



Media Advisory

Environmental Art Program Awarded NEA Grant for *Edible Landscapes*

**Selected artists and local students begin installation on
Wednesday, June 3rd**

The Environmental Art Program at The Schuylkill Center is pleased to announce the awarding of a \$15,000 National Endowment for the Arts Access to Artistic Excellence grant for the Fall 2009 Edible Landscapes exhibition.

What is *Edible Landscapes*?

Taking cues from the recent Urban Farming and Local Food movements especially active in the Philadelphia region and seeking to continue its mission of connecting art with environmental education, the Schuylkill Center will return a portion of its property to its agricultural past through the *Edible Landscape* exhibition. Six artist teams have been invited to consider the historical context of the local agricultural culture, the equipment used for cultivating and harvesting, the scale of farming fields, the animal and human resources, and the farm to market practices. Inviting artists to create this transformation will allow for a variety of possibilities of processes of working the land and producing food while exploring the connections to sustainable agriculture.

Furthermore, challenging artists and landscape architects to explore new forms of gardening and agriculture in a contained urban green space will allow SCEE to encourage innovation in the process and practice of reclaiming a connection to food production, to educate on the history of agriculture and farming, and to inspire visitors to become more involved in their local foodways and their own ability to feed themselves.

By showcasing how urban farms can be designed to work within the natural environment, SCEE will connect its Environmental Art program with its larger mission to serve the greater Philadelphia area through immersive nature experiences. **Working in partnership with local community**

organizations such as The Philadelphia Orchard Project, Philadelphia University, Urban Girls Produce, and the Philadelphia Waldorf School, will allow for a community-based context to be built into the project through participation. This project will also be created in collaboration with the **Green Woods Charter School**, whose students and families will be involved in many steps of the process, and may maintain, harvest, and sell the produce from the garden in the fall.

What is visiting Curator Amy Lipton planning for *Edible Landscapes*?

The Environmental Art Program at The Schuylkill Center has invited visiting curator Amy Lipton of Ecoartspace to bring together 6 artist teams to its Second Site. Second Site is a historic farmstead on the edge of the Schuylkill Center's property, and the 6 artist teams are each creating art installations that use agriculture, gardening, and food production as their materials. Projects include a **medicinal herb garden, rainwater runoff collection system**, a small **apple orchard**, a **garden of vegetables native to North America**, an **art studio/gardening shed** surrounded by raised bed plots, and a **creative deer fencing system**.

An integral part of this project is the participation and involvement of many different community and educational groups in the construction, planting, tending, and harvesting of the garden installations. Many of the artists are also including educational programming in their projects.

Who are the participating artists?

Joan Bankemper (NY), Knox Cummins (PA) , Simon Draper and The Habitat for Artists Collective (NY) , Stacy Levy (PA) , Ann Rosenthal and Steffi Domike (PA) , Susan Leibovitz Steinman (CA).

When will the *Edible Landscapes* project begin?

Throughout June, a number of groups will be on-site working with the artists on their ambitious creations. The garden installations will be maintained throughout the summer, with the intention of harvesting, and selling the produce from the garden in the fall.

June's gardening/installation schedule is as follows:

Wednesday June 3rd

Waldorf School 6th graders will be working with Simon Draper and Habitat for Artists on planting the raised bed gardens and working in the on-site art studio.

Thursday June 4th

Greenwoods Charter School- 7th graders will be working with Joan Bankemper on planting the medicinal herb garden.

Tuesday June 9th

Thursday June 11th – Greenwoods Charter School- 2nd and 3rd graders will work on planting a pumpkin patch.

The week of June 15th

Lankenau High School students will work on planting the apple orchard with Susan Leibovitz Steinman.

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