

NEWS RELEASE
October 1, 2001

Sunnyvale Creative Arts Center Gallery

In partnership with the

Euphrat Museum of Art

Art Exhibition:

Marci Tolomei

Victoria May

Shaping Memory Shaping Us

Sunnyvale Creative Arts Center Gallery
550 East Remington, Box 3707
Sunnyvale, CA 94088-3707

November 2 - December 22, 2001

Tuesday and Thursday, 11-5; Wednesday and Friday 1-5; Saturday 10-2.

Reception: Thursday, November 8, 5 - 7 pm

In *Shaping Memory Shaping Us*, Marci Tolomei and Victoria May comment on memory in regards to relationships. Tolomei offers insight into how we shape these memories — what we pay attention to, what significance we give to it. May focuses on how these memories shape us, become part of who we are.

Marci Tolomei

Marci Tolomei creates paintings that seem familiar to us, similar to a snapshot we may have taken to remember something. But many of them have a strange twist, often reflecting a psychodrama between people. Tolomei's *Kindred Spirits* is like a snapshot of herself and her two brothers, but she has given herself and one brother two heads, so that they appear to move and look at each other. She and this brother have a kindred spirit, often view things in the same way.

Dark Cloud is a painting of her mother, with her brother and herself when they were children. It is like a happy, staged group photo, only there is a gray cloud in the window behind them, a portent of troubled times to come for her mother. *Me and My Parents* (with father and stepmother) is an all too typical family portrait, all smiles even though the relationship isn't that rosy. There is an intensity to the subjects. In *Audre's Hands*, Tolomei emphasizes the art and power in the hands of a friend who sews airplane covers. *Christin* is a "snapshot" of her daughter, intent. *I Begged My Mirror Image* is a double portrait of her stepdaughter confronting herself at a difficult time in her life. All the artworks

are so different. *Passion of Balducci* is an oil painting like a travel photo taken on a recent trip to Italy. She painted herself walking in a medieval town, passing in front of a ceramic store. Music was coming out, and she was captivated by this music. On the same trip, she captures her husband with his backpack near the Uffizi, looking up with light striking his face. Entitled *From Which Perspective*, the painting alludes to the multiple interpretations of this light.

Victoria May

Victoria May's sculptures, similar to articles of clothing, take the process further. What was a memory of experiences becomes something we take on, we wear, carry around with us.

Victoria May makes blouses and headgear from organza, white and sheer. The installation has a quietness and thoughtful presence. The garments are metaphors for the unconscious mental constructs that people tailor for themselves in adaptation to their critical life experiences and wear daily without a second thought. The works suggest psychological states of mind, and all the titles are lower case. Sand is embedded in areas around the waist in *comfort*. The artist's hair is sewn into *hairshirt*. Chicken vertebrae are embedded in the spinal area of *exposure*. May has a sewing background, having created custom wedding gowns in the past. She worked with a lot of different body shapes, altering to make the perfect fit for the big day. Every era, every culture imposes something, for example the wimple. The art garments of May are what people impose on themselves.

The exhibition was curated by the Euphrat Museum of Art in conjunction with *Memory and History of Place*, held at the Euphrat Museum of Art, De Anza College, with an overlapping timeframe, October 2 – November 21, 2001.

Sponsored by City of Sunnyvale, Department of Parks and Recreation, Arts & Youth Services, in collaboration with the Euphrat Museum of Art, De Anza College, Cupertino.

Contact:

For information about the exhibition, call Euphrat Museum of Art at (408) 864-8836.

To schedule tours or for gallery information, call the Creative Arts Center Gallery at (408) 730-7731.

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