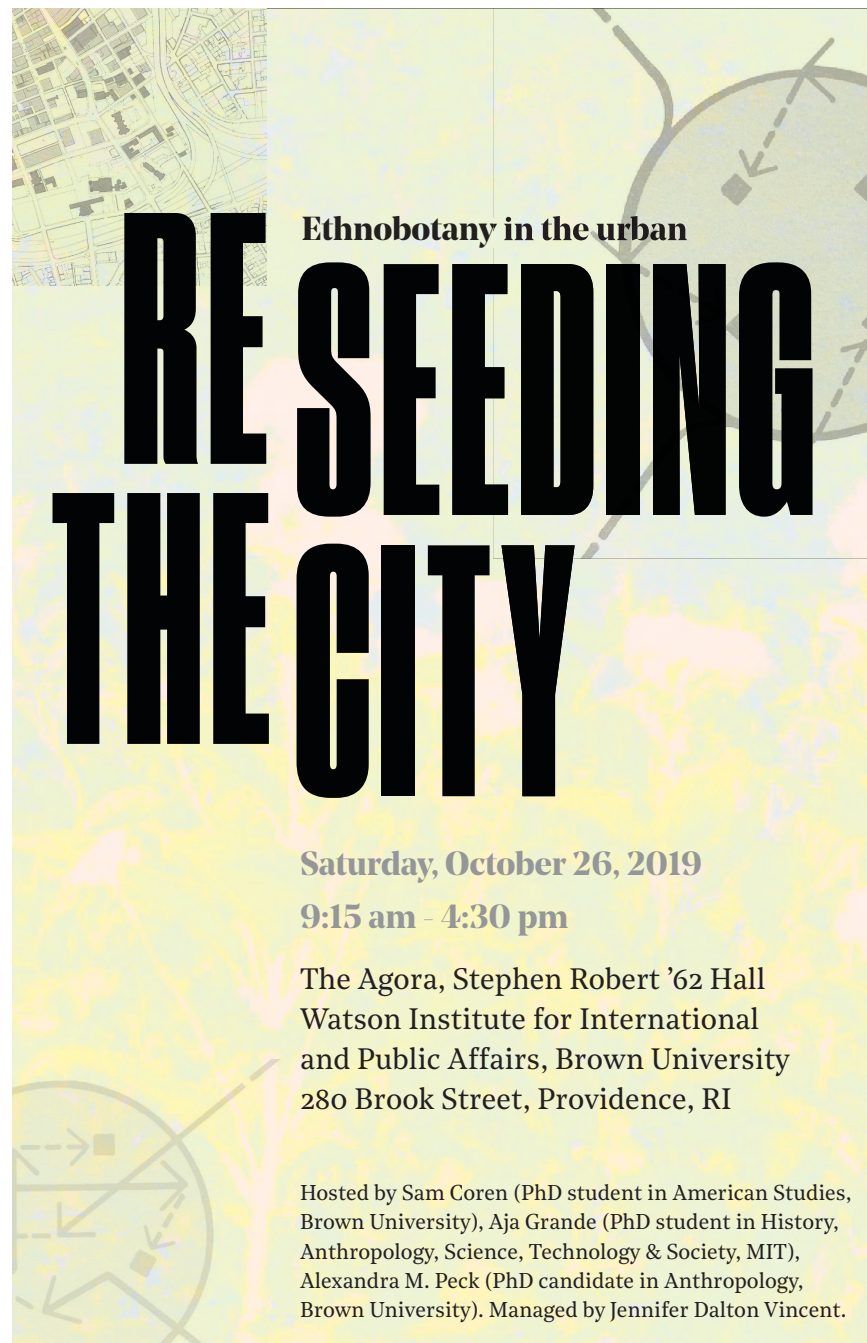




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RE SEEDING THE CITY

Ethnobotany in the urban

Saturday, October 26, 2019
9:15 am - 4:30 pm

The Agora, Stephen Robert '62 Hall
 Watson Institute for International
 and Public Affairs, Brown University
 280 Brook Street, Providence, RI

Hosted by Sam Coren (PhD student in American Studies, Brown University), Aja Grande (PhD student in History, Anthropology, Science, Technology & Society, MIT), Alexandra M. Peck (PhD candidate in Anthropology, Brown University). Managed by Jennifer Dalton Vincent.

In conjunction with the **ReSeeding the City** Focused Group Exhibition

October 25 - November 27, 2019

Opening reception October 26, 5:30 - 8 p.m.

Rhode Island State House, Lower Level Gallery

A project developed under the aegis of the Providence Biennial for Contemporary Art

Curated by Judith Tolnick Champa

Part of The Year of the City: The Providence Project

Drawing from indigenous, cross-cultural, and Western knowledge traditions, *ReSeeding the City* brings together artists, academics, designers, urban planners, farmers, and herbalists to share their perspectives on the entwined lives of humans, plants, and other life forms in urban New England.

The day-long forum is designed by three graduate students who share a concern for the more-than-human life of cities. Forum co-organizer Sam Coren remarks, “We hope that the forum might help to foster new collaborations and shared vocabularies among those concerned with urban nature and its futures.”

The forum looks to plants as models, metaphors, and partners in urban placemaking, exploring what it means to embrace the rich assemblage of life forms that take root in our midst, whether in gardens, wood patches, brown-fields, or roadside margins. It aims to create a space in which art and science might inspire activism and enlightened policy. Forum co-organizer Aja Grande focuses on this point. “The *ReSeeding the City* forum is intended to serve as a space to reflect on one’s consumption habits in cities, and to understand how our relationships with plants are inherently connected to the lives and cultures of others who pass unseen in their daily, mundane habits of urban living,” she says.

Born and raised in Hawai‘i, Grande’s graduate research traces how the development of urban infrastructures frames people’s relationship to the land. “About a year ago, the *ReSeeding* team and I originally titled our project, ‘home/lands,’” she continues. “Though its name has evolved, its original impetus persists. In my studies I seek to answer, ‘How does one orient to a home that one cares about (a feeling known in Hawai‘i as *aloha ʻāina*, ‘love of the land’) while still supporting the livelihoods of Native peoples?’”

Originally from the Pacific Northwest, co-organizer Alexandra Peck explains, “I was thrown for a loop when I found that Providence was chock full of cobble-stone sidewalks, jam-packed with colonial houses, and, to my untrained eyes, lacking any seemingly ‘natural’ features. I felt trapped, as though I was suffocating. It took me a long time to adjust to the new landscape, new plants, and new Narragansett names for these sacred entities. Over the years, I’ve learned to love the small reminders of nature in this city. Now, I can identify Jack in the Pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) and Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) just as well as I can name any wildflower in the Pacific rain-forests. I hope that *ReSeeding the City* encourages others to open their eyes in a similar fashion, and to appreciate the sometimes understated beauty that surrounds us in this urban environment.”

Beginning with a blessing of the grounds by a Narragansett elder, a range of presentations, workshops, and panel discussions will structure the forum. Herbalists and plant practitioners will lead workshops on how to prepare medicines, food, cloth, and other goods from plant materials. Papermaking from local seaweed and invasive plants will be demonstrated. Delving into human relationships with plants, in cities past and present, will be a leitmotif of the day.

Catering of the Forum is by Harvest Kitchen, part of Farm Fresh RI, a non-profit that sources food from local farms, and serves as a culinary job training program for teenagers.

All members of the public are invited without charge.

Welcome

- 9:15-9:45 a.m.** Coffee, tea and light breakfast served in Agora
- 9:45-10:00 a.m.** Opening remarks in True North (Conference Room 101)
- Elizabeth Hoover, *Associate Professor of American Studies, Brown University*
- Sam Coren, *host and PhD student in American Studies, Brown University*
- Aja Grande, *host and PhD student in HASTS (History, Anthropology, Science, Technology & Society), MIT*
- Alexandra M. Peck, *host and PhD candidate in Anthropology, Brown University*
- 10:00-10:15 a.m.** Grounds acknowledgment by Dawn Dove, *Narragansett / Niantic elder, educator, and traditional knowledge keeper, located in the Agora*

Morning

- 10:15-11:30 a.m.** Learning about plants of the season, located in Starr Plaza, weather permitting, or the Agora
- Myrna Cabán Lezcano, *Founder of Flor y Machete, and former Associate Director of Education and Cultural Organizing for The High Line*
- Lorén Spears, *Executive Director, Tomaquag Museum*
- Silvermoon LaRose, *Assistant Director, Tomaquag Museum*
- Christal Whelan, *PhD, writer, educator, and anthropologist*
- 11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.** Opening Plenary Session, located in True North (Room 101)
- Elizabeth Hoover, *Associate Professor of American Studies, Brown University*
- “You are on Indian Land (even if it’s paved): Indigenous Foods in Urban Spaces”
- 12:00-1:00 p.m.** Lunch and paper demonstration/making, located in Starr Plaza or the Agora
- Food catering from Harvest Kitchen and paper demonstration/making with artist May Babcock

Afternoon

- 1:00-2:00 p.m.** Panel 1. Theme: The Role of Plants in Indigenous and Diaspora Community Formation, located in True North (Conference Room 101)
- Myrna Cabán Lezcano, *Founder of Flor y Machete and former Associate Director of education and cultural organizing for The High Line*
- Keely Curliss, *farmer and youth worker, Boston, MA*
- Sakinah Abdur-Rasheed, *naturopath, WE HEAL Wisdom Empowerment Health Education Liberation & Advocacy*
- Discussant: Aja Grande
- 2:00-2:15 p.m.** Break
- 2:15-2:30 p.m.** Prison Perspectives: Readings from gardeners in the Garden Time program at the Men’s Maximum Security facility of the Rhode Island Department of Corrections.
- 2:30-3:30 p.m.** Panel 2. Theme: Urban Land Use and Urban Ecology, located in True North (Conference Room 101)
- Julius Kolawole, *President and Co-founder of African Alliance of Rhode Island (AARI)*
- Brian Byrnes, *Deputy Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, City of Providence*
- Sue Anderbois, *Director of Food Strategy, State of Rhode Island*
- “The Important Role of Urban Spaces As We Grow Agriculture and Food Systems in RI”
- Discussant: Sam Coren
- 1:00-2:15 p.m.** Panel 3. Theme: City Farms and Fertile Edges: The Urban Northeast, located in Jerome ’88 and Karen Leung Conference Room
- Dee Walls, *MA candidate in Integrative Studies, Brown University*
- “Urban Gardening and Community Food Security in Providence, Rhode Island”

Eric Sepenoski, *PhD candidate in Rhetoric and Composition, Northeastern University; former MFA student, Emerson College; MFA and former BA student, Emmanuel College*

“Among Lands and Publics: The Work of Tending Relationships in a Farming Community”

Seth Pilotte, *master’s candidate in Environmental Science specializing in Environmental Planning and Design, University of Rhode Island; Facilities Coordinator, URI Narragansett Bay Campus*

“Investigating Green Infrastructure Opportunities at University of Rhode Island Narragansett Bay Campus”

Sefra Alexandra, *The Seed Huntress; endurance race ethnobotanist; MAT in Agroecological Education, Cornell University; 2018-2019 Genebank Impacts Fellow on Global Crop Diversity Trust; Explorers Club member, WINGS WorldQuest Expedition flag carrier, hostess of “Grit & Garden: Spartan Up!” podcast*

“The Southport Globe Onion Initiative: Cultivating an Ethnobotanical Renaissance of Our Agrarian Roots Through the Revival of a Once Prolific Allium Heirloom”

Odin Waters, *writer; MA in Creative Writing, Rhode Island College*

“The Wild Side: Cultivating Eco-Conscious Portrayals of The Metropolis”

Discussant: Alexandra M. Peck

2:25-3:30 p.m.

Panel 3. Theme: Cities, Sprouting at the International Seams, located in Jerome ’88 and Karen Leung Conference Room

David Herrera, *Ph.D. candidate in Political Science, Brown University; former Executive Operations Specialist for the Carnegie Foundation, BA in Political Science, UC Berkeley*
“Greenspace in Lima, Peru”

Hyunseok An, *master’s candidate in Industrial Design, Rhode Island School of Design; BS in Biological Sciences, Seoul National University*

“The Coral: Home Algae Farming”

Lauren Kim, *MS candidate in Environmental Studies and Urban Studies, Yale University*

“Food Forest Stories: Promoting Urban Biodiversity and Reimagining Public Space”

Mariel Collard Arias, *MA in Landscape Architecture and Design Studies (Risk and Resilience) and Research Associate, Harvard University Graduate School of Design*
“Mulching Trees from Harvard’s Arboretum”

Discussant: Samantha Lash, *PhD candidate in Archaeology and the Ancient World, Brown University*

3:30-3:45 p.m.

Break

3:45-4:30 p.m.

Closing Plenary Session

Rebecca Uchill, *full-time Lecturer, Art Education, Art History and Media Studies, UMass Dartmouth*
“Re seeding to restoring: Contemporary art, living materials, and conservation culture”

Located in True North (Conference Room 101)

On-site Exhibition

Scott Lampham

On loan to the *ReSeeding the City* forum, two sculptures from his series “A is for Anthropocene,” 2018:

Flotsam

Jacket, barnacles, epoxy and artist-made hanging device

Tide Line

Trousers, mussel shells, epoxy on low pedestal

Conclusion of Forum

Depart for State House (82 Smith Street, Providence) for **ReSeeding the City: Ethnobotany in the Urban** Exhibition Opening

5:30-8:00 p.m.

Opening takes place at the exhibition site, Rhode Island State House, 82 Smith Street, Providence

Special focused exhibition curated by Judith Tolnick Champa and featuring the work of 20 visual artists from across New England.