

ARTslant

Tartarus: A netherworld forest of strange beauty and harsh realities

by Gabrielle Pescador 5/18/11



Tartarus - Scott Hocking at Public Pool, 3309 Caniff, Hamtramck, MI 48212, March 19, 2011 - April 30, 2011

Enter the doors of Public Pool and you'll find yourself in Scott Hocking's *Tartarus*, a netherworld forest created from trash and weedy overgrowth. The space is filled from floor to ceiling with large twiggy branches covered with discarded plastic bags collected from the littered urban landscape of Detroit.

There is barely room to move in this wild and chaotic installation, which is set in motion not only by the opening and closing of the Public Pool door but also by a large shop fan pushing air into the space as well as your nasal passages, hitting you face to face with the sometimes not so subtle smell of trash.

The theatrical nature of this stunning set is thankfully not wasted and becomes an interactive space for performance art at the show's closing reception on April 30. At this event, Dan DiMaggio performs selected readings on the magnificence and ugly realities of the city of Detroit. Tzarinas of the Plane do movement pieces transforming themselves into trash-like creatures that live and breathe in the realm of *Tartarus*. George Rahme plays music reflecting on Hocking's breathtaking hybrid world of the organic and inorganic and its artful interweaving of elements of beauty and filth.

Hocking's exhibit is quite the unusual scene, both stunning in its strange beauty and bitter ugliness. The horror and magnificence of the claustrophobic world of *Tartarus* forces us to interact with the harsh reality of our trashy ways, and to contemplate our lack of respect for the health and integrity of our environment and urban spaces, and what that could mean for the future.