

# NEWS



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Out with the old, in with the new**

Five artists, five takes on a changing environment

Seattle's [Ghost Gallery](http://ghostgallery.org) brings in the New Year with a show dedicated to exploring long-term visions for the shift between nature and urban life. ECOTONE opens January 13 with an artist reception from 5:00pm to 8:00pm.

The show's theme comes from a term used by ecologists to describe a physical transition between landscapes, such as the point where forest becomes desert. In some cases, the boundary between landscapes lasts indefinitely. More commonly, however, one landscape slowly eclipses the other. It's on these terms that five local artists explore the shift between the urban landscape and the natural one.

Each artist approaches the show from a similar perspective: we are living in an ecotone of our own. Often, it seems nature has reinvented itself for the city. Other times, elements of nature face extinction. Working in a variety of mediums including sculpture, painting, installation, fiber and performance, the artists explore the outcome of that transition: what it will look like as it progresses, what survives, and what dies.

"This show is about where we're heading and what it may look like when we get there. It is an exhibition threaded together with the artists' regard for the wild and unknown," said Laurie Kearney, curator at Ghost Gallery.

ECOTONE is designed to inspire questions and deep consideration for the human footprint. It also points to resurging appreciation among younger generations for the balance between communities of wilderness and concrete. But, above all else the show captures the essence the word "ecotone" itself, derived from a combination of eco(logy) plus -tone, from the Greek *tonos* or tension. In other words, we live in a place where ecologies are in tension. These artists bring that tension to life.

### **Show Information**

ECOTONE at Ghost Gallery  
504 E Denny Way at Summit  
Capitol Hill, Seattle, WA 98122  
<http://ghostgallery.org/>  
(206) 832-6063

Artists: Michael Alm, Joey Bates, Mary Elise Bolam,  
Jody Joldersma, and Jess Rees  
Runs: January 13, 2010 to February 4, 2010  
Artist Reception: Thursday, January 13th from 5 to 8 pm

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## **About the Artists**

**Michael Alm** is inspired by the way in which humans integrate animals into their lives. Ranging from companion to material, from religious icon to sustenance, our culture is built on the backs of beasts. As our world becomes less hospitable for animals, diversity decreases, and humans become increasingly removed from the living world. For Ecotone, Alm envisions a return to our naturally symbiotic relationship with animals. He creates his largest sculpture to date, which integrates his signature artificial taxidermy with the human form. The result is a startling representation of interdependence. <http://michaelalm.com/>

**Joey Bates** For the past six years bates has focused on portraiture and how our expressions function as a language or starting point for a slight narrative. In this show he has taken the human form and destroyed it in order to build a multitude of ecotones. Where legs once existed there are mountains, where there are shifts in the human form, say the pelvis to the legs, there are shifts in the "landscape". Instead of placing humans on the landscape he is placing ecologies on the human. Bates resides in Seattle. He is a graduate of Kendall College of Art and Design. His work has appeared in over 50 venues over the past five years as well as several private collections. <http://joeybates.com/>

**Mary Elise Bolam** is focused on intermingling her fascination of animal courtship rituals with that of human courtship. While her work stems from subject matter of intimate relationships, her final pieces often come off as facetious and whimsical. She uses a variety of methods to convey her concepts including performance, video, sculpture, and fiber arts. Bolam recently moved to the Seattle area by way of New York. She received her BFA in Sculpture from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY. <http://maryelisebolam.com>

**Jody Joldersma** uses imagery from the imagination coupled with satire to expose the correlation between constructed human behavior and the patterns of the natural world. Using an array of traditional media, found objects, and self developed sculptural techniques including paper mache and wax, she relates the experience of growing up caught between a culturally repressive urban world and the rural escapism of her childhood. After receiving her BFA in Communication Design from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY, she worked in the art department of New York Magazine, taught art at inner city schools in Chicago and currently resides in Seattle as a fine artist and illustrator. <http://www.jjoldersma.com/>

**Jess Rees** is a Seattle based artist who is interested in exploring the relationship between the idea of self and sense of place. She expresses her lifelong interest in urban naturalism by exploring the space between natural and constructed worlds. Using installation, sculpture, and drawing, Jess' work provides a vision of life across its representations, through themes of ecology, biology, architecture, psychology, history and art. She holds a BFA from Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University. <http://jessrees.com/>

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