

## <states of change>

In "Corson's Inlet," the narrator transforms the capricious eddies and streams of the shoreline into a metaphor for changing thought and action: they inspire him to accept nature's unpredictability as well as the natural flux of his ideas. "In nature," he writes, "there are few sharp lines...I have reached no conclusions, have erected no boundaries..." Like the swerving waves, he leaves himself open to changes of state.

With its unpredictable flow through the landscape, water reminds us of how we negotiate the constant transformations in our lives, communities, and environments. It is a powerful metaphor because of its fundamental, yet delicate, connection to life. When water "changes state" in our local environments, we feel its effects profoundly. The disappearance of native wetlands, shoreline erosion, polluted waterways, drought, fluctuating sea levels, and devastating storms serve as recent reminders of water's immediate impact as a natural, cultural, and political force in the Southeast.

Like the narrator of "Corson's Inlet," the contributors to *Water: Three States* explore process and transformation, characteristics fundamental to water itself. The incessant motion of Martha Whittington's sculptures recalls dowsing, the practice of divining water sources, and suggests a new and urgent need for the resource. Xiaotian Wang's mutated images of the Chattahoochee River reveal the landscape through a veil of color created by developing the images in the river's now-polluted water. Through the painstaking pinhole photography process, Daniel Kariko exposes the gradual, yet stark, corrosion of the contemporary Gulf Coast. Andy Behrle demonstrates the actual process of erosion by allowing water to exert its physical force within the gallery.

*Water: Three States* also embodies the process of eroding boundaries between art and science and expert and citizen. In Xavier Cortada's *The Reclamation Project* students and faculty help to grow live mangrove seedlings in the gallery before the artist returns the plants to the threatened mangrove forests of the Florida coast. Beth Maynor Young's photographs of Alabama's waterways document and preserve these beautiful ecosystems, as well as create awareness about their fragile nature. Alabama Water Watch in the Department of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures at Auburn University educates and empowers ordinary citizens by teaching them to monitor, restore, and protect water resources in their own communities.

The contributors to *Water: Three States* are part of a broader conversation in which boundaries to innovative thinking about water are being washed away. Their work demonstrates the need to transform our thoughts and accept new "eddies of meaning" as we face the challenges of water issues in the Southeast. —Kathryn M. Floyd, Assistant Professor of Art History, Department of Art

August 24 - November 10, 2009  
Biggin Gallery  
101 Biggin Hall  
Department of Art  
Auburn University  
Auburn, AL 36849

Gallery Hours:  
Monday - Friday, 8 AM - 4 PM or by appointment.  
Biggin Gallery is wheelchair accessible.

All events are free and open  
to the public.

"In nature, there are few sharp lines...I have reached no  
conclusions, have erected no boundaries"

Sponsored by:  
College of Liberal Arts  
Department of Art  
College of Agriculture

For more information contact:  
The Department of Art at (334) 844-4373  
The College of Agriculture at (334) 844-5887  
[www.ag.auburn.edu/ArtinAg](http://www.ag.auburn.edu/ArtinAg)



• Biggin Gallery



Auburn University is an equal opportunity  
educational institution/employer.  
[www.auburn.edu](http://www.auburn.edu)

agRICULTURE  
art in agriculture

AUBURN  
UNIVERSITY

...I allow myself eddies of meaning:  
 yield to a direction of significance  
 running  
 like a stream through the geography of my work:  
 you can find  
 in my sayings  
 swerves of action  
 like the inlet's cutting edge...



—From "Corson's Inlet" by A.R. Ammons

<Andy Behrle>

An interest in history, nature, the sublime, and the footprint of humanity unite in Andy Behrle's work. As an undergraduate student in philosophy and religion, he explored existentialism, Eastern philosophy, the industriousness of humanity, and the cyclical forces of nature by creating objects in bronze. For his M.F.A. in sculpture at Arizona State University, Behrle shifted his focus to environments. Inspired by decaying buildings, he created situations where water eroded clay, rusted metal, and permeated plaster walls – speeding up the destruction of these materials to reveal their essence. Behrle, a recent transplant to Alabama, now embraces the land where ore, limestone, and coal have been mined.

<Eve Brantley>

Eve Brantley has been with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System since 2000 working on watershed management, nonpoint source pollution education, and restoration activities. Her perspective on protecting, maintaining, and restoring water resources comes from her past work as a local watershed coordinator and from the many dedicated groups across Alabama who are seeking opportunities to manage their natural resources wisely. Brantley has a B.S. in biology from Berry College, an M.S. in forest resources from Clemson University, and a Ph.D. in forestry and wildlife sciences from Auburn University.

<Xavier Cortada>

Xavier Cortada has exhibited his work in cultural venues across the globe. Many of his community-based projects explore our ability to co-exist with

nature. Cortada has created art for the White House, the World Bank, and the Florida Supreme Court as well as completed murals and community art projects in Switzerland, South Africa, Ireland, and Cyprus. Recently, Cortada has been exploring the ecologies of the North and South Poles. His work has been supported by the National Science Foundation Antarctic Artists and Writers Program as well as the New York Foundation for the Arts. He holds a B.A., an M.A. in public administration, and the J.D. from the University of Miami.

<Bill Deutsch>

Bill Deutsch has been a research fellow in the Department of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures at Auburn University for twenty years, with degrees in zoology, biology, anthropology, and aquatic ecology. He previously worked eleven years as a research biologist and director of aquatic research with environmental consultants in Pennsylvania. Deutsch is the director of Alabama Water Watch, a citizen volunteer water monitoring program which currently has sixty-five active groups on lakes and streams statewide. He also directs Global Water Watch, a network of water monitoring groups in several countries including the Philippines, Brazil, and Mexico. He has made sixty trips to twenty countries working on watershed projects, particularly related to community-based environmental stewardship with rural people and indigenous groups.

<Katie Lamar Jackson>

Katie Lamar Jackson is a writer, editor, and photographer for the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station and Auburn University College of Agriculture, with more than twenty-five years of experience

reporting on science, agriculture, and the environment. She is author or co-author of three national gardening books and countless newspaper and magazine articles. Jackson has been with the Office of Agricultural Communications and Marketing since 1988 and serves as head of the department. She has a B.S. in agricultural science/journalism and an M.A. in public administration.

<Daniel Kariko>

Daniel Kariko was born in 1976 in Yugoslavia (now Northern Serbia) and moved to the U.S. in 1994. He attended the engineering program at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, Louisiana, but soon switched his interest to art photography and graduated with a B.A. He received his M.F.A. from Arizona State University and was awarded an Arizona-Austria travel grant in 2001. Kariko is interested in the ideas of displacement and land use both in Eastern Europe as well as in the wetlands of Louisiana where he has been photographing since 1999. Kariko teaches photography and digital art at Florida State University.

<Xiaotian Wang>

Xiaotian Wang is an M.F.A. candidate at Georgia State University. She received a B.F.A. in graphic design from Western Carolina University in 2005. Wang grew up in Qingdao, China, before moving to the U.S. as a teenager. Her photography concentrates on the themes of privacy and personal space, including body parts, living spaces, and the mind. She often magnifies unnoticeable objects, making them abstract and unrecognizable. *Chattahoochee Immersion* is Wang's first project dealing with environmental issues. She has exhibited in Atlanta

at the Georgia State University Gallery and the Rialto Center for the Visual Arts and at the Illges Gallery at Columbus State University.

<Martha Whittington>

Martha Whittington received her B.A. in sculpture from the Kansas City Art Institute. She received her M.F.A. in sculpture from Tyler School of Art, where she studied with Amy Hauff and Winifred Lutz. Whittington has been the recipient of a six-month artist residency at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Art. In support of her work, she has been awarded grants from the Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs and Austin Green. She has exhibited her work both nationally and internationally with shows at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Jacksonville, Florida; the Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia; and the AMOA-Laguna Gloria, Austin, Texas. Whittington is a foundations studies professor at the Savannah College of Art and Design in Atlanta.

<Beth Maynor Young>

Beth Maynor Young is a conservation photographer who chronicles the natural beauty and remnant wild places of the contemporary South. Her book *Headwaters: A Journey on Alabama Rivers* was published in 2009 by the University of Alabama Press. Her photographs focus on unprotected places, each with its own story of biological compromise and imminent threat. These places also embrace a southern tradition of preservation, restoration, and resurrection. Found in art collections across the country, her work is popular due to the importance of environmental issues as well the caliber of her photography. She is currently working on a book for the Longleaf Alliance.

Images: 1. Xiaotian Wang, *Chattahoochee Immersion: Location 7*, 2009, Chromogenic print, 30" x 30", Image courtesy of the artist. 2. Martha Whittington, *Dowsing*, 2007, Aluminum, mirrors, motor, reflections, 38" x 72", Image courtesy of the artist. 3. Xavier Cortada, *The Reclamation Project* (at the Miami Science Museum), 2007, 1100 mangrove seedlings, water-filled plastic cups on wall, 168" x 960", Image courtesy of the artist. 4. Andy Behrle, *Ephemera*, 2003, Detail of clay and water mixture reacting with the steel floor, Installation, Image courtesy of the artist. 5. Daniel Kariko, *Stilts, Sulfur Mine Island, Louisiana*, 2006, Pinhole Polaroid photograph, 12"x15", Image courtesy of the artist.

