

**The Christopher C. Brodigan Gallery
at the Groton School/Groton**

www.groton.org

BETH GALSTON: LUMINOUS GARDEN

For the past two decades, Beth Galston has wedded the worlds of nature and art. In this installation, she has transformed an intimate space about the size of an average dining room into an enchanting environment.

She altered the gallery by blocking the window on its outside wall, and the darkened space contains gently moving, grasslike stems topped with blue flower-like appendages. In the dimness, the viewer experiences the sensation of swimming underwater over an expanse of sea grass shifting in the tide. The “flowers” are blue Lucite castings of seedpods embedded with LEDs; the stems are thin wires approximately 20 inches high that move with the help of strategically placed fans. There are hundreds of them on three islands placed on the gallery floor. The wiring that powers the LEDs is bundled neatly and suggests the order found in nature.

The confinement of the gallery adds to the sensation of entering a special place. Part of the magic of this piece is the gentle tickling of these thin forms, which one can't help brushing up against, on one's legs.

The piece is best experienced privately. Galston has created a space for meditation and a place to get in touch with nature. However, nature here is artifice; our evolution has conditioned us to experience these equivalents of natural forms as we would the real thing. That is the magic of Galston's art.

—Rich McKown