

Inaugural Speech

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you very much.

On behalf of the participating artists—who have, actually, been seated way in the back . . . Hi! [The speaker waves.]

Good evening and welcome to inSITE97.

As an art exhibition, inSITE97 is focused on the exploration and activation of public space.

I think I can speak for all of the artists when I say that this is an extremely important aim. Especially now, when here and throughout the Americas all aspects of the public sphere are under attack, when the public sector is being downsized, public services privatized, public space enclosed, public speech controlled, and public goods of all kinds exchanged for the currency of private goals, be they prestige, privilege, power, and profits.

Public art cannot forestall the forces foreclosing on our public lives. But it can remind us of what we are losing, like the casual democracy of everyday encounters, when we find ourselves equal before places and things that needn't be paid for and can't be purchased, or the practical democracy of forums of public speech, where differences of status do not determine our places at the podium.

All the more reason why it is such a special opportunity for me to address you here this evening.

This is a perfect example of what makes inSITE97 so rewarding for its artists. As an exhibition of public art works and community engagement projects, it gives us the opportunity to address people who would otherwise never stop to look or listen. There

are all of you here this evening, but that's just the beginning. There are the tens of thousands of people expected to tour the exhibition sites. There are the hundreds of thousands who will just happen upon our work, unawares, in their parks and plazas, on their streets.

You will encounter our work as you walk along beaches, sit in cafes, go to elementary schools or see adult films, wait for buses, get tattoos, fish, cruise and, of course, cross the border.

You are residents, tourists, students, sailors, migrants; you are young and old, gay and straight, U.S., Mexican, and Chicano; you are upper- middle- and working class, you are unemployed; you live in walled estates, gated communities, condominiums, trailer parks, shanties, and doorways.

inSITE97 depends on the active involvement of its audiences. You are our audience this evening, and it is with great enthusiasm that I thank you for your participation.

Finally, I think that I can speak for all of the artists when I express my gratitude for the tremendous support that we have received from the exhibition's organizers.

Thanks to them, we will achieve a new level of recognition—locally, nationally and internationally, within the art world, and beyond.

[The speaker turns to her right.]

Thank you.

[She turns back to the audience.]

Thank you very much.

Thank you.

And thank you, Andrea, for that thoughtful introduction.

As one of the exhibition's organizers, I can say that Andrea is truly exemplary of the artists participating in this event. An internationally recognized and emerging

talent, she has delved into the commotion and poetic pause of this discontinuous urban sprawl, probing, digging, tracking, traversing and intervening in public space, discerning domains of dialogue and reverie.

And, Andrea is only one of over 50 artists and authors from 11 countries participating in our exhibition and events. As a group they represent the most influential cultural figures of the Americas. It is their extraordinary achievements that we celebrate here this evening.

We find ourselves this evening in a restlessly metaphoric place. It's a place of conflict and contradiction, disparity and division, rift and entanglements, all poised at a juncture of economies, labor forces, languages, artistic cultures and urban communities.

It is a matrix of forces which tends to strain relationship and threatens to pull us apart.

This exhibition demonstrates the enormous potential in working together. The participation and support of so many federal, state, and municipal agencies, national foundations, and international corporations demonstrates a shared belief that the arts are a uniquely powerful means of promoting understanding across borders, of building bridges between groups and discovering common ground in a multicultural and increasingly transnational society.

This is indeed the terrain in which the new arrangements of "global culture" are being formed.

It isn't possible to thank all of the many people who have contributed to this event. But we do want to say a special word of thanks to our board of trustees. They are a deeply devoted group of individuals who have generously volunteered their time, knowledge and wealth, networking, promoting, opening their homes for exclusive parties.

Who could forget that evening!

A black-tie benefit gala that equaled the raw creativity, exuberance and international flavor of the exhibition itself. There was music, dancing, live performance and superb cuisine, all in a lavish and dramatic setting.

And that's just one example of the many ways that our trustees have marshaled their extensive resources in support of our project. In their long and distinguished careers they have served as directors, executive vice presidents, state appointees, partners, brokers, planners, director generals, secretary generals, consul generals, vice- presidents of development, co-founders, chairmen, owners, significant shareholders, registered principals, chief financial officers, chief executive officers, and presidents throughout the Americas.

[The speaker turns to her right.]

To our trustees I would like to say, we are all deeply in your debt, and I thank you.

[She turns back to the audience.]

Thank you.

Thank you so much and thank you from the bottom of my heart for this. . . .

I am privileged.

I am truly privileged.

Working with such an accomplished and multi-talented group of artists and art experts has indeed been a rare and rewarding experience. This warm evening is an apt metaphor for how I feel about these wonderful creative people.

I am very proud of them and what they have done for us.

For us, this event is a unique opportunity to step up to the world stage. We want people to realize that there is a lot going on down here.

We're home to many internationally respected institutions, to Nobel Prize winners, authors, artists, celebrities, custom ocean-view homes, boutiques, luxury, charm, sophistication, and jet-setters from around the globe.

If you don't believe me, just look around this evening. This is not your regular crowd. This is very cutting-edge. This is very much big time, on an international level!

We are not provincial.

We're the gateway to the Pacific and Latin America. We're the information hub of NAFTA. We're a major center for high-tech, software, media and financial services.

We should also be a major center for art.

Our binational strength can help to get us there.

But first we have to put aside parochial interests and realize that our power lies in the relationships we forge and the common goals we establish.

Citizenship and national origin have never stood for much in our cosmopolitan community. In this new age of global culture and capital, they mean less and less.

As more and more of our Latin American friends are joining our museum boards and country clubs, and purchasing estates in our neighborhoods, we are discovering that we have more in common than art, golf and horsemanship. There are also political and economic interests that we share. Through cooperative projects such as this we are testing the soil for new hybrids; planting seeds which will blossom into beautiful joint ventures, election victories, and influence on policy throughout the hemisphere.

Of course, we could not approach these goals without the support of governments here and abroad. That is why I want to say a special word of thanks to our friends at city, state and federal agencies who have helped to make this effort a success.

Representing our public sponsors this evening, I am delighted to introduce a man who was elected and overwhelmingly re-elected by a small minority of the voting-age population.

Throughout his career, he has shown optimism and courage.

He is the national leader in the drive to stop illegality.

He has made tough choices necessary, cutting our income taxes.

His toughness was proven yet again when, recovering from a burst appendix, he was wheeled onto the floor to cast a tie-breaking vote on budget reduction.

He enjoys reading history and cheering for the Chargers.

I think that we all owe him a vote of thanks.

[The speaker turns to her right.]

Thank you.

[She turns back to the audience.]

(Applause.) Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you.

Won't you all sit down, please?

Thank you very, very much. Thank you.

It is a high honor and a rare privilege for me to join you in kicking off this tremendous effort.

And, I have to say that am quite intrigued with many of the art projects that I have seen so far.

But I can only begin by acknowledging my wife. A "career volunteerist," she is a shining example of just how much one woman can achieve—and achieve with grace, with style, and with class. She's been so active, in fact, that I haven't seen her in months. It is wonderful to have her with us here this evening.

Gayle and I are strong supporters of the arts, and we applaud you for your efforts to bring quality art reflecting our diverse cultures into all of our lives. It is our exciting

and distinctive art that keeps us on "the cutting edge." And there is no better place to be on "the cutting edge" than here.

Our region is a diverse region, populated by many different kinds of people. There are people who work in our fields and flower shops, hotels and factories. There are people who vote. There are people who pay taxes. There are people who establish foundations. There are people who send their children to public schools. There are people who vote.

And yet, despite this diversity, we are held together by our belief in diversity. We are devoted to that myth. It's our myth. It's all that many of us have.

Throughout our history, we have always answered adversity with a dream.

West! over desolate prairie and frozen mountains, we risked our lives crossing the mighty, until one day we found ourselves gazing down from the heights upon a golden valley of promise, inviting us to partake of the good life.

Quality communities, quality lifestyles, prime location. Benches and landscaping. Family-friendly neighborhoods and vibrant, multi-purpose districts. California Casual, Renaissance England and Palazzo Italiano in 49 different colors.

Multilevel. Stunning.

Within the next three years, no single race or ethnic group will make up a majority of this region's population.

We know what we'll look like. Just look around at this crowd tonight!

Yes! That's right!

I'm the redneck son of a poor dirt farmer! But even I can understand the benefits of cultural diversity our new global society.

With just 5% of the world's population, but 20% of the world's income, we must sell to the other 95% just to maintain our standard of living.

Because we are drawn from every culture on earth, we are uniquely positioned to do it.

We will meet the challenge of building the first society to embrace every ethnic group on the planet.

We will share a common future.

We will invent that future—and export it.

We are now the world leader in television set production and golf course design. 117 golf courses in our city alone. That's good news!

We have made your lives more livable, with tougher penalties for graffiti taggers. We now prohibit young people from loitering in public places. There's the Juvenile Curfew Enforcement Policy and the Anti-Cruising Ordinance. We confine demonstrations to parking lots!

We listened to what you wanted. We heard what you said: Stop the raw sewage flows that have plagued our residents!

We are now an advocate for business, not an adversary. We cut business taxes in half and then in half again.

Ours is a growth economy, built on the low-wage labor of people motivated to perform. With little or no unemployment and welfare benefits, a job is their only chance for survival. That equals a savings to you of up to 80% on your labor costs.

Our success is because of you. You: business, hotel and restaurant owners, investors and professionals.

Legitimate members of the community.

You are the ones who have made it happen and I thank you.

Our corporate sponsors also deserve a special word of thanks for our success.

Representing our corporate sponsors this evening, I have the honor to introduce to you a man whose outstanding leadership at the helm of a remarkable organization is deserving of special praise. Thanks to his vision, his competitive spirit, his tenacity and his uncompromising commitment to excellence, he has made this flagship Enterprise a global champion.

We are proud to count him as one of us.

[The speaker turns to her right.]

Thank you.

[She turns back to the audience.]

Thank you. Good morning. And welcome to those of you who are from out of town. I'm happy to see so many of my old friends here today. It's also exciting to see so many new faces.

I must say that I swell with pride and satisfaction in your accomplishments. Too many of us have been told, "You can't, you shouldn't, you won't." But you found a way around those obstacles. You can, you should and you did!

Increasingly, as public expenditures are reduced, corporate philanthropy is being called on to support the building blocks of our diverse communities. We view our contributions as an investment in regions where our company has a presence.

The globalization of culture makes this an especially favorable time for us. Films, TV programs, music, sports and classic products are proliferating and spreading around the world.

We must maximize our tie-ins with culture.

We may be the world's largest, but the world market still offers tremendous potential for growth.

We must act aggressively, making inroads with a strong presence and significant investment.

But in our zeal for global success, we must also be willing to discover and appreciate the uniqueness of each market. In this we have been able to draw on the diversity of our work force, people who understand other cultures and who speak other languages.

We have hired local people. We have developed local partnerships. We clearly picked the right partner in Mexico, in Brazil. Argentina is growing rapidly. Our partner is the leader in Chile.

And, as personal incomes rise in developing countries, more and more people will be able to spend money on "luxury" items, like ours.

We will work to transform regional identities, indigenous cultures and stable communities into differentiated markets.

We will work to create the future that we imagine. A future in which everywhere around the globe, we will symbolize the good things in life.

We are the world . . . 's beer company—"la compañía cervecera del mundo."

Gracias!

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