

Artist: Deborah Springstead Ford from the exhibition [*The Space of Hope: A Collective Response*](#) on view at MAM from June 8 to September 18, 2021

Artwork: *Reality of Its Presence*

Age range: The whole family!

Create: Art inspired by *Reality of Its Presence* using simple materials found in the home.

Materials: A bowl or shallow dish or pan, water, your freezer, natural materials like leaves sticks, bark, flowers.

Prompt: Ford reminds us that we are currently a society dependent on fossil fuels which must be extracted from the earth using costly processes that harm our environment. Art can draw attention to this issue and also help us investigate hope and possibility for a healthy future for us and our planet.



Deborah Springstead Ford, *Reality of Its Presence*, archival pigment photograph, 2013/18, courtesy of the artist.

Ford was awarded an opportunity to be artist in residence at Biosphere 2, a science museum in Arizona. She says, “My time there allowed me to shift my focus from one of concern, anger and despair about our changing environment to that of hope and possibility... B2 is a place where attention to biological processes is the order of the day and where one sees evidence of scientists, students and artists turning concern into knowledge, and knowledge into solutions for change.”

How might you express your hopes for our shared environment through art using natural materials and the element of water? Does making this artwork spark any ideas about solutions for change?

Instructions:

1. **Choose your bowl or shallow dish.** Make sure it can hold water and make room in your freezer so you can place it there when you are ready.
2. **Bring your bowl outdoors to collect your natural materials.** How many items you use is up to you. It could be just a few, or a lot.
3. **Begin to arrange your materials into a composition.** A composition is how each object relates to the others. The materials might be similar or different. They might be separate or overlapping.

Step back and look at your work. Artists change their minds and edit all the time. It's up to you to decide on a pleasing composition. There is no one "right" way to make art.

4. Pour water into the container. Your items might move around so you might need to adjust your composition.

5. Place the finished composition in the freezer and wait until it freezes, probably overnight.

6. Remove the container from the freezer and flip it upside down on a towel. Wait a few moments and your artwork will release.

6. Share your art using the hashtag #saturdayswithMAM and tag us @missoulaartmuseum.