

One speaks of site-works and installations as though they're as distinct from painting and sculpture as painting and sculpture are from one another. As a result, major exhibitions that focus solely on these genres seem perfectly natural and appropriate. inSITE94 is just this kind of undertaking, having dedicated itself forthrightly to installation and site-specific art in the San Diego/Tijuana area.

It's large in scale, and what constitutes installation and site-specific art, at least within the context of inSITE, is equally expansive, but also problematic. Almost all of the work in this year's exhibition could be moved to other locations with little or no effect on appearance or interpretation, and in that sense cannot be considered truly site-specific. As to whether or not individual pieces can be regarded as installation, the work in inSITE suggests that the definition depends primarily on scale; work approaching or exceeding the size of a Volkswagen is acceptable, while work closer in size to a bread box, unless a lot of it appears together, is not. If a work, or some part of it, hangs from the ceiling or needs to be removed with a broom, then it is somehow

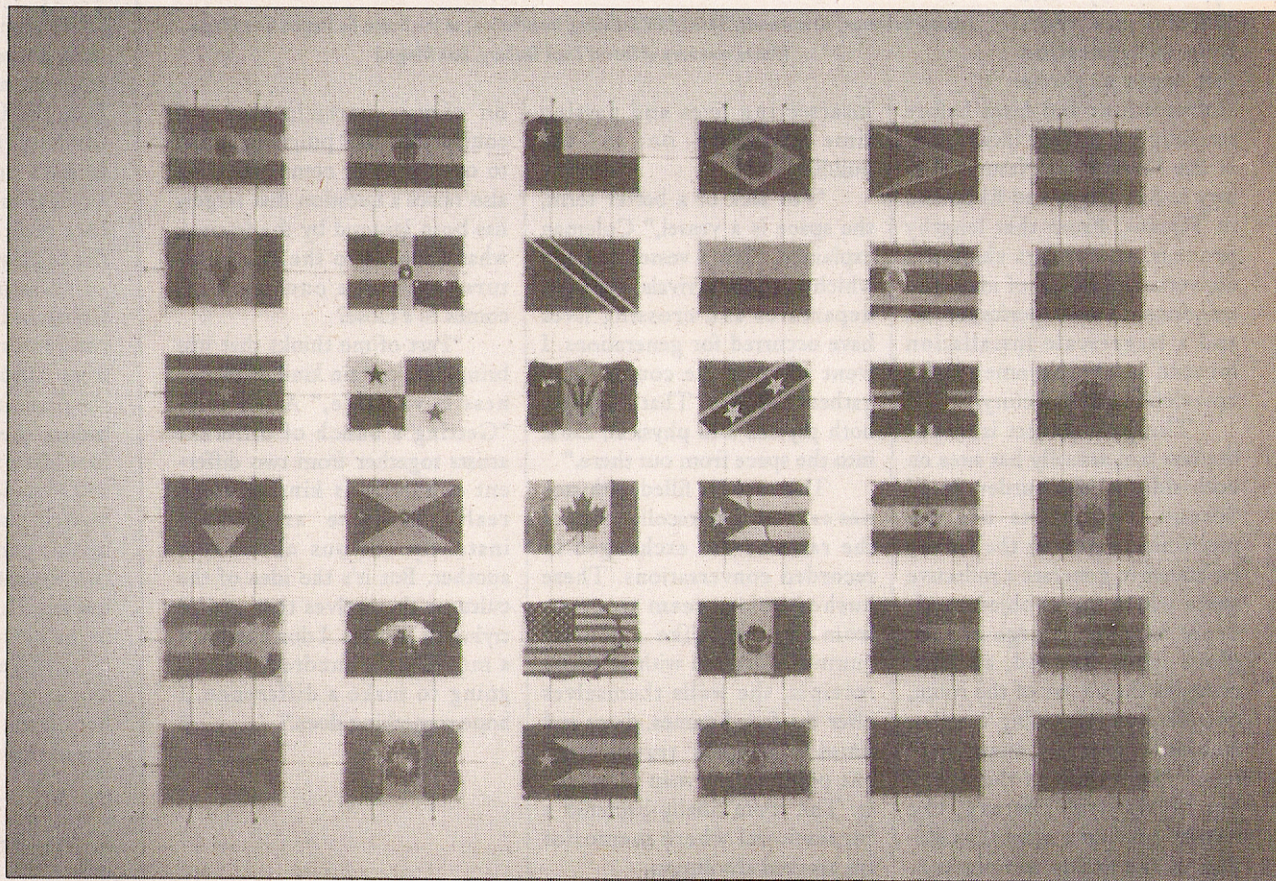
transformed from sculpture into installation, and, of course, works of this sort have been included in inSITE94.

In regard to inSITE's binationality, perhaps the organizers have acted wisely by not overemphasizing it. Instead, decisions concerning border-specific issues and controversies were left entirely to the participating artists. As a result, the exhibition is neither avowedly binor nor multi-cultural. Nonetheless, many points of view emerge and many current topics—the border being one of them—are openly addressed. This is appropriate, given that inSITE's focus is not on content but on form.

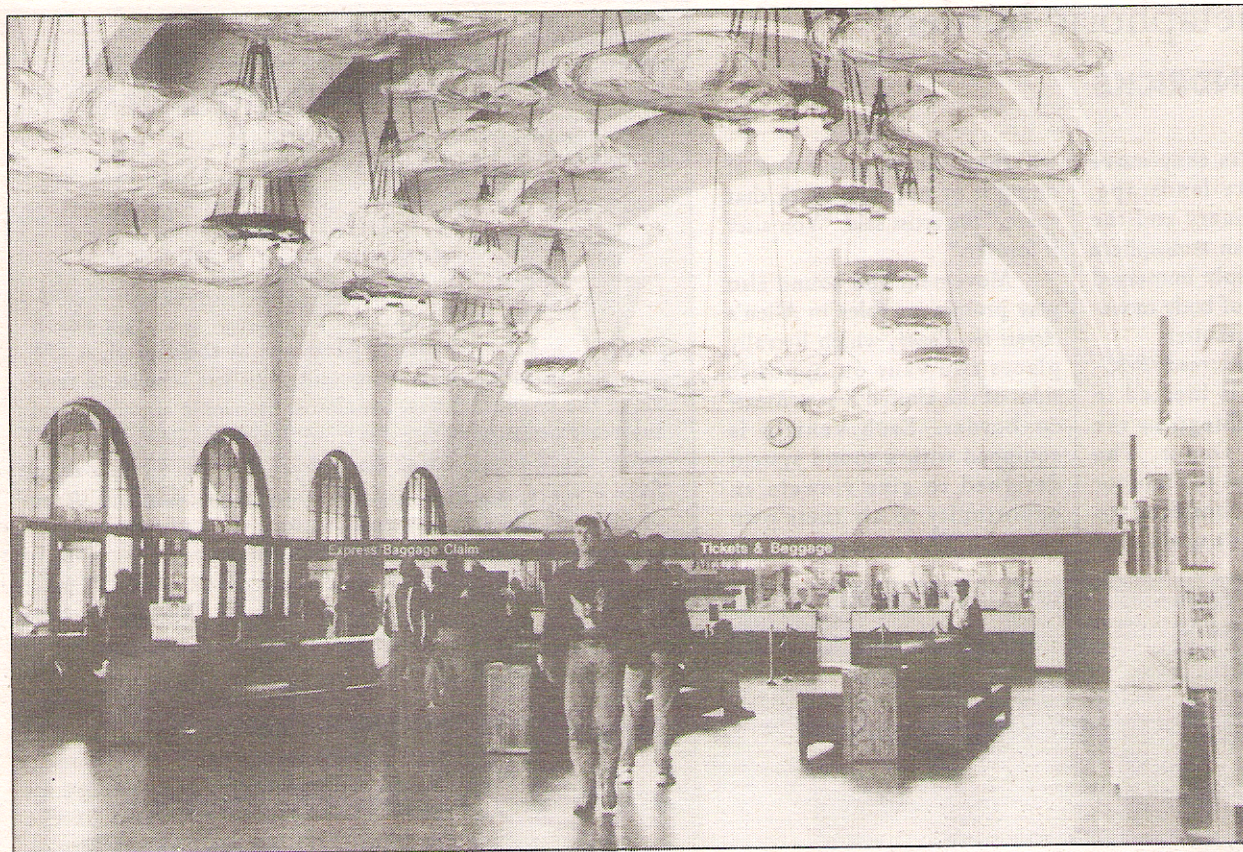
And what a form inSITE

proves to be.

Installations appear in so many different places that an effort to find even half of them quickly becomes a jitterbuggy adventure: you look at art, and then dash off to look for the



Yukinori Yanagi, *America, 1994, flags*, at the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego.



Yolanda Gutiérrez, *De paso*, at the Santa Fe Depot, San Diego.

Jitterbuggy adventure: a trip through inSITE94

BY DAVID LEWINSON

next place to look at art, with the possibility that it might be in the next block, the next town, or the next country. This back-and-forth-in-and-out encounter with art soon becomes disconcerting, even dizzying. However, it also may lead to a remarkable experience, a thorough blurring of the line (the border, if you will) between art and non-art. Everywhere becomes inSITE, because the exhibition, finally, does not end when you walk out of a venue. Unless you're going home, you're still in inSITE, even if you're on the freeway

or waiting in line to cross the border in order to get from one inSITE venue to another.

Functionally, this is hardly different than going from the Egyptian wing to the Medieval galleries at the Met, except that

the corridors here are not the sedate hallways of a museum, but the sidewalks, traffic, office towers, shacks, pushcarts, bridges, trash, hills, ships, bull rings and apartments which are the real landscape of inSITE's chosen region.

As one moves among the details of this landscape, it becomes apparent that inSITE, with only a few exceptions, has touched none of them. Instead, it clings closely to the world of cultural institutions: schools, civic buildings, parks, museums—all of which are predisposed sympathetically to inSITE's project.

This is surprising for two reasons. First, it represents a missed opportunity for artists to work outside of the confines (the borders) of the art world, and so realize the potential to reach a much wider audience. Second, it suggests that inSITE's organizers have somehow failed to recognize that the exhibition as a whole constitutes an installation, or sitework, in its own right. It is in these areas, perhaps, that inSITE, as it continues to build on this year's valuable, ambitious effort, should focus additional attention as it contemplates its future.

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