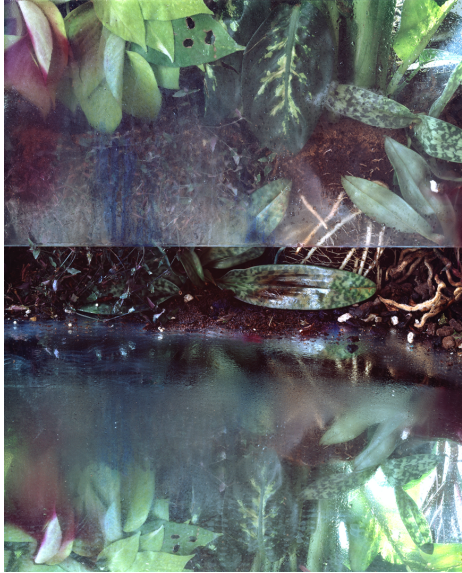


## Heidi Norton

### *to Threptikon*

February 6 - March 29, 2014



Aristotle postulated that plants have a vegetative soul called "to threptikon". Centuries later, Charles Darwin hypothesized that plants are cognitive organisms with a "root-brain" acting as a control center. These ideas are still hotly debated, but recent studies prove that plants are not just passive, immobile organisms; they're endowed with sophisticated abilities to communicate, signal, and detect danger- above ground and below.

In her first solo exhibition at moniquemeloche, *to Threptikon*, Heidi Norton employs the parallels between plant and human cognition in order to explore ideas of unseen and invisible systems at work in the natural world. Light and living plants are Norton's primary mediums, channeled through photographic film, glass, resin, wax, along with plant material detritus from her studio. At times Norton's works are evocative of chlorophyll slides viewed under a microscope lens; in other works she foregrounds the use of glass as a medium for vision and a means of preservation. These new works build on Norton's multi-

disciplinary practice as an artist, which is more generally anchored in her interests in science, ecology and human ideas about nature and preservation-past, present and future. In *to Threptikon*, Norton considers the value of slower modes of vision while alluding to the significant role of plant life in biomedicine, eco-sciences, space exploration, and our own human security.

**Heidi Norton (American, born 1977, lives Chicago)** received her BFA from University of Maryland, Baltimore (1999), her MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2002), and currently teaches at Northwestern University and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Norton had solo exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art as part of their "Chicago Works" series in 2012 and at Northeastern Illinois University Fine Art Center in 2011. She is currently in Ghost Nature at Gallery 400 at the University of Illinois Chicago, traveling to La Box at National School of Art Bourges in Bourges, France in March 2014. Norton has had other group exhibitions at the Contemporary Museum in Baltimore, Chicago Cultural Center, Dominican University Chicago and The Knitting Factory in New York. Norton is developing a major site-specific installation for Elmhurst Art Museum, where she will be the artist-in-residence this summer. Her work is in the collections of the Midwest Photography Project at the Museum of Contemporary Photography, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Joyce Foundation. A panel discussion about Norton's work, plant intelligence, and contemporary art practices is scheduled Saturday, March 22nd 1pm at moniquemeloche - panelists to be announced.

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