

# Deconstructing memory at the La Grange Art League

By **Bruce Ingram**  
Pioneer Press

MARCH 31, 2015, 11:40 AM

**M**emories — creating them and retaining them — have been the main theme in the work of Indian Head Park artist Sarah Rehmer for the past 12 years, ever since her grandmother was diagnosed with [Alzheimer's Disease](#).

Thirty-five of her memory-themed sculptural paintings and altered photographs, plus a site-specific installation, will be on display March 30 through April 30 in "Remnant Memories" at the La Grange Art League.

"So much of my work deals with memory and what happens to memories when they're no longer remembered," Rehmer said. "But I'm also interested in the personal aspirations and big grand plans that we never go after, that we cast aside so easily, that never has the chance to become a memory."

Rehmer was taking a collage course after graduating from [Dominican University](#) in 2003 when her grandmother was diagnosed. So, while assisting with caretaking, she began working on a project using the blank end pages of books to represent lost memories — recognizable as book pages but devoid of information. And, since that time, she has continued to use deconstructed books as a metaphor for memory.

"When I was doing more two-dimensional work, I'd take them apart and present the pages out of order, so you knew it was a book but the information didn't make sense," Rehmer said.

"When I started working on the more sculptural pieces, those were more about the memories we decide to forget on purpose. The memories we've stuffed down because we don't want to deal with them. The stuff that's going to come up again eventually, represented by plumes of pages pouring out."

Rehmer said it affected her greatly to see her grandmother, who had always been such a strong individual, lose her memories and her sense of identity and become unable to take care of herself. But she doesn't consider the work that experience inspired to be entirely personal.

"It's a very personal theme for me, obviously, but not so personal that it can't be understood by everyone," she explained. "I hope it makes people stop and think about the things they deem important in life. Do you go after you want? Do you at least try to make those memories? Even if you're not able to hold onto them forever, do you at least try to make them occur in the first place?"

"If I can get people thinking about those questions, then my job is done."

'Remnant Memories'

La Grange Art League, 122 Calendar Ave., La Grange

March 30 through April 30

Admission is free.

(708) 352-3101 or visit <http://www.lagrangeartleague.org>.

Copyright © 2015, Chicago Tribune

---

**Q SEARCH**

---

SUBSCRIBE LOG IN

MEMBER CENTER

PLACE AN AD

CLASSIFIED >

NEWS >

SUBURBS >

SPORTS >

POLITICS >

WATCHDOG >

BUSINESS >

BLUE SKY >

OPINION >

ENTERTAINMENT >

DINING >

THEATER LOOP >

LIFE & STYLE >

VIDEO & PHOTO >

AUTOS >



---

[SUBSCRIBE](#) [LOG IN](#)

[MEMBER CENTER](#)

[PLACE AN AD](#)

[CLASSIFIED](#) >

[NEWS](#) >

[SUBURBS](#) >

[SPORTS](#) >

[POLITICS](#) >

[WATCHDOG](#) >

[BUSINESS](#) >

[BLUE SKY](#) >

[OPINION](#) >

[ENTERTAINMENT](#) >

[DINING](#) >

[THEATER LOOP](#) >

[LIFE & STYLE](#) >

[VIDEO & PHOTO](#) >

[AUTOS](#) >