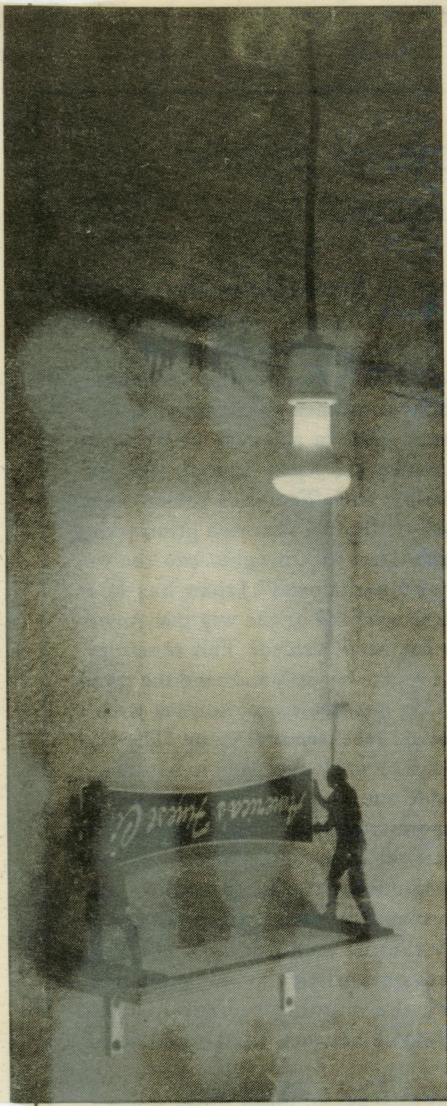


The Preeminence of Creativity

IN/SITE 92 at various locations in

San Diego/Tijuana region

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Above top: Jay Johnson, *Micro Installation*, 7" x 12" x 4",
at Installation, San Diego

Above bottom: Antony Gormley,
detail of *Field*, 1991, terra-cotta,
at the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, La Jolla.

Above right: Marcia Olson, *3,584 Patterns & Counting*, at Boehm Gallery, Palomar College, San Marcos.

What kept appearing was the silhouette of a man and woman who held a red banner inscribed with the words, "America's Finest City." On closer observation, one noticed that the figures stood on an engraved base: "Despite Where We Are. We Make Art." This serial installation by San Diego artist Jay Johnson appeared at various venues, physically and theoretically asserting itself as the sculptural logo of the premiering San Diego/Tijuana art extravaganza *IN/SITE 1992*, its incisive wit parodying one of the most central issues of the festival.

Throughout September and October, this ambitious and sprawling event featured installation art by forty-nine artists at twenty-two venues. Sponsored by San Diego's nonprofit collective Installation, which has been quietly promoting site-specific art in the San Diego region for more than a decade, this new event was conceived by Installation arts advisory board members Mark Quint and Ernest Silva. In other lives, Quint is co-owner with Michael Krichman of the preeminent art gallery and residency program Quint Krichman Projects in La Jolla, and Silva is an artist and professor at the University of California, San Diego. And *IN/SITE* is anything but quiet.

Installation's managing director Anna Gonzales suggests that the real excitement of the event comes from the synergy which has been created between arts

organizations. Culling into one event this region's often separate factions of commercial, academic and nonprofit venues, as well as incorporating nontraditional sites such as book stores, coffee houses and even a beach, *IN/SITE* attempts to "ambush all kinds of audiences," as Silva puts it.

In general, installations work to recontextualize our understanding of art, deconstructing that rarified perception of art as something that belongs only to privileged contexts or places. Playing with the element of surprise, it creates, locates and/or finds art in unexpected places. The *IN/SITE* extravaganza explores these notions by investigating not only current artistic questions, but by reexamining paradigms of thought which have long insisted that certain cities or communities are in fact more privileged contexts for creating and viewing art than others. The notion of regional or provincial geographic communities, after all, historically has cast a shadow over San Diego/Tijuana artistic accomplishments despite the existence of a small but top-flight museum of modern art, a strong graduate arts department at UCSD, some outstanding private commercial galleries, and a small but strong community of politically active artists concerned with border issues.

Confronting apprehensions of place and location directly, *IN/SITE* organizers mapped six distinct art locales with a suggested path of exploration from San Marcos, La Jolla and Claremont in the north, through downtown San Diego to Chula Vista and Tijuana, Mexico, in the south, or just as feasibly the reverse. This definition of territory functioned conceptually to unify what are often considered as separate destinations, to forge a distinct identity for the San Diego/Tijuana art world that is at once comprehensive and attractive for its promise of artistic exchange and synthesis implied by a definition of territory that crosses borders.

In what was an uneven but compelling juxtaposition, internationally exhibited artists like Noboru Tsubaki, Antony Gormley and Ulf Rollof were presented with regionally recognized, mid-career artists and a group of vigorous younger artists that are emerging from UCSD's graduate art school. For all of them, context was a central issue. Some, such as Gormley, Judit Hersko,

Adolfo Davila, Marcia Olson and Nanette Yannuzzi Macias, built installations that theatrically controlled the space they occupied, concisely directing viewer attention to the cosmic or political issues that ranged from concern for the unborn to past and present human injustices. Others, such as Rollof, Cora Boyd, David Jurist, Melissa Smedley and Olav Westphalen, worked with given contexts to create resonance between extant space and the subject of their work, emphasizing notions of chance encounter and viewer participation. What it all suggested is that art can occur—out of creation, collaboration, or both—just about anywhere.

On a beach in Tijuana, Swedish artist Ulf Rollof has been working on *Abandonado II*, a site-specific work that deals with the subject of children and education. Internationally exhibited in both *Documenta* and the *São Paulo Bienal*, Rollof's work has generated so much excitement in Mexico that government officials will be present at the inauguration of Rollof's work that was granted a permanent, instead of temporary, site location when government officials learned of the intended work. Reaching towards broader audiences and contexts, Rollof's installation is crossing into territory that *IN/SITE* organizers admit they had only envisioned as possible. Appropriately enough, then, even though *IN/SITE 92* is not yet complete, plans are already underway for the planned biennial event to be even grander in 1994.

IN/SITE 92 was a series of installations held in September and October throughout the San Diego/Tijuana region, including community colleges, public and private spaces, the Centro Cultural de la Raza, the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, and Installation.

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