

**PRESS RELEASE**

University of Maine Museum of Art

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High resolution digital images available upon request

**UMAINE MUSEUM OF ART ANNOUNCES SUMMER EXHIBITION**

**NEW DAWN FADES: Photographs by Thomas Hager**

June 24 - September 24, 2011

In *New Dawn Fades*, Thomas Hager pays homage to, and expands upon, early photographic processes developed and practiced in the 1840s by Sir John Herschel and Anna Atkins. By re-examining these historical processes the photographer forges a distinct path, employing new techniques and technology to achieve his large-scale images. In several of the featured works that incorporate figurative elements, Hager looks to art history for inspiration; works by Leonardo da Vinci, Andreas Vesalius and others are layered atop Hager's photographs of various models. At times Hager points the camera on himself. In the haunting self-portrait *Departure*, the nude torso of the photographer is layered with an anatomical drawing of a skeleton, as if wrestling with the dualities of flesh and spirit. Noted photographer Duane Michals, with whom Hager studied, states that the artist "is attempting something with photography that is almost impossible—to make visible essential metaphysical questions about the self and its chaos of contradictions."

The exhibition also features a stunning assortment of botanicals created using both cyanotype and van dyke brown processes that reflect the photographer's on-going interest in the intersection of art and science. Hager's enlarged depictions of ginger, clover and sweet peas are several generations removed from his initial shot. The degradation that occurs to images during this multi-stepped process ultimately renders plants with an enhanced tonal range that disintegrates into the soft glow of their environments. In particular, Hager's rich Prussian blue botanicals draw associations to photographic pioneer Anna Atkins' cyanotype photographs of algae and ferns.

Admission to the Museum is FREE in 2011 thanks to Machias Savings Bank in honor of Ted Leonard.

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THOMAS HAGER  
*Departure*, 2009  
Cyanotype



Free Admission for 2011 is generously provided by Machias Savings Bank in memory of Ted Leonard.