

NEWS RELEASE

February 4, 1998

For Immediate Release

Press release on art exhibition:

Watersheds, Waterwebs

Mar. 3 - Apr. 16, 1998

Museum Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 11-4; Wednesday evening 6-8, Saturday 11-2.
Open to tour groups by appointment.

Reception: Wednesday, March 18, 6-8, reception with artist presentation

Artists and Organizations: Mark Abrahamson, ARTSHIP Foundation, Aquatic Outreach Institute, Christine Arle Baeumler and Rhoda London, Coastal Advocates, Mary Jane Dean, Augusto Ferriols, Erica L. Fielder, Jo Hanson, Lynne Hull, Robin Lasser, Leza Lidow, Vicente Partida, Katherine Westerohout Mann.

Rain falls on a mountain ridge. Rivulets merge and rush below as creeks, then become streams, and farther down rivers. Live clusters. Forests, pastures, fields. Cities. Everywhere waters are directed, carving land forms, attracting particular plant, animal, and human communities, inviting exchange. Watersheds. Water webs.

Watersheds, Waterwebs is an exhibition of painting, sculpture, photography, installations, and more, focusing on watersheds from the vantage points of art, ecology, and community building. Works by visual artists, ecology groups, and school children 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.

Watersheds, Waterwebs is part of a larger collaborative *Watersheds* project of Euphrat Museum of Art and ARTSHIP Foundation, Oakland.

Artists:

Since 1990 **Mark Abrahamson** has been working on his *Watershed Investigations* series, an aerial look at the impacts of land uses upon water quality within specific American river watersheds. *Urban Watersheds*, new work from this series is an examination of the urban rivers of metropolitan New York, Seattle and Chicago. We see uncropped Cibachromes of highly developed, rich but slowly decaying, heavily polluted urban environ-

ments. The abstractions document point and nonpoint factors that adversely affect water quality. The subversive formalism of the images underscores the deceptive beauty of the land as viewed from the air. Abrahamson is especially intrigued by abandoned industrial sites, so-called "brownfields" which lie in ruins while business and new industries locate or relocate to the suburbs and the rural countryside.

Christine Arle Baeumler and **Rhoda London** have created a large mixed media installation, *50/50: A Tale of Two Watersheds*, based on an exchange of ideas regarding the watersheds they live in. The work of London who lives in Oakland and Baeumler who lives in St. Paul, Minnesota, reveals a synchronicity of occurrences between the middle coast line (the Mississippi) and the west coast line (San Francisco Bay). Esconced in plastic bags and mounted on the wall are found materials, "treasures," both detritus and natural from each waterway — ranging from half decomposed packaging materials to dolls' legs (one found in each area). Dried, cracked clay tablets are on the ground with empty glasses of water. Clear plastic tubing flows from the detritus to the parched floor piece. London commented on the environmental disasters in both locales: "What is left to drink?"

"Did you know that the largest redwood trees in the world grew at the headwaters of Sausal Creek [Oakland]?" Promoting appreciation of the San Francisco Bay Area and inspiring community involvement that will restore the Estuary and the watershed around it are part of the mission of **Aquatic Outreach Institute**, Richmond. Their Sausal Creek Watershed Awareness Program is now in its third year. Non-native plants are being removed and replaced by plants native to the watershed. On exhibit are signs about the watershed in multiple languages, even some decorated by children for hanging on a doorknob. For viewing and interactivity, *Exploring the Estuary* software, developed by the Institute to teach about the San Francisco Bay and Delta, provides information on natural history, various uses of the estuary, and Bay-Delta issues, by way of over 300 screens of graphics and numerous bird calls.

Erica Fielder's *Salmon Skin Cape* is an installation that addresses the contrast between our present attempts to manage wild Coho salmon in order to increase their populations for "resource extraction" and the way a number of indigenous cultures have ensured the return of the salmon for 10,000 years through a gesture of *giving back*. The cape is transparent, embedded with transparencies and lichen, representing the imprint the environment has had on the fish. It also contains curving copper lines that are both map of the bloodstream of a wild salmon and an aerial view of the Metkuyaki (Ten Mile River) watershed in which that salmon hatched and later died. "The story" relates that in order for the salmon to return each year, the bones of previous year's catch must be returned to the river. A handmade book expands on the two themes: resource management and the gesture of giving back.

The photographic images by **Coastal Advocates**, Los Gatos, may seem color enhanced or like some form of earth sculpture, but they document field investigations and have helped launch a Superfund Site investigation, an analysis of water and sediment quality, and an inter-agency Mercury Discussion Group and Sand and Gravel "summit." The watersheds are local, such as around San Carlos Creek, which runs yellow, orange, sometimes red from the drainage from the abandoned New Idria mercury mine. Severe bank erosion has occurred along the San Benito River (drains to Monterey Bay) adjacent to a sand and gravel mining operation; in one attempt abandoned cars were used to shore up the river bank. Coastal Advocates Director Kathleen Van Velsor states they will use these images for their Sustainable Coastal Watershed Project, "Fish Stories," which will link urban users of coastal watershed resources to the effort to reduce/reverse watershed decline in the central coast region of California.

Two brooms upside down, their bristles pointing up. One, a push broom, is bound to the other in a manner to suggest a cross. A small crucifix is affixed just above this crosspiece. This striking symbol was created by **Vicente Partida** for Janitors for Justice, a group which recently demonstrated with the blessed cross and images of Virgen de Guadalupe and la familia, connecting labor activism with a strong family and spiritual life. The symbol of sacrifice tied three events together: a week's fast in Sacramento by janitors, community and religious

leaders, a 10-day (150 miles) march from Sacramento to the site of a Hewlett Packard stockholders meeting in Cupertino, and the presentation to the Board of Directors to notify them of the degree of sacrifice and deprivation incurred in the quest for a collective bargaining contract. Particularly interested in union representation at many high-tech firms, it was appropo that Partida's artwork was recently featured very prominently on the front page of the Business Section. Watershed issues are integrally related to social issues and valuing maintenance.

Lynne Hull is a Wyoming artist currently living in Colorado. She has pioneered "trans-species" art, creating sculpture installations as wildlife habitat enhancement and mitigation for human impact. Canvas panels with mixed media, photos, text, and maps etc. include refernece to her *Green River Greenbelt* project in Wyoming, her *Desert Hydroglyph* series, and her *Island* for waterfowl nesting and loafing. She began her environmental work from the desire to express her concerns for endangered life cycles. Hull has worked with a variety of wildlife agencies, including state wildlife departments. She recently completed *The Exiled Oxbow*, a memorial to the loss of wetlands in Salina, Kansas. Currently she is working on a series of sites in southern Mexico. Her client list includes hawks, eagles, pine martin, osprey, owls, salmon, butterflies, bees, frogs, toads, newts, bats, beaver, songbirds, otter, monkeys, rock hyrax, small desert species, waterfowl and occasional humans.

Katherine Westerhout Mann's installation of three large color photographs pushes the meaning of "watershed" beyond its association with a drainage area to incorporate broader implications of a water parting, a divide, a point of division between two phases. The photographs of various bodies of water span the Pacific Rim: Li River in southwest China, Eastlake near Wuhan in central China, and Ft. Funston on the West Coast of California. Through reflections, light, and composition, the images transcend the divisions of space and time, here and there, then and now — rendering a sense of place that is everywhere and eternal. "It is in that sense that these watersheds are life gathering and life sustaining."

A different poetry is evidenced in *The Wasteland Series* by **Mary Jane Dean**, built from panoramic pinhole camera images of an area of San Francisco Bay. Areas of salt mining, they seem destitute, and Dean has given them individual titles which are quotes from T. S. Eliot's *The Wasteland*. "The River Sweats." And "Under my feet. After the event." Dean comments on her study of landscape, on her various artworks: "...fleeting and fragmentary. They emulate my weak grasp on the factuality of our world, and the distorted vision of my frail eyes." "This work, a cross of natural fact with the visual grammar of abstract painting, explores the visual analogues of the phenomena and the conditions of the ocean and the land: light, movement, space, substance, weight, surface, and atmospheric weather."

Jo Hanson exhibits the reassembled remains of a striking 6'x8' red structure, a "ceremonial gate" that was partially washed away in the 1995 flooding of her watershed creek near the Russian River. The structure, once an installation at the civic center in Dublin in 1994, was imprinted with the handprints and names of 500 Dublin students and called *500 Reasons to Preserve the Earth*; it was stored at her place on the river, where the 1995 floods washed some of the boards away. Accompanying is a storyboard that uses flood photos to discuss the values and importance of flood and also the major impairment of her creek — its health and integrity — relative to flood and the spawning of steelheads. Hanson tells the story of the creek, "why it is so jumpy in rising and falling, what it needs, and what happens to the fish population. It is a 'sad' story but wonderful and exciting and full of potential for communicating the awesomeness and spirit of water. After all, we are water too, pri rily, and we seek our own."

Leza Lidow, from Los Angeles, presents two mannequins, meticulously painted in oil on plastic, to reveal the sorry state of our natural waterways. Entitled *Save the Rivers* and *Save the Streams*, the waters contain fish who compete with the litter of car parts, old furniture, items of clothing, cosmetics, baby toys and more, which items she relates to different gender practices of acquiring and discarding possessions. These works are part of

Lidow's *Pollution Series*, concerned with different environmental or health issues.

The *Dirty Diapers* photographs of **Robin Lasser** reflect her concern for the environment and the toxins we expose our children to. It also explores the environmental degradation which may occur in the act of child rearing — disposable diapers, over population, etc. "Our water table is, indeed, affected by our waste." Characteristically, the photographs were taken of installations she has created, such as a dirt-covered table and chair, with a mound of apparently used diapers (stained with tea). Lasser has been creating installations and public art for social transformation since 1985, and is concerned with environmental, social, and health issues. In 1997 she received a grant from LEF Foundation for a community-based garden/earthwork in collaboration with the community and local "youth at risk."

Augusto Ferriols exhibits *Waterlines*, a layered plexiglas sculpture with inscribed images of regional watersheds and related images of watershed as metaphor — such as the human circulatory system, the root system of a tree. These play with light to reveal the linear structures that bind us together. Ferriols is a dancer/visual artist whose visual art influences his dance, and vice versa. He has performed many dances with water or at creekside, often with communities in Oakland.

ARTSHIP Foundation* exhibits a 5' sphere of cane tied with fabric. The sphere was rolled along as part of a ten-blocks-long procession through Oakland streets over Temescal Creek (these days mostly channeled underground). This performance was part of a neighborhood history project and opened a two-week long period of events. ARTSHIP Foundation has a long-term relationship with creeksides in Oakland. For the past two years, they have created a stage which spans two sides of the creek which runs through Arroyo Viejo Park and worked with the local community to participate in a summer performance series.

At the beginning of April, a collaborative artwork *Our Watershed* will be installed, organized by the Euphrat Museum of Art's Arts & Schools Program in conjunction with *Watersheds*, and involving over 200 school **children from the Cupertino Union, Sunnyvale, and Los Altos School Districts**. This work will be celebrated Family Day, April 4.

***Watersheds*, a multifaceted, collaborative project of Euphrat Museum of Art and ARTSHIP Foundation:** Exhibitions and educational programs will be conducted at Bay Area sites. Concurrent with this Euphrat exhibition is a *Watersheds* exhibition at the Sunnyvale Creative Arts Center Gallery, Mar. 13 - May 2, 1998.

An expanded *Watersheds* exhibition will be the first exhibition on the ARTSHIP. The ship's title was recently transferred by legislation to ARTSHIP Foundation, which is now in process of bringing this historical vessel to the Oakland waterfront. As an arts, culture, and education center, ARTSHIP represents the transformation for peaceful use of the T/S Golden Bear. This 1930s cargo and passenger ship was a troop carrier in World War II, later a training vessel for the California Maritime Academy. Rooms of the ship will become exhibition spaces.

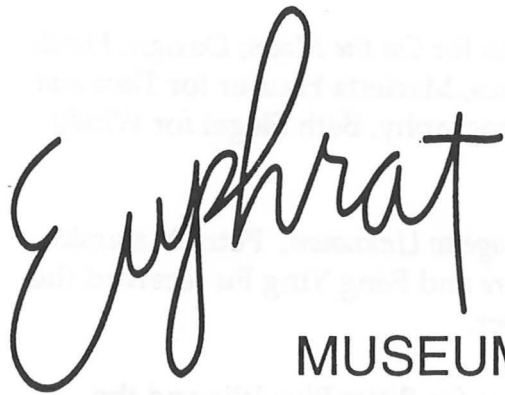
*ARTSHIP Foundation: The ARTSHIP is a project of ARTSHIP Foundation, dedicated to intercultural, inter-generational collaborations and community-based programs in the arts, education, and areas of community interest and concern. Headquartered in Oakland, ARTSHIP is also the American campus of the newly founded International Peace University of Berlin, Germany.

Curatorial Team: Jan Rindfleisch, Director, Euphrat Museum of Art; Slobodan Dan Paich, Artistic Director, ARTSHIP Foundation; Victor Faessel, Environmental Literacy Coordinator, ARTSHIP Foundation
Additional assistance: Diana Argabrite, Director, Arts & Schools Program, Euphrat Museum of Art

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NEWS RELEASE

May 10, 1998

For Immediate Release

Press release on art exhibition:

De Anza Student Art Show

May 26 to June 18, 1998

Museum Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 11-4; Tuesday evening 6-8, Saturday 11-2.
Open to tour groups by appointment.

Reception: Tuesday, June 16, 6-8

The 29th annual *De Anza Student Art Show* is on view at the Euphrat Museum of Art from May 26 - June 18. Sponsored by the De Anza Associated Student Body, the Euphrat Museum of Art, and the Creative Arts Division, this juried exhibition features paintings, drawings, prints, mixed-media works, photography, graphic design, sculpture, and ceramics, and is open to De Anza students from all departments.

The gathering of works reflects expertise in diverse media and varied interests and points of view. The exhibition is a chance to see some excellent work and support the creative process.

Traditional figurative drawings in graphite and watercolor are accompanied by figures with exaggerated body parts, or created with less common tools, such as *A Cheerful Memento Mori*, drawn using a twig and ink. Body castings in plaster and papier-mâché became parts of three dimensional sculptures or a surface for painting. Ceramics range from objects of playfulness to beautifully designed vases — include wall pieces and functional tableware. The photography is sometimes evocative, other times with a minimalist approach. On close look, there are photocopies, digital photographs, and works produced with Adobe Photoshop. Subject matter in the exhibition includes the introspective and the expressive, with works touching on topics of unplanned pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, gay pride, capitalism, organized religion, destruction of redwoods, and illuminating portions of U.S. history that have been ignored in the past.

Jurors for the exhibition were the following members of the Creative Arts faculty: Bill Geisinger, Joan Hill, Ben Kashkooli, Linda Mau, Elizabeth Mjelde, Moto Ohtake, Eugene Rodriguez, and Lee Tacang. They also chose the award winners (19 awards available) to represent each of the seven disciplines also three memorial awards, two faculty awards, five honorable mention and two Claymaker Material Awards.

The recipients of the 1998 discipline awards are: Ceramics, Yumi Ishii for *On the Moon*; Design, Heidi Dumanski for *Jack and Jill*; Drawing, Roger Ngim for *Triple X*; Graphics, Marietta Hauser for *Then and Now Chardonnay*; Painting, Maria Pugnetti for *Naughty and Nice*; Photography, Beth Siegel for *Windy City*; and Sculpture, Chris Eckert for *Head*.

Junko Larsen received the Katharine Weis Memorial Award for *Passage to Unknown*. Petra Malarski won the Bill Brown Memorial Award in Ceramics for *2-Piece Sculpture* and Feng Ying Fu received the Sandra Johnstone Memorial Award in Functional Ceramics for *Forever*.

The Faculty Two Dimensional Award was won by Melissa von Bunau for *Bitter Blue Jello* and the Faculty Three Dimensional Award was won by Sara Cole for *Still Searching for Me*.

Five Honorable Mention Awards were given: Eiko Jozen for *Wa*; Eldon Fox for *Emergence*; Robin Dee Mizushima for *Jack and Jill*; Jason Fitzgerald for *Egg II* and Gary Dusek for *Timber*.

The two Claymaker Material Awards were awarded to Nancy Kamin Albarran for *Untitled* and Inez Liu for *Silica Valley*.

In addition, visitors to the Museum are asked to vote for their favorite piece. The Popular Choice Award will be announced at the reception, June 16 in the Euphrat Museum.

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