



Trees & Other Ramifications: Branches in Nature & Culture

March 5 – May 24, 2009

Central Court, Natural History Museum, & The Commons @ Spooner Hall

MEDIA CONTACT

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PUBLICITY IMAGES AVAILABLE

LAWRENCE—Visitors to the Spencer Museum of Art can now experience the ways in which trees affect their lives. The exhibition ***Trees & Other Ramifications: Branches in Nature & Culture***, on view March 5 through May 24 in the Museum's Central Court, with connected projects at the Natural History Museum and The Commons @ Spooner Hall, offers an open-ended look at some of the many ways that trees are meaningful to humanity and important in the natural world. ***Trees & Other Ramifications*** will have a public reception along with the Museum's other spring exhibitions on March 5 at 6:30 PM.

The exhibition, which features prints, drawings, books, and photographs drawn from University of Kansas and area collections, explores both works of art that were inspired by trees and images from the arts and sciences in which trees have served as a metaphor for real and imagined branching systems. For example, you will find works about family trees, the tree of knowledge, and Darwin's evolutionary tree of life.

In alliance with other spring exhibitions and programs concerning climate change, the [Natural History Museum/Biodiversity Research Center](#) has contributed research on the species of trees seen in some of the exhibited works that allows us to predict the future geographic distribution of those species under different climate change models. The Biodiversity Research Center will also be sharing new research documentation of the remarkable [Bowerbirds of New Guinea](#). As part of their courtship behavior, bowerbirds make elaborate structures that incorporate tree elements and that are sometimes built around saplings.

Trees & Other Ramifications is organized by Stephen Goddard, Senior Curator of Prints, working in cooperation with KU's Biodiversity Research Center and the [Spencer Research](#)

[Library](#). The exhibition is made possible in part by the generous support of the Elizabeth Schultz Environmental Fund of the Douglas County Foundation, Arthur V. Neis, and [Gould Evans Associates, LC](#).

The last month of *Trees & Other Ramifications* will coincide with the arrival of world-renowned sculptor [Patrick Dougherty](#). Hosted by the Spencer Museum in cooperation with [The Commons](#), Dougherty will be an artist-in-residence during May, when he will create a tree-branch sculpture outside The Commons @ Spooner Hall. Dougherty has gained an international reputation for his structures and has created hundreds of monumental, site-specific sculptures around the world. His work is constructed from saplings gathered from local sources and shaped into massive, swirling forms as high as 40 feet. Dougherty's residency is made possible in part by the generous support of Reed and Stacey Dillon, the [KU School of Architecture and Urban Planning](#), the [Elizabeth Schultz Environmental Fund of the Douglas County Community Foundation](#), and corporate sponsor [Capitol Federal Foundation](#).

Connected Exhibitions on Campus & Beyond

Trees & Other Ramifications has inspired several similarly themed shows, on and off campus. The [Spencer Student Advisory Board](#) will present [Technology/Nature](#), a juried student art exhibition opening April 2 in the Kansas Union's SUA Gallery.

As well, two installations are planned at the Natural History Museum: the NHM Student Advisory Board will present [Branching Systems](#), also opening April 2; and a new fossil tree display, tentatively titled [Paleotrees](#), will open March 5. [Paleotrees](#) is curated by Bruce Scherling of the Natural History Museum with KU paleobotanist Rudolph Serbet.

Several additional exhibitions have been planned in Lawrence and Kansas City in association with the Spencer's exhibition:

Happy Tree Friends (or Standing: Tree as Agent, Index, Object of Desire) - Part I

Curated by Kate Hackman for the Charlotte Street Foundation, La Esquina Gallery, 1000 West 25th Kansas City, MO

Opening reception: March 6, 6-9 PM

First Friday April reception: April 3, 6-9 PM; talk with curator & artists at 6 PM

Hours: Thursdays + Saturdays, 12-5 PM and by appointment

March 6 - April 23 www.charlottestreet.org

- [Press Release](#) (785KB)

Hugh Cameron: Tree Hermit, Philosopher, and Civil War Veteran

Curated by The Watkins Community Museum of History, Lawrence, March 7 - May 24 www.watkinsmuseum.org

Trees I Have Known

Curated by the Lawrence Corporation for the Advancement of the Visual Arts at the Lawrence Percolator,
March 14 - May 3 www.lcava.org

Trees

Curated by Sally Piller for 6 Gallery, Lawrence,
March 14 - April 17 www.6gallery.net

Happy Tree Friends - Part II

Curated by Kate Hackman for the Charlotte Street Foundation, Paragraph gallery, 23 East 12th Street Kansas City MO

Opening reception: April 17, 6-9 PM

Third Friday May reception: May 15, 6-9 PM

Hours: Thursdays + Saturdays, 12-5 PM and by appointment

April 17 - June 4, 2009 www.charlottestreet.org

- [Press Release](#) (785KB)

Public Programs for *Trees & Other Ramifications*

3.5



Reception: *Spring @ the Spencer*

6:30 PM / SMA Galleries & Central Court

A celebration of the Museum's spring exhibitions.

3.27



Town & Gown: *Perspectives on Nature and Art*

10 AM-12 PM /

Focusing on the exhibitions [Climate Change at the Poles](#) and [Trees & Other Ramifications: Branches in Nature & Culture](#), faculty from a variety of disciplines will discuss the natural environment, offering new perspectives for understanding its meaning and impact on our lives / Co-sponsored by the [Hall Center for the Humanities](#)

4.2



Opening Reception: *Technology/Nature*

7 PM / SUA Gallery, Fourth Floor, Kansas Union

An SMA Student Advisory Board juried art exhibition. / In conjunction with [Climate Change at the Poles](#) and [Trees & Other Ramifications: Branches in Nature & Culture](#)

4.16



Performance: *University Dance Company*

7:30 PM / Lied Center of Kansas

\$ / Additional performance on April 17 / As part of the University Dance Company's annual spring concert, KU dance students will perform *Other Ramifications*, an original, choreographic work by Michelle Heffner Hayes inspired by the "branching" activity explored in the Spencer's [Trees & Other Ramifications](#) exhibition. The movement originated as a two-week, site-specific installation in Marvin Grove during October of 2008. Dance students of Professor Michelle Heffner Hayes responded to different "movement scores" based on the role of the individual in relationship to his or her environment. Students in American Studies recorded these experiments through sound and film, took ethnographic notes during the events, interviewed the dancers about their experiences, then combined these elements in an interactive wiki--a database of Web pages which visitors can edit live. Students in the parallel courses then added their own

commentaries, and made choices about which photos, videos, sound recordings, and writings to include in different places on the wiki. These experiences provided a “map” of the event that became the source material for new choreography. The meditation on environmental impact transformed into an exploration of human relationships--personal, cultural and global. / Co-sponsored by the KU departments of Dance and American Studies / In conjunction with [**Trees & Other Ramifications: Branches in Nature & Culture**](#)

4.18



It Starts With Art!: Children's art appreciation classes for ages 5-14 / *Tree Personalities*
10:30 AM & 1:30 PM /

See how artists make trees unique in the *Trees & Other Ramifications: Branches in Nature & Culture* exhibition, then depict the special 'personalities' of trees in your own work. / \$ / To enroll, contact SMA Education Department, 785.864.0137 or smakids@ku.edu, or visit the [**Spencer's website**](#) to enroll online.

4.23



Special Event: *Spring Student Night*
6-8 PM /

Sponsored by the SMA Student Advisory Board / In conjunction with [**Trees & Other Ramifications: Branches in Nature & Culture**](#) and [**Climate Change at the Poles**](#)

5.2



Arts & Culture Festival:

1-4 PM / SMA Galleries and Front Lawn

Co-sponsored by SMA Student Advisory Board and Student Union Activities / In conjunction with SMA spring exhibitions

5.6



Music Performance: Makoto Nakura, marimba, on *The Wood and Forests Project*
7 PM / Central Court

Accompanied by [Matthew Herren](#), cello, and KU Assistant Professor of Music [David Fedele](#), flute / Born in Kobe, Japan, [Makoto Nakura](#) moved from his native Japan to New York City, becoming the first marimbist to win First Prize in the prestigious Young Concert Artists International Auditions. He has performed with orchestras such as the New York Chamber Symphony and appeared in recital at prestigious concert halls including Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall and the Kennedy Center. In conjunction with [**Trees & Other Ramifications: Branches in Nature & Culture**](#)

5.21



Artists Talk: *Visiting Artist Patrick Dougherty on his work*

5:30 PM / SMA Auditorium

In conjunction with [**Trees & Other Ramifications: Branches in Nature & Culture**](#)

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Spencer Museum of Art
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Also find the Spencer...

- On the Web: www.spencerart.ku.edu
- E-mail: spencerart@ku.edu



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