



Reynolda House Greenhouse, Winston-Salem North Carolina (louvers), May 2007, Digital inkjet print, Triptych by **Esther Pullman**

Esther Pullman's Greenhouses @ Jane Deering Gallery

Photosynthesis

By **ERIN J. SMITH** / CASA

GREENHOUSES NOURISH LIFE AND SOUL ALIKE when captured through the photographic lens of an artist. Esther Pullman's *Greenhouses* will be on display at the Jane Deering Gallery through March 26th.

"I have to have light in my life. I crave it," said Pullman. "My own attraction to the subject of greenhouses has a lot to do with plants and lights – those things that all living things respond to."

Pullman will speak about her work on Saturday, March 19th. The gallery will be open from 5 to 7pm with the artist talk to begin at 5:30pm.

Pullman grew up in an artistic household in Westchester County outside of New York City. Her parents were fascinated by Japanese art and culture. Her mother studied Ikebana, the Japanese art of flower arrangement, and was instrumental in starting Ikebana International. Always interested in the arts, Pullman enrolled in an art class at Rye High School taught by Mabel D'Amico, the wife of the Director of Education at the Museum of Modern Art. "During a visit to the museum, I remember seeing a film of Alexander Calder at work in his studio making mobiles," said Pullman. "It was so full of light, so playful, and full of delight. It was then that I knew I wanted to be an artist."

After graduating from high school, Pullman studied art at Smith College and continued on to graduate school at Yale University. "I was interested in typesetting and thought I'd go into printmaking," said Pullman. "But when I went for an interview at Yale, I gathered that my work was more in line with graphic design." Pullman

enrolled in Yale's groundbreaking graduate program, which gave her the opportunity to study calligraphy, papermaking, bookbinding, as well as typesetting and type production. "When I started studying graphic design, it was a new field," she said. "Before, it was considered commercial art. Yale was an intellectual playing field for the most progressive practitioners of graphic design."

Pullman also had the opportunity to study photography with Walker Evans, best known for his photographic documentation of the Great Depression. "I felt that his influence on me was both gradual and unconscious," she said. "Knowing him and knowing his work undoubtedly shaped my vision to look for beauty in the commonplace." Pullman rediscovered photography 30 years later, combining her fascination with horticulture, form, and light into her series of panoramic photographs of greenhouses.

"I had always remembered a series of paintings of the Wellesley College Greenhouse," said Pullman. "I decided I'd come back to the idea and create a series." Although Pullman didn't have a panorama camera, she discovered that she could use the format of a single frame photograph taken in a series to achieve the same effect.

"I find that I think with my eyes and my hands while looking through the camera," she said. "I lose myself in what I'm doing in the process of taking these pictures."



Esther Pullman

Jane Deering Gallery is located at 25 E. De la Guerra Street. Hours are 11am to 5pm, Tuesday through Saturday, and Sunday and Monday by appointment. For more information, call 917-902-4359 or visit www.janedeevingallery.com and www.estherpullman.com.



Private Estate Greenhouse, Wellesley MA, October 2000, Digital C-print, Triptych by **Esther Pullman**