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Written by Gallery Coordinator Karen Jean Smith

Baltimore Woods Showcases Gallery of Whimsical and Wonder-inspired Photography

MARCELLUS, NY - (September 7, 2021) "Nature's Magic" is illustrated through the whimsical creations of Lisa Davis and the wonder-inspired photographs of Dean Kolts in the fall exhibit at Baltimore Woods Nature Center. This is an exhibit that offers the opportunity to see plants in a new way, while engaging the imagination!

The public is invited to attend the art reception on Saturday, September 18 from 2:30 until 4:00 pm in the John A. Weeks Interpretive Center at 4007 Bishop Hill Road, Marcellus. Show dates are September 11 through October 28. The gallery will be open to the public on Saturdays from 10:00 until 4:00 throughout the exhibit. Those who wish to see the exhibit Monday through Friday between 9:00 and 4:00 will need to call 315-673-1350. There are no admission or parking fees, and all artwork will be for sale. A portion of the proceeds will go to support the mission of nature education at Baltimore Woods Nature Center.

While both featured artists are inspired by nature and use photography to produce their images, they each have their own individual approach and result. For Dean Kolts, photography has been a lifelong hobby. In the early sixties he took an Ansco Cadet II along on vacations and family outings, and in his teens, he graduated to a Minolta SLR. Fifteen years ago, he joined the digital revolution to produce the fine work that he does today.

Photography, Kolts states, has always provided an excuse for him to get outside, and this is why all of his work depicts landscapes and/or is nature themed. Concentration is required, and he becomes absorbed in the process of selecting his subjects, determining his compositions, and managing the technology within his camera to produce the best possible result. For him, doing the work is more enjoyable than seeing the final product. He describes his methods as a learning process that continues to evolve.

The work in this exhibit speaks to Kolts' sense of wonder regarding the smaller worlds around us that we may rarely notice. In "Forest Floor" we see a detailed view of what normally would lie beneath our feet, but in this case, it is presented as though we are just inches in height. Kolts' work also provides us with a close-up look at parts of plants and fungi just as they would appear to us in nature. One image depicts drops of water hanging from a delicate blossom of spotted jewelweed. Visitors to the exhibit will note that some of the same plants and small items of nature appear in the art of Lisa Davis.

In Lisa Davis' award-winning work, we see the wonder of nature transformed into the whimsical. Careful observation has led her to the discovery of little heads, fanciful clothing and delicate wings among the flowers in the garden at her country home. Fairies hide, fly and dance among flowers and along the

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forest floor. Davis tells us that her little fairy figures have served to “inspire her and encourage her evolution in the creative process.” Viewers at the exhibit will have fun trying to find all the fairies depicted!

Lisa Davis’ process began years ago, when she tried drying flowers but was disappointed when they would eventually fade. In an effort to find a way to retain their colorful beauty, she came across a relatively new art form called scanography, also known as scanner photography. Simply put, the technique that she has developed involves four basic steps: gathering the flowers and other elements from nature, arranging them on a flatbed scanner and scanning them with the lid up so as not to crush them, and then refining them in a lengthy process with a graphic art computer program.

Responsible sourcing of her materials is important to Davis’ work. True to her mission to promote closer relationships with the natural world, Lisa Davis is respectful of it. Vulnerable native plants come exclusively from her property, and she is careful to remove very limited quantities. She harms no insects in gathering butterfly wings; many are obtained from insects already dead that were found on such places as windowsills or car grills. Finally, all the organic items that are used in her work are composted back into her garden or woods, where she gives thanks for the bounties of the earth.

Both Lisa Davis and Dean Kolts reside in Central New York.

Baltimore Woods Nature Center fosters enduring stewardship of the natural world by offering immersive programs and a place in Central New York for everyone to cultivate appreciation and personal connections to nature through environmental education, recreation, play, and research.

A portion of the proceeds raised from the sale of the artwork goes to support the mission of Baltimore Woods Nature Center.

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