Natural Bridges: Connecting Audiences to Nature through Art
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• Introductions

• Bridging Art and Science: Levels of Visitor Engagement
  – Exhibits as the Entry Point
    • Attract new audiences
    • Drive visitors into our collections
    • Foster affective connections
    • Increase self-efficacy in exploring trees and the natural world
    • Challenge audiences to consider the interdependence of people and trees
  – Ages and Stages
    • Develop visual and environmental literacy
    • Connect art and science concepts
    • Inspire creativity
    • Stimulate a fresh perspective on the complexity of nature
    • Fostering social experiences

• Q&A/Wrap-up
To collect and study trees, shrubs, and other plants from around the world, to display them across naturally beautiful landscapes for people to study and enjoy, and to learn how to grow them in ways that enhance our environment. Our goal is to encourage the planting and conservation of trees and other plants for a greener, healthier, and more beautiful world.
The Morton Arboretum is the fourth most-visited public garden or arboretum in the United States

- **Site:**
  - 1,700 acres
  - 9 miles of roads & 16 miles of walking trails

- **Collections:**
  - 190,000 specimens
  - 4,200 different *types* of trees, shrubs, and other plants native to 40 countries
  - Horticultural, geographic, taxonomic, special habitat, evaluation groups, and endangered plants
  - Herbarium with 87,000 preserved specimens

- **Research:**
  - Roots and soils
  - Tree improvement
  - Testing plant performance under urban stresses
  - Woodland conservation
  - Protecting natural ecosystems
  - Rare and endangered species

- **Education:** Serving more than 40,000 adults and children annually
- **Attendance:** 831,511 (2010)
- **Membership:** 34,065 (2009)
Temporary Exhibitions 2007-2010
Art can…

• Attract new audiences
• Drive visitors into our collections
  – Conquer “Plant Blindness” by offering a new view of our collections
  – Help us see nature in new ways and appreciate what before was unnoticed
  – Promote deeper understanding of The Morton Arboretum
• Foster affective connections
  – Highlight the beauty and vulnerability of trees and their intrinsic value
  – Celebrate nature as a relevant influence on cultural production
  – Inspire us to compare nature’s sculptural forms to human-made creations
• Increase self-efficacy in exploring trees and the natural world
• Challenge audiences to consider the interdependence of people and trees
Xanadu, 2007
Big Bugs, 2008
Steelroots, 2010
Nature Unframed, 2011
Stage 1: Develop visual and science literacy.
Stage 2: 
Connect art and science concepts.
Stage 3:
Let nature inspire creativity.
Stage 4:
*Use art to explore abstract science concepts and the complexities of our world.*
Stage 5:
Use art to facilitate social engagement and self-actualization.
Cognitive vs. Emotional Responses