

For immediate release
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Charlotte Street Foundation's Urban Culture Project presents:

A banner with a background of tree rings. The text "happy tree friends (part 2)" is written in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font across the center.

happy tree friends (part 2)

HAPPY TREE FRIENDS (PART II)

PARAGRAPH | 23 EAST 12th Street | KANSAS CITY, MO 64108 | 816.221.5115

APRIL 17-JUNE 4, 2009

Opening reception: April 17, 6-9pm

Third Friday May reception: May 15, 6-9pm; talk with curator & artists at 6pm

Hours: Thursdays + Saturdays, 12-5pm and by appointment

Curated by Kate Hackman, Associate Director, Charlotte Street Foundation, *Happy Tree Friends (Part II)* is the second component of a two-part exhibition project featuring artworks that depict, reference, incorporate, document, and otherwise derive or draw inspiration from trees. The project has been organized in partnership with the Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, which is concurrently presenting *Trees and other Ramifications: Branches in Nature & Culture*, on view through May 25, 2009. *Happy Tree Friends Part I* remains on view at Urban Culture Project's la Esquina venue through April 18.

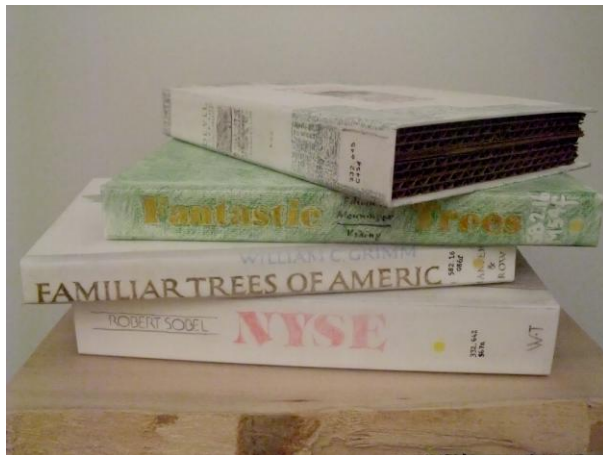
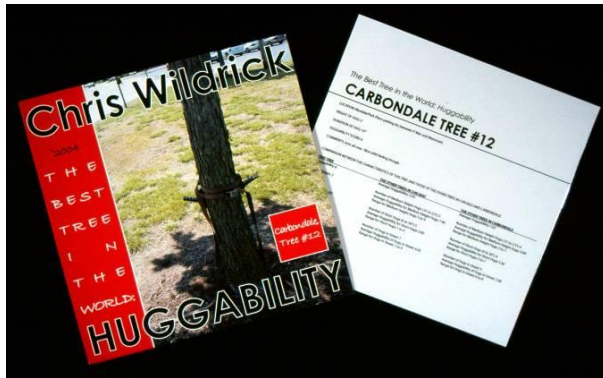
Happy Tree Friends (Part II) at la Paragraph, April 17-June 4, features work by Kurt Fleckling (Kansas City), Ke-Sook Lee (Kansas City), Hmh Services (Kansas City), Sarah Vandersall (Kansas City), BJ Vogt (St. Louis, MO), and Chris Wildrick (Syracuse, NY). Artists were selected through a mix of invitations and a call for proposals distributed in late 2008.

Happy Tree Friends (Part II) focuses primarily on exhibition-specific installation-based works, creating an immersive, interactive, multi-sensorial experience for viewers. Works include *Root*, a new installation by St. Louis based artist (and KCAI alumni) B.J. Vogt, which incorporates motion sensors and tree limbs to form a connection between the synaptic connections in the brain and the branching structures of trees; and a new multi-media wall installation by Sarah Vandersall relating to organic growth and "psychic tree energy."

Tree Woman and *Tree Woman Leaf*, two new related installations by Ke-Sook Lee, explore personal and cultural memory and lived experiences in nature, employing leaves and bark gathered by the artist as sculptural elements and surfaces for drawings. These pieces reference Lee's recollections of growing up in Korea, including memories of "the Mudang (female



Ke-Sook Lee, *Tree Woman* (above), tree bark, fallen leaves, thread, mixed media; *Tree Woman Leaf* (below), fallen leaves, thread, mixed media.



Chris Wildrick, *Huggability*, 2004, designed and printed record cover and slip, from the series *The Best Tree in the World*; Hmh Services, *Fake Reference Books for the Buttonwood-Prairie Ent-Empty Center of America* (working title), 2009, Cardboard, museum board, colored pencil on vellum.

shaman) shaking her body under the big tree to connect to spirit world,” and of “Sig-Mok-II” Holiday (National Tree Planting Day), after the Korean War. Kurt Flecksing is interested in storytelling as well; his installation of seating made from raw wood will serve as the gathering space for a series of tree-related lectures and conversations hosted by area arborealists on Saturday afternoons in May (exact dates to be announced.)

Also featured will be an installation by Hmh Services (Neal Wilson and Lacy Wozny), who employ an associative process to connect a network of tree-related histories and references, blurring fact and fiction. And Syracuse, NY-based artist Chris Wildrick presents several works from an ongoing, multi-faceted project titled *The Best Tree in the World*, through which he has developed a range of measures, means of documentation, and systems of analysis toward determining exactly that.

Public Programs/events in conjunction with *Happy Tree Friends* - all free & open to the public:

- Opening reception: Friday, April 17, 6-9pm
- Third Friday second reception: Friday, May 15, 6-9pm
- Gallery talk: Friday, May 15, 6pm
- Saturday Tree Talks hosted by Kurt Flecksing: several Saturdays in May, final dates to be announced.

In addition, the exhibition includes a collaboration with Heartland Tree Alliance, presenting the following:

- **Happy Tree Friends Urban Tree Identification Walk – Saturday, April 18, 2-4pm** – Meet at la Esquina, 1000 West 25th Street, for a walking excursion to identify and learn more about trees in the downtown area, led by Angela Schreffler, Director of the Heartland Tree Alliance. Heartland Tree Alliance’s mission is to engage people of the greater Kansas City region to take action and advocate for a healthy community forest. Visit www.heartlandtreealliance.org for more information about HTA’s work.
- **Arbor Day Tree Planting Event: Saturday, April 25th, 9-noon, Budd Park, St. John Ave and Quincy Ave, Kansas City, MO** – Volunteers are invited to help plant 40 trees in the park. No previous experience is necessary and training will be provided. Pre-registration is required by calling 816-561-1061, ext. 110 or emailing treemail@bridgingthegap.org.

On view through April 18:

Happy Tree Friends (Part I) at la Esquina, 1000 West 25th Street, includes works by: Barry Anderson (Kansas City), Jeff Badger (Portland, Maine), Carnal Torpor (Kansas City/Omaha, NE), Mark Cowardin (Kansas City), Jeanna Darby (Chicago), Dominique Davison + Robert Riccardi (Kansas City), Kristina Estell (Duluth, MN), Cari Freno (Richmond, VA), Diane Henk (Kansas City), Michael Krueger (Lawrence, KS), Sarah Luther (Milwaukee, WI), Kacy Maddux (Kansas City), Johnny Naugahyde (Kansas City), Benjamin

Potter (Portland, Maine), Shawn Sanem (Kansas City), Margaret Shelby (Kansas City), Carlos Rosales-Silva (Austin, TX), Deanna Skedel (Kansas City), Jesse Small (Kansas City/China), Corine Vermeulen-Smith (Detroit, MI), Maranda Stebbins (Kansas City), Davin Watne (Kansas City), and Jennifer Whiteford (Kansas City).

***Trees and other Ramifications: Branches in Nature and Culture** is an exhibition project curated by Steve Goddard, Senior Curator and Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Spencer Museum, in collaboration with the University of Kansas Natural History Museum / Biodiversity Research Center.

Trees and other Ramifications offers an open-ended look at some of the many ways that trees are meaningful to humanity and important in the natural world. The exhibition, predominantly of prints, drawings, books, and photographs drawn from University of Kansas and area collections, is not limited to works of art that were inspired by trees, but also includes images from the arts and sciences in which trees have served as a metaphor for real and imagined branching systems (ramifications). In alliance with other spring exhibitions and programs concerning climate change, the Natural History Museum/Biodiversity Research Center has contributed research on the species of trees seen in some of the exhibited works that allows us to predict the future geographic distribution of those species under different climate change models. **Visit www.spencerart.ku.edu for complete information.**

This project is made possible with support from the Richard J. Stern Foundation for the Arts, Commerce Bank Trustee.

An initiative of the Charlotte Street Foundation, Urban Culture Project creates new opportunities for artists of all disciplines and contributes to urban revitalization by transforming spaces in downtown Kansas City into new venues for multi-disciplinary contemporary arts programming. For more information, visit CSF's NEW website at www.charlottestreet.org.

