

# artsMEDIA

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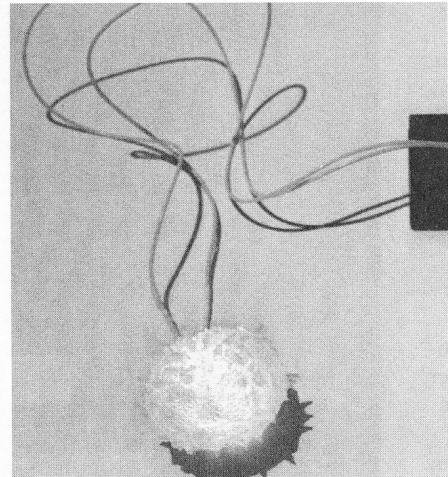
## LIGHTING UP FOR THE HOLIDAYS by Gwendolyn Holbrow

Another MIT graduate, sculptor Beth Galston, currently incorporates light into her work on a more intimate scale, capturing rather than projecting it. Over the past twenty years she has created a large body of light installations, and another of perforated metal outdoor sculpture that manipulates natural light and shadow. For several years in the mid-90s, she worked mainly with natural materials like leaves and seedpods, and her work appeared not to be about light. Then, when she discovered translucent resin in 1998, "I felt I had found my way back to light."

Galston began by embedding leaves, acorns and other natural materials in the resin, but was dissatisfied with their limitations of form and color. The next step was to make molds and cast the objects in resin. One result is her Ice Forest, an installation of icy-looking rose stems suspended like matrix of stalactites from her studio ceiling. Another result is heaps of transparent acorns, piled like the hoards of cold and ghostly squirrels. And a third result is a question: how best to illuminate this material? From within, Galston decided, and started embedding LEDs.

Now tiny shimmering pink and red acorns climb the wall, grounded by their root-like wires. Pale blue pods bob like heavy flower heads atop tall straight wires. And a clear prickly chestnut burr rests pregnantly in its own eerie blue glow.

"In this work there are references to things we've seen in the outside world, ordinary things that have been transformed," says Galston. She envisions the pieces multiplied and scaled up into an environment, with "dots of light all over the room, and being able to walk through it, and some movement..." To see where this process leads Galston, visit her April exhibit at the Groton School's Christopher Brodigan Gallery in Groton, MA.



Beth Galston's "Battery powered horse chestnut pod with LED."