

Luminous Garden
2003, Christopher Brodigan Gallery, Groton, MA

Materials: Urethane resin, LEDs, steel wire, electronics, fans
Dimensions: 3' H x 15' W x 21' L

This immersive “garden” was inspired by walking through a field of wildflowers at the end of the suburban street where I grew up. The field no longer exists, but the experience remains alive in my memory. This first environment in the *Luminous Garden* series grew out of my desire to capture light within the natural forms I collected and cast in translucent resin. I wanted to use these elements to transform a space, creating a landscape for viewers to explore.

I responded to the qualities of the gallery space to come up with my concept. The floor of the room was made of a dark oak with a shiny finish, which was very reflective and looked like water. It reminded me of a marsh, within which I planted four islands of luminous vegetation not taller than 3' high—about waist level, depending on your height.

The garden is meant to be experienced physically, with viewers moving through spaces between the islands and choosing their own pathways. As people walked, they would often brush the illuminated elements, causing them to gently bob and sway.

I made the decision to let all of the technology show, rather than hiding it. If you look closely at one of the islands, the electrical system which allows individual stalks to attach to the power source is visible and part of the piece. I felt that the curving wires evoked root systems, causing a lovely blend of what you see in nature and a new form using this industrial material.

The passage of time is an important component of the piece. Visitors would often sit and linger in the installation to take it in slowly, and students at the Groton School would come into the space to spend a contemplative moment between classes.