

Marsh Marigold by Tim Harding

In recognition of the important part that art has had in the Mayo Clinic environment since the original Mayo Building was finished in 1914, *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* will feature some of the numerous works of art displayed throughout the buildings on the Mayo Clinic campuses.

Tim Harding, born in Houston, Texas, in 1983, received his BFA in 2008 from Texas Woman's University in Denton and his MFA in 2010 from Texas Christian University School of Art in Fort Worth.¹ While studying art at the university level, Harding focused on painting and photography but discovered an interest in and attraction to fiber arts, a genre dedicated to use of plant, animal, and man-made fibers. One of his favored specialties includes wearable art, and he has found inspiration in the kimono. Harding currently resides in Stillwater, Minnesota, with his wife, Kathleen, where they maintain the Tim Harding Studio. Harding has extensive museum and corporate collections that can be found throughout the United States and Asia.²

Marsh Marigolds, a 30×50-inch assemblage, is constructed of cut silk in varying hues of orange, yellow, and green that lend an amazing reality to the floral image. There is an almost trompe l'oeil effect (art that deceives), and the magic of the realism is not fully laid bare until the viewer approaches within an arm's length of *Marsh Marigolds*. Silk, the main medium in *Marsh Marigolds*, is a textile that is considered highly extravagant and elegant by most standards because of the labor-intensive process required to create it. Thus, it seems a violence or vandalism for Harding to cut it into ribbons and shreds. However, the beauty of the rearranged and recon-



structed fabric redeems the process. This is a paradox that Harding likes to explore. He notes the following about his work:

There is a culturally ingrained preciousness to fabric. We must not tear, scorch, or soil our 'good' clothes. And yet, these textiles have a tempting vulnerability.

My work is based on the act of violating this taboo.²

Another close examination of *Marsh Marigolds* reveals mimicry of an embroidery technique known as *smocking* that elicits the honeycombed or diamond like weave in the image of the marigold and provides the realism in the petals of the flower.

Marsh Marigolds, created in 2007, is located on the 15th floor of the Gonda Building in Rochester, Minnesota.

Margaret R. Wentz, BA

1. http://www.texasbiennial.org/TX11_gallery_guide.pdf. Accessed February 24, 2012.
2. <http://www.timharding.com/th/about.html>. Accessed February 24, 2012.

