



women and
their work
1710 Lavaca St.
Austin, TX 78701
512.477.1064
womenandtheirwork.org

thirst

This project is supported by the
RAUSCHENBERG
Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

Dear Members of the Press,

Feel free to call or email us with any interview requests or additional questions. All of these images are available in higher resolutions. Check out our 'meet the THIRST team' video as well. We are thrilled.

---Press Release – for immediate release 8-30 – Women & Their Work presents THIRST on Lady Bird Lake---

Austin, Texas, August 30, 2013

Women & Their Work presents THIRST, a large-scale temporary art installation sited on Lady Bird Lake, the emotional and geographical center of Austin.

Comprised of two components, the installation features a 35-foot-tall dead cedar elm tree painted ghostly white that appears to hover over the surface of the lake, its roots unable to reach the water, and a meditative trail walk that will include 14,000 prayer flags. Suspended from trees forming a 2.5-mile loop from the Lamar Bridge to the Pfluger Pedestrian Bridge to the 1st Street Bridge and back, leading visitors down to the Pfluger Circle, the flags are silkscreened with an image of the dead tree.

Collaborating with Women & Their Work to create THIRST are Beili Liu, Associate Professor of Art at the University of Texas; Emily Little and Norma Yancey, of Clayton & Little Architects; and Cassie Bergstrom, of dwg. landscape architecture.

THIRST will focus attention in a visually and experientially powerful way on the centrality of water to life and encourage discussion about water, our most precious resource. While focusing attention on the need to engage in conservation and preservation, THIRST will also memorialize the loss of over 300 million trees that died in Texas in the drought of 2011.

The constant water level of Lady Bird Lake itself serves to remind us how easy it is to be complacent about the availability of water in our lives, an attitude that THIRST challenges.



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The importance of the water of Lady Bird Lake has become more than symbolic as Austin struggles with recent extreme drought, water rationing and fears for future sustainability. The strains brought about by drought are exacerbated by the rapid increase in Austin's population.

Opening Celebration: The weekend of September 28-29, 2013, on the Pfluger Pedestrian Bridge and other locations on Lady Bird Lake to be announced. Additional community programming will be announced.

This collaborative site-specific art installation will remain on view through December 20, 2013.

This project is supported by the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. Famous during his lifetime for his work that spanned artistic disciplines, Robert Rauschenberg believed that art is an important agent for social transformation: that art can change the world. It is to this high standard that THIRST aspires.

This project was approved by the Austin City Council through the City's Artwork Donation and Loan process managed by the Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office, Cultural Arts Division. Women & Their Work, in collaboration with the participating artists, incorporated feedback from the Austin Rowing Club, the Trail Foundation, the City of Austin Watershed Protection Department, the City of Austin Planning and Development Review Department, the City of Austin Park Ranger Program, the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department, the City of Austin Arborist Program, the City of Austin Urban Forestry Program, Environmental Review and Land Use Review staff, Austin Energy, the City of Austin Public Works Department, the City of Austin Sustainability Department, the Austin Parks Foundation, the Austin Arts Commission, the Austin Police Department, Downtown Austin Alliance, the Sierra Club, the Nature Conservancy, and Austin City Council, as well as local neighborhood associations, to create and install this work.

The THIRST website contains an extensive FAQ. Additional information, meet the THIRST team video and project maps are available at: <http://THIRSTart.org>
Let's tweet about it: #THIRSTart

Additional announcements:

http://www.womenandtheirwork.org/upcoming_exhibitions.html?itemid=830
@wtwgallery



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IMAGE CAPTIONS: attached as.doc.

THIRST QUOTES:

Megan Crigger, Cultural Arts Program Manager, 8-28, 2013

"As evidenced by Council action today, the city is excited to support this public art project led by Women & Their Work. The city's recently revised donation policy was intended to attract public art projects of this kind that communicate issues affecting civic life through excellence in art and design. Nationally-funded, this project reinforces Austin as a creative and innovative magnet, and showcases our local talents who offer critical thinking to city issues through a meritorious work of art."

Kevin Johns, Executive Director of the Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office

"Art has the ability to create conversation about issues affecting our community and our office supports innovative projects like THIRST as a way to spark that exchange of ideas."

Lucia Athens, Chief Sustainability Officer for the City of Austin

"THIRST will be a visible representation of this drought's impact on Austin. This prominent installation should serve as a powerful reminder that we all have a part to play in conserving one of our region's most precious resources – water."

Norma Yancey, THIRST Team artist, Clayton & Little Architects

"I am excited to be a part of THIRST because it presents a platform to discuss the extreme drought that has affected our City. Throughout the design process, the team and I have had the privilege of working with both Michael Embesi, City Arborist and Angela Hanson with Urban Forestry. We were all humbled by the statistics they shared with us of the magnitude of the drought and were inspired by their proactive nature and commitment to our urban forest."

Norma Yancey, THIRST Team artist, Clayton & Little Architects

"The team and I quickly realized that the simple act of watering a tree wouldn't undo or prevent a drought, we needed a revolution of thought. A small team of artists had the means to make a big statement."



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Chris Cowden, Executive Director, Women & Their Work

“To place THIRST on Lady Bird Lake required many, many meetings with many, many people. The process was long; it was complicated; it was messy; it was inconvenient. Many people didn't want to deal with it or even talk about it. It is a perfect metaphor for the struggles that lie before us all as citizens of Austin as we come to terms with a shortage of water.”

Chris Cowden, Executive Director, Women & Their Work

“One of the most famous artists of the 20th century and whose foundation made our project possible, Robert Rauschenberg believed that art is a powerful agent for social transformation: that art can change the world. It is to this high standard that THIRST aspires.”

Cassie Bergstrom, THIRST Team artist, dwg. urban landscape architects

“Trees are so important for so many reasons! Trees are so important for community and social reasons, ecological and environmental reasons as well as economic and spiritual reasons. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, ‘One acre of forest absorbs six tons of carbon dioxide and puts out four tons of oxygen. This is enough to meet the annual needs of 18 people.’”

Beili Liu, THIRST Team artist, Associate Professor of Art, University of Texas

“Thirst is a project for our community. It is a project that brings people together. It brought the collaborative team together, and hopefully will bring our citizens together and inspire conversations about the millions of trees we have lost and are continuing to lose. We chose the Lady Bird Lake as the project site not only because it is the heart of Austin, but also because of its constant water level and the beautiful green belt surrounding it—sometimes it is exactly the place we tend to forget about the urgency of the water crisis. By creating Thirst on this site, we hope to heighten people’s awareness about water, and the drought, and together, we could possibly initiate some positive change.”

Media Contact:

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512-477-1064



Women & Their Work presents THIRST on Lady Bird Lake

Celebrate THIRST! Join us this Sunday evening as we gather at the Pfluger Pedestrian Bridge (near Lamar) to formally inaugurate the THIRST project and illuminate the tree. Come visit with friends and start the conversation about water.

THIRSTart.org #THIRSTart

Sunday, Sept. 29 from 7:30-8:00pm

THIRST on Lady Bird Lake is on view Sept. 29 – Dec. 20, 2013

We are proud to present this temporary public art installation with our creative team members, Beili Liu – Visual Artist, The University of Texas at Austin, Emily Little – Architect (FAIA), Clayton & Little Architects, Norma Yancey – Associate AIA, Clayton & Little Architects, Cassie Bergstrom – Landscape Designer (ASLA), dwg. urban landscape architects and many other volunteers and supporters.

THIRST encourages us to consider our relationship to water, our most precious natural resource, and memorializes the loss of the 300 million trees that died in the recent Texas drought. The iconic 38 foot cedar elm tree on the lake and the 14,000 prayer flag meditation walk on the trail acknowledge the devastating impact of drought in Austin, in Texas, and in places around the world. The goal of THIRST is to make the horrific loss visible while promoting the incorporation of conservation and sustainability into our daily lives. [Read More...http://thirstart.org](http://thirstart.org)

This project is funded in part by the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. This project was approved by the Austin City Council through the City's Artwork Donation process managed by the Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office, Cultural Arts Division.

Women & Their Work is a 35 year old non-profit cultural arts organization. To learn more about our events you can [read more...http://womenandtheirwork.org](http://womenandtheirwork.org)

THIRSTart.org #THIRSTart
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[YouTube Channel](#)
[FaceBook Fan Page](#)
@WTWGallery

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