

 **Digging In**
A year in a writer's garden with Molly Glentzer

November 16, 2009

Natural Recyclers



MOLLY GLENTZER PHOTOS *The view from the patio.*



The native-planted mushroom.



Dianthus out of its natural range.

Molly Glentzer Photos

If you've happened over to the Art League Houston and the adjacent Inversion Coffeehouse in the past few days you may have noticed something large has sprouted in the garden out by the back patio.

Mushrooms large enough to make you feel downright Lilliputian. Mushrooms sprouting mint, pigeon berry and dianthus, among other things.

They're an installation by Nicola Parente and Divya Murthy called Natural Recyclers -- each crafted of rebar, chicken wire, Spanish moss and plants in black plastic pots.

One is planted with herbs; one is planted with Texas natives; and the third is planted with non-native ornamentals. They've pretty much been left to survive or thrive on their own through next year, and the artists are perhaps expecting that only the native-planted mushroom will survive.

Just one catch. When we looked on Saturday, they all needed water.

Nothing lives in a black plastic pot for long without a little help from the gardener. And biodegradable brown pots would've been more environmentally friendly -- not to mention better-looking.

It may be art in the garden, but this gardener doesn't find it all that artful.

See them at Art League Houston, 1953 Montrose Blvd.