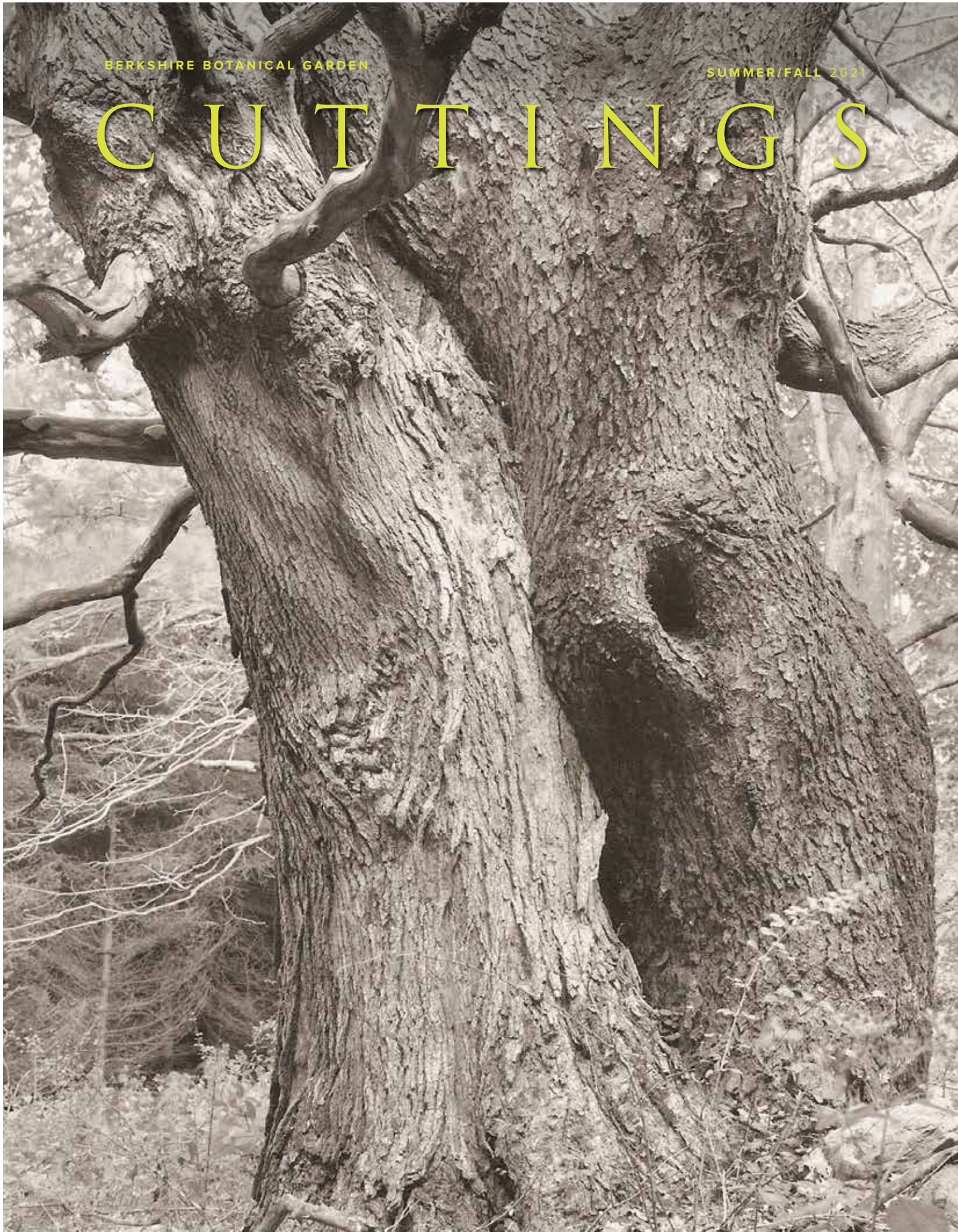


BERKSHIRE BOTANICAL GARDEN

SUMMER/FALL 2021

CUTTINGS





OCT
9-10

87th Annual Harvest Festival

BBG's legendary Harvest Festival returns over Columbus Day weekend with a full line-up of entertainment, regional food, craft vendors and autumn activities.

THROUGH SEPT 20

Music Mondays

Join us in Lucy's Topiary Garden for live music and explore BBG's grounds after hours.

THROUGH OCT 31

Taking Flight

A sculpture exhibition inspired by flight and curated by Beth Rudin DeWoody.

AUG 28

A Photographic Walk at BBG

Hone your smartphone or DSLR skills with a community of garden photographers.



Peter D. Gerakaris, *Spotted Owl Mosaic*, 2021, Glass Mosaic on stucco wall

TAKING FLIGHT IN THE GARDEN: A COLLABORATIVE VISION

By Laura Dvorkin

It is with *Taking Flight* that we premiere an ongoing collaboration with celebrated collector and curator, Beth Rudin DeWoody. For over five decades, DeWoody has been collecting art in various media including painting, drawing, sculpture, and video. She began with acquiring Beatles memorabilia and her very first artwork in 1969, a drawing by her then-teacher at the New School, artist Benny Andrews. Andrews would continue his undoubtedly substantial career and social justice contributions to the arts during the civil rights movement. DeWoody would go on to be one of the greatest supporters the art world has ever seen.

DeWoody's expansive collection includes works by today's leading contemporary artists, as well as significant holdings in

iconic furniture, ephemera, and artists' books. Her continuous commitment to collecting has also given emerging and under-recognized artists a national platform through exhibitions at her private art space, The Bunker, West Palm Beach, and in public institutions across the country. Her vision is known throughout the art world to be a unique perspective — what she acquires is always daring, playful, and inspiring. At times traveling in the matter of minutes from an Upper East Side gallery to an artist's studio in Brooklyn, her tenacity holds no bounds. She is an egalitarian and true art lover.

DeWoody has curated several exhibitions, including *I Won't Grow Up* at Cheim & Read, New York; *Think Pink* at Gavlak Gallery, Palm Beach; *Inspired* at Steven

Kasher Gallery, New York; *Bad For You* at Shizaru Gallery, London; *Please Enter* at Franklin Parrasch Gallery, New York; *Really?* at Wilding Cran Gallery, Los Angeles; and *Go Figure!* at Eric Firestone Gallery, East Hampton.

At Berkshire Botanical Garden, it is in her endless passion of collecting and curating that DeWoody dives deep into the *Taking Flight* theme, by including atypical and thought-provoking examples. In many ways, the artists in the exhibition challenge the idea of public sculpture and the monument, while the rest of the world now does the same. DeWoody's approach aligns so succinctly with the mission of BBG, delivering engaging programming and continuously expanding the language for conversation. The *Taking Flight* sculptural



exhibition not only alludes to birds, but also reemergence, the return to life after the pandemic. It's with great enthusiasm that we finally have our wings back.

Entering the garden, guests are greeted by *Singing Bird*, one of three marble sculptures by Ian L.C. Swordy. Swordy, an artist who for much of his career has worked in assemblage, in recent years continues to deepen his practice through marble and an intensive stone-carving practice. *Singing Bird* acts as a peaceful guardian and alternative symbiosis between cat and bird, a predator and prey in repose. Swordy additionally sees this relationship in the idea of a garden. A once wild and natural space, with human intervention, the landscape is transformed to protect nature while preserving its beauty. Swordy's other sculptures, two marble animal adorned bird baths, can be seen as other welcomed interventions in the garden.

Beyond the Visitor Center on an expanse

of lawn, a large, solemn, raven made of rubber and steel emerges from the greenery. Addressing issues of fragility, Rachel Owens' *Groundswell* debuted at Socrates Sculpture Park in New York almost 15 years ago, and, as the discussion around climate change crescendos, is even more relevant today. The title refers to the extensive societal conversations around our planet and the complex underground infrastructure beneath New York City's surface. Captivating and mysterious, the piece offers a post-apocalyptic lens to view the world around us. A fountain, usually thriving and a symbol of life, is reimagined into a trickle ending in an oil bin. Our friend, the raven, an allusion to both wisdom and death, is perched atop a severed pipe that spouts from the earth like a tree.

Outside of the Center House, we discover a wood-carved sparrow lying on a pedestal, its eyes painted humanlike to reference Egyptian statue making.

Left: Ian L.C. Swordy, *Singing Bird*, 2021
Mixed marbles

Right: Rachel Owens, *Groundswell*, 2007
Steel, rubber, wood, pump, water

Concha Martinez Barreto's body of work, that usually evokes a melancholic beauty, is centered around memories and the exploration of how we as people form them. Akin to Owens, Martinez Barreto uses birds in her work to signify fragility. In mood and posture, she also alludes to Catholic sculptural tradition and more specifically the iconic Pietà. *Bird* is not about life or death, but rather the feeling of being alive and dead at the same time. It represents both vulnerability and resilience.

Celebrated British artist Tracey Emin has been featured in numerous exhibitions curated by DeWoody. Serving as a symbol of