

State Of The Art Gallery 2008

Eight Sculptures on State Street

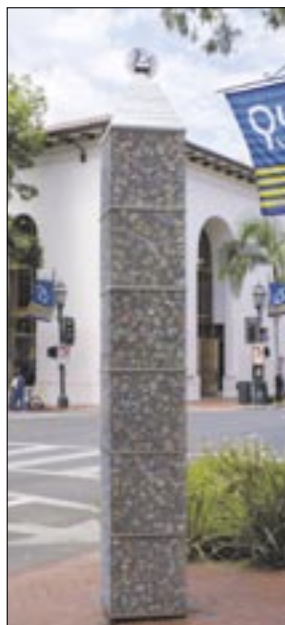
ART ON STATE STREET reminds citizens and visitors alike that Santa Barbara has an artful soul. With the installation this week of eight sculptors by tri-county artists, the Santa Barbara County Arts Commission successfully inaugurated the 5th State of the Art Gallery 2008 Exhibition (SOAG 2008). This project is a unique collaboration between the City and County of Santa Barbara and the Downtown Organization, with funding support from the City of Santa Barbara Redevelopment Agency. The sculptures will be on view through November 15th with an opening reception held on Saturday, August 9th, at 1pm at 1137 State Street across from SBMA. Santa Barbara Mayor Marty Blum will preside over the dedication and Curator Dean Anes will conduct a walk-through tour of the sculptures with the SOAG artists.

This year the 2008 finalists were chosen by Curator Dean Anes, the director of Acme Gallery in Los Angeles. Nine regional artists, **Richard Aber, Jeff Elings, Ed Inks, Bill Malis, Rafael Perea de la Cabada & Matthew Woodford, Jeff Sanders, Helle Scharling-Todd and Nathan Snyder**, created sculptures for State Street, in the heart of the Cultural Arts District. Anes said, "Art making can be a very solitary endeavor but once a work or sculpture is complete the artist does not want only familiar eyes to see it, they want it to be shared and experienced by many. Whereas public spaces, and often our lives, feel so regulated, State of the Art Gallery 2008 exhibition provides residents and visitors to Santa Barbara the wonderful experience, through public art, of the unexpected."

Rita Ferri, Public Arts Coordinator and



Enshrined Detritus: Open Frame Series #3 by **Bill Malis** is his largest sculpture to date and resembles a Japanese character or symbol. He lives and makes art in La Conchita. His sculptures are made with "industrial discards" and "organic decay" which is most often found on the public beaches close to his working residence.



Annuit Coeptis (Trans: He approves our undertakings) by **Jeff Sanders**, a frequent fabricator and collaborator who has worked with many important American artists. A long time resident of Ojai, Sander's sculptures and art works often use humor for social and political commentary. The steel and aluminum obelisk is reminiscent of not just the Washington monument, but more ominously, a watch tower.

Curator of Collections for the County Arts Commission, who organized the SOAG 2008 exhibition shared, "Many people will be surprised by the breadth and diversity of art practices of our regional artists in this State of the Art Gallery 2008 Exhibition. Area artists have pushed themselves to create something that will delight, challenge, or inform everyone who visits State Street. In some way each artist's sculpture will make the familiar landscape new again."

State of the Art Gallery 2008 exhibition will also collaborate with Off-Axis in October, a month-long immersion of exhibitions, public openings, artist interventions, tours, lectures, and cross-over events that will be a source of discovery. The Santa Barbara Museum of Art will create a pod cast of SOAG 2008 available in October. On 1st Thursday, October 2nd, 5



Persistence of the Unnecessary was created by a multi-media collaborative team, **Rafael Perea de la Cabada** and **Matthew Woodford** who pooled their creative resources to give State Street a monolith of consumerism for the new century. The steel tower's frame holds "desired" goods inside. Viewers can look but are not able to touch the cuddly and colorful plush contents. The sculpture mirrors store windows and has fun with the associations.



The Birth of Bacchus is by Professor of sculpture, **Ed Inks**, who has worked at SBCC since 1991. His recent work explores some of sculpture's roots by crafting large-scale vessels. Working this time with bronze rods, Inks has created the cage-like frame of a vessel; vessels being the most ancient sculptural form. The work is a combination of opposites. Suggestive of a heavy and mysterious form, it is instead open, welcoming and light. It brings to mind the relics of antiquity while being composed of contemporary fabricated materials with a modern means of metal working and welding.

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- Curator **Dean Anes**

to 7pm, the general public is invited to walk State Street and meet and greet each sculptor.

The State of the Art Committee, which initiated the review and approval process, is comprised of sixteen city and art organization members including a Santa Barbara Council liaison. This exhibition is the direct result of the SB community's vision and commitment to placing public art in the heart of the Cultural Arts District and funded by a grant from the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Santa Barbara, and Santa Barbara Beautiful; support from Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (MTD), Betty and Bob Klausner and Betty Wells, and the cooperation of the Downtown Organization.



Our World Breaking Open is by **Nathan Snyder**, a native of Hawaii who moved to SB to be a part of the art community and apprentice with Montecito sculptor Aristides Demetrios. He is a graduate of the Univ of Hawaii and is now an on-site technician for the foundry at SBCC. His sculpture is made of gleaming stainless steel, which represents the spherical symbol of the globe and resembles a puzzle or lock-like form with the presence of power and strength as it sits on a solid base.



Gooto is by **Jeff Elings**, who has worked in the diverse fields of engineering, robotics, organic farming, and mechanics. His interests seem to have coalesced and resulted in sculptural forms seemingly from another world. The massive steel skinned *Gooto*, utilizing innovative fabrication techniques, is both industrial and organic.



Stupa by **Richard Aber** is a tall, uncomplicated form, like a golden torch, and big enough to be seen from the heavens. The coated canvas is an unusual material for outdoor sculpture acting like a skin or scales and yet is reminiscent of roof shingles used in building. The title refers to the Buddhist structures erected at sacred sites.



Color Molecules is by Helle Scharling-Todd, a native of Denmark who resides in Ventura. Helle Scharling-Todd has a variety of art works in public spaces but nationally and internationally. For many years her art practice consisted of stained glass and mosaics. More recently she has been making metal sculptures. Scharling-Todd has blown-up the microscopic world of molecular structures and added her own touches of color and whimsy, inviting viewers to ponder this mysterious world in a much lighter fanciful way.