Fool’s Paradise
September 25-November 6, 2015
Opening Reception: Friday, September 25, 2015

Anima Mundi
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Elizabeth Gemperlein
Marissa Lehner

Buffalo Arts Studio
Elizabeth Gemperlein draws compelling images depicting the impact of human excess on nature's fragility. Influenced by Romanticism and landscape painting, her work challenges the myth of a world consisting of endless natural resources. She portrays man's conflicting impulses to care for and consume land and wildlife as reflections of skewed values and priorities. She also tells the story of a distant romantic landscape that laments the loss of a more balanced coexistence and of animals forced to inhabit a hostile environment where humans are too often passive witnesses. Gemperlein's drawings lead her audience to question their relation to nature, and to rethink human figures are often suspended amidst flora and fauna. The materials themselves, as well as the presentation of the final work, diminishes the "preciousness" of the art object and focuses the viewer on the details within the drawings. The materials themselves, as well as the presentation of the surfaces including paper, masonite, and even packing tape, create a rich imagery using graphite with a variety of techniques. The impact of human excess on nature's fragility. Influenced by Romanticism and landscape painting, her work challenges the notion of endless natural resources. Elizabeth Gemperlein's drawings compel the viewer to question their relation to nature, and to rethink
Marissa Lehner, Anima Mundi, creates sculptures and spaces that are poetic and accessible for her audience. She initiates an immersive sensory experience for the audience through the combination of simple forms and textures as well as materials and methods that address large themes such as birth, death, fragility, and futility. Her use of reclaimed materials allows multiple histories to intertwine while leaving space for the audience to bring their own personal memories and associations to the work. Marissa Lehner creates sculptures with natural and familial origins, rendering emotions more tangible. Her use of materials such as linen and woven through the sculpture’s canopy, are meant to provide solace. Lehner invites visitors to write their own affirmations of mind. The text, which is handwritten on strips of linen and woven through the sculptures, can serve as a symbolic self-portrait representing the oscillation between two often conflicting states of mind. This installation also acts as a symbol of self-affirmation that her audience will do the same.

Marissa Lehner, Anima Mundi, 2015
Elizabeth Gemperlein is an artist based in Western New York. Her work has been shown throughout the US as well as in China and Sri Lanka. She received her MFA from the University at Buffalo and has taught widely at universities in the US, China, India and Sri Lanka. She is currently an adjunct lecturer at Geneseo Community College and a visiting artist at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery.

Marissa Lehner is an artist and educator from Buffalo, New York. She received her BFA from Alfred University, and M.S. in Art Education from Nazareth College. She is committed to community arts engagement and is one of the founders of Emerging Leaders of the Arts Buffalo (ELAB). She is a former board member of the Buffalo Arts Studio and is currently the project director for the Ferry Street Corridor Project.

Additional exhibition support provided by: Ashkers, Double Tree Club Hotel, Gates Circle Club Hotel, Flying Bison Brewing, Flying Bison Brewery, Youngs, and NYSCA Visual Arts Program.