

Art

Roots and Wings

High on Mt. Adams, in a wreck of a sanctuary, an artist's imagination takes flight.

» **ARTIST SHINJI TURNER-YAMAMOTO**

was visiting Mt. Adams gallery owner Mary Baskett when he first saw it: a photograph of an abandoned church—spare and serene, but a crumbled mess. A European ruin? No, Baskett said, “It’s here.” Which is how the deconsecrated Holy Cross Church sanctuary became part of Turner-Yamamoto’s Global Tree Project. The artist has traveled around the world creating installations for specific, significant sites influenced by the local ecology. In Ireland, for example, his setting was the historic Roches Clock Tower in County Cork; in India, the tree that inspired him was the banyan, with its odd aerial roots. Inside the vast emptiness of Holy Cross, he conceived of *Hanging Garden*: a dead tree upturned, with a live tree suspended above it—dramatic, and looking, as Turner-Yamamoto says, “a little bit unstable.” A simple, stark statement about the cycle of life. But not so simple to accomplish. There were problems—Is the door big enough? The floor strong enough? Will the roots stay moist?—and a small army of assorted nurserymen, engineers, art students, and volunteers to help solve them. “I can carry canvas,” he says, “but not a tree.” —LINDA VACCARIELLO

Hanging Garden (www.globaltreeproject.org) is open on weekends through Oct 17



PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN KURTZ