



# The Entropic Garden

February 9 - March 25, 2001

Wake Forest University Fine Arts Gallery

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# The Entropic Garden

## Happy Disorders, Cataclysms of Hyper-order, Amateur Appreciation

In Genesis, the world was a garden; it proceeded from the first division of the light from the dark, and the succeeding sun-drenched profusion of greenery. This entropy, and its heterogeneous result, a variegated, multi-textured reality was a garden; a diverse place of sustenance and pleasures that engendered mankind, a complexity in synch with nature's tendency to disorder. It was a unity of disordered diversity.

In contrast, now, in the globalization of Pax Americana, we experience a contrasting complexity, a technologically enhanced hyper-ordering complexity. Paradoxically, this complexity of order, this dominating hyper-negative entropy demands a radically reductionist unity, an excessively self-replicating mass culture. The cost of all the hyper complexity requires massive economies of scale in production. There is consequent pressure against natural meandering diversity. We see a metastasizing proliferation of "outlets" from the mainstream, rather than diverse points of creative individuality. Vertically integrated mega-merged networks monopolize reality, enveloping politics, co-opting culture, and dissembling civitas.

These monumental, towering examples of negative entropy deny the prolonged existence of any pleasantly haphazard symphony of modest community achievement. Instead, a surreal world of purchasable, pre-packaged life-experience chokes the entire spectrum of authorized, FCC-licensed mainstream existence. The vast de-natured network architectures obscure the basic tendency of nature to entropy and the ability of citizens to create their own lives.

There is little accommodation for neighborhood businesses, amateurs, family farmers, artists, eccentrics, tinkerers, free-thinkers, or any one deviating along the byways from the highway that propels mass commodity for those people who make their own visions into small personal realities. Their manifold reality, the accumulation of those visions of each of our citizens is the exquisite corpse that has been our civilization. This satisfying social structure is increasingly battered by the large-scale economics of the mass culture, a culture geared to unsatisfied, anxious consumers that deprives us of our individuality, even as it fails to unite us.

It is the "amateur" culture, the manifold culture created by people by their "love" that stands against the cancerous propagation of inertial hyper order. The home-made, the self-defined, and the consequent self-fulfillment of the individual through these acts is the weed that cracks the wall. Like the moss in out of the way shadows, grassed over highways, trees on rooftops, and mold in the basements, they are evidence of natural reclamation. In reclaiming, residing and manifesting itself, entropy can be gradual or cataclysmic, and in reclamation, makes startling, unexpected intrusions.

Joel Beck



Sheila Moss, 1998  
**Dirt Carpet** (detail)  
dirt (variable, site specific)



Andrea Frank, 2000 **Case Study #1** C Print, 16" x 24"  
Decayed ruins fo an abandoned Italian fascist youth camp, c.1930s.

The exhibition curators, Joel Beck and Christian Viveros-Fauné are the co-directors of Roebing Hall, an art gallery in Brooklyn, N.Y. ([www.brooklynart.com](http://www.brooklynart.com)). Roebing Hall is the successor gallery to Salon 75, which operated in Joel Beck's studio between 1996 and 1998. Roebing Hall opened in May 1998 with Sheila Moss' "Horror Vacui." Christian Viveros-Fauné became a partner in the gallery with Joel Beck the following October, with the debut of the "Greenworld" series, a three-part exhibition including "Utopia", "Dystopia", and "Babel". These shows introduced their curatorial partnership and established the "vision" and scope of the gallery's ambitious program.

"Brooklyn is central to this vision, as a contrast to the high-stakes commercial gallery scene in Manhattan. The gallery is committed to demonstrating the viability of introducing difficult ambitious work by young artists, and important work by artists whose work does not appear to have immediate commercial potential. We strive to offer thought-provoking entertaining work of the highest order without lapsing into jargon-laden insider art. Our mission is to argue convincingly for the necessity and viability of intelligent artwork to enter the cultural dialogue without resorting to extreme shock tactics or conversely, by watering down it's ongoing cultural critique." - Joel Beck

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Ken Bass, 1997  
**Bee Movie** (installation)  
video projection, box fans, wood, steel



David Opdyke, 1999  
**Mirage**  
mock irrigation system, 84" x 175" x 26"



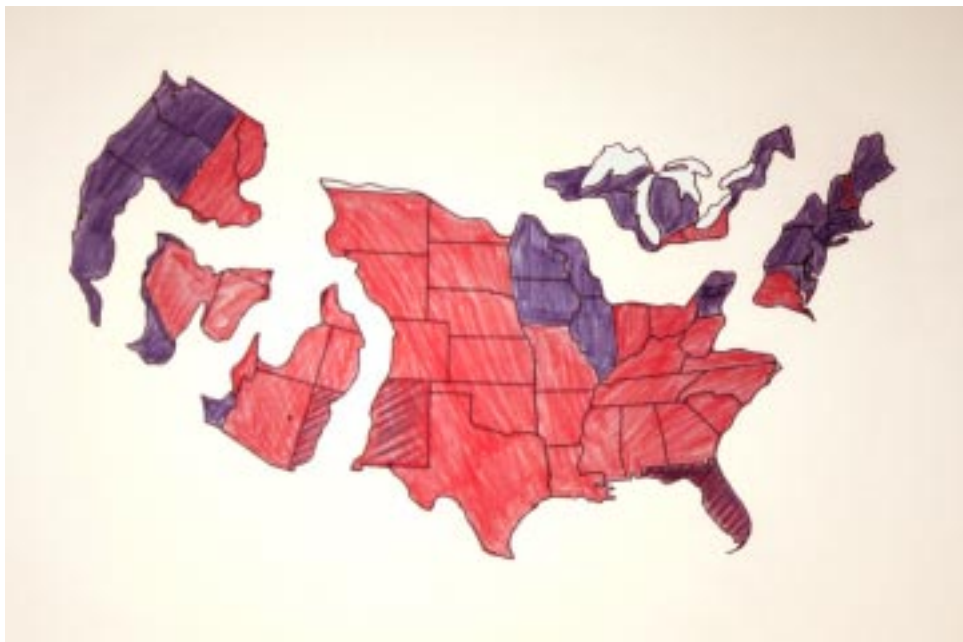
Christoph Draeger, 1998  
**TWA 800** (image for jigsaw puzzle)  
digital print, 12" x 40"

# The Entropic Garden

Curated by Joel Beck and Christian Viveros-Fauné

Christoph Draeger  
Andrea Frank  
Robert Kalka  
K.K. Kozik  
David Opdyke  
Kenn Bass  
Sheila Moss  
Peggy Reynolds  
Peter Fend  
Soren Martinsen

Cover: K.K. Kozik, 1999  
**Dark Heart**  
oil on linen, 72" x 57"



Peter Fend, 2000

**Watershed/Basins Election Drawing**

19" x 24"



Robert Kalka, 1999

**Forget Everything**

plexiglas, plaster, wood, mold, condensation

48" x 36" x 32"