Mathilde Roussel is a French artist born in 1983. She grew up on a farm in Normandy, France, an experience which helped cultivate her awareness of the human relationship with nature, land and time. She studied graphic arts and photography in Paris and Vienna. After graduating, she spent several years living and working in Brooklyn, N.Y., studying art critical vocabulary at New York University and sculpture and printmaking at the School of Visual Arts. In 2011, she was a Visiting Artist at the University of Iowa. She has exhibited sculpture and work on paper in a number of gallery exhibitions in Paris and New York. Her work has been discussed in the New York Times, Design Today, Beaux Arts Magazine, and Le Figaro. Anatomia Botanica is her first solo exhibition in the United States.

Artist-in-Residence Program at Cheekwood Named In Memory of Martin Shallenberger

Cheekwood has received a $1 million dollar endowment to fund a new Artist-in-Residence program to be named in honor of Martin Shallenberger as a gift from a private foundation. Shallenberger was an artist who studied at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington; the Art Students League and National Academy of Design in New York; and the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. In 1971, Cheekwood hosted an exhibition of Shallenberger’s paintings of places he visited around the world, including Paris, Florence, Amsterdam and Cologne.

Mathilde Roussel

Cheekwood has received a $1 million dollar endowment to fund a new Artist-in-Residence program to be named in honor of Martin Shallenberger as a gift from a private foundation. Shallenberger was an artist who studied at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington; the Art Students League and National Academy of Design in New York; and the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. In 1971, Cheekwood hosted an exhibition of Shallenberger’s paintings of places he visited around the world, including Paris, Florence, Amsterdam and Cologne.

Cheekwood Botanical Garden & Museum of Art
1200 Forrest Park Drive  Nashville, Tennessee  37205
cheekwood.org  615.356.8000

March 24 – May 13, 2012
Martin Shallenberger Artist-In-Residence
MR: In the variety of its elements, the roots of nature is similar to the complexity of human body’s organs, the richness of diversity and the multitudes of forms, the flow of its fluids. Based on organs, cellular forms and scientific illustrations, I explore the body and its relation to nature. I also try to find what material is appropriate to represent reality. For example, my graphite cut paper drawings evoke the carbon cycle: opened between plants, animals, soil and humans as it moves from one organism to the other to make soil and recycling. These ideas are represented by elements that convey the ephemeral: light in the context of the ineluctable escape of time. These ideas are inspired by the Ego-s of our future organs. Likewise we internalize the sense of time in our body. In Egyptian mythology, Osiris, the God of renewal, the one who eternally comes back to life after death, becomes the breast milk that creates life. The seed and plants are the extension of the human body. The fertile earth becomes the breast milk that creates life. The seed sprouts and grows, until it decays, in a similar way to human life stages. I would like to bring visitors to have a new vision of their lives through the sculptures. It is time that sculpt the forms, makes them change and then decay. I am interested in the idea that people can observe through time the sculptures.

JW: Your work has a tendency to border on the ephemeral. For Cheekwood you created two sculptures that are designed to bloom for a limited time that sculpts the forms, makes them change and then decay. I am interested in the idea that people can observe through time the sculptures. It is time that sculpt the forms, makes them change and then decay. I am interested in the idea that people can observe through time the sculptures.

MR: Jochen Wierich: Mathilde, your education as a sculptor and printmaker has been defined by three places. The French Alps through your family, and you were invited as a Visiting Artist at the University of Iowa. Are these geographic locations for you? Or do you see a common thread that would link these places?

MR: Well, I believe that in life everything is connected in some kind of way. My home-school upbringing on a farm in Normandy and the summers I spent in the mountain shaped the way I relate to nature and soil. Growing up in an urban environment encouraged my desire to create: staying outside and building things with branches,Insurance, pillows, making things with wood, clay or fabric. I was also drawing all the time and copying paintings from Matisse or Picasso. My parents had a lot of books on art and the house was filled with objects and pictures from the past. My dad kept his herbarium from when he studied agronomy. In Paris, I studied graphic arts and did a six months student exchange at the University of Tennessee. I spent my time exploring botany and human biology. For example, the nature that we eat as food becomes the tissue of our future organs. Likewise we internalize the sense of time in our body. In Egyptian mythology, Osiris, the God of renewal, the one who eternally comes back to life. He is also the personification of the fertile land and the natural cycles: death and rebirth, dynamics and fertility. And this life and wealth in European painting of the 17th century evoke the fleetingness of human pleasures in light of the ineluctable escape of time. These ideas are represented by elements that convey the ephemeral: flowers, fruits, butterflies, etc. Drawing from this tradition, I try to show the effects of transformation of the body and the vegetation of organic matter overlap incompatible realms, the human body and the life of plants. Yet in your work the fragility of the human body and the vegetation of organic matter overlap and become interchangeable. Where are your roots, where these realms cross? In what way does science and the subversion of scientific experiment play a role in your artistic practice?

JW: Mathilde, your experience as a sculptor and printmaker has been defined by three places that are rich in a rich artistic tradition, Vienna, Paris, and New York. How do you see each location shaping the trajectory of your career? At the same time, you also have roots in the countryside of Normandy and the French Alps, which you bring to your new home and you were invited as a Visiting Artist at the University of Iowa. Are these different cities in your development as an artist, or do you see a common thread that would link these geographic locations for you?

Mathilde Rousse: Well, I believe that in life everything is connected in some kind of way. My home-school upbringing on a farm in Normandy and the summers I spent in the mountain shaped the way I relate to nature and soil. Growing up in a rural environment encouraged my desire to create: staying outside and building things with branches, Insurance, pillows, making things with wood, clay or fabric. I was also drawing all the time and copying paintings from Matisse or Picasso. My parents had a lot of books on art and the house was filled with objects and pictures from the past.

My dad kept his herbarium from when he studied agronomy. In Paris, I studied graphic arts and did a six months student exchange at the University of Tennessee. I spent my time exploring botany and human biology.

For example, the nature that we eat as food becomes the tissue of our future organs. Likewise we internalize the sense of time in our body. In Egyptian mythology, Osiris, the God of renewal, the one who eternally comes back to life. He is also the personification of the fertile land and the natural cycles: death and rebirth, dynamics and fertility. And this life and wealth in European painting of the 17th century evoke the fleetingness of human pleasures in light of the ineluctable escape of time. These ideas are represented by elements that convey the ephemeral: flowers, fruits, butterflies, etc. Drawing from this tradition, I try to show the effects of transformation of the body and the vegetation of organic matter overlap incompatible realms, the human body and the life of plants. Yet in your work the fragility of the human body and the vegetation of organic matter overlap and become interchangeable. Where are your roots, where these realms cross? In what way does science and the subversion of scientific experiment play a role in your artistic practice?

JW: You are fascinated by the similarities between human and the natural elements. So by dealing with the living, my work tries to reveal our ephemeral nature: ageing, modification, evolution, and metamorphosis. We all belong to the same nature and our body is a reflection of the earth that we eat as food becomes the tissue of our future organs. Likewise we internalize the sense of time in our body. In Egyptian mythology, Osiris, the God of renewal, the one who eternally comes back to life. He is also the personification of the fertile land and the natural cycles: death and rebirth, dynamics and fertility. And this life and wealth in European painting of the 17th century evoke the fleetingness of human pleasures in light of the ineluctable escape of time.

These ideas are represented by elements that convey the ephemeral: flowers, fruits, butterflies, etc. Drawing from this tradition, I try to show the effects of transformation of the body and the vegetation of organic matter overlap incompatible realms, the human body and the life of plants. Yet in your work the fragility of the human body and the vegetation of organic matter overlap and become interchangeable. Where are your roots, where these realms cross? In what way does science and the subversion of scientific experiment play a role in your artistic practice?

MR: I am interested in the idea that people can observe through time the sculptures. It is time that sculpt the forms, makes them change and then decay. I am interested in the idea that people can observe through time the sculptures.

JW: Mathilde, your experience as a sculptor and printmaker has been defined by three places that are rich in a rich artistic tradition, Vienna, Paris, and New York. How do you see each location shaping the trajectory of your career? At the same time, you also have roots in the countryside of Normandy and the French Alps, which you bring to your new home and you were invited as a Visiting Artist at the University of Iowa. Are these different cities in your development as an artist, or do you see a common thread that would link these geographic locations for you?

Mathilde Rousse: Well, I believe that in life everything is connected in some kind of way. My home-school upbringing on a farm in Normandy and the summers I spent in the mountain shaped the way I relate to nature and soil. Growing up in a rural environment encouraged my desire to create: staying outside and building things with branches, Insurance, pillows, making things with wood, clay or fabric. I was also drawing all the time and copying paintings from Matisse or Picasso. My parents had a lot of books on art and the house was filled with objects and pictures from the past.

My dad kept his herbarium from when he studied agronomy. In Paris, I studied graphic arts and did a six months student exchange at the University of Tennessee. I spent my time exploring botany and human biology.

For example, the nature that we eat as food becomes the tissue of our future organs. Likewise we internalize the sense of time in our body. In Egyptian mythology, Osiris, the God of renewal, the one who eternally comes back to life. He is also the personification of the fertile land and the natural cycles: death and rebirth, dynamics and fertility. And this life and wealth in European painting of the 17th century evoke the fleetingness of human pleasures in light of the ineluctable escape of time. These ideas are represented by elements that convey the ephemeral: flowers, fruits, butterflies, etc. Drawing from this tradition, I try to show the effects of transformation of the body and the vegetation of organic matter overlap incompatible realms, the human body and the life of plants. Yet in your work the fragility of the human body and the vegetation of organic matter overlap and become interchangeable. Where are your roots, where these realms cross? In what way does science and the subversion of scientific experiment play a role in your artistic practice?

JW: You are fascinated by the similarities between human and the natural elements. So by dealing with the living, my work tries to reveal our ephemeral nature: ageing, modification, evolution, and metamorphosis. We all belong to the same nature and our body is a reflection of the earth that we eat as food becomes the tissue of our future organs. Likewise we internalize the sense of time in our body. In Egyptian mythology, Osiris, the God of renewal, the one who eternally comes back to life. He is also the personification of the fertile land and the natural cycles: death and rebirth, dynamics and fertility. And this life and wealth in European painting of the 17th century evoke the fleetingness of human pleasures in light of the ineluctable escape of time. These ideas are represented by elements that convey the ephemeral: flowers, fruits, butterflies, etc. Drawing from this tradition, I try to show the effects of transformation of the body and the vegetation of organic matter overlap incompatible realms, the human body and the life of plants. Yet in your work the fragility of the human body and the vegetation of organic matter overlap and become interchangeable.