

• FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE •

**Matthew Brandt and Christine Nguyen**  
*Garden Pictures*

January 20 — February 17, 2024  
**Opening Reception: Saturday, January 20, 5 – 8 pm**  
Free and open to the public | Artist in attendance

David B. Smith Gallery is pleased to present *Garden Pictures*, a special collaboration between Los Angeles-based artist Matthew Brandt and Denver-based artist Christine Nguyen. In their first ever collaboration, Brandt and Nguyen compiled, manipulated, and layered images taken of their home gardens to produce vibrant photo collages that hark back to each artist's nostalgic relationship to analog darkroom processes.

The domestic landscape, expressed through the manicured gardens of Brandt and Nguyen, is a unique, designed site where nature and human intervention meet. Through cultivation, personal preference and visual language can be captured in one's home garden, and indeed is a creative and skill-based practice. In *Garden Pictures*, the starting point of collaboration was sewn in the Los Angeles and Denver home gardens of Brandt and Nguyen, respectively.

Through a back and forth process of sharing and digitally manipulating photographs taken of each other's home gardens, the artists were able to combine their interest in plants and cultivation with their unique visual languages. By mimicking analog darkroom processes, digital editing techniques that replicate double exposures, color balancing, and positive and negative image printing, the two captured the nostalgia that each artist shares for the darkroom. Collaborative digital collages were then printed and photographed on top of photo paper boxes to produce the final works.

Presented in the dead of winter, vivid plants and electrified ferns unfurl in the gallery's Project Room. Bordered by commercial photo paper boxes, works in the exhibition delightfully challenge and obscure the final image. The now novel tactility of dark room experimentation, the intimacy of cultivated gardens, and the interplay of digital and physical come to colorful fruition in Matthew Brandt's and Christine Nguyen's *Garden Pictures*.

**About Christine Nguyen**

Christine Nguyen was born and raised in California and currently resides in Aurora, CO and also works in Long Beach, CA. She is a lover of animals, plants, and nature.

Nguyen received her B.F.A from California State University, Long Beach and M.F.A from University of California, Irvine. Exhibitions of her work have been shown nationally and internationally. Her works can be found in various collections such as the J.Paul Getty Museum Department of Photographs, Getty Research Institute, Armand Hammer Museum, Grunwald Center for Graphic Art, Los Angeles World Airport's Collection, Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles, CA; Burger Collection, Hong Kong; The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Hanoi, VN; Long Beach Museum of Art, Kleefeld Contemporary Art Museum in Long Beach, CA; Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland, OH; and Microsoft Collection.

Nguyen has completed artist residencies at Montello Foundation, NV; Pacific Bonsai Museum, WA; Gyeongju Int. Residency Art Festa 2018, S. Korea; Theodore Payne Foundation, CA; BaikArt with Cemeti Art House, Indonesia; U.S Dept. of Interior-BLM Eastern Interior AIR, Alaska; Wildfjords (WFAR), Iceland; Montalvo Art Center, CA; Tamarind Institute, NM; and the Headlands Center for the Arts, CA. Nguyen is currently a 2022-2024 Redline Artist in Residence in Denver, CO.



Christine Nguyen and Matthew Brandt, *Garden Picture 9*, 2023, archival pigment inks on paper, 18.5 x 15 in. (47 x 38.1 cm)

### **About Matthew Brandt**

Photo-based artist Matthew Brandt (b. 1982; Los Angeles, CA) creates his artworks using physical elements from the very subjects he photographs. Among different sources, the artist finds inspiration in landscape photography of the American West, especially its correlation to the methods of printing and making images during photography's infancy in the mid-nineteenth century. In this vein of historical engagement, Brandt revives traditional photographic processes, including handmade papermaking and gum-bichromate, which predates film in the timeline of photographic technology. Much of Brandt's oeuvre is made from the subjects it depicts: prints may be soaked in water from the lakes they picture, or the pigments affixed to the print may be derived from charcoal made from trees in the image. At times, the artist's process goes so far as rendering night skies in cocaine on black velvet, or baking tar-based images in the sun. This engagement with the natural world and derived materials also introduces an element of chance to Brandt's work, as the media resist control and create new, unexpected features.

Matthew Brandt has mounted solo exhibitions of his work across the globe, including at the Newark Museum, Newark, NJ; Erarta Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia; Forest Lawn Museum, Glendale, CA; Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH; and Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, Virginia Beach, VA, among others. The artist has exhibited work in many notable group exhibitions, including at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville Paris, France; and the Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR. His work is in the collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Art Gallery of South Wales, Sydney, Australia, among other institutions. Brandt received his BFA from The Cooper Union in New York and his MFA from UCLA. He currently lives and works in Los Angeles.

### **About David B. Smith Gallery**

David B. Smith Gallery is committed to presenting intelligent and culturally relevant exhibitions in its Denver location, featuring the region's most important emerging talent alongside internationally recognized artists. Through its curatorial program, participation in art fairs, and extensive media coverage in publications such as *Artforum*, *Art in America*, and *ARTnews*, David B. Smith Gallery has cultivated a strong regional, national and international collector audience. *The New York Times* hailed the gallery as offering "an exciting contrast of cutting edge works." The gallery also maintains an active publishing division, which produces exhibition catalogues and editions.

David B. Smith Gallery is a member of the New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA).

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