

## Santa Barbara Contemporary Art Forum: Jean-Pierre Hébert's *Drawing With the Mind*

By ANDRIA WATSON / CASA

**WITH MATHEMATICAL LANDSCAPES**, a computer-driven robot that produces images in sand, and pulses of sound that form drawings on water, Jean-Pierre Hébert explores a web of infinite possibilities of computer-generated art, and proves to be a true pioneer in his solo exhibition, *Drawing with the Mind*, at the Santa Barbara Contemporary Art Forum (CAF), on view through November 9th.

"Viewers can expect to see two new things from me at this show. I have new works on paper; those are my digital drawings that are the largest I've ever done," explained Hébert. "There is also a very special water piece, whose image is created by sound waves."

A Santa Barbara local since 1984, Hébert is mining the fields of engineering, visual art, music, spirituality, and digital technology. This exhibition presents newly commissioned works in digital media, kinetic sculptures, digital video

animations, and large format prints.

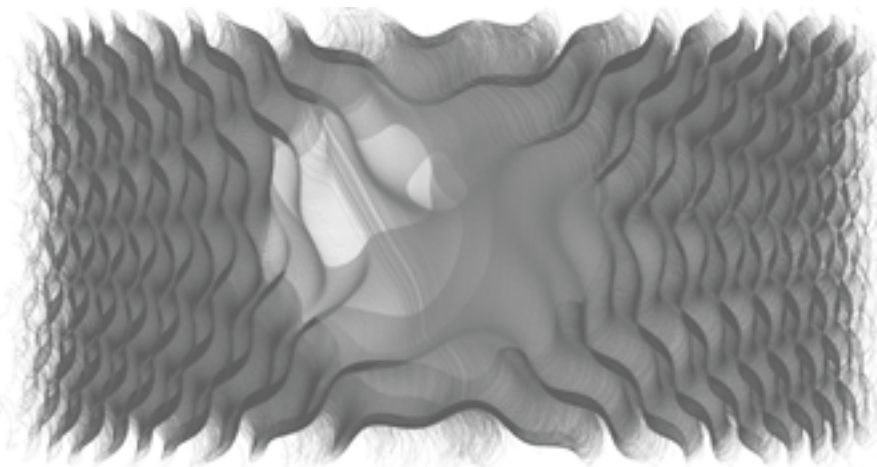
"I was exposed to geometric art at a young age, and I remember thinking how different it was from other art I saw," shared Hébert. "With the aid of a computer, my brain is allowed to run freely, creating endless possibilities that I simply couldn't create with only two hands."

In the past 30 years, Hébert has become one of our digital generation's most sophisticated and accomplished masters, linking old and new disciplines, simple and complex technologies, and the cultures of the East and West.

Fascinated by the sublime world of nature's mathematical algorithms and inspired by Chagal, Picasso, and others working near his childhood home in France, Hébert is one of the world's first artists to co-opt computer code as an essential art tool. He uses programming languages to drive electronic mechanical devices to assist him in making intensely beautiful, meditative, math and physics-based works



Jean-Pierre Hébert



*Bright Wavelets 4, 2008* by Jean-Pierre Hébert, 76.75" x 38.25"

on paper, sand, water, copper, and other materials. Exploring what is now known as "computational drawing," Hébert composes computer code to realize mesmerizing images on a variety of plotters. Seeing the computer as a "tool for the mind" and his plotter as a replacement for his hand, he forms a direct connection between his mind and finished works of art.

"I'm enjoying my progression with large-scale drawings," shared Hébert. "I've always tried to achieve something new and different, that is well-made, with a structure and texture that is totally independent."

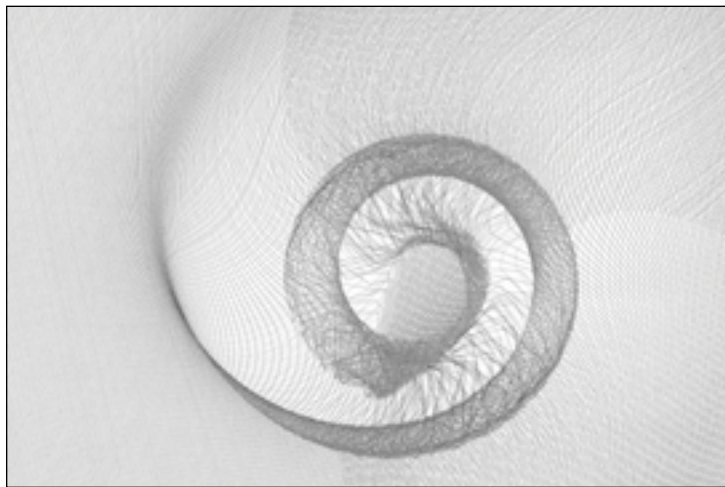
Hébert was born in 1939, in Calais, France. He spent summers with his grandparents in Vence, a village near Provence, where he frequented *Galerie Les Mages* (later *Galerie Chave*). At the gallery and around the neighborhood, he often saw new work from the avant-garde artists such as Man Ray, Max Ernst, Chagall, Picasso, and Léger. In 1984 he moved to the U.S., at which point he devoted himself wholly to creating art. Since 1989, his work has been shown extensively in the U.S. and Europe.

Hébert is also currently exhibiting at Marcia Burt Studio, located at 517

Laguna Street through October 4th. Past exhibitions include: *Siggraph*; *Sans lever la plume*, *Galerie Chave*, Venice; *Alien Intelligence*, and *Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art*, Helsinki.

Hébert serves as the Artist-in-Residence at the Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics at UCSB, where he curates exhibits and the imagery database, pursues personal research, and has occasional shows of his own. He is also the Artist-in-Residence for the Allosphere Project at the California NanoSystems Institute (CNSI). Upcoming shows will be held at Block Museum at Northwestern University, Evanston, and the Pratt Institute Manhattan Gallery. Hébert is the recipient of a Pollock-Krasner Award.

For information, call CAF at 966-5373 or visit [jeanpierrehebert.com](http://jeanpierrehebert.com)



*Light Blue Eddies 3, (detail) 2008* by Jean-Pierre Hébert, 76.75" x 38.25"

