


MUSIC POLITICS THEATER FILM FOOD ART CLUBS

OC WEEKLY

FREE



INSIDE! OC  VEGAS

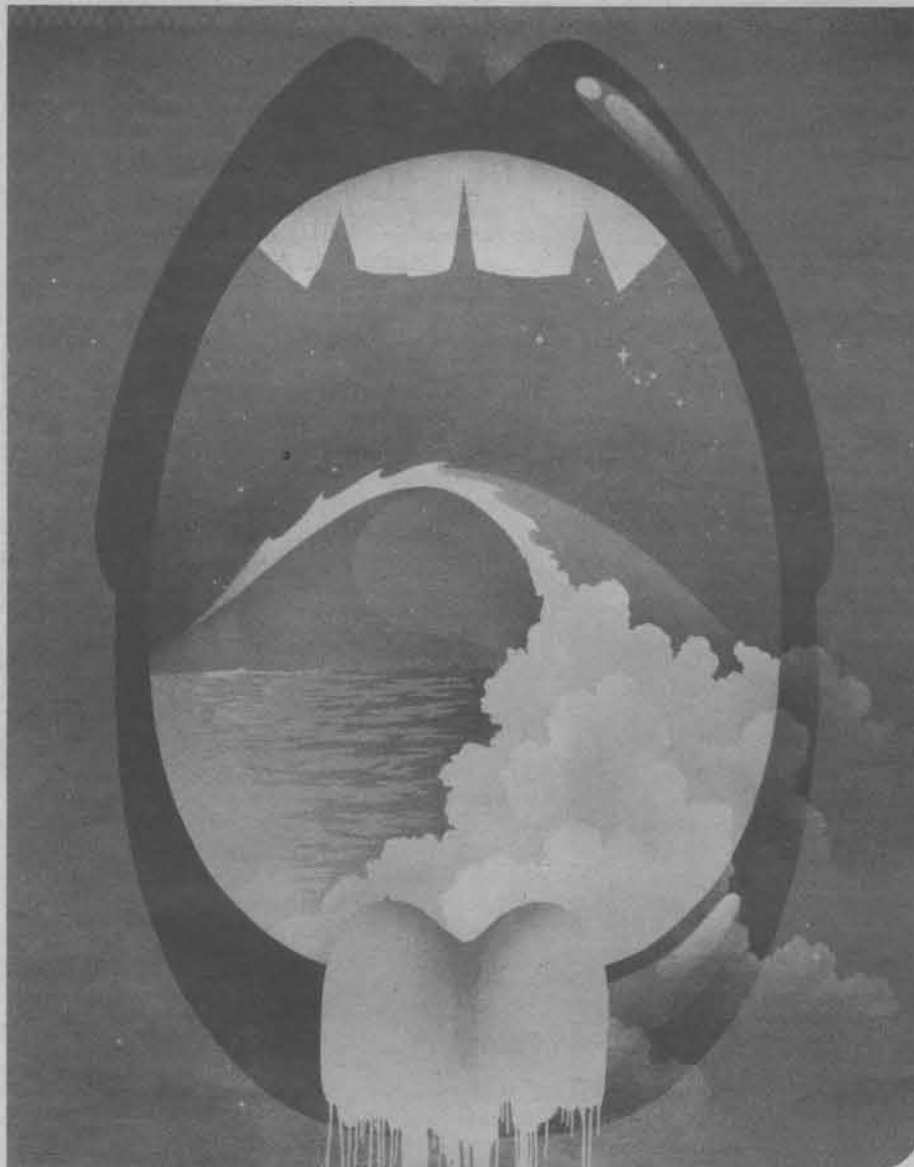
NO SEX, NO ROCK & ROLL

NICK SCHOU'S NEW BOOK ON CIA COKE RUNNERS

OUCH! ACCUSED GOP MOLESTER TURNS ON WEEKLY

BI-CURIOUS OCMA'S BIENNIAL ART FEST COMES FIRST IN OUR HEARTS

HEADY METAL STEP INTO THE SUNNO))) CHAMBER



TIDAL WRETCH BY PEARL C. HSIUNG/IMAGE COURTESY OCMA

and photographed in 2005 after heavy winter rains sent it sliding down a hill. The people inside survived, but it was for sale at the time, and he imagines they took a beating on the price.

"I am sympathetic, but on a certain level," Zaki says, "this is a result of the dramatic experimentation here, the constant building." But experimenting is what we do! Zaki's three photographs of the house hull show it from opposite angles, and a video still montage—set to a remix of the Pixies' "Where Is My Mind"—stands as a monument to our hubris. So do his stark pictures of our pools emptied for the winter (winter comes even to Southern California) and of another hill house shot from below, its supports Photoshopped away. It sits impossibly poised on the edge, and we await its fall.

SAN JOSEAN BINH DANH, a Vietnamese immigrant, uses a brilliant concept to reveal other strong emotions in his Vietnam War-inspired work. Danh turns found

images of soldiers and civilian casualties into negatives—then prints his new negatives onto native Southeast Asian plants he's collected and treated with the proper chemicals to turn them into flash paper. It sounds gimmicky, but his photographs are incredibly haunting—even if you'd rather not know what the war says about us. His series inhabits an entire room at OCMA, its walls painted black to better showcase grim servicemen and grimacing children—even a *Life* magazine spread on war dead, printed on sections of a huge leaf. It instantly recalls what we think we know of Iraq. Mounted below these prints are framed covers of the *Swamp Thing* comic book series and examples of its action figures—a juxtaposition whose levity is so unexpected as to reflect attention back on the war.

It's actually quite easy to find someone with an opinion on California, you realize as you leave Danh's black room for the blinding whiteness of the rest of the show. The trick is finding artists who know more than we who live here and think we know it all. This, OCMA has handily accomplished; you should visit at least twice to see it all.

"2006 CALIFORNIA BIENNIAL," ORANGE COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART, 850 SAN CLEMENTE DR., NEWPORT BEACH. OPEN WED.-SUN., 11 A.M.-5 P.M.; THURS., 11 A.M.-8 P.M. \$8-\$10. ALSO AT ORANGE LOUNGE AT SOUTH COAST PLAZA, 3333 BEAR ST., COSTA MESA, (949) 759-1122; WWW.OCMA.NET. OPEN MON.-FRI., 10 A.M.-9 P.M.; SAT., 10 A.M.-8 P.M.; SUN., 11 A.M.-6:30 P.M. FREE. THROUGH DEC. 31.

LET'S TALK ABOUT US

ORANGE COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART'S 'BIENNIAL' KNOWS US BETTER THAN WE DO
BY THEO DOUGLAS

ORANGE COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART'S "2006 California Biennial" delivers more than 125 works on everything from *Swamp Thing* (anything reminding us of Adrienne Barbeau is okay) to Siamese cats, in its latest report card on the state of the state's artists. And despite our own narcissism—or perhaps because of it—the best pieces here are those with something significant to say about the state or the region. That's partly because we love to see things that remind us of us—but also because we think we know us best.

This is the age of the installation, and you will see many here—sprawling, multimedia works that could theoretically include something painted or sculptural, so long as its surroundings bleed down the pedestal and onto the floor in paint or colored vinyl, ending in what looks like oversized Extra-Strength Tylenol. Painter Pearl C. Hsiung, whose *Tidal Wretch* is featured on the "Biennial" catalog, does just that with her high-contrast 1980s-inspired enamels, which are fine. They'd look great in the house of that South County guy who mounted the Lamborghini on his wall, but they don't break much new ground except, yes, with the installation. Someday, installations will be very now.

Los Angeles multimedia artist Goody-B. Wiseman overcomes being dated—we predict with hope—with, ironically, another installation: *Pentegoet Park (The Terrible Ones)*, a work so large, sprawling, multilayered and intelligent as to win over anyone who likes dogs or children. You know you'll like something when the artist tells you she discovered it while researching Lizzie Borden, and that's exactly how Wiseman—the spitting image of Laura Ingalls at the press preview, in long brown curls and a plaid dress—came to her subject of feral children. Drawing from true stories, *Pentegoet Park* uses dioramas, displays of "vestigial members," found items and even video to tell the tales of "children" raised by wolves ("Coyote Kid"), badgers and deer—then captured by men who shot or maimed their surrogate parents. We know it must be false, but our uneasiness toward wildlife—slaughtering coyotes and mountain lions who encroach on our habitat but permitting Ringling Bros. to live—brings it vividly to life. It is a powerful exhibit, even as the videos of the leaping deer girl—or the badger boy rutting around on a mattress—are way too good to be true. Wiseman cops to much of her invention, but her grin says she's shocked at your suggestion these could be her friends. "These," she says, "are my feral children."

Huntington Beach artist Amir Zaki, a native Californian, has a similar hold on the abandoned house in Laurel Canyon that he discovered



ALL TOGETHER NOW

ADJACENT FREQUENCIES BY PHILLIP STEARNS

THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE WALKING DOWN THE STREET AND HEARING SOUNDWALK

Strange sounds in the air for the past two summers in this little neighborhood in Long Beach: digitized bird chirps, deep dinosaur groans and drones, and even a Doppler-wave dose of Antonin Artaud to break up the usual bus-brake hiss along Broadway for the one-of-a-kind SoundWalk experimental sound installation event. Long Beach art collective FLOOD (Shea M Gauer with noted locals Kamran Assadi, Frauke von der Horst, Scott A. Peterson, Shelley RuggThorp and Marco Schindelmann) set up the first SoundWalk in 2004 to introduce site-specific sound pieces (like Gauer and Assadi's synchronized auto symphony *Car-tee*) to a larger space and a wider audience. Now in its third year, the annual SoundWalk draws about a thousand people to four blocks in Long Beach's East Village to look at and listen to dozens of sound installations built directly into the environment—speakers in stairwells or hanging in trees or camped in local businesses. It's a gallery opening exploded into an entire neighborhood—a unique event, says Gauer, because of the way it superimposes a series of installations over a regular residential neighborhood.

"It's almost transforming the city," says artist Albert Ortega, a participant in every SoundWalk so far. "What situationists write about is what's happening on this night."

Plenty of sound artists worldwide set up multi-part openings in galleries (or the next best, unofficial warehouse spaces), but only SoundWalk wipes out the confines of the venue altogether, opting instead for the kind of flexible boundaries that fit a game of hide-and-seek. And that makes for a low-pressure environment—you're not stuck inside a club, waiting to buy drinks, says Ortega—that adds an accidental audience to the deliberate visitors, says Gauer.

"The people that just happen to wander into it are actually even more engaged," he points out. "They've got no expectation whatsoever—they're walking down the street and they start hearing sounds. Or they come out of their apartment and wonder why people are walking through the neighborhood with maps—where are the sounds coming from? It's the element of surprise."

Even Gauer doesn't know exactly what he'll wake up to on SoundWalk Saturday—most artists install their pieces the night before (or on the day of) the event. But historically SoundWalk attracts an extremely diverse set of sound work, from unobtrusive low-tech installations in the trees to the immensely complex electronic sculptures that filled up most of Koo's last year. Artist Leticia Castaneda propped a disconnected speaker against a flagpole—silent sound art—while artist Joe Winter drove up from San Diego with a super-modified piano bristling with effects pedals and contact mics and pushed it on foot from performance to improv performance. ("A mobile architecture experiment," says Ortega.) There's even guerrilla participation—unscheduled installations like the "noise taxi," says Ortega, which was a minivan shuttling pedestrians between installations with harsh works by Antonin Artaud on its stereo. ("To the point of ears bleeding," laughs artist Phil Stearns, participating for the first time in SoundWalk this year.)

"That's the beauty of sound," says Gauer. "It can be anywhere."

—Chris Ziegler

SOUNDWALK 2006 PRE-PERFORMANCE WITH ARCANUM, ALESSANDRO BOSETTI, METAL ROUGE AND NOAH THOMAS AT 528 E. BROADWAY, LONG BEACH. FRI., 8 P.M. \$10 DONATION. ALL AGES. SOUNDWALK MAIN EVENT BETWEEN BROADWAY AND OCEAN AND ATLANTIC AND ELM IN LONG BEACH'S EAST VILLAGE. SAT., 5 P.M. FREE. MONTHLONG INSTALLATION AT 2ND COUNCIL, 435 ALAMITOS AVE., LONG BEACH, (562) 901-0997. CALL FOR HOURS. THROUGH NOV. 5. WWW.SOUNDWALK.ORG.