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**ART: PREVIEW**

## **Exhibit covers Magnum opus**

### **Erwitt's prints are gentle without being sentimental**

By Alan G. Artner  
Tribune art critic

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Artists often decide the world is a richer source for images than the imagination. Some then represent what they see while others use it as a germ for elaboration. Shona Macdonald has done the latter in selections from five years of drawings at the Chicago Cultural Center.

Macdonald, like many artists these days, is interested in maps, which she traces, manipulates and repeats to create new forms still related to mapping systems but more involved with her own experience. Shapes of islands, for example, might become floating shards that seem viewed through clouds from above and connected by webs of lines meant to indicate flight routes or a record of visits.

These pale drawings in pencil and gouache stake out a position between representation and abstraction, sometimes leaning more one way, at other times inclining more toward the other. The same happens with elements of landscapes such as mountains, craters and shells that Macdonald assembles or elides to cascade down each sheet. Ostensibly representational images continually cross the line to abstraction even as we read the forms as trees or branches or rocks or eddies.

Borrowing a word from poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, the drawings are called "inscapes," which tells us these fragile personal essays strive toward essences and epiphanies.

At Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St., 312-744-6630.