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150 West State Street, Trenton NJ 08608

Phone (609) 989-1100

QuickTakes!

William Paterson University Explores the Complexity of Humans and Nature Coexisting with One Another

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Humans and nature is a match made in heaven that plays out as a complex relationship on earth. William Paterson University Galleries exhibition explores the complex, mediated, and often fraught relationships between humans and the natural world in *Living Together: Nurturing Nature in the Built Environment*, an exhibition on view in the William Paterson University Galleries in the Ben Shahn Center for the Arts on the institution's campus in Wayne from March 21, 2016 through May 13, 2016.

Artists Dana Fritz, Ellie Irons, Anne Percoco, and Tattfoo Tan demonstrate different strategies for co-existing with nature in the exhibition, which features plants, as well as photography, drawing, and collage. The exhibition is located in the Court Gallery which was originally built in 1968 as an open-air courtyard for plants and revisits the space's history as a site for nature. Artists Ellie Irons and Anne Percoco will be giving a talk on Monday, April 18 from 2:15 to 3:15 p.m. in the Court Gallery.

Ms. Fritz, a photographer, presents images from the series "Terraria Gigantica: The World Under Glass," which documents enclosed environments where plants are grown amidst carefully constructed representations of the natural world. She photographed the Henry Doorly Zoo (Omaha, Nebraska) and the Eden Project (Cornwall, UK), which support scientific observation and research and demonstrate the current and complex relationship with the natural world. Ms. Fritz's images bear a striking resemblance to the architecture of the Court Gallery and resonate with its history as a space for nurturing the natural world.

Ms. Irons and Ms. Percoco present a collaborative project, *Next Epoch Seed Bank*, about studying and preserving invasive plants in Bushwick, Brooklyn, as well as on the William Paterson University campus. The seed bank focuses on weedy species most likely to survive and thrive in landscape dominated by genetically modified organisms. The installation will include a cabinet housing a library of seeds, an interactive shelf with magnifying boxes, a drying rack for sorting and cataloguing seeds, and maps and guides. Visitors will be invited to take samples of seeds and leave their own samples. In addition to their collaborative project, artists Irons and Percoco will also exhibit works on paper and video.

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Mr. Tan engages diverse audiences to raise awareness about the relationship of people to plants and food. In the S.O.S. Mobile Garden, he will collaborate with WPU students to convert strollers, shopping carts and other rolling devices into gardens. The goal is to make taking care, nurturing and protecting nature a part of everyday life. Visitors will be invited to sign the S.O.S. Pledge, an eco-conscious pledge distributed as a postcard. On Earth Day, a parade around campus with the mobile garden will be held to engage the students and raise the awareness of cultivating and consuming healthy food.

Dana Fritz holds a BFA in photography and video from the Kansas City Art Institute and an MFA in intermedia from Arizona State University. Her work has been exhibited in more than 60 venues in the last decade including the Center for Photography at Woodstock, New York; the Houston Center for Photography, Texas; Florida State University Museum of Fine Arts; the Griffin Museum of Photography, Winchester, Massachusetts; and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; as well as Chateau de Villandry, France; Xi'an Jiaotong University Art Museum, China; and Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Japan. Her work is held in numerous collections in the United States and abroad. Fritz has been awarded artist residencies at Villa Montalvo in Saratoga, California; Chateau de Rochefort-en-Terre, Brittany, France; Biosphere 2, Oracle, Arizona; and PLAYA, Summer Lake, Oregon. She is a professor in the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln where she teaches photography.

Ellie Irons holds a BA in studio art and a minor in environmental science from Scripps College and an MFA from Hunter College, City University of New York. Her work has been exhibited nationally at the Queens Botanical Garden, New York; Pioneer Works, Red Hook, New York; The Center for Book Arts, New York; SVA Nature & Tech Lab, School of Visual Arts, New York; Wave Hill Glyndor Gallery, New York; Bronx Museum of Art, New York; Cress Art Gallery, University of Tennessee, Chattanooga; and Smack Mellon, Brooklyn, New York. She has held residencies at the Jamaica Center for the Arts, Queens, New York; Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory, Gothic, Colorado; and Artist in the Marketplace, Bronx Museum of Art, New York. She was also a 2015 recipient of the New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship Award in Interdisciplinary Art. She currently lives and works in Brooklyn.

Anne Percoco earned a BA from Drew University and an MFA from Rutgers University. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally at Chitrakala Parishath College of Art, Bangalore, India; NURTUREart, New York; Randall's Island Park Alliance, New York; Anchorage Museum, Alaska; Bronx Museum and Wave Hill, New York; United States Botanical Garden, Washington, D.C.; the Queens Museum of Art, New York (forthcoming), among others. She has held residency fellowships at the Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, Vermont; Smack Mellon, Brooklyn, New York; ISE Cultural Foundation, New York; A.I.R. Gallery, New York; Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, New York; and the Artist in the Marketplace, Bronx Museum of Art, New York. She currently lives and works in Jersey City.

Tattfoo Tan is a Malaysian-born, self-taught artist, now living and working in Staten Island, New York. His work has been featured nationally at venues including NURTUREart,

Brooklyn, New York; Parsons New School for Design, New York; Art in Odd Places, 14th Street, New York; and Artspace, New Haven, Connecticut. His solo exhibitions include Black Gold featured at the Bronx River Art Center, New York; Cuisine du Jour at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, New York; and the SG Series at the Williamsburg Art and Historical Center, Brooklyn, New York. He was the recipient of a proclamation from the City of New York, as well as the 28th Annual Award for Excellence in Design by the Public Design Commission of the City of New York. Tan also serves on the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and the Mayor's Citizens' Advisory Committee.

This exhibition is made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. For information, please call 973-720-2654. Gallery hours are Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on April 10, April 17, and May 1 from noon to 4 p.m. Admission is free. An opening reception for the exhibition will be held on Sunday, April 10 from 2 to 4 p.m.