

# Whitney

and the connection people have to trees in their daily lives. Dimopoulos: "I want people to notice the trees, to see them as more than just wallpaper in their lives."

With full approval of the Forest Society, the installation is a community-participatory project. On Sept. 30, the Currier organized a community art day, inviting members and the public to paint trees with a blue paint that within a few weeks, will wash away. The project is the result of a collaboration of the Currier, local arborists and foresters to identify which trees will be colored, to ensure the utmost environmental stewardship with this art installation.

Since the debut of "The Blue Trees" at the 2011 Vancouver Biennale, Dimopoulos has since created a Blue Trees installation in Sacramento, California; Seattle, Washington; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Norcross, Georgia; Houston, Texas; Galveston, Texas; Breckenridge, Colorado; Jacksonville, Florida; Gainesville, Florida; and in Singapore, Germany; Sydney, Australia and in New Zealand.

Dimopoulos, a native of Egypt, born to Greek parents, grew up at the mouth of the Suez Canal until age 8, when the family moved to Wellington, New Zealand. He is interested in moving art outside the museum and into people's daily life, into the very pathways where they walk, dramatically demonstrating a link between concept and space to highlight the global ecocide of our forests and to inspire a social change in consciousness about trees.

Dimopoulos: "Colour and the Tree come together to transform and affect each other; the colour changing the Tree into something surreal, something out of this world. While the Tree rooted in this earth reflects what we may lose."

At the heart of this installation is the question about where art lives, and how it interacts with people. The artist observed: "Art is and has always been an extended part of nature and... art can affect social change. For that to happen, one has to move out of the art institutions and galleries and move outside among nature and human beings in their living spaces."

New Hampshire, as the second-most forested state in the nation, has a long early legacy of protecting forests. In fact, the story of William Wentworth Brown, New Hampshire's

19th century forestry pioneer and visionary, is surprisingly relevant today because Brown cared about how he treated the forests, as well as the people who worked in the forestry industry. The Northern Forest stretches from Watertown, New York to Fort Kent, Maine. It includes 23 million acres of private land, 5 million acres of public land, 2.5 acres of wetlands, 7,000 lakes covering 1 million acres, with only 50 people per square mile.

Geographically, Berlin, New Hampshire, is the center of this region. From the 1860s-1930s, W.W. Brown transformed Berlin into an industrial city, combining prudent land use with keen management of forest resources. He inspired his third son, William Robinson Brown, to carry on this important legacy. W.R. Brown took forest management to new heights, pioneering the idea of "sustainable yield." These forest management directives included studying forest science; original research on tree growth and genetics; running the largest private tree nursery in the U.S.; and developing pioneering methods in woods safety programs. In 1901, W.R. Brown became a founding member of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, the first society of its kind in the nation.

The Weeks Act of 1911 created a national forest system for the East by acquiring 300,000 acres of the Presidential Range, the core of today's 800,000-acre White Mountain National Forest. In the 1920s, W.R. Brown and the Brown Paper Co. owned 3.75 million acres of forest in northern New England and Canada, the precise acreage W.R. Brown figured could meet the needs of New Hampshire and Que-

becois paper mills – but, as he stated, "without ever cutting the forest faster than it was growing."

This kind of legacy speaks for itself – it also speaks to the future.

According to Dave Anderson, at the NHSPF, "Currently, the biggest issue facing New Hampshire forests is fragmentation, the subdivision of larger contiguous forests into smaller, disconnected lands, normally done so by roadways or other human intervention. This creates several issues affecting the health of these lands and the creatures who inhabit them."

Anderson refers to a sobering report entitled "New Hampshire Everlasting," that warns us of what can interfere with protective land management.

"New Hampshire is well-endowed with forests and

sparkling waters. We enjoy walking, hiking, picnicking, hunting and working on our lands... Yet, there are some startling trends that threaten all of this. New Hampshire is the fastest growing state in the Northeast. Population growth and sprawling development are consuming open space and community character at a rapid rate. Researchers estimate that within the next 25 years, southeastern New Hampshire will be virtually built-out meaning that all available land not conserved will be developed."

The mission of the NHSPF, then, is to counter that development through conservation. "Collectively, we need to conserve 1 million acres of our most significant lands within the next 25 years. The Forest Society envisions a living landscape where managed woodlands, farms and wild lands are woven into the fabric of community life. We envision people caring for lands that sustain dynamic communities with clean water and air, forest and agricultural products, habitat for native plants and animals, scenic beauty, good jobs and recreational opportunities."

Such conservation would focus on five areas: working forests, water quality, community character, wildlife habitat, and productive farmland.

What does it take to get our attention?

As you admire October's magnificent palette and drive by those jarring blue trees, contemplate the vision of one forester in Berlin, New Hampshire in 1860, who cared enough about future generations to conserve – and by doing so, literally created our beautiful state as it is today. It does matter what we do today. Art is Nature, and Nature, Art.

As Thylas Moss observed, "One must always be aware, to notice, even though the cost of noticing is to become responsible."

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