

## **Verdant**

Binh Danh / Paula Hayes / Tim Knowles / Workingman Collective

January 30 - March 10, 2011

Opening reception: Monday, January 30, 2011, 6 - 8pm

Sandra & David Bakalar Gallery  
Massachusetts College of Art and Design

*Verdant* explores the intersections between people and the natural environment; delving into the complexity of humanity's relationships with the landscape through the work of contemporary artists who use living plants in their art. Rather than simply drawing inspiration from the biosphere, these artists utilize plant matter as their artistic media, incorporate natural growth processes to create striking images, employ plants with pollutant-eliminating abilities in interactive sculptures to create healthy social spaces, and even embrace plants as active collaborators in their work.

The artists showcased in this multi-disciplinary exhibition are Binh Danh, Paula Hayes, Tim Knowles, and the Workingman Collective. Binh Danh creates unique imagery using a chlorophyll printing process that generates photographic images on leaves through the action of photosynthesis. His delicately haunting works mine personal histories and collective memories, while reflecting upon mortality and spirituality.

Microcosmic hand blown glass terrariums, living epiphyte (air plant) necklaces, and otherworldly silicone pod planters are just a few of landscape designer and artist Paula Hayes' fantastical sculptural environments that feature myriad growing plants and minerals. Each sculpture is a living entity that requires care by student gallery docents, who will keep detailed "gardener's logs" to track the daily needs of the green and leafy subjects.

Collaborating with various trees (i.e. spruce, ginkgo, maple, and pine), Tim Knowles creates drawings by attaching pens to their branches, setting up paper and easel, and letting nature do the rest. Each tree's drawing is a portrait of the tree as artist accompanied by its serendipitous marks. Fascinated by making the unseen visible, Knowles uses his wind-driven artworks to highlight parts of the natural and physical world that are often overlooked, such as the complex and surprisingly beautiful movement of branches on a gusty day.

The three primary members of the Workingman Collective (WMC) – Tom Ashcraft, Janis Goodman, and Peter Winant – create project-based works that invite participation. Encouraging group interactions rather than solitary contemplation, their double-sided swing set allows several participants to sit and swing together in the gallery. The sculpture, which is covered by plants whose transpiration cleans the air of Volatile Organic Compounds, is designed to provide a playful, healthy, and welcoming social space for visitors.



Binh Danh



Tim Knowles



Terrarium

Paula Hayes



Workingman Collective