

NEWS RELEASE
November 24, 1997

Sunnyvale Creative Arts Center Gallery

in partnership with the

Euphrat Museum of Art

Art Exhibition:

Connections:

Susan Matthews, Paintings

Josefina Bates, Installation

Sunnyvale Creative Art Center Gallery

550 E. Remington, Box 3707

Sunnyvale, CA 94088-3707

January 9 - February 28, 1998

Tuesday and Thursday 11 - 5 pm, Wednesday and Friday 1 - 5; Saturday 10 am - 12 noon

Artist lecture: January 9, 4:30 pm

The exhibition *Connections: Susan Matthews, Paintings; Josefina Bates, Installation* at the Sunnyvale Creative Arts Center Gallery presents the art of two artists with a broad range of cultural and community connections which interplay with the form and content of their art. Both look at issues of the working class, of cultural differences, using common language and images of people we see in everyday life. Matthews paints her students and friends, people she has known as a life-long resident of Oakland, teaching art, Spanish, and music in high school and participating in the community. Bates, who teaches printmaking and digital media, creates art related to the lives of immigrants and the exchange of cultural information, connecting with the Mission District, San Francisco Art Institute, and Internet communities.

The exhibition *Connections: Susan Matthews, Paintings; Josefina Bates, Installation* was curated by the Euphrat Museum of Art. It is presented in conjunction with a larger *Connections* exhibition, nearby at the Euphrat Museum of Art, De Anza College, Cupertino, with an overlapping time frame, Jan. 6 - Feb. 13.

Susan Matthews exhibits a series of 7'x5' acrylic portraits documenting contemporary urban people of the Bay Area. Full figure, with clothes and stature to fit their different personalities, they are friends, family, or students of the artist, but enhanced to make strong statements, sometimes in quite unexpected areas. For instance, a student named Lysistrata is shown with images of discarded guns and arrowheads beneath her feet, indicative of her Greek peacemaker namesake. The nature of the art is often theatrical, with a hot red background for *Yo Soy Tarasco*, black background and descriptive banner for *Portrait of a Musician* (complete with tattoos), and a parted gold curtain for *Ianthia*, clothed all in white.

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

(408) 730-7731 For Deaf access call TDD/TTY 408-730-7501

Euphrat Museum of Art, De Anza College, Cupertino, CA 95014 (408)864-8836

Matthews is a member of ProArts in Oakland. She dances, studies music, and plays the drums with the Latino Jazz Ensemble at University of California, Berkeley. She has taught high school for twenty years in Berkeley. She makes masks ("One I wear on Day of the Dead") and musical instruments ("I use them with the students"). She states, "I was raised in East Oakland. We celebrate it."

Her portraits are a rethinking of formal portraiture which has documented the upper classes throughout history. They recognize people who "appear in Social Realism as objects rather than subjects. I paint friends, family members, and students... Sometimes the paintings change our lives and relationships in small ways. This series of paintings blurs the line between my art and my life."

Josefina Bates exhibits silkscreen prints of occupations that are taken by many immigrants. Using Spanglish, a mixture of Spanish and English, we have *La Beibisira, El Rufero (The Babysitter, The Roofer)* and such. These prints are part of the much larger *California Lottery* project, which is a take-off on the Mexican lottery, a bingo game popular in Mexico and other countries in Central America. But here she juxtaposes the immigrants' hopes of striking it rich, with the realities they encounter in this country. The print *California Lottery* was part of a public art project on Market Street in San Francisco in the summer of 1996. She has since created silkscreen prints of the *Lottery* characters. Bates is expanding these ideas onto a Website, *Worlds in Collision*, which brings information about different cultures to high school students. The work is available on her own Website. For exhibition purposes, she has built a kiosk to house the computer that runs the "Lotto" interactive movie.

Bates currently teaches at San Francisco Art Institute. She has also taught printmaking at Mission Grafica, where she does her printmaking and connects up with other printmakers. When she was a student at the Art Institute, she was a member of Grupo ñ, a loose coalition of students interested in Latino issues and mutual support. Bates received her MFA from the Art Institute and BFA from San Francisco State. She was born and raised in Colombia, has taught printmaking in Colombia, and in the early '80s studied painting restoration in Italy.

The exhibition *Connections: Susan Matthews, Paintings; Josefina Bates, Installation* complements the *Connections* show at the Euphrat Museum. At the Sunnyvale Creative Arts Center Gallery, the multiple connections of the artists are befitting their multidisciplinary art careers. At the Euphrat Museum the connections are with formal arts organizations or informal art alliances.

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:

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Art Exhibition:

Watersheds, Water Ways (with Bear and the Watershed Chorus)

Brad Bussey, Beth Craven, Nanci Kahn, Maryly Snow, Susan Leibovitz Steinman, Pamela Zoline

Sunnyvale Creative Art Center Gallery

550 E. Remington, Box 3707

Sunnyvale, CA 94088-3707

March 13 - May 2, 1998

Tuesday and Thursday 11 - 5 pm, Wednesday and Friday 1 - 5; Saturday 10 am - 12 noon

Artist lecture: March 13, 4:30 pm

The exhibition *Watersheds, Water Ways (with Bear and the Watershed Chorus)* at the Sunnyvale Creative Arts Center Gallery presents painting, sculpture, photography, installations and more, focusing on watersheds from the vantage points of art, ecology, community building — and Bear.

Works illuminate the local/regional, wild/cultivated, rural/urban, life-gathering phenomenon of watershed — ranging over the simplicity-in-complexity of the subject. The exhibition conveys expressions from the subjective and evocative to the scientific and concrete. Some works illustrate the physical qualities of watersheds and the many communities and “habitat” styles within our Bay Area, or more distant watersheds. Bear is joined by the Watershed Chorus of singing stones.

Watersheds, Water Ways (with Bear and the Watershed Chorus) was curated by the Euphrat Museum of Art, working with ARTSHIP Foundation, Oakland. It is part of a larger *Watersheds* project of Euphrat Museum of Art and ARTSHIP Foundation, with exhibitions and educational programs to be conducted at Bay Area sites.

Artists:

The Channel Project by **Beth Craven** is structured to be a chain of public art sculptures to be placed along major waterways in the South Bay. On display is a “channel” structure, a narrow, hall-like construction with arched roof, c. 10'x12'x6', and relevant information about our hidden waterways. “Our creeks have been built over, redirected into culverts and spillways or hidden behind fences... Only by looking closely at a map can one find the relationship of Guadalupe Reservoir at Almaden Quicksilver County Park to the Alviso Slough. Amazingly, most valley residents unknowingly cross the Guadalupe River daily.” The proposed project will symbolically connect these manipulated creeks to their main reservoirs and the San Francisco Bay. Craven’s wants to connect residents to the valley’s remaining natural areas and generate interest in restoring those already damaged

In *The Bear is the Good Old Man of the Watershed*, **Pamela Zoline** joins several large paintings of bears to make a kind of screen, on which the life of the world is seen as lived out through the lives of bears. On a Watershed Table, a large drawing/map of the San Miguel Watershed is laid out like a

giant game board with paths along which pieces can be moved. The paths are part of a narrative in which the Bear journeys through the Watershed's several landscapes, searching for food and coming into conflict with human development. Nearby is a large, self-standing painting of the Bear as guide, artist, and enforcer. Zoline states, "Bears play a central role in our watershed drama." She is speaking of one million acres in Southwestern Colorado, extending from alpine meadow headwaters at 14,000 feet to a deep red sandstone canyon at 5000 feet — now at risk with high in-migration and resort growth rates. She, along with other Watershed artists have helped form the San Miguel Watershed Coalition for planning, conservation, education, and sustainability.

Brad Bussey's *An Aquatic Portrait: Nicasio Reservoir in the Drought Years, 1987 - 1994*, is a photographic essay capturing the dramatic changes that occurred at this northern Marin reservoir during the drought. A range of plant varieties bloomed along the gradually receding shoreline. The retreating waters left layers of concentric "seed rings" deposited on the water's edge. As the seeds sprouted they modified the landscape. The plants offered a visual record of the types of seed regularly blown onto the water. Taken at different seasons and times of day, the work captures mood shifts of this striking waterway.

Nanci Kahn exhibits *Charting the Land*, a 5'x8' mural of color prints which explore the ways art and science view and consider the landscape and its waterways. She combines aerial photographs with maps and close-ups. For the most part, the water in the mural has gone and left its mark, or is hidden or unusable, e.g. frozen or in cloud form. She asks: "At what point do scientific investigation and artistic exploration meet?" She notes that going back to the early 1800s and the U.S. Geological Survey, people have photographed, charted, catalogued, categorized and surveyed the landscape and its waterways. Today we are armed with maps and charts when hike, bike, or boat. She looks at our relationship to land, be it analytical in nature or reverential in spirit.

Noted for collaborative, public artworks built from recycled materials and addressing environmental themes, **Susan Leibovitz Steinman** here uses few elements: a flattened, rusted shopping cart interwoven with plastic tubes of stagnant water, with the remnants of a few bits of yellow "caution" tape.

Maryly Snow exhibits colorful monoprints from her *California Water Rites* series. *California Water Rites #8* (Mt. Diablo from the Air) sets the themes of clear air and water as critical for the health of watersheds. A few titles are more telling: *California Fish Kill*, *California Water Wars*. In creating the works, Snow was concerned with "the eco-political struggle over usage, health, and maintenance of California water." Primarily abstract, Snow uses recognizable images sparingly, for example the simple curves of a hill, a set of x-and-y coordinates, a bucket spilling water, an upside down fish.

The exhibition *Watersheds, Water Ways...* is presented in conjunction with a larger *Watersheds* exhibition, nearby at the Euphrat Museum of Art, De Anza College, Cupertino, Mar. 3 - Apr. 16.

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