

This Month in the Arts

ART, ART HISTORY, TECHNOCULTURAL STUDIES, AND THE
RICHARD L. NELSON GALLERY AND FINE ART COLLECTION

UC DAVIS
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

JANUARY 2009

EVENTS

Catherine Chalmers, "Sex, Food Chains and Cockroaches"

**Wednesday
1/7/2009
6:30 PM
Wyatt Pavilion**

Nationally known multi-media artist Catherine Chalmers, who explores the lives of cockroaches and other creatures that the general public disdains, will speak on "Sex, Food Chains and Cockroaches" on Wednesday, Jan. 7 at the Wyatt Pavilion, University of California, Davis.

Her presentation, from 6:30 to 8 p.m., is the second in a series of four lectures on "The Consilience of Art and Science," a centennial colloquium sponsored by the UC Davis Art/Science Fusion experimental learning program. The lectures are free and open to the public.

"Catherine Chalmers investigates the natural world, from food chains to insect sex, revealing new points of view about our place in the ecosystem," said Art/Science Fusion co-director Diane Ullman, associate dean of Undergraduate Academic Programs, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and professor of entomology.

Chalmers, who specializes in photography, sculpture, drawing and video, displays her art-science work throughout the country. The Boise (Idaho) Art Museum showcased her most recent show, "The American Cockroach." She's been featured in the New York Times, Kansas City Star, the Idaho Statesman and others. Chalmers said she explores the question of what it is to be human and humankind's relationship and reactions to the insect world. Combining humor and biology, she paints her cockroaches to resemble other insects, camouflages them in garden settings, and even "executes" them, strapping a cockroach to an "electric chair" or "burning" it at the stake. Chalmers is quick to point out, however, that no animals are harmed in the making of her art.

She lives with her artist-husband in Rensselaerville, N.Y., where she rears and poses insects for her art work. Some of her work appears on her Web site, www.catherinechalmers.com. A native of San Mateo, Chalmers received a bachelor of science degree in engineering from Stanford University, and a master's degree in painting from the Royal College of Art, London.

The Consilience of Art and Science Speaker Series



Catherine Wagner: Art Studio Program Lecture Series of 2008-2009 Presents a Public Lecture

**Thursday
1/29/2009
4:30 PM
TCS Building**

Catherine Wagner is an artist who photographs elements of contemporary society and transforms them into conceptual images that investigate culture. For over thirty years she has been a keen observer of the built environment, examining institutions of learning and knowledge, such as art museums and science labs, as well as the ways we construct our cultural identity. Her current project, *A Narrative History of the Light Bulb*, is a natural linkage to her past work involving science, technology, and culture. Ms. Wagner's process involves the investigation of what art critic David Bonetti calls "the systems people create, our love of order, our ambition to shape the world, the value we place on knowledge, and the tokens we display to express ourselves."

While Ms. Wagner has spent her life residing in California, she has also been an active international artist, working on collaborations, site-specific installations, and lecturing extensively at museums and universities. She has received many major awards, including the inaugural Visual Arts Fellowship from the San Jose Museum of Art, a Guggenheim Fellowship, NEA Fellowships, and the Ferguson Award. Ms. Wagner was also named one of Time Magazine's Fine Arts Innovators of the Year for 2001. Her work is represented in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Museum of Folkwang, Essen, Germany, and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Her monographs include *Cross Sections* (Twin Palms Press 2002), *Art & Science: Investigating Matter* (Washington University, 1996), *Home and Other Stories* (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1993), and *American Classroom* (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1988). Ms. Wagner is represented by Gallery Luisotti in Santa Monica, California and the Stephen Wirtz Gallery in San Francisco.

Columbus, Penelope, Dailah, 2005



Generously sponsored by the Office of the Dean

EXHIBITIONS

Stacy Vetter, JAY JAY, Sacramento

**January 7-February 21
JAY JAY
Sacramento**

Stacey Vetter (Art Studio, MFA) will open "Winter Flowers", a new exhibition of works on paper, this month at JAYJAY in Sacramento. "Winter Flowers" runs from January 7 until February 21.



Opening reception: January 10, 6-9 pm
Location: JayJay, 5520 Elvas Avenue, Sacramento, CA
Gallery hours: Wednesday to Saturday, 11-4 pm (or by appointment)

Jeff Dodson, I Still Just Want to be a Millionaire (So I Can Do Good Things and Help People)

**March-March 2017
B-763
Novato Self Storage
Binford Road
Novato, CA
By Appointment**

I STILL JUST WANT TO BE A MILLIONAIRE (SO I CAN DO GOOD THINGS AND HELP PEOPLE) is an on-going (since 2000), all-encompassing, 3-dimensional, artwork consisting of 40+ banana boxes; each is an artwork made of artworks that together make one artwork. According to Dodson, "it is all of my 3-dimensional stuff that I don't need that I have not yet figured out how to ethically get rid of. Since 2000, excluding cat litter, I have

produced less than one regular-sized paper bag's worth of trash per year." ISJWTBAM(SICDGTAP) is semi-permanently installed in a 5' x 8' x 8' storage unit approximately 25 miles north of San Francisco, CA. It can be re-installed into a much smaller space or expand to fit any space. Total weight is approximately 1000 pounds and averages 21 pounds per box.



It can be purchased for **\$1,000,000**.

Bonus: any/all artists wishing to show with Dodson at this venue (Unit B763, Novato Self Storage) please email jeffreypodson@hotmail.com

REVIEWS

Jennifer Marshall, "Machines & Beauty in the Great Depression", November 10 2008

In an event co-sponsored by the Art History Program, the Design department's James Housefield invited Stanford University's Acting Assistant Professor Jennifer Marshall to present a lecture on "Machines & Beauty in the Great Depression." Marshall's talk stemmed from her doctoral research and is the subject for her forthcoming article, "In Form we Trust," which will be featured in the December 2008 Art Bulletin (90.4). Marshall began her lecture by vivaciously opening up the floor to a conversation about the New York Museum of Modern Art's unconventional exhibiting practices. The new building that opened in 2006 received much media attention for its eccentric design and strange placement of works of art. Marshall linked the present day MoMA back to the original museum housed in a brownstone apartment building. She focused her talk on the 1934 exhibition, "Machine Art.")

Curated at the height of the Great Depression, "Machine Art" was an apparently eccentric showcase of everyday, generic objects made in America. Over 600 items including glass beakers, petri dishes, airplane propellers, pots, pans, a toaster and ball bearings were displayed. The items were taken out of their industrial settings and bought from New York City's general stores to be showcased on pedestals at MoMA. Here these ubiquitous items were heavily polished and cleaned to give them visual drama and, to better impart to them the aura of art, viewers were instructed 'Do Not Touch.' Yet the catalog included pricing and purchasing information for these "avant-garde" objects: the Great Depression, Professor Marshall argued, was the first time in American history when shopping was encouraged and even considered patriotic. At the same time, Machine Art offered certainty in the uncertain world of the Depression.

Curators Alfred Barr and Philip Johnson argued that the machine-made parts used in everyday objects met the abstract ideal of modernist and Platonic form. To reinforce this impression, Ruth Bernhard photographed the exhibition catalog by showcasing these straightforward items shined to perfection and set against a standard plywood background. Ironically, Professor Marshall explained, one of the celebrity judges called in by the "Machine Art" organizers to commentate on the show was the Pragmatist John Dewey, whose aesthetics of contingency and effect could not be more different to the Idealism of MoMA. Melanie Ross (M.A. Candidate, Art History Program)

Sara Velas, "The Velaslavasay Panorama", November 20, 2008

Immersive artworks, technology from a by-gone era, and the museum as an artwork in and of itself. These were the issues addressed by Sarah Velas, the artist/curator who delivered a talk and slide show on November 20th as the first artist in the Art Studio Program Lecture Series of 2008-2009.

Sarah is responsible for the Velaslavasay Panorama in Los Angeles, a building housing a 360 degree panorama painting which currently depicts a frozen arctic landscape entitled *Effulgence Of The North*. Using the panorama as its central attraction, the rest of the building acts as a repository of odd wonders, an exhibition hall, and a theatre space. This is an idea of the museum borrowed from the world's fairs of the late 19th century, which was part side-show attraction, part curio cabinet. In this fashion, the Velaslavasay Panorama becomes an organic structure with a revolving cast of attractions and events, an idea of curating much akin to The Museum of Jurassic Technology, also in Los Angeles.

Sarah's lecture focused largely on her own interest in the panorama, a technology which flourished in the days just prior to film, and which still flourishes in countries like China and Korea in massive scale. She delved into the history of the medium, its origins, and its offshoots such as the moving panoramas of the early part of the 20th century. Often the static panorama pieces acted as a fusion between landscape and narrative, depicting famous battle scenes or events which are frozen in a 360 degree view. The moving panoramas often explored the landscape as a piece of rolling trickery, but occasionally it became a medium for a sequential narrative, such as the recently discovered *Pilgrim's Progress* panorama of Saco, Maine. Sarah's talk ended with a film showing her own current contribution to the medium, *Effulgence of The North*, which is available for viewing at www.panoramaonview.org. Josh Pelletier (M.F.A. Candidate, Art Studio)

DEPARTMENT NEWS

AWARDS AND HONORS

Frances Muenzer

Art Studio undergraduate student Frances Muenzer was awarded the Nettie Weber Scholarship and received the Windgate Fellowship nomination.

Raven Keller

Art Studio undergraduate student Raven Keller was awarded the Nettie Weber Scholarship.

Nicolle Nguyen

Art Studio undergraduate student Nicolle Nguyen received the Windgate Fellowship nomination

Anna Corbett Senior, Art History

Art History undergraduate student Anna Corbett was awarded the 2009 President's Undergraduate Fellowship for her project "*The Grosvenor Gallery: A Marriage Between Art and Business*" under supervisor Professor Catherine Anderson

2nd Annual Art, Art History, and Technocultural Studies Cookie Bake-Off, December 8, 2009

Fortune cookies never lie. Apparently they taste good too. The V.R.F. — the Lisa and Leah baking duo — swept the 2nd Annual Art, Art History and Technocultural Studies Cookie Bake-Off with their Angus Chang inspired fortune cookies. Second place in the non-chocolate chip category went to Jesse's oatmeal cookies and third to Fatema for her peanut butter cookies. In the chocolate chip category, Leah took first place, second place went to Don Yee's Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip cookies, and Lisa took third for her basic batch of Tollhouse. Lynn Roller, Rose Mary Miller, and Aerial Collatz offered up their discriminating palates to judge the event. After nibbling their way through the various entries, the tasting (binging) was opened up to everyone else. Needless to say, a tasty time was had by all.



January's Featured Art History Graduate Students



Laura Hutchison (Art History)

Laura Hutchison is a recent graduate of Hendrix College, a small liberal arts college in Arkansas. She was born and raised a Memphis girl, so she considers herself a connoisseur of both barbecue and the Blues. Laura's interests include cooking (often with butter), traveling, reading as much as she possibly can, and, of course, looking at art. Laura's senior thesis focused on the divine female figure of antiquity, as reinterpreted in female figures of Medieval and Renaissance art.

Laura arrives at the UCD program with a keen interest in classical art, but remains excited about exploring all aspects of Art History.



Alexandra Rea-Baum (Art History)

Alexandra Rea-Baum comes to UC Davis from New York City. She graduated from New York's Union College cum laude in 2006 with departmental honors in Art History and a minor in History. For her honors thesis, she investigated the progression of feminism as viewed through the changing interpretations of Mary Cassatt from the late nineteenth century to present day. Since graduating Union College, she has had a variety of jobs, including waitressing in Florence, Italy as well as working at a gallery in New York's SoHo district. She is interested in continuing her study of American art in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, but hopes to broaden her horizon while studying at UC Davis.

January's Featured Art Studio Graduate Students



Christopher Woodcock (Art Studio)

Born in San Francisco and raised primarily in Sonoma, Christopher graduated in 2003 from the San Francisco Art Institute with a BFA in photography. An outdoor enthusiast and an urban explorer, he is always looking to heighten our contemporary notion of the sublime and expand this vision with his travel companions which include several large view cameras and a small fleet of

bicycles.



Traci Horgen (Art Studio)

Traci moved to Davis from Woody Creek, Colorado. She received a B.F.A. in painting from Hartford Art School at University of Hartford in Connecticut with an additional year of study at the New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture. Traci works in painting, sculpture and drawing and is currently investigating the use of text as symbolic commentary on the state of truth and beauty in contem-

porary culture.



Joshua Pelletier (Art Studio)

B.A., Studio Art, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY
Joshua comes to Davis from the Hudson Valley of New York, where he has lived since 2002 and where he established a small artist's collective called Salt of The Valley as an independent curatorial experiment. As an undergrad, Joshua's main focus was sculpture, but his independent work soon leaned toward an interest in drawing, particularly in the form of pen and ink. Over the years, various projects have dragged him toward large-scale collaborative installation pieces, the most recent of which incorporated elements of sound, performance, and video. Now it seems all of these interests are running parallel, and his studio is filled with drawings which are making their way into the 3-dimensional space, toying with temporal elements, with an experimental element supplied by the viewer.

ALUMNI NEWS

Jayne Yahr M.A. 2004

Jayne is co-curating an exhibition, "Transatlantic: American Artists in Germany," at the Frye Art Museum. The exhibition runs from January 24, 2009—April 26, 2009 and examines the profound impact of Germany on American artists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Jeff Dodson M.F.A. 2004

Jeff's ongoing artwork, *I STILL JUST WANT TO BE A MILLIONAIRE (SO I CAN DO GOOD THINGS AND HELP PEOPLE)* is reviewed on ARTslant by Andy Ritchie: <http://www.artslant.com/sf/articles/show/3359>

Nelleke Beltjens M.F. A.

Nelleke Beltjens exhibited in GROUPSHOW in Cologne Germany

PLEASE WRITE!

To let us know about upcoming Departmental events or shows, to let us know about your recent accomplishments, or to be added to our mailing list contact us at:

visualarts@ucdavis.edu

Submission deadline for February's Newsletter is
26 January 2009