

San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art
News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT

Maureen Cappon-Javey
408.283.8155; maureen@sjica.org

***Afterlife* Resurrects Contemporary Castaways**
Group Exhibition at the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art Presents
Discarded Materials Transformed Into Works of Art.

October 2009, SAN JOSE, CA – On the heels of its recent show, *NextNew:Green* that featured the works of emerging Bay Area artists exploring issues related to conservation, the environment and global warming; the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) presents *Afterlife*, a group exhibition of works created to breathe new life into re-purposed materials and objects. Guest curated by Kathryn Funk, *Afterlife* will be exhibited in the ICA's Main Gallery and Cardinale Project Room from November 7, 2009 through January 23, 2010. The show includes sculpture, video, and multi-media work from artists Claudia Borgna, Mark Fox-Morgan, Elisabeth Higgins O'Connor, Lisa Kokin, Charlotte Kruk, Robert Larson, Scott Oliver, Beverly Rayner, and Ann Weber. A public reception will be held at the ICA on Friday, November 6, 2009 from 6pm to 8pm. An Artist Talk moderated by Kathryn Funk will take place at the ICA on Thursday, November 12th from 7pm to 9pm.



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Afterlife at the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art
560 South First Street, San Jose, CA 95113 (408) 283-8155 www.sjica.org

The artists represented in *Afterlife* take advantage of cast-offs from our contemporary lives. With a conscious eye to the materiality of the chosen discards, items from the street, junkyards and second-hand stores are transformed into fresh, inspired creations that give rise to thoughtful consideration and interpretation. “Even before the green recycling revolution took hold, artists were reusing and re-purposing found materials,” says *Afterlife* curator Kathryn Funk. “When an object has been discharged from its original purpose it still carries some association with its past. When that association is altered it takes on new meaning,” explains Funk.



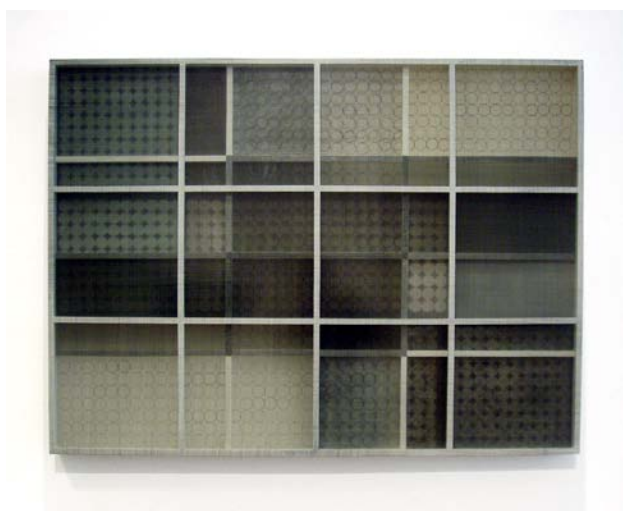
Exploring new meanings and new lives of discarded and re-used materials is the central focus of the artists’ works on view in *Afterlife*.

London-based artist Claudia Borgna has been collecting and using plastic bags as an inspired muse in her art for several years, carefully gathering and using them after each installation or performance in a different configuration. Borgna’s work will be on view in *Afterlife* and *Night Moves* – after dark video art programming presented in the ICA’s front windows.

Mark Fox-Morgan uses paper – a tree by-product— cast as beams for his massive house-like structure. The beguiling skeleton appears remarkably strong despite its extremely fragile nature, thus calling into question the nature and exploitation of its source. Elisabeth

Higgins O’Connor and Lisa Kokin find inspiration in materials scavenged from flea markets and thrift stores. Higgins O’Connor uses discarded fabrics of all sorts and stitches together life-sized anthropomorphic stuffed animal creatures. Kokin uses books and the book format; dissecting, reassembling and pulping them to express new ideas and her own personal, political and cultural views. Charlotte Kruk salvages and sews product wrappers side by side to create new textiles in the form of wearable art. Robert Larson gathers and dissects tossed cigarette packages and match books to make visually stunning constructed paintings of rich color patterns, hues and textures, with the dissected paper material.

Conceptual artist Scott Oliver alters everyday objects, carefully crafting them into a unique state that undermines their original function but never erases the original object's identity. Beverly Rayner manipulates all kinds of discarded items and constructs new roles for them in her art as she explores the subject of surveillance. Ann Weber transforms cardboard boxes pulled from dumpsters into elegant, playful biomorphic forms.



Also opening on November 7th in the ICA's Focus Gallery and running through February 20, 2010 is *Manifold*, a solo exhibition of two installations of works by San Francisco-based postminimalist artist Theodora Varnay Jones. The installations are comprised of drawings, constructed works, sculptures, and re-conceptualized ready-made pieces that represent the artist's exploration and interpretation of form, space and repetition. A *Talking Art* conversation with Varnay Jones will be held on Thursday, January 14th from 7pm to 9pm at the ICA.

Image Captions:

Lisa Kokin, *The Book of Martyrs*, 2008, pulped book, 7x16x16 inches, Courtesy of the Artist

Beverly Rayner, *Memory Encapsulation Network #3*, 2007, photographs, rubber bulbs, rubberized rope, lenses, latex tubing and metal, 86.5 x 24.5 x 11.5 inches, Courtesy of the Artist and Braunstein/Quay Gallery, SF

Theodora Varnay Jones, *Transparency #32*, 2007, paper, graphite, pigments, acrylic polymer, wood structure 32 X 43 X 2 ¾ inches, Courtesy of the Artist and Don Soker Contemporary Art, SF

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The San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) is an energetic art space located in downtown San Jose dedicated to making contemporary art accessible and exciting to audiences of all ages and backgrounds. Exhibitions are presented in three galleries that display the most current, relevant and often challenging art from the region, the nation and the world. The ICA is activated by opening receptions, South First Friday gallery walks, after-dark programming in the front windows, panel discussions, printmaking workshops, brown bag lunches and impromptu conversations in the galleries. The ICA is a member-supported, non-profit organization. Admission to the gallery is free.

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