

For Immediate Release: February 21, 2012

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Exhibition Title: "FIELD WORK"

Exhibition on View: March 8 – April 14, 2012 (free to view exhibit)

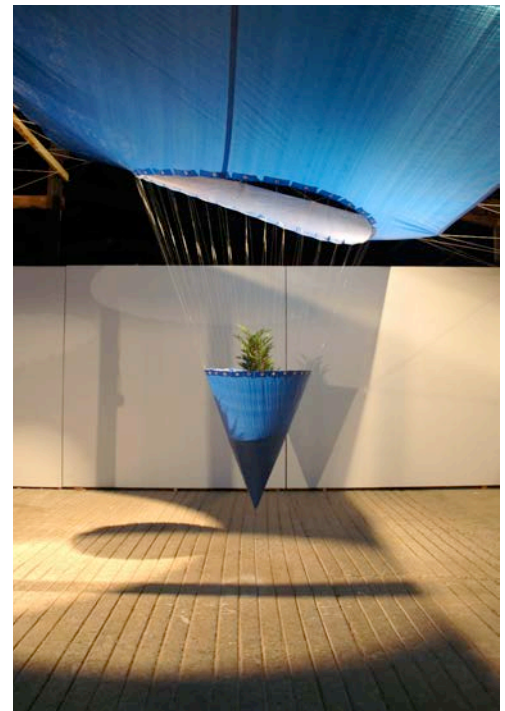
Opening Reception: March 9, from 7:00–9:00 p.m. (free)

Gallery Hours: Wed., Thurs., Fri. 12-9 p.m. Sat. & Sun. 12-5 p.m.

Innovative Art and Conservation Collaboration

Rockville, MD — VisArts at Rockville is pleased to present *FIELD WORK* a group exhibition in the Gibbs Street Gallery and the Kaplan Gallery from March 8 through April 14, 2012. Nine artists investigate the relationships between community, resources, sustainability and art. Featuring the work of: Dan Allende, Ian Cox, Selin Balci, Margaret Boozer, J.J. McCracken, Lynn Cazabon, Patterson Clark, Hugh Pocock, and Jackson Martin.

How do smoke signals, dead grass, weeds, and hungry microbes contribute to a conversation surrounding sustainability? Does meeting for a picnic in twenty years have anything to do with a long-term plan for a balanced relationship between human life and the natural environment? Can artists serve as effective messengers and advocates for sustainable issues?



Threshold II, by Jackson Martin. In an odd, yet wondrous juxtaposition of the natural and the unnatural, Martin suspends a living forest overhead that hovers magically.

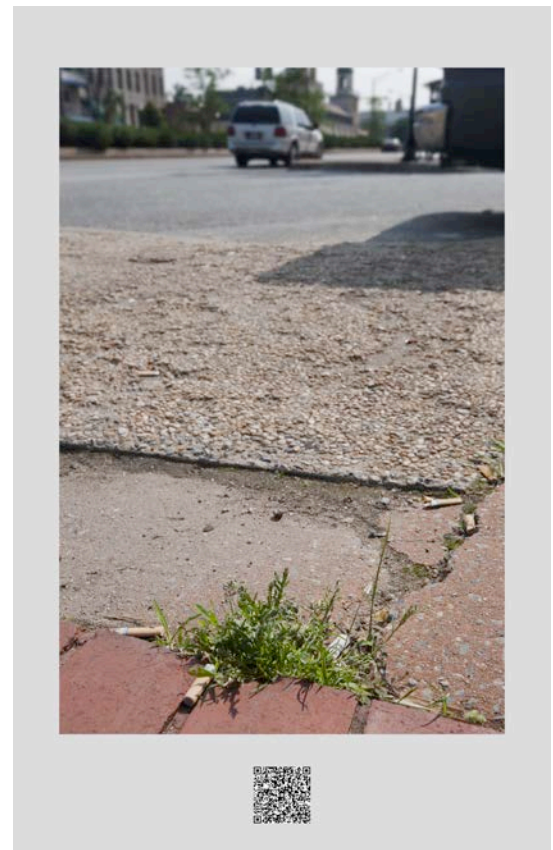


Banner With Metric: Wizzard Weed, by Patterson Clark (left), and **Clash,** by Selin Balci (above) are works in the exhibition "FIELD WORK," on view March 8 through April 14, at VisArts at Rockville.

The nine artists in the VisArts exhibition *FIELD WORK* propose that sensitive observation and simple questions might be the first steps toward identifying what is valuable and how to sustain it. Working individually or collaboratively, the artists direct attention toward the obvious, but often taken-for-granted, natural world. They create participatory installations that investigate the relationships between community, resources, sustainability and art.

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Literally and figuratively working in the field, these artists evoke poignant experiences with place, space and time. Hugh Pocock organizes a picnic lunch for the year 2032 as a way to imagine the future and make the connectivity of people the primary material of his work. His large scale banner announces, "Let's meet again in 2032"... "unless either one of us are dead." Dan Allende and Ian Cox send smoke signals from San Francisco to Rockville and provide sky-watching blankets stitched with wind speed maps. Contemplating the closed environment of the gallery, Margaret Boozer and J.J. McCracken invite visitors to climb a slope of dying grass to read a rainfall calendar. In her videos and microbe-made drawings, Selin Balci presents evidence of the boundaries that microbial communities establish as they compete for food resources. Lynn Cazabon's photography project, *Uncultivated*, focuses on the hardy weeds that pierce the urban concrete and signal the effect of global climate change on the urban landscape. Viewers can scan a QR code with their cell phones to identify the wild plants. Patterson Clark prospects for materials from invasive plants. His wood block prints are made entirely from the plants that they portray, essentially creating a "cradle to cradle" sustainable art-making system. Cazabon and Clark paired their efforts in a collaborative project that combines Cazabon's photos printed on Clark's *Alienweed* paper. In an odd, yet wondrous juxtaposition of the natural and the unnatural, Jackson Martin suspends a living forest overhead that hovers magically.



***Uncultivated*, by Lynn Cazabon.** Viewers can scan a QR code with their cell phones to identify the wild plants.

The artists in *FIELD WORK* balance activism, elemental revelation, observation of systems, and sustainable practices. Their efforts are on the forefront of a vital and dynamic relationship between art and issues that affect community. They expose connections to a local and global ecology that includes the natural, the social and the cultural.

About the Artists:

Dan Allende: Daniel Allende is an artist, builder and inventor. He studied Interdisciplinary Sculpture at the Maryland Institute College Art. Allende's multifaceted and social-engaging work includes installations, videos, performances, and sculptural objects, often created in collaboration. In 2009, Allende collaborated with Futurefarmers on the Reverse Ark: In the Wake at the Contemporary Museum, Baltimore, Maryland and on the People's Roulette for the Shenzhen Biennale of Urbanism\Architecture.

Ian Cox: Ian Cox is an artist, explorer, and creative problem solver. Exploration of our world with an imaginative open mind is at the heart of Ian's interests. In much of his work he shows specific phenomenon from unique perspectives to look at what we think we understand in new ways. Ian first worked with Futurefarmers in 2009 on the Reverse Ark: In the Wake at the Contemporary Museum in Baltimore, Maryland. He studied Interdisciplinary Sculpture at the Maryland Institute College of Art.

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Selin Balci: Selin Balci, a Washington, D.C.-based installation and bio artist, received a BSc degree from Istanbul University and a BFA from West Virginia University. She is in her final semester at the University of Maryland where she is pursuing a MFA degree in Studio Arts. Selin has received multiple awards. These include the *Anne Truitt MFA Scholarship Award*, *Vermont Studio Residency Artist Award* and the *Goldhaber Travel Grant* from the University of Maryland Graduate School. Since 2010, her work has been represented by the Hamiltonian Gallery in Washington, D.C.. At the Hamiltonian Gallery she was awarded with the *So Hamiltonian Fellowship*. She has presented her work in multiple solo and group shows at national and international venues such as the *Scope Art Fair Miami* in 2010 and *MIND THE GAP* project in Istanbul during *ISEA 2011 Istanbul*. Lately, she has been awarded with a *2012 Professional Development Fellowship in the Visual Arts Award* from the College Art Association.

Patterson Clark: Patterson Clark has been harvesting D.C.'s exotic invasive vegetation for seven years, exploring its potential for use as art (alienweeds.com). At The Washington Post he is a visual journalist, writing and illustrating the weekly natural history column "Urban Jungle." Patterson maintains a small community garden plot, where he grows garlic, basil, stevia, sweet grass and cow peas.

Lynn Cazabon: Lynn Cazabon's work in photography, video and installation has been exhibited both nationally and internationally. She has received grants and residency fellowships from the Baltimore City Arts and Humanities Fund, Maryland State Arts Council, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Franklin Furnace Archives, Jentel Foundation, The Camargo Foundation, The MacDowell Colony, Fundacion Valparaiso, and Yaddo. Her work is featured in numerous exhibition catalogs and has been written about by noted photo historian Geoffrey Batchen in the book *Each Wild Idea: Writing, Photography, History* (MIT Press, 2001). Cazabon's work is in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and was chosen by the US Department of State's Art in Embassies Program to be featured in an exhibition at the residence of the US ambassador to Oman. Cazabon is an Associate Professor of Art at University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

Margaret Boozer: Margaret Boozer lives and works in the Washington, D.C. metro area. She received a BFA in sculpture from Auburn University and an MFA in ceramics from New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University. Her work is included in the collection of the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, The Wilson Building Public Art collection and in many private collections. Boozer taught for ten years at the Corcoran College of Art and Design before founding Red Dirt Studio in Mt. Rainier, MD where she directs a ceramics and sculpture seminar. Recent projects include commissioned installations at Grapeseed restaurant (Bethesda, MD), and The Metropole condominium lobby (Washington, D.C.). Current project include writing a chapter on her work as soil-centric art for U. S. Geologic Survey's forthcoming book, *Soil and Culture*. Recent exhibitions include *Margaret Boozer: Dirt Drawings* at the American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center in Washington, DC.

J. J. McCracken: Focusing on the Living Experience—making & consuming, loss, the passage of time—J.J. McCracken constructs immersive installations. Based in Washington, D.C., McCracken received an MFA in studio arts from The George Washington University. McCracken is currently building project-scale works with support of a position as Artist-In-Residence at Red Dirt Studio in Mt. Rainier, Maryland. J.J. McCracken also teaches as adjunct professor at Virginia Commonwealth University, The George Washington University, Montgomery College, and Hood College.

Jackson Martin: Jackson Martin was born and raised on a commune in rural Tennessee. At age 10 he moved to Nashville, TN where he graduated from Hume Fogg Academic High School in 1997. He received his BFA from Middle Tennessee State University in 2004 and earned his MFA from the Rinehart School of Sculpture at the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2007. Martin has exhibited his work at venues such as Viridian Artists in NYC, Sculpture Key West and the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts in Grand Rapids, MI. In 2010 Martin's sculpture was chosen by the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park to be installed in downtown

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Grand Rapids for *ArtPrize*. He was also invited to install one of his works in the renowned sculpture park at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY. He has been featured in the itinerary section of *Sculpture* magazine and was an artist in residence at the Vermont Studio Center in 2008 and 2011. Most recently Martin returned from South Korea where he lived and worked with 25 Korean, Japanese, Swedish and Austrian artists in a residency-style environment for the *Jara Island International Bagat Art Exhibition*. Martin now lives with his wife and daughter in Charleston, SC where he teaches at the College of Charleston and works for the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art. To view Jackson Martin's work, visit his website: www.jacksonmartin.com

Hugh Pocock: Born in New Zealand and raised in the United States, Hugh Pocock's work seeks to integrate the dynamics of natural and cultural phenomena. Over the past two decades, he has shown his work in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York and San Antonio as well as internationally in the former Soviet Union, Germany and China. His work has been exhibited in galleries and museums including Portikus Museum in Frankfurt, Germany, the Wexner Museum, the Santa Monica Museum of Art and the Baltimore Museum of Art. Pocock's work has also been built for "non-art sites" such as private homes, movie theatres and farms. He received his BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and then completed his MFA at UCLA in New Genres. He is living and working in Baltimore, Maryland and is teaching Sculpture, Video and Social Practice courses that focus on the impact of Climate Change and issues of Sustainability at Maryland Institute College of Art. Hugh Pocock's work can be seen at his website: www.hughpocock.net

Exhibition Events & Programs:

Panel Discussion: Saturday, March 24, 2:00–3:30 p.m. A panel of artists, scientists, community sustainability promoters, farmers join *FIELD WORK* artists to discuss the relationship between community, resources, sustainability and art. (free)

F.E.A.S.T. at VisArts: Saturday, March 24, 7:00–10:00 p.m. Dinner designed to use community-driven financial support to democratically fund new and emerging art makers. Theme: Sustainability. (Tickets- \$30 at [FEAST](#))

Hands-on workshops include: "Prospecting for Materials from Invasive Plants" on Saturday, April 14, 1:00–4:00 p.m. Artist Patterson Clark leads an exploration of art materials harvested from local weeds. (suggested donation: \$10)

Additional Programs & Information: www.visartscenter.org

About VisArts at Rockville:

VisArts at Rockville is a dynamic, nonprofit arts center dedicated to engaging the community in the arts and providing opportunities for artistic exploration, education and participation. Through educational programming, gallery exhibitions and a resident artist program, VisArts provides children, teens and adults with opportunities to express their creativity and enhance their awareness of the arts.

VisArts at Rockville is located three blocks from the Rockville Metro station at 155 Gibbs Street, Rockville, MD. The galleries are open on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 12 p.m. to 9 p.m., and on Saturday and Sunday from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. For information, please visit www.visartscenter.org or call 301-315-8200.

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For information, images, or to arrange an interview or a preview of the exhibition, please contact:
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