

## Pandra Williams at Kiang Gallery

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By Jerry Cullum

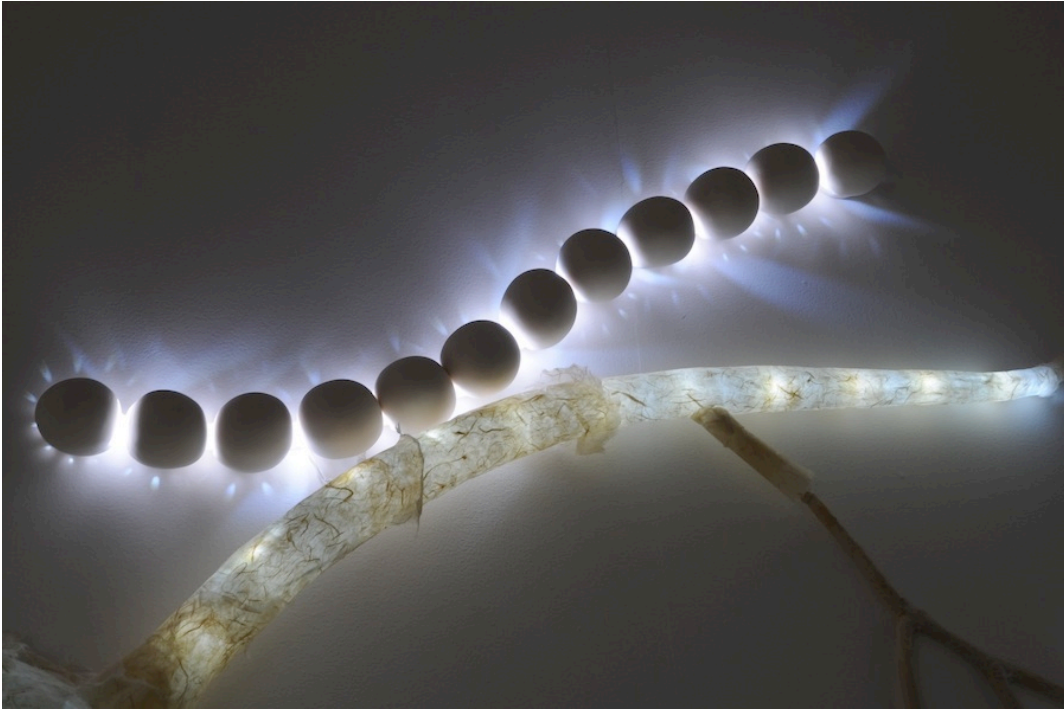


Pandra Williams, *Radicis*, 2010. Installation consisting mainly of solar panels, battery bank, microprocessor, 465 l.e.d. lights, laminated mulberry paper, hand-built porcelain objects. Photo courtesy Michael Williams.

[Pandra Williams](#)' installation [Radicis](#) is not easy to write about. Any wall-filling work that uses mulberry paper and porcelain for its outer structure and LED lights controlled by a microprocessor and powered by solar-charged batteries has already raised so many art-related issues that it would take an entire review just to list them.

A shortcut to the immense task of relaying *Radicis*' complexity may be accomplished by describing the physical response of viewers to the work's immense branching tree of flickering lights: Those at the opening seemed disinclined to leave its mesmerizingly contemplative atmosphere that both overwhelms and calms.

As Williams indicates, this is by design. (Williams' statement is quoted in [my longer essay](#) on Counterforces.) Two of the four rhythms within the pattern of lights are keyed to the speed of breath and general bodily process so as to induce a feeling of contemplation; the other two are more mathematical in nature (for example, the [Fibonacci series](#) is the root of the fourth).



Pandra Williams, *Radix* (detail), 2010. Photo courtesy Michael Williams.

*Radix*' design is directly linked to the underpinnings of the work in general: the solid science that links the body to biology, yogic breathing practices to the body, and the body to the web of life and to the world at large. Yet in *Radix*, Williams represents science almost entirely as metaphor: She has chosen shapes for the organisms on her branching ecosystem that are as non-literal as is the branching tree on which phyla and genera are customarily represented in introductory textbooks. (As with a family tree, there are other ways of representing the information.) As mentioned above, the symbolism continues in the choice of rhythms for the light patterns.

Turning the plant world into a starry constellation is only one of the wonders Williams has accomplished in this complex installation. *Radix* creates a mood-altering environment and provides a symbolic map for a thoroughly rational understanding of part of the universe.

*Pandra Williams' Radix will be on view at the Kiang Gallery through Saturday, May 1.*

*A well-known critic, poet, and ART PAPERS staff member, Dr. Jerry Cullum has been a keen observer of the metro Atlanta scene for decades.*