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“Open Spaces” opening on the trails and in the gallery at the Schuylkill Center



PHILADELPHIA – This summer nine artists are coming to the Schuylkill Center with indoor and outdoor installations, extending the environmental art gallery out onto the Center’s trails. With a reception on Tuesday, June 16, *Open Spaces*, combines gallery, forest, and field, to create an environmental art show that explores natural and constructed spaces. Each work invites the viewer to meditate, reflect, or engage with the space around them, whether it is through natural or repurposed materials, transforming ordinary spaces into meditative ones, or inspiring ecological and environmental thought.



These artists are part of the Art in the Open program, a bi-annual event that brings artists to the Schuylkill River waterfront to create art on-site, encouraging new ways to see the urban environment and the creative process. By opening up the artist process, Art in the Open encourages the public to connect with art-making, and to think differently about the physical spaces of our city – the river, the banks, the constructed and natural areas that define us. In May 2014, 29 artists set up for three days on Schuylkill Banks to create their works in public, revealing their process and allowing members of the public to watch, ask questions, and participate. Now, in the last of three exhibitions over the past year, nine of those artists bring their works to the Schuylkill Center.



Some have expanded on their 2014 Art in the Open works, and others have adapted them to a new setting, creating unique installations for their new locations. Some of the artists bring works created alongside or literally through the Schuylkill River, others bring works created by community members who visited the 2014 Art in the Open event. One will be creating a wholly new work in the Schuylkill Center’s newly renovated west wing, expanding from her 2014 Art in the Open piece. Still others have installed works on the Schuylkill Center’s trails, creating meditation sculptures and textile installations which transform the ordinary into the remarkable.

Christina Catanese, Director of Environmental Art at the Schuylkill Center, explains that the artists explore space in multiple ways, saying, “each installation reflects on our relationship with the world around us. The artists explore and celebrate the natural beauty and urban character of Philadelphia, and the complex and fascinating interactions between nature and the city.”

The public is invited to a reception for *Open Spaces*, including a chance to meet all nine artists and to enjoy a guided tour to installations on the trails on Tuesday, June 16 from 6 – 8 pm. *Open Spaces* will be on view from June 1 – July 25.

About the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education

The Schuylkill Center was founded in 1965 as the nation's first urban environmental education center. Its 340-acres of fields and forests serve as a living laboratory to foster appreciation, deepen understanding, and encourage stewardship of the environment. Reaching over 36,000 Philadelphia-area residents each year, the Schuylkill Center offers a diverse collection of educational programs, including programs for school, continuing education for teachers, Pennsylvania's first Nature Preschool, and a full calendar of events for the public. In 2015 the Schuylkill Center is celebrating 50 years of connecting people and nature, with a series of events highlighting the Center's work and vision for the future. For more information: www.schuylkillcenter.org.

About Art in the Open

Art in the Open (AiO) is a citywide event that celebrates artists, their inspirations for creating art, and our relationship with the urban environment. In 2014, AiO was re-framed as a biannual event, in which 30 artists interested in using the Schuylkill River Banks as their studios made their a creative process open to everyone. Working over the course of three days (May 16-18, 2014), this jury-selected group created works of art along the Schuylkill Banks – from the historic Fairmount Water Works to Locust Street – inspiring new ways of seeing the river and the city it runs through.

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