

**Roberley Bell**

American, b. 1955

*Belvedere*, 2003

steel, artificial turf, artificial flowers, oilcloth, real plantings

60 x 60 x 204 inches

courtesy of the artist



In *Belvedere*, Roberley Bell addresses the strict divisions between nature and architectural construct, sprawling landscape and remote walled interiors, and the imposition of a severe geometric ideal upon desultory human interaction. Using a mix of natural and artificial materials, Bell brings interior "decorative" motifs and soft, curving furniture out-of-doors, onto the campus plaza. Echoing the form of the female body, giant topiary urns with inset floral divans reference the traditionally domestic pursuits of gardening and sewing. This sheltering invitation to gather, however, challenges the architecture, and even nature and time, by virtue of its scale and materials—Astroturf and plastic flowers over welded steel. "I responded first to the intense grid of the campus and strong sight lines created by the treed areas and the lack of friendly seating," said Bell. "On a college campus I can see the participation becoming much more theatrical."

Roberley Bell has had one-person exhibitions at Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center in Buffalo, NY; at Old Dominion University Gallery in Norfolk, VA; at the Meghan Gallery of Allegheny College in Meadville, PA; and at the Contemporary Art Museum at Wright State University in Dayton, OH. Among Bell's public commissions are those for Point State Park in Pittsburgh, PA; Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD; National Public Radio in Washington, DC, and the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park in Lincoln, MA.



Artist Roberley Bell (raking) and Museum assistants planting Impatiens for *Belvedere* installation.