

Dear Members of the Press,

The closing date of THIRST has changed, please note it is now Dec. 16, 2013. Also we have great photos of the tree and flags on site. Feel free to request additional images, interviews or ask any questions that come up.

-----psa-----Oct.7 – Dec 16- THIRST on Lady Bird Lake-----for immediate press release-----

THIRST on Lady Bird Lake sounds a call to action for conservation and sustainability and illuminates the water crisis in Austin. [The drought is now the worst Central Texas has experienced](#)— worse already than the epic decade-long drought of the 1950s.

Women & Their Work presents THIRST, a temporary installation sited on Lady Bird Lake, the emotional and geographical center of Austin, Texas. Women & Their Work collaborated with Beili Liu, Visual Art; Emily Little and Norma Yancey, Architecture; and Cassie Bergstrom, Landscape Architecture, to create the installation. THIRST is on view through December 16. Visit <http://THIRStart.org> for more information. Join the online discussion see #THIRStart on twitter & instagram or go to <http://womenandtheirwork.org> for links.

Comprised of two components, the installation features a 38 foot tall dead cedar elm tree painted ghostly white that appears to hover over the surface of the lake, its roots unable to reach the water. A trail of 14,000 prayer flags is suspended from trees forming a 2.5 mile loop on the trail around the lake from the Lamar Bridge to Pfluger Pedestrian Bridge to the 1st Street Bridge and back leading visitors down to the Pfluger Circle. An image of the dead tree is silk screened on each flag.

The work focuses attention on the water crises and memorializes the more than [300 million trees](#) that died in the recent Texas drought. Aldo Leopold, one of the founders of modern conservation ecology, said we must learn to "think like a mountain" when considering the balance of an ecosystem. But how can we learn to think like a drought? It is to this question that THIRST responds.

The importance of the water in Lady Bird Lake is more apparent as Austin struggles with recent extreme drought, water rationing and fears for future sustainability. The strains brought about by drought are exacerbated by the rapid increase in our area's population. THIRST acknowledges the devastating impact that changes in weather patterns have had in Texas. THIRST encourages viewers to consider their relationship to water, our most precious resource. The constant water level of the lake itself serves as a reminder of how easy it is to be complacent about the availability of water in our lives, an attitude that THIRST challenges.

THIRST is supported by the [Robert Rauschenberg Foundation](#)'s Artistic Innovation and Collaboration Program, which supports fearless and innovative collaborations in the spirit of Robert Rauschenberg. Famous during his lifetime for his work that spanned artistic disciplines, Robert Rauschenberg believed that art is an important agent for social transformation: that art can change the world. It is to this high standard that THIRST aspires.

Image caption:

“THIRST on Lady Bird Lake”, cedar elm, paint, metal & LED lighting, photograph by Ben Aqua, courtesy of Women & Their Work, 2013.

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<http://THIRSTart.org>
#THIRSTart