



NEWS RELEASE

February 5, 1995

For Immediate Release

Press release on art exhibition:

Changing Threads: Creating Traditions and Memories

March 1 - April 19, 1995

Museum Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 11-4
Wednesday evening 6-8
Saturday 11-2
Before selected Flint Center events
Open to tour groups by appointment

Reception: Wednesday, March 15, 6 - 8.

Family Day: Saturday, April 8, 12:30 - 2:30. Reception for student art project, with hands-on activities and performances.

Changing Threads: Creating Traditions and Memories presents art which draws from various cultural traditions and memories. However, since memories are often incomplete, and extensive knowledge of traditions is often not at hand, the potential for invention is great. Through paintings, quilts, and installation, the artists in *Changing Threads* invent — pick up threads, change threads, twist, turn, and interweave them.

Timothy Berry:

Timothy Berry employs traditional painting techniques and recognizable images (a hunting horn, cornucopia, flowers, and vines) in a complex exploration of memory, culture, and history. In Berry's paintings, some images emerge, others fade, overlap, interconnect, much as memories do. Berry often starts with a title (usually from his own writings), followed by an image (frequently a decorative motif or architectural element) in the center of the canvas. Both serve as triggering devices for recollections and a stream-of-consciousness process which combines metaphor and narrative with formal concerns. The title *Downwinders* came from a code name the U.S. Army used in the 1950s for people who were accidentally downwind of a nuclear test; the painting that evolved was of a woman and fruit, with blue feathers blowing in the wind. The title *Sineaters* refers to the onetime custom whereby a close relative of the deceased would absolve the dead person's sins by eating food

eating food off their body; the painting turned out about unequal relationships, a wedding and divorce, and taking on the responsibilities of another. *Downwinders* related to consequences, *Sineaters* to transformation. Berry speaks of the final paintings as souvenirs for himself — a way to remember.

Coming from an Irish background, Berry comments, "With Ireland, I have complete affinity. It shows up in my art and writing. I spend time with theater people, poets, writers." Berry's work has a theatrical, narrative quality.

None of Berry's images are contemporary. He likes to give viewers a sense of time. "Images from older books give more sense of metaphor; the viewer thinks less about the kind of lamp than what a lamp does," states Berry, commenting on form and function, and emphasizing the latter: what something does, rather than what it is.

Berry's works frequently allude to text: books, book press, letters of the alphabet. A former English major, he thinks about the nature of text and images. Berry rarely uses text in an artwork. However, in one artwork, the words "word struggle image observe" pointed to his ideas about text versus image — about "trusting images to be metaphors."

"Influenced by Tibetan monastic paintings, I see my work as western 'Tangkas' — Tibetan narrative icons meant to instruct and delight."

Berry, born in Ohio, has a B.A. from Denison University in Ohio, and an M.F.A. from Central School in England. He is represented by Haines Gallery in San Francisco, and in addition to painting is known for his printmaking.

Virginia Harris:

Virginia Harris writes about quilting as a metaphor for life — "a transformative act of the imagination that makes new connections....Quilting reveals the possibility for birthing tradition, the truths of tradition, transitions of tradition....There is a unique African American history in quilting. Most has been lost....My quilts are inspired by designs from a number of African countries....The designs connect the African and American parts of me through pattern and fabric....I want to make contact with both the pattern and fabric of who I am, of others' traditions, and where those traditions converge in me."

Wild Thing incorporates more than thirty-five African prints and twenty solid colors; the pattern is an adaptation of a basketweave pattern on a Nyoro pot stand from Uganda. *Either/Or* is two-sided. The pattern on the front is an adaptation of a Kuba design from Zaire; a quilting pattern on the back is derived from an Ashanti cast-bronze gold weight from Ghana. "'Either/Or' thinking permeates our society. 'Either/Or' requires a place for everything, a label for everything."

The pattern on the front of *Candy Box* (1994) is an adaptation of an unfolded origami candy box; on the back it is an adaptation of an unfolded origami kimono. "A Japanese American friend invited me to fold origami....I folded, unfolded, and fascinating shapes evolved, a whole new source of blocks for quilts. The distinct blocks disappeared and an entire new pattern evolved." As in a candy box, "the special and one-of-a-kind pieces are in the center." Origami is also a basis for *Origami Mask* (1994).

"I find my own tradition through this medium... *Burning Image* is about burning the image which I have been told I should have, an image based on materialism. I used a central image from a Native American folktale." *Burning Image* incorporates phototransfers of Harris's friends as children, along with a cruise ship, fur coat, dollar bills, road signs, flames, and a deliberate large hole in the quilt — all alluding to a cautionary tale of the child that devours the adult one could be.

Harris lives in East Palo Alto and has been quilting since 1991, exploring and discovering traditions, adapting African and "Euro-western" designs. She was a photographer from 1977 to 1985, and for almost two decades has been a writer of short stories, essays, and novels. A recent essay appears in *Skin Deep*, a collection of writings compiled by Elena Featherston.

Norine Kiku Nishimura:

Concerning her *Wedding Bell Blues* installation, Nishimura has written: "In 1952 I was given the names

of both my grandmothers. Nori, I have known well....We have a phone date every Friday at noon....Kikuyo is a fantasy. I did not speak her language while she was still alive and clear of mind. Isolated moments of her life were told through inferences; what wasn't told, I made up. Yet hers is the greatest presence....I have begun to know her through her American-born son and two daughters. I have begun to understand why her presence embraces me. This is the mother of my father. This begins her story.”

The *Wedding Bell Blues* installation contains a woodblock print, seven different stand-alone images of a school girl, and various objects and writings of personal and historical significance. While *Wedding Bell Blues* is a love story of sorts, Nishimura examines the effects of personal and collective histories and builds upon the political nature of her personal narrative. For example, family photos allude to shared emotions of many Issei women who had split families because of anti-immigration laws earlier this century. A citizenship test on a table, and references to U.S. internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, also relate to experiences many had earlier this century. An accompanying 6'x10' mixed media painting entitled *No Mystery: Shhh*, which includes braille and handprints cut from paper bags, reveals Nishimura's openness to new media and forms of expression. Many of her works continue to be autobiographical, ancestral. “Understanding is facilitated through the owning and sharing of our personal and collective histories.”

Nishimura is a Bay Area artist, known for her woodcuts. She also produces large, mixed-media paintings and collographs on paper bags. She has been a member of the theater group, Foreign Bodies.

***We Remember*, a collaborative public art work involving elementary school children (April 1 - 19):**
During April, the exhibition *Changing Threads* will be expanded by *We Remember*, a collaborative public art work involving elementary school children from Cupertino Union, Sunnyvale, and Los Altos School Districts. Developed through the Euphrat Museum's Arts & Schools Program, *We Remember* draws on diverse memories and traditions. *We Remember* is a narrative bas-relief sculpture, which presents personal and collective histories — as remembered and enhanced by the young artists. Guest Artists and storytelling will provide background and set the stage for the production of the final artwork.

Photographs are available.

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Contact: Jan Rindfleisch (408) 864-8836



NEWS RELEASE
March 22, 1995

Euphrat Museum of Art
De Anza College

Calendar Listing for a Children's Art Event:

Family Day '95: Traditions and Memories

Saturday, April 8, 1995

Noon to 3 p.m.

Family Day '95: Traditions and Memories is an afternoon of art, music and dance for children and their families, held in and around the Euphrat Museum of Art. *Family Day* features a community chalk-in, student performances, and ongoing workshops in Chinese brush painting, Mexican paper art, netsuke sculpture, the art of "quilt" books, wrapped sticks, and more. On view in the Euphrat Museum is the bas-relief mural *We Remember*, created by students from Cupertino Union, Sunnyvale, and Los Altos School Districts; this public art project was produced through the Euphrat Arts & Schools Program.

Performers include students from The Music School, Abhinaya Dance Company, and South Bay Dance Company. Visual artists participating include Virginia R. Harris, Luchita Ugalde, Ann Hsieh, Linda Chen, and Chun-Hui Yu. Several dancers from Wings of a Hundred Viet are providing mini-lessons in Vietnamese dance.

The children's art and activities are integrated into the current Euphrat exhibition, *Changing Threads: Creating Traditions and Memories*, which presents paintings, quilts, and installations which draw from various cultural traditions and memories.

Program development and sponsorship of this event were provided by Apple Computer, City of Cupertino, Advanced Micro Devices, and Hewlett-Packard. Additional program support was provided by the cities of Los Altos and Sunnyvale.

Free admission. Refreshments.

The Euphrat Museum of Art is located just east of Flint Center on the De Anza College campus. For more information, call 408/864-8596.

Euphrat Museum of Art, De Anza College, Cupertino, CA 95014



NEWS RELEASE
May 5, 1995

Euphrat Museum of Art
De Anza College

Calendar Listing for student art exhibition

De Anza Student Art Show
May 23 - June 14, 1995

Museum Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 10-3
Tuesday evening 6-8
Saturday 11-2

Open De Anza Day, Sunday, June 11, 8-4
Closed Memorial Day, Monday, May 29

Reception: Tuesday, May 23 6-8

The annual *De Anza Student Art Show*, a celebration of artworks created by De Anza College students during the 1994-95 academic year, will be on view at the Euphrat Museum of Art May 23-June 14. The opening reception and awards ceremony honoring the artists and De Anza's Art and Photography Department will be held at the Euphrat Museum of Art on May 23 from 6 to 8 p.m.

The juried show will include paintings, drawings, sculpture, photography, ceramics, prints, graphics, and mixed media. De Anza students submit work for consideration by a jury panel of three Bay Area artists.

The De Anza Student Art Show is sponsored by the De Anza Student Body and the Euphrat Museum of Art. The exhibition is free and open to the public. The Euphrat is wheelchair accessible.

For more information or to schedule group tours, please call 408/864-8836.