



At the opening reception for the Natura exhibition are, from left, Paul Lange '76, Jeannie Pearce '76, Stuart Rome '77, Alida Fish '76 and John Pfahl. (Photo by Elizabeth Lamark '00)

Natural Selections

Exhibit unites retired professor and four former students

The work is widely divergent, but former RIT professor John Pfahl could see a common thread in the photos of four of his former students.

And so he organized a show of their work, which opened in December at the Nina Freudenheim Gallery in Buffalo, where his own work has frequently been exhibited.

Pfahl dubbed the show "Natura" because all of the photos share a connection to nature.

Alida Fish '76 (MFA) created large tintype photographs of snake, bird and fish specimens found preserved in museum collections, making reference to 16th and 17th century European Cabinets of Curiosities. Fish is currently professor of photography at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia.

Jeannie Pearce '76 (BFA), also on the faculty of the University of the Arts, photographs birds with a quirky homemade combination of telescope and digital camera as an alternative to more traditional nature photography.

Paul Lange '76 (BFA) closed his fashion photography studio in New York City after the Sept. 11, 2001, attack and moved to a farm in upstate New York to devote more time to his personal work. His lushly colored flower portraits were inspired by a commission to photograph the gardens and greenhouse of a nearby estate.

Stuart Rome '77 (BFA) presented black-and-white silver prints from his recent book, *Forest*. His large, detailed photographs seek to create a transcendent order from the chaos of nature. He is currently profes-

sor of photography at Drexel University in Philadelphia.

"Many of my former students are doing beautiful work," says Pfahl, who taught at RIT from 1968 to 1986 and now lives in Buffalo, "but these stood out in my mind."

The RIT Office of Alumni Relations hosted a reception at the gallery, providing an opportunity for area alumni to meet the photographers and Pfahl.

Pfahl continues to pursue his own work. His most recent project, entitled "Scrolls," involves enormous digital prints 84 inches high by 21 inches wide. Several of these are part of the permanent collection of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo. For more about his work, see www.johnpfahl.com.