

NEWS RELEASE

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Artists in Dialogue with Landscape, Adkins Arboretum's Outdoor Sculpture Invitational, on View through Sept. 30

This summer, Adkins Arboretum has invited seven artists from the Mid-Atlantic region to create site-specific sculptures inspired by its native forest and meadows. The variety of their works confirms that there is much more to the landscapes of the Eastern Shore than just their beauty.

On view through September 30, the seventh biennial Outdoor Sculpture Invitational, *Artists in Dialogue with Landscape*, is all about exploring the different ways we see and relate to the landscape. There will be a reception and sculpture walk on Sat., June 21 from 3 to 5 p.m. during which the artists will talk about the ideas behind their works.

How we humans go about experiencing the natural world fascinates Baltimore artist Marian Glebes. She goes so far as to offer a comfortable situation for viewing nature by providing two swinging benches where visitors can sit and observe the birds, butterflies, grasses and wildflowers living in the Arboretum's South Meadow. Positioned on either side of the meadow across from the Visitor's Center, they act as thresholds between the manmade world of the building, paths and parking lot and the



Visitors to Adkins Arboretum view "Clear Forest.," a site-specific sculpture by Washington, D.C. artist Julia Bloom. "Clear Forest" is part of the Arboretum's biennial Outdoor Sculpture Invitational, Artists in Dialogue with Landscape, on view through Sept. 30.

natural environments of the meadow and surrounding forest.

More invitations to observe the natural landscape follow. A series of short nature poems by Jay Fuhrman, of Glenmoore, Penn., can be found along the quiet River Birch Alleé, along with a sculpture of weathered arcs of oak that includes a bench where visitors can rest and meditate.

Invisible at first glance, Washington artist Julia Bloom's sculptures made of hundreds of sticks bound together seem to bend and sway as they stand under the tall forest trees. Not quite natural, they catch the eye and make you look again to see how these intricate, human-made frameworks relate to the trees and understory plants.

Also using sticks as her materials, Baltimore artist Marcia Wolfson Ray created an undulating path of interwoven marsh elder sticks. Its fluid movement suggests flowing water, swirling wind or a slithering snake, all elements of the marsh elder bush's natural environment in wetlands throughout the Eastern Shore.

The fragility of nature is the subject of a tiny, clear plexiglass nature shrine in the shape of a house by Melissa Burley, of Laurel, Md. Filled with small, living pine saplings, ferns and moss, it stands alone under the tall trees, a gentle symbol of the vulnerability of our shared home, the earth itself.

Another work by Burley, "Silent Sting—A World without Bees," refers to the rapid decline of the pollinators that are so vital to the ecosystem, as do two sculptures by Elizabeth McCue of Yardley, Penn. Her cluster of "Butterflies," made from bronze screening, hangs in a tree at a junction of two paths. A short walk away, "Flowers in the Field" overlooks the Arboretum's wetland. Created by cutting recycled plastic bottles into flower shapes, it mimics meadow flowers and sparkles prettily in the sunlight, but its blossoms are sterile invaders into the ecosystem.

A Chicago artist who currently lives in Chestertown, where he is Assistant Professor of Art at Washington College, Benjamin Bellas created his work by cutting words directly into a mossy path. Deeply evocative and strangely moving, it can be seen as referring simply to human memory and relationships, but secluded on this narrow, shady green path, it also speaks about how the land so greatly influences our perceptions, affirming that we are physical beings born of this physical earth.

This show is part of Adkins Arboretum's ongoing exhibition series of work on natural themes by regional artists. It is on view through September 30 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 offers educational programs for all ages about nature and gardening. Through its **Campaign to Build a Green Legacy**, it will build the **W. Flaccus and Ruth B. Stifel Center at Adkins***

Arboretum and a "green" entranceway to broaden educational offerings and research initiatives promoting best practices in conservation and land stewardship. For additional information about Arboretum programs, visit www.adkinsarboretum.org or call 410-634-2847, ext. 0.

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