



See John Bonath's "Thorny Pod" and many other works at the Botanic Gardens.

REALLY UNREAL

John Bonath's new exhibit just might blow your mind.

"I want something to happen in people's brains as far as their questioning of reality and what they're looking at and what they're assuming," say John Bonath, whose newest exhibit -- ***Real/UnReal: Botanical Studies***, currently on display at the Denver Botanic Gardens -- combines photography and digital manipulation of flowers, both real and fake, with oil paint-

ing to create (touchable!) three-dimensional pieces that stretch the imagination. "Most people," Bonath explains, "when they first look at a piece, they assume that the flower is real. But once they realize that one of them isn't real, they begin to question their assumptions about the others. The 'unreal' flowers, in many cases, are more real than the 'real' flowers. The fact is, the only thin that is real is the object on the wall."

Prepare to have your mind blown: The full installation features 43 large (41"x41"), wide-format hand-worked, digital canvas prints assembled as individual images with modular frames.

"When you walk into the space, it just completely fills you," Bonath says, "It's not like you have one picture over there and another over there, it becomes an entire peripheral ad perceptual

bombardment of experience. I like to joke that it's like you've walked into an eye-candy store."

Real/UnReal shows in the Gates Garden Court through January 4. Join Bonath for an artist reception today from 1 to 3 p.m. The Denver Botanic Gardens, 1005 York Street, is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily; admission is 410.50 for adults, \$7.50 for seniors and \$6 for students/youth. Get more information at www.botanicgardens.org or 720-865-3585.

--Drew Bixby