



Osceola Refetoff & Chris Langley

## *The Forest for the Trees* **Various Artists**

**Artists:** Sant Khalsa, Constance Mallinson, Greg Rose, Timothy Robert Smith, High & Dry, Robert Dunahay

Forest for the Trees is comprised of five exhibitions addressing the complex relationships between people and the living and built environments they inhabit, specifically focusing on humans' symbiotic connection to trees. Featured in the Main Gallery at MOAH is a survey of work documented over the course of eight years by artist Greg Rose. Featured in the South Gallery is 40 plus years of work by Sant Khalsa. With solo exhibition by Constance Mallinson, site specific installations by artists Timothy R. Smith and High & Dry, a collaboration between Osceola Refetoff and Christopher Langley.

Each of the artists explore the environment and the impacts, both positive and negative, that humans have upon it. Greg Rose's work documents his, nearly decade long, excursions into the San Gabriel Mountains as he catalogs, analyzes, and paints various trees across the forest. Sant Khalsa's, Prana, brings together work from her more than forty years as an artist, examining humanity's existence within nature, specifically their connection to trees. Constance Mallinson's work takes a closer look at the massive amounts of material waste that humans generate, magnifying the remains of landfills and garbage "patches" by painting them on oversized canvases. Timothy R. Smith is constructing a site specific installation regarding the built environment that will span two stories and multiple exhibition spaces. High & Dry's dispatches takes a look at humans and their impact on the environment, specifically concerning the Mojave Desert region and what we leave behind as a culture. Joining Forest for the Trees at MOAH: CEDAR on Saturday, June 16 from 6 to 8 p.m. is artist Miya Ando. Inspired

by her upbringing, Ando's installation will transport visitors to the redwood forests of northern California.

## **High & Dry**

### *LAND ARTIFACTS*

High & Dry comprises a long-term exploration of the California desert and the people who live there. Balancing images and words with the personal and historical, the cross-platform collaboration between photographer Osceola Refetoff and writer/historian Christopher Langley focuses on the remnants and future of human activity across these vast open spaces, territory that has traditionally been used for resource extraction, toxic dumping and military exercises, and currently faces a future dominated by immense wind and solar arrays.

The exhibit *Land Artifacts* examines the things we leave behind and what they reveal about ourselves, our past and our future. Nowhere are these instructive legacies and endowments more exposed than in the barren California desert. Whether from ruins, artifacts, memorials and/or waste, there is much we can learn about lives, attitudes and the things that we value. It has been said that we borrow our land from our grandchildren. What legacy do you want to leave?

Osceola Refetoff's interest is in documenting humanity's impact on the world – both the intersection of nature and industry, and the narratives of the people living at those crossroads. The landscape photographs in *Land Artifacts* are infrared exposures, which accentuate the raw intensity of vast arid spaces and the graphic relationship between land and sky. Though Refetoff does not work exclusively in black and white, what links the diverse forms of his practice is his commitment to render not only what a place looks like, but also how it feels to be there. To that end, his black and white infrared photographs tap into classic historical and visual tropes from the medium's earliest days, confronting evolving questions of truth, beauty, dispassion, reportage and artistry that have always been a part of how photography functions in our culture.

Christopher Langley, a life-long educator, has lived in and studied the Mojave Desert for more than forty-five years. Working as a film historian, founder of the Museum of Western Film History in Lone Pine and Inyo County Film Commissioner, he focuses on the desert's complex relationship with cinema, and how land plays an essential role in the story of our lives. Co-founder of the Alabama Hills Stewardship Group, Langley's environmental advocacy has won the National Conservation Cooperation Award. His writing is widely syndicated and includes three books on California's arid landscape. High & Dry is a regular feature on KCET's Emmy-winning program *Artbound*.

## **Greg Rose**

### *Tree Fiction*

Greg Rose has been documenting individual trees and the changes they undergo for the past eight years. It began while taking regular hiking trips through the San Gabriel Mountains. He started noticing the trees of this region were made rugged from enduring extreme weather conditions. Over time, he began regarding the trees by their individual characteristics and started to document them. First he maps, illustrates and photographs the trees, then he paints them.

In his series, *Tree Fiction*, Greg Rose presents detailed gouache renderings of trees which he has isolated in a plane of vibrant gradients. His work takes on the quality of a narrative, mirroring both the tension and sense of connection one may find in their own life such as within families and other relationships. The titles of each painting suggests a variety of complicated exchanges between the trees like characters in a play. Greg Rose is most interested in the concept of change and how much change trees undergo throughout their lifetime, particularly in regard to wildfires.

Greg Rose is a Los Angeles based artist with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in drawing and painting from California State University, Long Beach, California and a Master of Fine Arts degree in drawing and painting from Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California. Greg Rose has been exhibited in both group and solo shows in California, New York, Texas, Missouri and Columbia and has been featured in a number of publications including *Artillery magazine*, *The Huffington Post*, *Artweek*, *Los Angeles Times*, *LA Weekly*, *San Francisco Chronicle* and more.

## **Sant Khalsa**

### *Prana: Life with Trees*

Sant Khalsa is an artist and activist whose projects develop from her impassioned inquiry into the nature of place and complex environmental and societal issues. Her artworks create a contemplative space where one can sense the subtle and profound connections between themselves and the natural world.

The subject of trees has been a focus in Sant Khalsa's creative work for nearly five decades. *Prana: Life with Trees* is the first in depth survey of Khalsa's intimate connection with trees – her explorations, observations, perceptions and interpretations. Her unique perspective is expressed through a style that encompasses the documentary, subjective and conceptual. Her work evokes a meditative calm to what we often experience as a chaotic and conflicted world.

Khalsa is concerned with both the micro and macro aspects of forests: what is seen and unseen; historical, scientific and spiritual; and personal and universal. She is mindful of our symbiotic relationship with trees and forests, grounded in the life-sustaining connection through the breath (exchange of carbon dioxide and oxygen). Her beautiful, distinctive and sometime disquieting works express the cycle of life (birth, life, death and rebirth), the destruction and memory of the forest, as well as the promise of new growth.

The exhibition includes her earliest landscapes (self-portraits and photographs of orange groves); images of trees from her three decades photographing in the Santa Ana Watershed and other locations in the American West; and mixed-media sculptures and installation works inspired by her research on air quality and life-changing experience planting more than a thousand trees in 1992 as part of the reforestation of Holcomb Valley in the San Bernardino Mountains. In her recent color photographs, we witness the fruits of her activism, a healthy, thriving and hopeful forest eco-system.

Sant Khalsa's artworks are widely exhibited internationally, collected by prestigious museums including the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Nevada Museum of Art and Center for Creative Photography in Tucson and published in numerous art books and periodicals. Khalsa is a recipient of prestigious fellowships, awards and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, California Arts Council, California Council for the Humanities and others. She is a Professor of Art, Emerita at California State University, San Bernardino and resides in Joshua Tree.

### **Constance Mallinson**

*ME, ME, ME*

Constance Mallinson depicts monumental assortments of post-consumer items that are reminiscent of trash dumps, ocean gyres and urban alleyways. Her art unveils the complexities and moral dilemmas of living in a technological, consumerist, disposable world as humans simultaneously contribute to its demise. Evoking the past, present and future, the content of her work examines the complexities and moral dilemmas that come with living in an imprudent consumerist culture. Post-apocalyptic, darkly humorous, critical and celebratory at once, Mallinson's images of degraded commodities situate the viewer in a provocative endgame.

Mallinson's art features paintings composed from both natural and manufactured waste that the artist has collected from the streets on her daily walks through her neighborhood. The discarded contents found on city streets are not often associated with the sublime, but in Constance Mallinson's paintings, they are rendered at a disturbing scale. Decaying plant materials and a fantastical assortment of post-consumer items are deftly interwoven. The rich details, dazzling color, variety of objects and interplay of forms nod towards 17th century Dutch still life painting as well as Cubist collage. Mallinson renders kitsch advertising images in an Old Masters technique with an underlying desire to push for a newer paradigm that reflects globalism and awareness to the threatening of the world's ecosystems by population, industry and pollution. In their scale and execution her art pieces have been appreciated for their ability to simultaneously seduce and deliver a critique and to share a continuing relevance for painting in an era of ubiquitous mass media.

Constance Mallinson received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Georgia and has exhibited her work throughout California. In addition to her recent commission for the EXPO Line MTA Bergamot Station permanent artwork installation, she has designed a poster for the MTA Red Line, been a finalist for a mural for the California Supreme Court in San Francisco and numerous libraries in Southern California. Mallinson has taught at many universities and colleges in Southern California including University of California, Los Angeles and Claremont Graduate School. She was the recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship as well as the City of Los Angeles' Artist Grant. Many of Constance Mallinson's paintings can also be viewed in major private and public art collections including LACMA and the San Jose Museum.

### **Timothy Robert Smith**

*Revised Maps of the Present*

Timothy Robert Smith is a Los Angeles based oil painter and muralist interested in multi-dimensionalism, which he describes as an attempt to understand how one's personal experience in the world fits into the greater picture of the universe. Smith's work does not replicate reality as we perceive it, but rather asks the viewer to consider the realities they do not see, questioning the realness of their perspective both visually and metaphysically.

*Revised Maps of the Present* is a multi-room interactive installation that combines painted walls, sculpted figures, lights, sound and video projections. The installation begins with the scene of a train station in a city. As the observer moves through the installation, layers of reality disconnect and unfold into a labyrinth of warped angles, hidden spatial dimensions and alternative versions of the present. The installation aims to simulate a present moment as if one were to view it from all perspectives at once.

The installation as seen here at MOAH is the first incarnation of this exhibit. With each new installment hereafter, *Revised Maps of the Present* will reconfigure and expand with added rooms and features. Timothy Robert Smith invites the viewer to reexamine the world

without their familiar mental filter and to see again as a child sees: enormous, mysterious and full of possibilities.

Timothy Robert Smith received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in studio art from California State University Los Angeles and a Masters of Fine Arts degree for studio art from Laguna College of Art and Design. He also teaches at Laguna College of Art and Design, California State University Long Beach, California State University Los Angeles and Saddleback College. Timothy Robert Smith has also been featured in various media outlets including *Juxtapoz* Magazine and NBC News and his paintings have shown in solo exhibitions at TEDx Conferences and Copro Gallery in Santa Monica, California.

## **Robert Dunahay**

*He Man*

Distinguished patrons worldwide collect Robert Dunahay's art including the Royal Family Al Thani of Qatar, Baroness Monica Von Neumann of Switzerland and celebrities Pierce Brosnan, Kelsey Grammer and Linda Hamilton. His work is part of the corporate collections for Pepperdine University, The Financial Times, The Packard Foundation and the W Hotel. Dunahay is most known for his Palm Series of paintings depicting grand-scale palm trees in vibrant colors. By depicting his subject in face-to-face portraiture style on a solid background, he replaces traditional references to landscape with the transcendentalism of iconography. American artist Robert Charles Dunahay currently lives and works in Palm Springs, California.

## **Museum of Art and History**

665 W. Lancaster Blvd, Lancaster CA 93534

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Tuesday and Wednesday | 11 AM – 4 PM

Thursday and Friday | 11 AM – 8 PM

Saturday and Sunday | 11 AM – 4 PM

Closed Mondays, Holidays, and during periods of installation

(661) 723-6250

## **MOAH: CEDAR**

44857 Cedar Avenue, Lancaster, CA 93534

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Open Thursday - Sunday | 2 PM - 8 PM

Closed Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Holidays, and during periods of installation

(661) 723-6250

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