Green Horizons
Synergy Exhibition Faculty Initiative Grants
Request for Proposals

The Museum and Synergy Exhibitions
The world of art has always been a realm of ideas, a domain of interdisciplinary thought and practice. At the Bates College Museum of Art, the primacy of the objects in our collection and exhibitions—and the many ideas these works of art address—are more important than the commercial success of exhibitions. Our museum is a laboratory for creative thought, a site that is free and open to the public where artists, curators, scholars, students, and visitors together engage these ideas through art.

A generous gift to the College established The Synergy Fund, which supports the museum's goal of involving faculty and students in the process of thinking about art, our efforts to look more creatively at how we organize exhibitions, and the expansion of the role of Bates scholars in the process. While the museum does this on a modest scale with each exhibition, the Synergy Fund now allows us to, on a regular basis, mount Synergy Exhibitions: ambitious projects which have strong links across the curriculum to the research, teaching, and learning support structures of the college. Their goal is to expand upon ideas presented by works of art by engaging faculty and students from across the disciplines, and for this engagement to enrich—if not be central to—the intellectual and cultural environment of Bates and its community, such that the result is greater than the sum of its parts: synergistic.

Green Horizons
Green Horizons is scheduled to run June through December 2007 and is the first fully developed Synergy Exhibition. As such, it will provide a map for the development of future exhibitions.

Through a series of conversations with faculty, the Dean of Faculty, the Harward Center, and students over the past few years, we have evolved the exhibition to its present state as a group exhibition of artists whose works explore the thorny problem of sustainability poetically rather than pedantically. The exhibition’s cornerstone is Manifest Destiny, a large mural by Alexis Rockman. Commissioned by the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the painting depicts the artist's apocalyptic vision of global warming's impact on the city. Its presence invites the discussion of complex issues, including community, prophecy, humankind's often unintentional impact on local and global ecosystems, and how we react to those impacts. We have embraced these issues as the main themes through which other artworks will explore the issue of sustainability. (For a full exhibition précis, visit our website at: www.bates.edu/synergy.xml.
Faculty Engagement
Faculty from across the disciplines have assisted with each stage of Green Horizons’ evolution, and we welcome additional collaboration for the development of the exhibition, catalogue, symposium, and/or the associated programming throughout 2006 and 2007. Faculty engagement may come in many shapes and levels of commitment. Examples include:

1. Involving an exhibiting artist in your teaching
2. Organizing and/or presenting at the Green Horizons Symposium
3. Contributing to the Green Horizons catalog

Synergy Exhibition Faculty Project Support Grants
Synergy Exhibition Faculty Project Support Grants provide funds to connect existing or new courses with themes explored by Synergy Exhibitions.

Through a series of conversations, we have determined that at the center Green Horizons shall be a number of collaborations between artists, students, faculty, and community members joining creative forces to produce original works of art. To this end, Faculty Project Support Grants for Green Horizons will fund the creation of new works of art made in part by cross-curricular investigation of the themes of the exhibition. The grants will also support the creation or deepening of relationships within Bates and with local community environmental and/or cultural organizations such as Lots-to-Gardens, Stanton Bird Club; Museum L/A, Androscoggin River Alliance, Androscoggin Land Trust, etc. Examples of faculty initiatives for Green Horizons include:

1. One or more faculty members in different departments work with an artist (as a guest lecturer) whose work intersects with ideas which bridge their courses.
2. Students enrolled in a course conduct research in collaboration with a local partnering organization and analyze or organize data for use by an artist.
3. A faculty member involves an artist in his/her teaching to develop strategies for students to make original works of art which address the subject of a given course and the themes of the exhibition. These artworks will be added to Green Horizons as they are completed.

Each project will be assigned to a museum curator, who will act as a project facilitator.

Eligibility
All members of the Bates College faculty are eligible to apply.

Funding
Each grant provides $5000 to the artist to cover his/her fee, cost of materials, etc; $1000 honorarium to each faculty member; $1000 honorarium to the partnering organization.
Selection Criteria
Up to six grants will be awarded. Selection criteria will include:

- project feasibility
- the quality of collaboration with the artist and, if applicable, the benefit to partnering organization/s
- benefit to curriculum, pedagogy, and the learning experience
- service-learning opportunities
- plans for documentation and assessment

Application Process
In the spirit of continuing the many conversations that have been vital to the development of Green Horizons, the museum staff encourages applicants to talk with us about their ideas before submitting a formal application. These conversations are not mandatory. Additional information on potential artists and partnering organizations can be found at www.bates.edu/synergy.xml.

To apply, please submit a letter of intent describing the general plan for the project, courses involved, proposed partnering community organization, and artist or type of art you would like to involve. Letters should briefly address the four selection criteria.

Green Horizons is, in fact, just over the horizon. In the interest of getting artists on board and thinking about the exhibition as quickly as possible, the application deadline is March 31, 2006.