

Multimedia artist Deborah Wing-Spoul creates sculptures and performance artworks as part of her ongoing series titled *Tidal Culture*. One component of this project is her one-hour seated performances where she is alone and silent in front of the ocean, which she videotapes for later viewing. Another component is her sculptures – utensils, cups and bowls – that are made from ocean materials such as algae and seaweed and evoke contemplation about the preciousness and fragility of life, both on land and in the sea. About the role ocean ecology plays in her art practice she writes:

*I'm interested in using the ocean and algae as metaphor and investigatory tool for asking questions pertaining to identity, influence and isolation. Seaweed, which does not honor human-established boundaries, is my primary medium both for making what the nomadic existence requires (food, clothing, utensils) and also as a means of referencing the ways in which cultures influence one another (the artist's website).*



Rebecca Kamen, *Divining Nature: An Elemental Garden*, installation shot

Washington, D.C. sculptor Rebecca Kamen's recent installation, *Divining Nature: An Elemental Garden*, used the periodic table as a vehicle and metaphor to get people excited about what it represents. Flat orbital patterns are transformed into three-dimensional flowers, providing people with a unique way of seeing and knowing the chemical elements. Collaborating architect Alick Dearie integrated the Fibonacci spiral, long associated with nature's most beautiful proportions, in the garden plan.

Accompanying the installation is a soundscape by composer Susan Alexander that is similarly science-based – “derived by mapping the frequencies of a magnetic-field-induced oscillation of atomic nuclei (Larmor frequencies) to audible frequencies played through a synthesizer.” By turning something rigid such as the traditional periodic table into something of beauty to experience by walking through it, Kamen hopes people will come away feeling a little more in awe of the world around them (Amato, 2009).

External interviewees referenced writing and performance art that draw from neuroscience, termed “neuroaesthetics.” For example, *Replica*, a dance performance choreographed by Jonah Bokaer in collaboration with Daniel Arsham and Judith Sanchez Ruiz, examines memory loss, pattern recognition and perceptual faculties as they apply to the human body. *Replica* was co-sponsored by



Image from *Replica* brochure, CPNAS