

Calendar listing for exhibition

For Immediate Release: January 8, 2008

Euphrat Museum of Art

De Anza College, Cupertino, CA 95014

<http://www.deanza.edu/euphrat/>

408 864-8836

Art exhibition:

Graphic Storytelling as Activism

Feb. 11 – Apr. 17, 2008

(closed President's Day, February 18, and closed spring break, March 31 – April 4)

For events, check our website <http://www.deanza.edu/euphrat/>

Artists include: Seyed Alavi, Oliver Chin, Charisse Domingo and De-Bug, Sharon Hing, Keith Knight, Lingshan, America Meredith, Favianna Rodriguez, Shorty Fatz

Graphic Storytelling as Activism presents a variety of art forms, including cartoons, political posters, digital art, book art, and more to explore a range of imagery with an activist bent. It began with graphic storyteller **Keith Knight**, who sees comics and cartooning as a powerful tool for social change. They have been "communicating information, concepts, and ideas since the days of hieroglyphics. They can transcend language, class, and race. Knowing the tools and concepts of cartooning allows anyone to be a mass communicator... You don't need a million dollars. Just a pen and a piece of paper." In this exhibition we took Knight's ideas a bit farther, adding other tools to enable one to build communities through community-based arts, to address issues of the day, locally and globally, and to tell the personal story with the larger context, historically and culturally.

Graphic storyteller **Keith Knight** exhibits work from three series. One group of cartoons is from the book *Beginner's Guide to Community-Based Arts*, which features ten graphic stories about artists, educators, and activists across the U.S. Knight's drawings bring alive people and stories, e.g. Lily Yeh, Founder of the Village of Arts and Humanities in Philadelphia, and James "Big Man" Maxton, master mosaicist and former Operations Director at the Village. Other images on display are drawn from his nationally syndicated comic strips, "The K Chronicles" and "(th)ink." Knight is an award-winning cartoonist, rapper, and hip-hop musician. www.kchronicles.com

Favianna Rodriguez exhibits colorful silkscreen and other prints, including political posters and personal art. Her silkscreen *Designs on Democracy: Communication for Liberation* shows the intersection between being a designer and an activist. The image is a self-portrait with a city landscape. "My intersecting identities as a poster artist, activist, designer, and woman of color all came together in this piece." Rodriguez was schooled in East Oakland by Chicano political poster artists at a very young age. "My art pieces reflect national and international grassroots struggles, and tell a history of social justice through graphics." Rodriguez is a founding member of the EastSide Arts

and are joined with illustrative images. Cherokee, like other Native American languages is in danger of extinction. Meredith enlists cyclists in to collaborate, forming a moving exhibition around the world, which they photograph. Meredith's *Think Pink* paintings reminds us of history, glossed over and forgotten. She adds text, combining humor and insight, for example giving a little history lesson (with plus and minus points) about U.S. Vice President Charles Curtis (Kaw, Potawatomi, and Osage) under Herbert Hoover. www.ahalenia.com/america

Seyed Alavi's book *Frames of Reference* presents visual story telling that lies between a photographic novel, movie, and storybook. This collection of photos documents a journey to Iran, and probes and educates beyond the charged Iranian political situation in the news. *Frames of Reference* is poetic, less didactic, allowing the reader/viewer to experience a vision of a country where tradition and modernity dance together in a fragile pas de deux. It is also filmic. Each photo merges with the next creating a river of images that carries the viewer/reader along on a multifaceted journey.

Lingshan's social realist paintings expose us to overarching stories, along with stories within stories. His painting of John Rabe and Minnie Vautrin refers to the story of the Nanking massacre. In December 1937, the Japanese army invaded, burned, and looted Nanking, killing 300,000 unarmed Chinese and raping 20,000. Like Otto Schindler during the Holocaust, Rabe and Vautrin saved many Chinese from execution. In conjunction, we show Lingshan's portrait of **Iris Chang**, who lived nearby in Silicon Valley. For years she researched and brought to light the atrocities that occurred in Nanking, so we could learn from history. In that spirit, Lingshan also helped organize a traveling exhibition.

Several publications will be on display, including *New Creative Community*, from **New Village Press**. www.newvillagepress.net The exhibition grew from Knight's concept, was curated by Jan Rindfleisch, with Nancy Hom, Jianhua Shu, and Diana Argabrite.

The Euphrat Museum is in an interim space in the A quad (same location as before) while construction of the new Euphrat building proceeds. The Euphrat Museum of Art is funded in part by Arts Council Silicon Valley, and by an Applied Materials Excellence in the Arts grant and an Adobe Systems Inc. grant, both in partnership with Arts Council Silicon Valley.

For **events** connected to the exhibition, call the number listed below or check the website. A new website is under development and will be up and running in Winter 2008.

Call Jan Rindfleisch 408-864-8836 for more information.