

AT THE GALLERIES / LEAH OLLMAN

Renewed Energy and Ingenuity at Installation

SAN DIEGO—Installation Gallery has launched its portion of the sprawling IN/SITE 92 program of artists' installations quite literally on site. On each floor of the Mission Brewery Plaza where Installation now resides, an artist has transformed raw office space into the space of memory, history, fantasy and social critique. The results, though mixed, are an encouraging indicator of Installation's restored energy and of the feasibility and ingenuity of the IN/SITE concept.

By far the most absorbing of the four installations are Daphne Ruff's "Ruff-Wear," on the ground floor, and Nina Katchadourian's "30 years 21 minutes 17 tapes,"

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on the third floor.

Ruff, who received her master's degree this year from UC San Diego, outfits her allotted space in the manner of a clothing design studio. Completed garments rest on hangers and other forms, and in the rear of the room materials lie strewn about the floor, among scissors and papers.

This pseudo-studio could hardly be mistaken for the real thing, however, because Ruff's garments are rendered from the most unlikely of materials, including industrial rubber, rusty nails, bubble wrap packing material, cardboard and staples. One outfit is displayed on a traditional dressmaker's form, but another is draped over a tank of the sort used to hold oxygen or helium. Plastic flowers adorn one dress, and another is made entirely of the flimsy plastic sheaths used by dry cleaning establishments.

"Ruff-Wear" is exactly that, with its collars of nails

GALLERY

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and picket fence casings. The artist's punning last name helps describe her mock products, but it glosses over the disturbing undercurrent of her show. These clothes spoof the fashion industry by carrying it to extremes. Through clothes that are blatantly synthetic—even dangerous—the artist shows exactly how arbitrary and inhumane the fashion industry can be. She challenges the notion of clothing as protection and adornment, offering instead a vision of clothing as aggressive act. She sneers at feminizing fashions and snubs—albeit gently, with humor—those who subscribe to them.

Katchadourian, a graduate student at UCSD, has created a beautifully evocative oral history and visual autobiography through her video installation, "30 years 21 minutes 17 tapes." On an unfinished mezzanine in the brewery complex, she has constructed an intimate viewing booth, lined with white, translucent scrim. Inside a bench sits before a television monitor and a shelf of tapes.

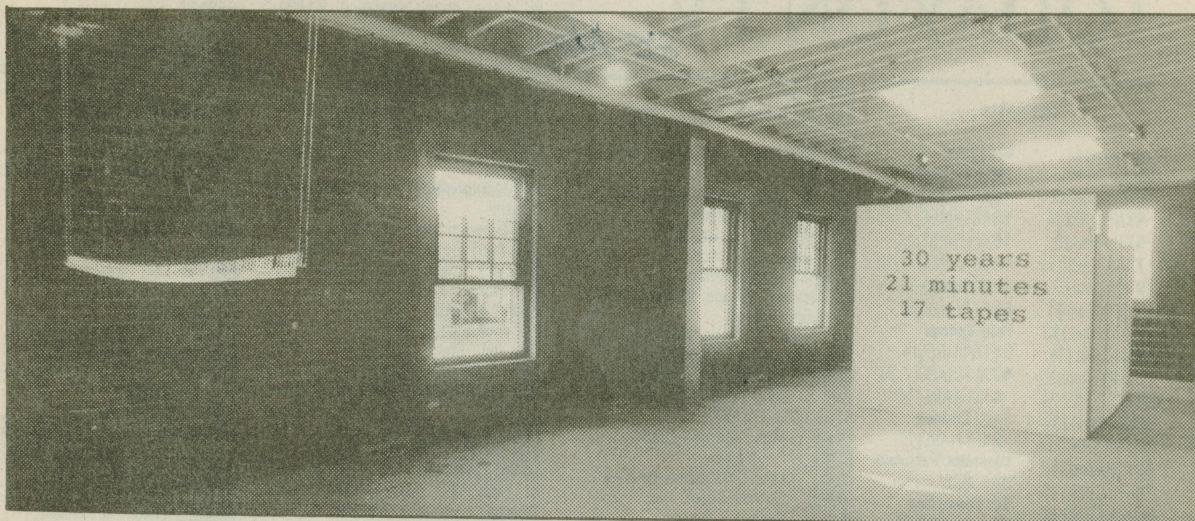
Each tape lasts only a minute or so and affords an abbreviated, condensed glimpse into a facet of Katchadourian's childhood or family history.

In "How They Met in Five Sentences," the artist's Finnish mother describes how she met and married the artist's Armenian father. Another tape with the same title gives the father's version of the tale. Both are accompanied by footage of Lebanon, where the courtship took place, and snippets showing a couple cavorting in the woods.



Daphne Ruff takes aim at the fashion industry with her vision of clothing as aggressive act.

LOS ANGELES TIMES



Nina Katchadourian's autobiographical video installation "30 years 21 minutes 17 tapes," at the

Mission Brewery Plaza, includes vignettes of the artist's life like disconnected pages of a journal.

Photos by BARBARA MARTIN / Los Angeles Times



VINCE COMPAGNONE / Los Angeles Times

One of the mirrors in Cora Boyd's installation, "Operettas on the Head of a Pen," at ABC Books/Art + Architecture downtown.

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All But 1 Installation Falter in IN/SITE '92

SAN DIEGO—Installation art draws much of its strength from dissolving boundaries between other media. It makes collaborators of painting, sculpture, photography and even performance art, eliminating the hierarchical distinctions between them (the notion that

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painting, for instance, is a superior art form) and channeling their individual attributes into one common effort. Boundaries break down, too, between viewers and the thing viewed. Observers may become participants when art and audience share the same space.

When that space is the space of everyday life, rather

than the rarefied realm of the museum or gallery, installations often take on an even more intriguing dimension. The organizers of IN/SITE '92, the current city-wide program of temporary installations by local artists, recognized the fertile possibilities of staging installations in such unexpected contexts as bookstores and office buildings, and these venues complement the more conventional list of galleries and museums on the IN/SITE schedule.

Cora Boyd's moving installation, "Operettas on the Head of a Pen," is one IN/SITE offering that fully exploits the potential of its site, ABC Books/Art + Architecture downtown. Unfortunately, several others take their sites for granted and fail to use their unusual settings as impetus for unusual experiences.

Steve Ilott's "Travels," a series of vague ink sketches on yellow legal paper, hangs inauspiciously, in fact nearly invisibly, above a bookcase in the already richly cluttered atmosphere of D. G. Wills Bookstore in La Jolla. Among wagon wheels, skulls, sleds, scales and profuse memorabilia permanently strewn about the store, the artist's abstracted impressions of people and places feel undistinguished. The drawings have energy, but they are overshadowed by the abundance of equally energetic ideas and images that fill the store.

At Java Coffeehouse/Gallery downtown, Luis Stand has drawn excerpts from maps of the Mediterranean and Latin America directly on two of the walls. Upon these, he has mounted painted shelves holding flowers planted in coffee and tomato cans. On one wall, a less readily identifiable map is punctuated by three vases of red carnations mounted on it. While the flowers in the vases have a vaguely elegiac quality in combination with the unidentified country outlined behind them, the planted flowers have little resonance at all with the regions with which they are paired. Stand, a graduate student at UC San Diego, calls his work "Historical Ceremonies," but

fails to truly engage history in this all-too-passive installation.

Also at Java, Michael Soriano fills two exterior windows (on the 9th Avenue side) with a curious array of books and objects in a work titled "The Flight of Waxed Dreams." A paean to learning and fully experiencing the process of life as opposed to just its products, the installation has its mildly evocative moments, but most of its appeal lies in the antique aura it conveys through the combination of such materials as old picture frames, well-worn books, a bed of dried pomegranates and fronds of eucalyptus. Though texturally rich, the installation feels conceptually bland.

By contrast, Boyd's installation at ABC Books works because it uses its space as an active arena for interchange. Physically, the installation announces itself at once, but insinuates itself more slowly into the viewer's consciousness. Boyd has hung 10 plastic mirrors, handles up, at eye level throughout the store. The back of each mirror has been painted gold, and across the front is a narrow strip of plastic with such phrases as *Who Are You*, *They Will Tell You Lies Too*, and *You Are Changed*.

Leaning against one shelf, among texts that focus on issues of appearance and beauty, is another gold mirror, with the message, "Someday You Will Grow Into a Beautiful Swan." A small swan figurine sits on a framed old movie still next to the mirror. In another small assemblage planted unobtrusively in the store, this time on the cashier's table, Boyd uses a broken china saucer, a typed text and other objects to make a point about the tragic linking of beauty and wholeness.

Boyd also provides a soundtrack of sorts for the installation, audible through earphones attached to a gold chair. On the tape, women's voices sternly proclaim: "Lies . . . Look into the mirror . . . Who is that person? Who are you? Where did you go? I don't recognize you." With a cloying girliness, other women's voices chant nursery rhymes, "London Bridge is falling down" and "Ring around the rosy."

The sounds, the mirrors and the small assemblages all weave together to issue a simple but powerful warning not to succumb to the fickle flattery of the mirror. Amid books about the nature of beauty, truth and the ideal, Boyd incisively brings the dialogue down to a personal, intimate level. The promise of becoming a beautiful swan leads to disillusionment, Boyd cautions, for even if one does attain a state of external beauty, it will fade. One will be changed by time and become unrecognizable even to oneself. This bitter truth becomes all-encompassing in Boyd's work, for she has made her installation something to be experienced, in a real context, and not just viewed in a vacuum.

Where the "IN/SITE 92" Shows Are

ABC Art and Architecture Books

Cora Boyd, "Operettas on the head of a pen."
Sept. 21-Nov. 6
Reception Oct. 9, 6-9 p.m.
835 G St.
Open daily 11 a.m.-6 p.m. 544-6444

Boehm Gallery at Palomar College

Ming Mur-Ray, "Beyond Numbers," and Ben Anderson, "A Balance is Something."
Through Sept. 30
Marcia Olson, "3,584 Patterns and Counting," and Nanette Yannuzzi Macias, "The Interview, The Journey, and Claiming Death."
Oct. 9-Nov. 11
Reception Oct. 8, 6-8 p.m.
Gallery talk with the artists Thursday, Oct. 15, 11 a.m.
1140 W. Mission Road, San Marcos
Open Tuesday 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Friday and Saturday 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 744-1150

Casa de la Cultura

Jean Lowe and Kim MacConnell, "Tale of the Bull/Cuento del Toro."
Sept. 9-30
Reception Sept. 9, 7 p.m.
Avenida Paris y Lisboa, No. 5
Altamira, Tijuana
Open daily 10 a.m.-8 p.m. 011-5266-872604

Centro Cultural de la Raza

Four Regional Latina Artists, "Ambientaciones: 1492-1992."
Oct. 10-Nov. 22
Reception Oct. 9, 7-9 p.m.
Balboa Park
Open Wednesday-Sunday noon-5 p.m. 235-6135

Centro Cultural Tijuana

Ellen Phillips, Cheryl Lynn Parry and Larry Dumlao, "Transcending Borders: Human & Environmental Inter-Relations."
Sept. 25-Nov. 2
Reception Sept. 25, 7:30-9:30 p.m.
East Paseo de Los Heroes & Los Mina, Tijuana
Open daily 10 a.m.-5 p.m. 011-5266-84111

Galleria de Arte de la Ciudad

Anna O'Cain, "There was a snake in the garden."
Sept. 11-Oct. 6
Reception Sept. 11, 7:30-9 p.m.
Calle Segunda & Constitucion
Antigo Palacio de Municipal, Tijuana
Open Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-7 p.m. 011-5266-850104

Installation

Cipriano, "Performance Ritual;" Carmella Castrejon, "Elementos;" Jay Johnson, "Micro Installation;" Nina Katchadourian, "30 years 20 minutes 17 tapes," and Daphne Ruff, "RuffWear."
Through Sept. 26
Reception Sept. 18, 6-9 p.m.
Adolfo Davila, "Los Que Se Van;" Judit Hersko,

"Surge;" Melissa Smedley, "New Work," and Olav Westphalen, "A faithful reconstruction of the upstairs room with all its contents."

Oct. 9-31
Reception Oct. 16, 6-9 p.m.
2150 W. Washington, Suite 406
Open Friday and Saturday noon-5 p.m. and by appointment. 260-1313

Java Coffeehouse/Gallery

Michael Soriano, "The Flight of Waxed Dreams," and Luis Stand, "Historical Ceremonies."
Sept. 20-Nov. 1
837 G St.
Open daily 8 a.m.-2 a.m. 235-4012

David Lewinson Gallery

Patricia Patterson and Roy David Rogers, "Two Installations and Other Works."
Oct. 10-Nov. 28
629 J St., Second floor
Open Wednesday-Saturday 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Fridays until 9 p.m. 755-2494

Lyceum Theatre Gallery

Ellen Phillips, Cheryl Lynn Parry and Larry Dumlao, "Transcending Borders: Human & Environmental Inter-Relations."
Through Sept. 9
79 Horton Plaza
Open Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and during performances. 231-3586

Mesa College Art Gallery

James Luna and Lewis De Soto, "Kish Tetayawet Dreamhouse Wampkish."
Through Sept. 16
7250 Mesa College Drive
Open Monday-Friday 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Thursdays until 8:30 p.m. 677-2878

Linda Moore Fine Arts

Deborah Small, "Frances Slocum/Maconaqua."
Oct. 26-Nov. 22
Reception Nov. 6, 6:30-9 p.m.
1611 W. Lewis St.
Open Monday-Friday noon-5 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m.-3 p.m. 260-1101

Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego

Noboru Tsubaki
Through Sept. 26
Antony Gormley, "Field."
Oct. 3-Dec. 9
Gormley lecture Oct. 1, 7:30 p.m.
700 Prospect St., La Jolla
Open Tuesday-Sunday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Wednesday until 9 p.m. 454-3541

Playas de Tijuana

Ulf Rollof, "Abandonado II."
Oct. 3-31
Three-quarters of a mile south of bullring on right past canyon, Tijuana. 492-8982

Quint/Krichman Projects

David Jurist, "In the Tepidarium," and Jay Johnson, "Micro Installation."

Oct. 3-Nov. 7
Reception Oct. 3, 4-7 p.m.
7447 Girard Ave., La Jolla
Open Tuesday-Saturday 11 a.m.-5 p.m. 454-3409

Rita Dean Gallery

Leslie Samuels, "Silent Death, Invisible Weapons," and James Healy/Pawel Tulin, "Cereal Killers: The Art of Corporate Lebensraum."
Through Sept. 12
Thomas Nault, "Private."
Sept. 15-Oct. 24
544 Sixth Ave.
Open Tuesday-Thursday 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Friday and Saturday 11 a.m.-10 p.m. 338-8153

SOMA Gallery

Brent Riggs, "The Spirit of Loveliness in Youth."
Sept. 10-Oct. 4
Reception Sept. 18, 7-10 p.m.
Amanda Farber, "In Here."
Oct. 9-31
Reception Oct. 16, 7-10 p.m.
343 Fourth Ave.
Open Tuesday-Thursday 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Friday-Saturday 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Sunday noon-5. 232-3955

Southwestern College Art Gallery

Liss Platt, Ellen Phillips and Joyce Cutler-Shaw
"Three in One."
Oct. 8-Nov. 6
Reception Oct. 8, 6-9 p.m.
900 Otay Lakes Road, Chula Vista
Open Tuesday-Friday 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Wednesday-Thursday 6-9 p.m. 482-6372

D.G. Wills Bookstore

Steve Ilott, "Travels."
Sept. 18-Oct. 10
7461 Girard Ave., La Jolla
Open Sunday-Thursday 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Friday-Saturday 10 a.m.-10 p.m. 456-1800

Women's Caucus for the Arts

Patsy Babcock, Eva Montville, Laura Crouch and Mary Louise Donovan, "Eve Transplanted: Mind Your Garden."
Through Sept. 26
India St. Design Center
2165 India St.
Open Friday and Saturday noon-5. 598-8373

David Zapf Gallery

Johnny Coleman, "Ruminations."
Through Sept. 26
Chuck Collings, "Resolve"
Oct. 9-31
Reception Oct. 9, 6-9 p.m.
Artist lecture/informal discussion Oct. 24, 2 p.m.
2400 Kettner Blvd.
Open Friday and Saturday noon-5 p.m. and by appointment. 232-5004

AT THE GALLERIES

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Artist Fills History Gaps With Lessons

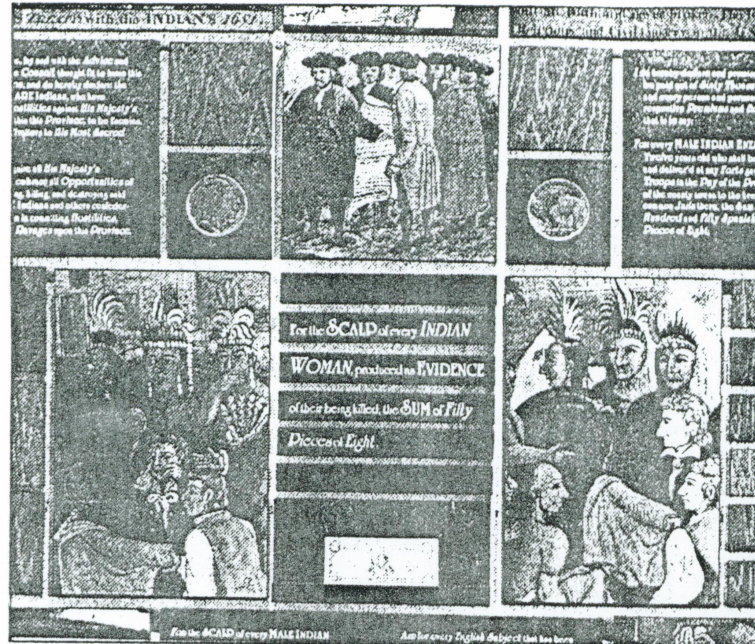
SAN DIEGO—Deborah Small is as much a teacher as an artist, a teacher of remedial history who identifies gaps in our understanding of the past, provides information for filling those gaps, and, implicitly, urges us to scrutinize why such gaps occur in the first place.

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She is an example of one of the most effective kinds of teachers. She presents her material in a fresh, dynamic manner, never wrapping it in a falsely neat, compact package. Rather, she presents history as the amalgam of loose ends that it truly is, and the critical process that we use to make sense of those fragments, to tie them together, is internal, essential to our personal and political sensibility. Small does nothing less than nurture our ability to perceive injustices, contradictions and cover-ups on the grand scale of world history.

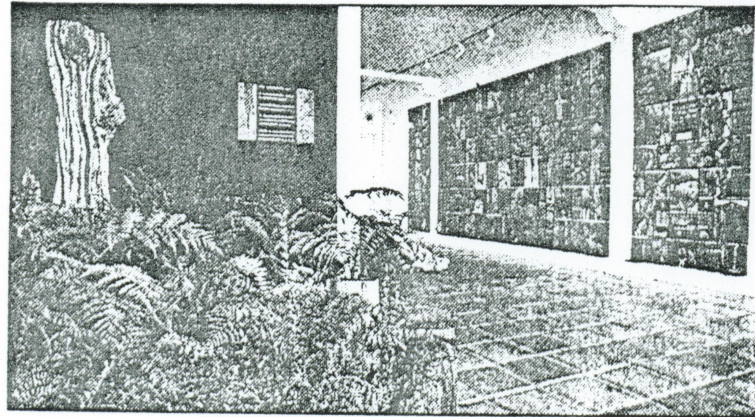
Small's newest work, "MACONAQUA/Frances Slocum," at the Linda Moore Gallery, is her fourth installation to focus on captivity narratives, the tales of whites captured by Indians and brought to live among them. In each, she has deftly aligned visual and verbal accounts from different periods and perspectives on hundreds of panels and shelves, and mounted them grid-like on walls. It is history as seen through a prism, rather than a telescope. "MACONAQUA," like the others in the ongoing series that have been on view in separate shows locally and nationally over the past few years, is an intelligent, intriguing piece of work.

Frances Slocum (1773-1847) was captured at the age of five from her home in Pennsylvania and adopted by a Delaware Indian family. Though by her own account her capture was traumatic, she adjusted to her new communi-



Photos by DAVID McNEW / Los Angeles Times

A detail, above, of Deborah Small's "MACONAQUA/Frances Slocum" is displayed as part of an installation at the Linda Moore Gallery.



the Indians until her death. When she was in her 60s, her white siblings located her and interviewed her. The resulting narrative was published in 1842 as "The Lost Sister of the Wyoming."

Small, who lives in San Diego, includes excerpts from the book's index and opening pages on panels in her "MACO-

NAQUA" installation. She juxtaposes these, in the manner of a dense but orderly mosaic, with reproductions of Edward Hicks' painting, "The Peaceable Kingdom," a glorified vision of people and nature in harmony. In another section of the work, Hicks' benign painting of William Penn's Treaty with the Indians neighbors the text of a 1756 proclamation of war against them. Outlined in the text is the bounty structure for capture and murder of Indian men, women and children.

Dominating the central section of the installation are snippets from Slocum's narrative, Delaware Indian pictographs, an unidentified Indian poem and a lush spread of images of forests, plants and animals. Small has also arranged tree trunks and ferns in the gallery as set pieces for these clashing narratives. While one image idealizes the indigenous lifestyle, another condemns it as barbaric. At one moment the Indians are allies, at another, enemies.

Slocum's own words provide the most poignant interlude in this array of observations; proclamations and interpretations. "I am an old tree," she said. "I was a sapling when they took me away. It is all gone past. I am happy here. . . . This is my home. . . . I should not be happy with my white relatives. I am glad enough to see them but I can not go." Such narrative fragments carry the weight of direct testimony, evidence contradicting the stereotypical, hostile views of native Americans held by most white settlers at the time, and harbored still by many of their descendants.

The interplay of forces across this vibrant wall is thick with connotation and understated tension. The installation is milder, in fact, than much of Small's work, but consistent with the artist's activist stance against injustice. Here, as elsewhere, Small introduces sources that help explain the cruel legacies we live with and go far to dismantle them.