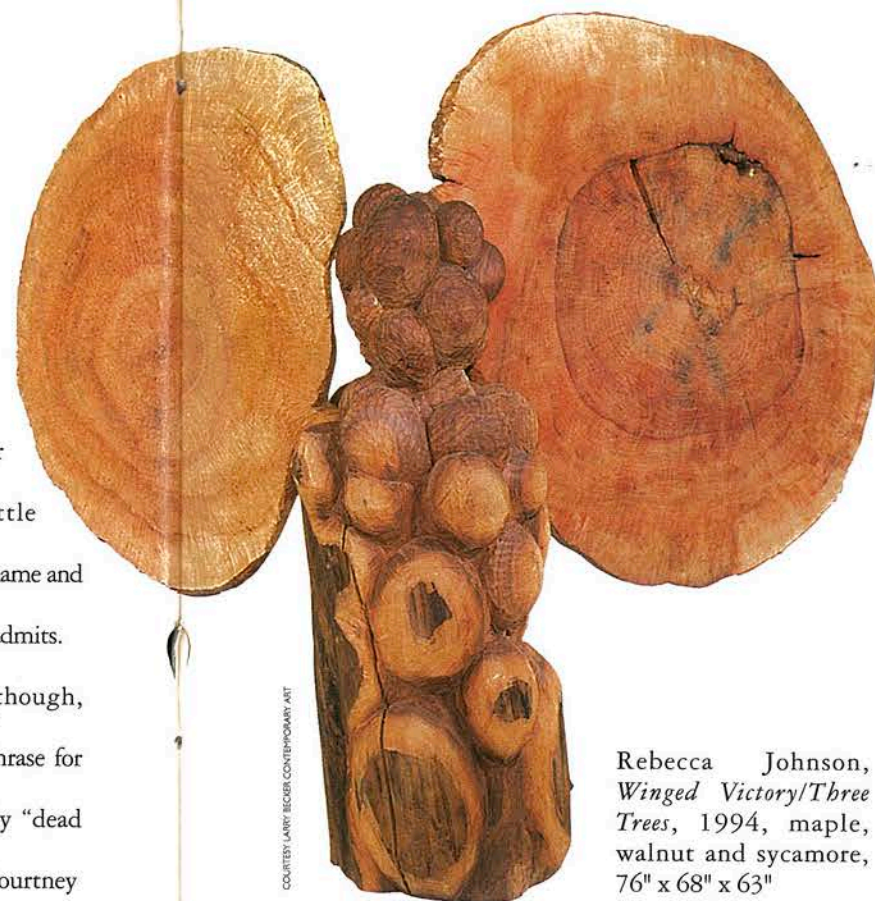
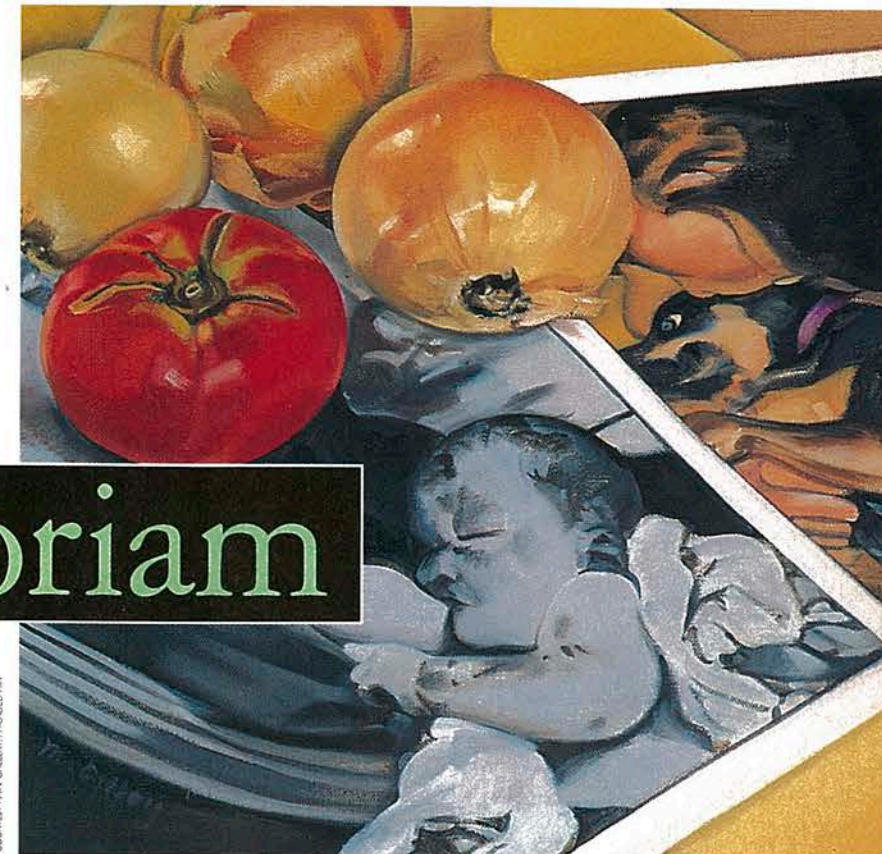


Bill Scanga, *18 Frogs with Pants Categorized by Color (primary, secondary, tertiary, button and floral)*, 1994, glass jars, frogs, alcohol and fabric, size varies

# Nature: In Memoriam

Margaretta Gilboy, *They Kill us for Their Sport*, 1995, oil on linen, 14" x 14"



Rebecca Johnson, *Winged Victory/Three Trees*, 1994, maple, walnut and sycamore, 76" x 68" x 63"

A new exhibit at  
the Pennsylvania  
Academy of the  
Fine Arts celebrates  
the Philadelphia  
Flower Show —  
with a twist.

By Judith West

For most of us, the annual Philadelphia Flower Show means a welcome respite from a hard winter that's gone on too long already, a parade of glorious displays of exotic flowers that transports us to a gentler, more floral world. For curator Julie Courtney — Morris Gallery of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts to coincide with the Flower Show, she was initially a little stumped. "I couldn't imagine my name and still life in the same sentence," she admits. Pondering the word itself, though, Courtney hit upon the French phrase for still life — *nature morte*, literally "dead nature." It just so happens that Courtney

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## NATURE MORTE

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admires a number of local artists whose work focuses on dead nature. While the resulting exhibit may shock some with its ample references to death, it offers an intriguing approach to a traditional genre.

Many of the works carry within them poignant memories of nature in its living state. Rebecca Johnson made her rugged wood sculpture, for example, with chunks of a maple tree that dominated the family garden while she was growing up. The tree — a favorite childhood hideaway — died and was cut down, but is memorialized by Johnson in a number of sculptures created from its wood. Bill Scanga takes the mandate to portray dead nature literally, preserving frogs and fish and crocheting little bathing suits for them. Closer to traditional still lifes are Margaretta Gilboy's paintings that juxtapose images evoking both personal experiences and broader themes such as morality and female identity. (Gilboy's work will be on exhibit in a solo show at F.A.N. Gallery in April.)

Other artists in the exhibition are Martha Madigan, A.p. Gorny, Mei-Ling Hom, Wade Schuman, Peter Kinney, Michael Gallagher and Winifred Lutz.

In conjunction with the exhibit, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts will also display still lifes from its own collection by contemporary Pennsylvania Academy graduates and instructors. ■