

NEWS RELEASE

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(RIDGELY, MD—December 6, 2017)

***Emergent: Visual Sips from the Waterline*, Photographs by Lynn Teo Simarski, on View through Feb. 2 at Adkins Arboretum**

During the six years she lived aboard a boat on the Chesapeake and its tributaries, photographer and science writer Lynn Teo Simarski often slipped her kayak into the water to explore the delicate borders where water mingles with land. In her show *Emergent: Visual Sips from the Waterline*, on view through February 2 at the Adkins Arboretum Visitor's Center, her digital photographs tell the stories of the remarkable plants she found in the region's quiet coves and marshes. There will be a reception to meet the artist on Sat., Dec. 16 from 3 to 5 p.m.

Sliding along low in the water, the kayak gives Simarski a close-up, intimate view of every detail of the shoreline. In photographs that range from spare black-and-white images of slender marsh grasses and their dancing reflections to masses of lotus leaves floating in water rippled with brilliant autumn colors, she distills moments of beauty and playfulness that few people get to see. There are softly rising mists, dramatic slanting shadows and an occasional dragonfly perching weightlessly on a bit of grass.



"Spikerush," Lynn Teo Simarski, 15" x 20"

Simarski, who lives in Alexandria, Va., when she and her husband aren't aboard their 40-foot trawler, *Bright Pleiades*, said, "I kayak as much as I can. That's really my favorite part about having lived on the boat."

In a perfect image of the interconnections of earth, water and sky, sprightly blades of grass emerge from satiny reflections of the clouds above in "Skygrass." Simarski's fascination with

emergents—plants that are rooted in the underwater soil but grow up into the air—continually draws her to the fragile edges of the water where these aquatic plants perform a vital role in the ecosystem by providing shelter, food and breeding places for countless creatures.

The majority of the show's photographs come from the Chesapeake region, but Simarski shot a few of them in Maine, Wisconsin and South Carolina. Interestingly, except for some tassels of Spanish moss dangling from a leafy branch, it's hard to tell the difference. There's a certain universality in the elegant calligraphic gestures of blades of marsh grass and the ever-changing effects of light, mirrored skies, turning tides and shifting seasons.

With its perky bright green stalks tipped with gold, "Spikerush" is a jaunty image. A type of sedge, it's small and grows just barely above the water's surface. Simarski found it with tiny concentric rings dimpling the water where its stalks meet their own reflections.

"This is one that was not from a kayak," she explained. "It was spring, and I was going for a walk at the marina in Galesville, Md., where we keep our boat. I saw these patterns in a ditch, and I was just stunned. Here were these rushes only about three inches high. So, I ran back to the boat and drove back over so I could stand on the car and look down at the ditch to get the viewpoint I wanted."

In addition to her photography, Simarski has written articles on the Bay for *Chesapeake Bay Magazine* and *Bay Weekly*. She and her husband, Guy G. Guthridge, are currently working on a book called *Chesapeake Winter* about their years living aboard their boat and their conversations with scientists, watermen and others about the Bay's future. They are planning a trip to Florida along the Intracoastal Waterway.

For Simarski, the margins of water and land are endlessly compelling. Speaking of her love for these vulnerable, ever-changing perimeters, she said, "The boat enables me to go to these places you can't get to by road and put the kayak in. The boat is our magic carpet."

This show is part of Adkins Arboretum's ongoing exhibition series of work on natural themes by regional artists. It is on view through Feb. 2 at the Arboretum Visitor's Center located at 12610 Eveland Road near Tuckahoe State Park in Ridgely. Contact the Arboretum at 410-634-2847, ext. 0 or info@adkinsarboretum.org for gallery hours.

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Adkins Arboretum is a 400-acre native garden and preserve at the headwaters of the Tuckahoe Creek in Caroline County. Open year round, the Arboretum is the region's resource for native plants and education programs about nature, ecology and wildlife conservation gardening. For more information, visit adkinsarboretum.org or call 410-634-2847, ext. 0.

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