

For Immediate Release
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PRESENCE
Some Details from a Garden
Photographs and Mixed Media by Starr Ockenga
April 12–May 19, 2007



Diaperomera femorata/Northern Walkingstick/Phasmidae
12/23/06

April 12, 2007 - New York, NY: Tria Gallery presents award-winning photographer and writer Starr Ockenga. Ms. Ockenga's photographs and articles have appeared in many publications, including *Horticulture*, *Life*, *Esquire*, *Camera*, *Victoria*, and *Country Home*. She is also the author of books on American gardens that feature her timeless photography.

Over the past 20 years, Starr Ockenga's garden has become her muse and is the subject of this intensely personal exhibition. Unlike the broader vistas and vignettes she has taken of this country's gardens and the portraits she made of their makers, she focuses her lens on closer inspection – of both the plants and the creatures – that exist in her private world.

She writes, “I am looking for what I haven’t seen before, in discovering the world revealed in the details. I want to study objects I cannot see well with my naked eye. I am curious to see a plant in its entirety, to include roots, rhizomes, and bulbs. By looking at a plant in its different stages, I am reminded of the inevitability of Nature’s cycles. A season never stops. Things are raw, and then, they are ripe, fresh and, then, finished. The process is unrelenting, elegant, and, sometimes, harsh.

Finding the essence of flowers and their seed heads is a challenge. Making portraits of insects, mammals and birds, which are sometimes damaged, may even take courage. Yet the creatures are part of the community. Making an ongoing record of what is born, grows, and dies in my garden is only complete with their presence.

An unknown image is an irresistible magnet. I must make it, as the result is the reward for the risk. These details instruct me. In them I find geometry, rhythm and delicacy; the unpredictable and wondrous; cataclysm and darkness; economy, harmony and affirmation; and, ultimately, I am shown grace.”

In addition to being a photographer and writer, Starr Ockenga is also a designer, educator and lecturer. Her most recent book, *AMARYLLIS*, published by Clarkson Potter Publishers in 2002, received a Best Book award from the Garden Writers Association in 2003. Her garden books, also published by Clarkson Potter, include *EDEN ON THEIR MINDS: American Gardeners with Bold Visions*, 2001, and *EARTH ON HER HANDS: The American Woman in Her Garden*, 1998. *EARTH ON HER HANDS* is a recipient of the American Horticultural Society’s Annual Book Award for 1999. Starr Ockenga is the author of nine books, including *ON WOMEN AND FRIENDSHIP: A Collection of Victorian Keepsakes and Traditions* (published by Stewart, Tabori & Chang in 1993). Her work has been exhibited in galleries across the United States and abroad, and is in numerous public and private collections. She received her Master’s Degree in Photography from the Rhode Island School of Design and has been granted fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Massachusetts Artists Foundation. Formerly an Associate Professor of Photography at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Starr Ockenga currently operates a studio in New York City and gardens in upstate New York.

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Tria Gallery specializes in contemporary painting, photography and mixed media by established and emerging artists. In addition to artwork on exhibit, the gallery maintains an inventory of select works by its featured artists. Tria’s three directors, Carol Suchman, Paige Bart and Latifa Metheny, are committed to presenting artists with compelling bodies of work, and ones whose stories, should, in their estimation, be told.

Tria is located in the heart of Chelsea, at 547 West 27th Street, Suite 504, and is open to the public. Hours are Wednesday – Saturday, 11:00-6:00. *Presence: Some Details from a Garden* runs from April 12 through May 19, 2007. For more information please visit www.triagallerynyc.com.