

Art for the
United States Courthouse
Sacramento California



Art in Federal buildings has been an American tradition since 1855, when Congress commissioned Constantino Brumidi to paint frescoes in the committee hearing rooms of the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington, D.C. The General Services Administration proudly continues this tradition by commissioning fine art for Federal buildings and U.S. courthouses through the Art in Architecture Program.

The incorporation of works of art into the nation's important civic buildings reflects our country's strongly held belief in the worth of the individual and the value of creative expression. Such public statements of American culture are meaningful contributors to the vibrancy of our democracy.

ART - IN - ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM

The Art in Architecture Program of GSA's Public Buildings Service was established in 1963, after President Kennedy's Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space recommended that, "where appropriate, fine art should be incorporated in the designs of Federal buildings, with emphasis on the work of living American artists." Since its establishment, the Art in Architecture Program has commissioned over 200 works of art for Federal buildings and courthouses across the nation. Each GSA public art commission is inexorably tied to a specific community, and facilitates a meaningful cultural dialogue between the American people and their government.

The nomination and selection process for commissioning artists follows guidelines developed over the past 30 years. GSA normally allocates one half of one percent (0.5%) of the estimated construction cost of a Federal building or courthouse for commissioning works of art. The Art in Architecture Program strives for the holistic integration of art and architecture, through collaboration among the artist, architect, GSA, and a selection panel. GSA invites community representatives, art professionals, and the project architect to serve on this panel, which makes recommendations concerning the type and location of art for a particular building, and nominates artists for GSA's consideration.

MARKING HISTORY:

ART IN ARCHITECTURE COMMISSIONS FOR
THE UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

The public spaces of the United States Courthouse in Sacramento, California are enhanced by one of the most comprehensive programs of public art in any Federal building. These thirteen works represent the vision of fourteen major artists, who drew their inspiration from the natural, cultural, and political history of the building's site.

During the California Gold Rush, the block on which the courthouse now stands was the heart of Sacramento's first community of Chinese immigrants. These new arrivals faced the challenges of reestablishing their homes, creating a sustainable community, and achieving equitable treatment in an often hostile adopted country whose culture, traditions, and language differed greatly from their own.

The courthouse is a fitting successor to this important historic district, as the Federal courts were instrumental in supporting the rights of the Chinese in America. Many new Americans faced similar cultural and economic struggles upon their arrival in this country. The courts have served as advocates and guardians of civil liberties for the successive waves of immigrant populations whose descendants constitute the American citizenry today.

These two themes - the legacy of the Chinese pioneers in California, and the concepts of justice and the law - weave throughout the courthouse's Art in Architecture installations. The Community Arts Panel that selected the artists envisioned a group of work that would be diverse in terms of styles and materials, yet related in concept. The Panel chose to commission an unusually large group of artists, many of whom live and work in Northern California. This unique collection of public art will provide visitors to the United States Courthouse in Sacramento with a potent and tangible connection to the rich history of this site.

ART-IN-ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM

LOCATION OF ARTWORK

Front Entrance Plaza

Gold Rush

Tom Otterness

Front Entrance Plaza

Installation for the Sacramento

United States Courthouse

Jenny Holzer

First Floor Rotunda

The Decisions

Larry Kirkland

Rita Dove

Sixth Floor

Golden Mountain-Golden Fields

Daniel Galvez

Seventh Floor

On This Spot Stood the First Chinese

Settlement in Sacramento

Tony Berlant

Eighth Floor

World Lines: Mapping the Journey
of Spirit and Reason

In memory of my Father

Kathleen Kasper-Noonan

Ninth Floor

China Pattern

Deborah Oropallo

Eleventh Floor

The Agreement

Jack Nielsen

Twelfth Floor

Dream Within a Dream

In Memory of the Pacific Asian Pioneers

George Miyasaki

Thirteenth Floor

Chinadom

Holley Junker

Fourteenth Floor

White Mountain Patriarch

Peter Holbrook

Fifteenth Floor

Beam Ends

C.G. Simonds

Sixteenth Floor

Passage No. 3

Steve Gillman

TOM OTTERNESS

A native of Wichita, Kansas, sculptor Tom Otterness now lives in Brooklyn, New York, where he creates the bronze and cast-stone sculptures for which he has become internationally known. Most of his work utilizes allegorical human and anthropomorphic animal figures. Otterness includes humorous elements in much of his work, even when dealing with serious social or political subjects. He is represented in major public and private collections around the world, with work ranging from single figures to entire sculpture gardens consisting of dozens of components.

GOLD RUSH CAST BRONZE SCULPTURES

Visitors to the courthouse are greeted by an assortment of knee-high characters reminiscent of California's early history - animals and fish, Native Americans, and pioneers. Artist Tom Otterness chose to position his whimsical yet enigmatic figures along the plaza's fountain, which serves as a reminder of the significant role the Sacramento River and other waterways have played in the history of the state. Further, the splashing water compliments the animated nature of this work. Using the Gold Rush as his theme, Otterness worked both with and against the artistic traditions of the American West, especially the sculpture of Frederick Remington. With this familiar cast of characters, Otterness prompts viewers to reevaluate certain beliefs (and myths) about American history.



Jenny Holzer first gained public attention in 1977 with the posters she distributed around lower Manhattan. Since then, her use of language has helped to develop a new genre of text based art. Holzer creates her work from social, political, and cultural commentaries, as well as her own writing. These short excerpts, or "truisms", are fabricated in diverse materials, such as stone benches or electronic signs. Her work has been collected and exhibited worldwide, and has been permanently installed at many public sites throughout the United States and Europe. Some of these sites include Spain's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Germany's Bundestag in Berlin, the Cologne Sculpture Garden, the Munich Literaturhaus, the University of Southern California, and the U.S. Courthouse and Federal Building in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Holzer received a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Rhode Island School of Design, and now lives and works in upstate New York.

INSTALLATION AT THE SACRAMENTO UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

TEXTS IN STONE

Conceptual artist Jenny Holzer believes that words are an artistic medium that can, as she says, be "used to provoke thinking, emotion, and conversation." Her installation at the courthouse presents a selection of writings about law, truth, and justice, which are carved into ninety-nine of the entrance plaza's paving stones. The texts reflect a variety of themes, which the artist has collected from multiple sources. These include traditional legal maxims, as well as the writings of Supreme Court justices, law professors, activists, and philosophers. The inscriptions are oriented at various angles, allowing pedestrians traveling from any direction across the plaza the opportunity to read a sampling of quotations. These inscriptions are intended to elicit both reflection and passion from readers, as the artist chose dictums that both compliment and contradict one another. With this installation, Holzer mimics the vast network of interlocking texts that constitute legal and judicial discourse.

WICKEDNESS IS NOT PRESUMED.

IT IS A FAIR SUMMARY
OF HISTORY TO SAY THAT THE
SAFEGUARDS OF LIBERTY HAVE
FREQUENTLY BEEN FORGED IN
CONTROVERSIES INVOLVING
NOT VERY NICE PEOPLE.

THERE MAY BE INJURY
WITHOUT ANY INJUSTICE.

THE LAW IS GOOD,
IF A MAN USES IT LAWFULLY.

LARRY KIRKLAND

Larry Kirkland's sculptures are often created for specific sites, and thus possess a strong sense of place. His twin concerns are art and the environment - be it physical, historical, or intellectual. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in environmental design from the University of Oregon, followed by a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Kansas. Kirkland's many public art commissions are located in diverse settings around the nation, including airports, universities, parks, and corporate headquarters.

THE DECISIONS MIXED MEDIA SCULPTURE

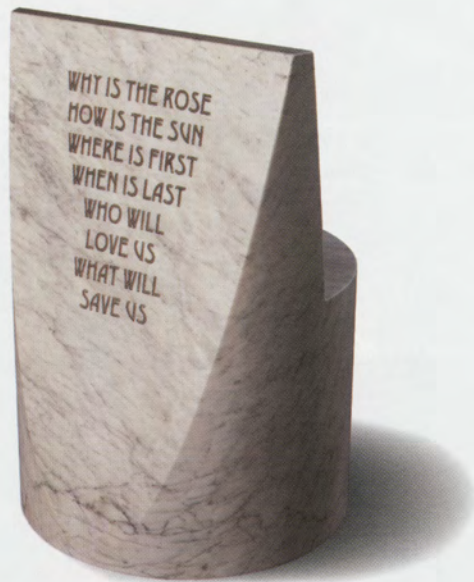
The courthouse rotunda is dominated by a monumental, golden scale of justice, which serves as an unambiguous emblem of the building's function. The hands at each end of the balance indicate that justice and the law are not only abstract concepts, but also active and participatory human endeavors. The elliptical shapes of the scales echo the shape of the rotunda, and thus provide a formal unity between the art and its surrounding architecture. The 23-karat gold surface of the scale references the importance of the California Gold Rush to this city.

Beneath the scale are twelve marble chairs, representing the twelve members of a jury. Acclaimed poet Rita Dove composed thought-provoking inscriptions for each ceremonial chair. Her words comment in part upon the roles and responsibilities of the individual within society, and the complicated relationships that exist between people. These themes will provide an inexhaustible reservoir of ideas for contemplation by visitors to the courthouse. For example, one inscription reads, "I'm not anyone more / than anyone else. / Did my job, then / looked into / their eyes. / What had I / become?" Other passages challenge readers to ponder issues such as fate, identity, and accountability.



RITA DOVE

*A frequent collaborator across artistic disciplines, Rita Dove has a strong interest in the interrelationships that exist between all the arts. In addition to her prolific writing, Dove sings and plays multiple musical instruments. She graduated summa cum laude from Miami University of Ohio, and later studied German at the Universität Tübingen as a Fulbright Scholar. She also received a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Ohio. Her first collection of poems, *The Yellow House on the Corner*, was published in 1980. Dove's poetry has earned many prestigious honors, among them the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1987 for *Thomas and Beulah*. Dove served two terms as Poet Laureate of the United States from 1993 to 1995, and was the youngest person and first African-American to hold that post. She then became Commonwealth Professor of English at the University of Virginia.*



TRAGEDY INVOLVES
ONE HISTORY
INVOLVES MANY
TOPPLING
ONE
AFTER
ANOTHER

LOOK AROUND,
MAGIC EVERYWHERE
BEHIND YOU
TEARS AND SHADOW
AHEAD THE PATH
CLEAN FLAME
LOOK UP, THE AIR
IS SINGING
UNDERFOOT
YOUR SHADOW
WAITS.

A STONE TO THROW
A CURSE TO HURL
A SILENCE TO BREAK
A PAGE TO WRITE
A DAY TO LIVE
A BLANK
TO FILL

RECOGNIZING
HAPPINESS
PROVIDES
INTERNAL
HEALTH
TO ALL

DANIEL GALVEZ

Daniel Galvez was born in Calexico, California in 1953. Of Mexican-American heritage, he was the third in a family of seven children, and was raised in Sacramento. Now living in Oakland, he is a nationally recognized muralist who has garnered awards for his work, which focuses on the strength of the human spirit. His murals - which often touch upon the themes of cultural diversity, educational achievements, and homage to local heroes - hang in public buildings and cultural centers on both coasts. Galvez earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, and a Master of Fine Arts degree from San Francisco State University.

GOLDEN MOUNTAIN/GOLDEN FIELDS ACRYLIC ON CANVAS PRINTING

Because the Sacramento courthouse stands on the site of the city's earliest Chinese community, artist Daniel Galvez focused the subject of his mural on the history of nineteenth and twentieth century Chinese immigration to California. His composition blends images of traditional Chinese life and landscape, views of early Sacramento and the delta, and portraits of contemporary Chinese-Americans. At the lower left corner of the mural, Galvez painted the ceiling of a Chinese temple to represent a cultural point of origin. In the mural's opposite corner shines the dome of the California State Capitol in Sacramento, symbol of the "golden mountain" that attracted many Chinese pioneers to the city in the 1850s. The black stone marker near the painting's center references the Angel Island Immigration Station in San Francisco Bay, and alludes to the hardships that many Chinese immigrants faced upon entering California. The multiple family groups, which are dressed in both Chinese and Western clothing, stress the central role that family life continues to play in the lives of Chinese-Americans.



A native of New York City, Tony Berlant studied art at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he earned Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, and Master of Fine Arts degrees. He began utilizing discarded metal advertising signs early in his career. Since then, he has made a specialty of creating quilt-like collages of hammered tin, using recycled materials stitched to plywood with steel brads. His works, which unite elements of flat panels and three-dimensional objects, have been exhibited internationally. Berlant has been commissioned to create murals and architectural elements - such as doors and columns - for airports, museums, government buildings, and private corporations. He makes his home in Santa Monica, California.

ON THIS SPOT STOOD THE FIRST CHINESE SETTLEMENT IN SACRAMENTO

MIXED MEDIA COLLAGE

Tony Berlant's collage is a dreamscape that honors the importance of the Gold Rush to the history of the Chinese people in Sacramento. The work's format is that of a window, through which one sees an aerial view of the Sacramento River and the urban grid of the Chinese community. The Chinese characters in the middle of the picture read "Second City," which was the Chinese immigrants' name for Sacramento. The characters on the left read "Old Gold Mountain," and refer to Northern California. Those on the right are the characters typically used to represent the concept of justice, which translate literally as "a public spirit ruled all under the sky." One of Berlant's goals in creating this mural was to make visitors to the courthouse aware of the vibrant Chinese-American history of the site.



Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1941, Kathleen Kasper-Noonan is a first-generation American of Czechoslovakian descent. As a child she learned how to use materials and tools while working with her father to remodel houses and make furniture. She received her formal training in art at the University of Minnesota, the University of California, Berkeley, and California State University at Sacramento. Since 1988, she has received numerous commissions for works of public art. Her sponsors have included the Wisconsin Art Board, the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission, the Davis Art Commission, and the Hewlett-Packard Corporation. Her work has been widely exhibited. Kasper-Noonan also teaches at Sacramento City College.

WORLD LINES: MAPPING THE JOURNEY OF
SPIRIT AND REASON
IN MEMORY OF MY FATHER
SLATE AND BRONZE MURAL

This stone mural metaphorically depicts not only the journey that millions of immigrants took in coming to America, but also the journey that an individual takes to unify opposing internal forces. Symbolically, the work is a map. The center represents the destination (alternately, the United States or the integrated self). The section on the right represents America's Western cultural and philosophical patrimony, while the element on the left symbolizes America's cultural and philosophical heritage from the East. The work also functions as a memorial to the artist's father, an immigrant from Czechoslovakia, from whom she inherited a love of working with tools.



Deborah Oropallo's work has been receiving attention, awards, and acclaim since her undergraduate years at Alfred University in New York. After graduating, Oropallo moved to California, and earned two master's degrees from the University of California at Berkeley, where she continues to live and work. Her paintings, drawings, and prints have been exhibited nationwide. The many public collections in which she is represented include the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the San Jose Museum of Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.

CHINA PATTERN PAINTING

With *China Pattern*, Deborah Oropallo pays homage to the more than 10,000 Chinese laborers whose unremitting perseverance and courage permitted the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad on May 10, 1869. In particular, this work commemorates the workers who lost their lives in the brutal winter of 1866, near the Donner Summit in the Sierra Nevada.

From a distance, the painting's geometric patterns read as abstractions. However, as one approaches the canvas, the details of the train tracks slowly emerge. These contrast against the white background, which evokes the unforgiving Sierra snow. The painting's repetition of countless railroad-ties reflects the seemingly endless task of the railroad workers. While excavating thirteen mountain-pass tunnels, the workers could advance only eight to twelve inches per day. By contrast, in summer and on flat ground, they were able to lay as many as ten miles of track in a single day.

The Chinese word for "train" (literally "fire cart") is repeated behind thirteen rows of tracks, connoting the thirteen tunnels completed by the railroad workers. At the bottom of the canvas, the tracks slowly fade into red, a color of great symbolic significance in Chinese history - both ancient and modern - and a reminder of the countless deaths that occurred over the course of this astounding feat of engineering that linked the nation together.



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Jack Nielsen was born in 1947 in Stockton, California. While still in college, he was already an exhibiting sculptor and ceramist. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from California State University in Sacramento, and a Master of Arts degree from the University of California, Davis. His work has been widely exhibited, and he has received numerous public and private commissions. Nielsen lives and works in Sacramento, where he is active in the community as an advocate for artists. He has served on both the Visual Arts Committee and the Art in Public Spaces Committee for the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission.

THE AGREEMENT
MIXED MEDIA SCULPTURE

The agreement referenced in the title of Jack Nielsen's sculpture is the collective assent of individuals within a society to abide by its laws. The work has three interrelated elements. First are the letters of the law, which cascade from a book. These letters and book symbolize the codification of laws, while their movement acknowledges that laws are dynamic - subject to interpretation and reinterpretation. The second element of this work is the shield, a symbol of law enforcement. Nielsen intends this shield to convey dual, contradictory meanings: a desire for protection from lawlessness offered by the police, and a fear of unrestrained police power. The final element of The Agreement is the pearl, a traditional Chinese symbol of wisdom.



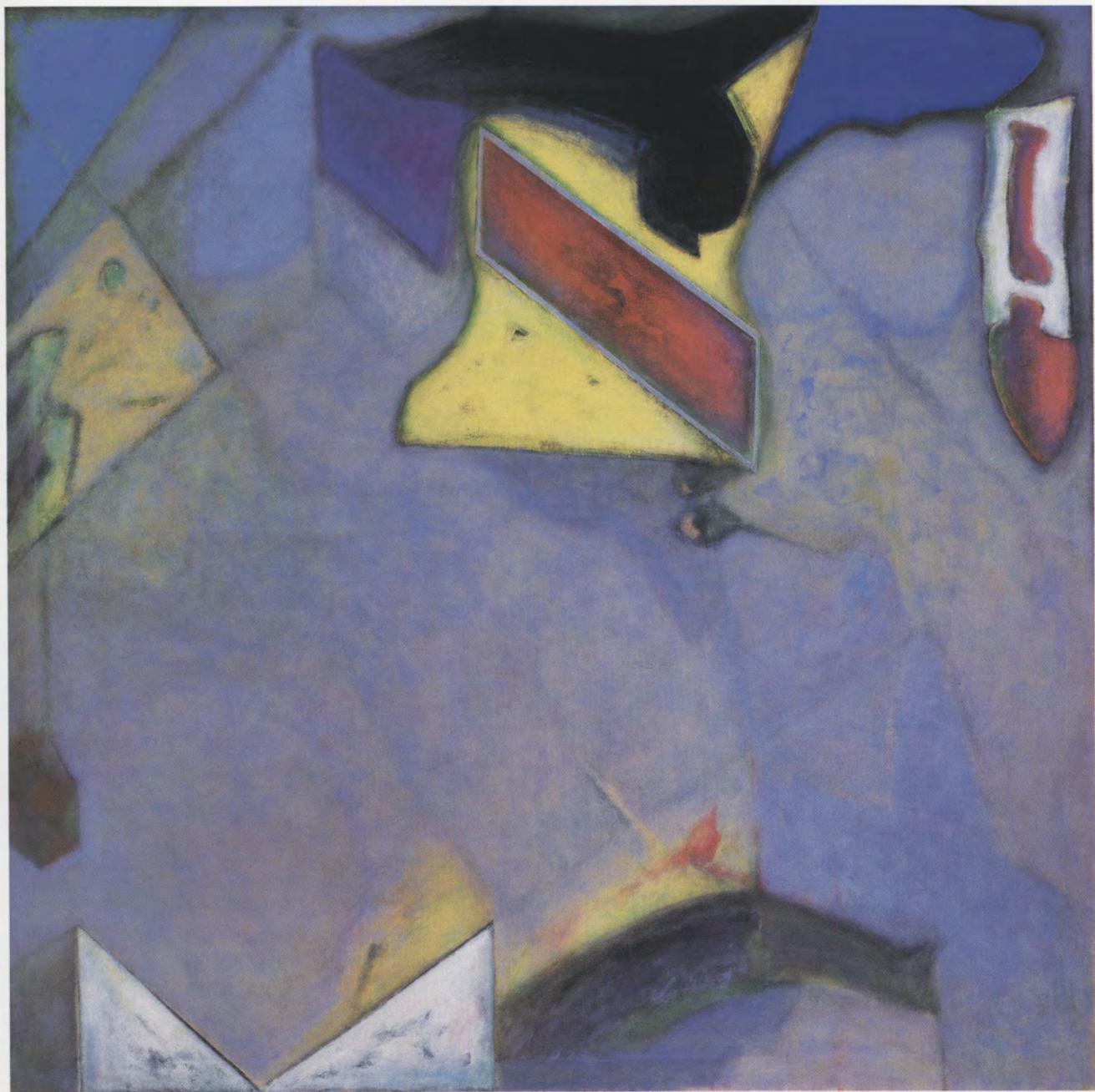
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GEORGE MIYASAKI

Born on the Big Island of Hawaii, George Miyasaki came to California to study at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland. After receiving a Master of Fine Arts degree, he began his career as a painter and a professor of art. He taught at his alma mater, at Stanford University, and at the University of California at Berkeley, of which he is now professor emeritus. A recipient of two Artist's Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as many other national awards, Miyasaki exhibits his works internationally. His paintings are included in more than fifty public collections, including the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the British Museum in London, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., the San Diego Museum of Art, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

DREAM WITHIN A DREAM IN HONOR OF THE PACIFIC ASIAN PIONEERS MIXED MEDIA PRINTING

George Miyasaki's paintings focus primarily upon ideas and images that evolve out of the process of working. His work is not concerned with depiction or narrative, but rather with the process of artistic creation; the exploration of, in his words, "a particular unknown, that unique something that appears and requires a definition in color, form, relationship." Taking his inspiration from the courthouse site's physical and historical connection to the Chinese immigrants of the Gold Rush era, Miyasaki expanded the theme of his commission to encompass the many Pacific Asian pioneers who have emigrated to the United States. Miyasaki's use of vivid color results in a dynamic work, the dimensions of which appear to shift as it is viewed from different vantage points, and which expresses his vision of the pioneer experience.



PICTURE BY PABLO PICASSO

Holley Junker has been working as an artist since 1979. Many of her quilts are done in an idiosyncratic style reminiscent of Pointillism, using petal-like fragments of fabric to create shimmering, painterly surfaces. Her award-winning work has been exhibited in galleries and museums throughout the United States and abroad, including the American Museum of Quilts and Textiles in San Jose, California, and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. She received degrees in both studio arts and anthropology from the State University of New York, and now lives and works in Sacramento, California.

CHINADOM
STUDIO QUILT

Artist Holley Junker conceived the subject and format for her vibrantly colored quilt *Chinadom* after learning that the Sacramento Courthouse site had once been the heart of the city's original Chinese community. Merchants and traders from China set up trade there during the Gold Rush, and served the burgeoning community that had flocked to California in search of fortune. According to contemporary sources, local residents dubbed the neighborhood "Chinadom."

Junker's fabric construction is a topographical map, which she based on infrared satellite photographs of the Sacramento area. The quilt depicts Sacramento's historic Chinese district at its center. Radiating outward from this center are the city's surrounding counties, indicating where numerous Chinese subsequently migrated, and where many of their descendants now live. Junker's work thus traces the arrival and transformation of one of Sacramento's important communities.



Choosing the landscape as his primary subject, Peter Holbrook creates paintings that may at first appear photographic, but are in fact highly personal meditations on light, space, and form. His works have been exhibited extensively in galleries and museums, and he is represented in the collections of the Smithsonian Institution, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Tucson Museum of Art, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, the Oakland Museum of Art, and many others. Holbrook was born in New York in 1940, and educated at Dartmouth College and the Brooklyn Museum School of Art. He now resides in rural Redway, California.

WHITE MOUNTAIN PATRIARCH

OIL ON CANVAS

During the 1970s, old and gnarled trees were frequently the subjects of Peter Holbrook's paintings. In the 1980s and 1990s, most of his landscape subjects were of the topography of the Southwest; tightly cropped canyon scenes that attempted to capture the uniqueness of particular natural environments. Although the subject of White Mountain Patriarch seems to reprise that of his earlier work, Holbrook considers the formal elements of this painting - the weathered and stratified surfaces - to be an extension of his more recent canyon images. The subject of Patriarch is an ancient bristlecone pine tree located at an elevation of about 11,000 feet in the Inyo National Forest. Among the oldest of living things (some specimens are over 4,000 years old), these trees have survived by retreating to a habitat so dry, cold, and wind-blasted that no competing flora or fauna dares to follow. Yet these trees teeter on the brink of extinction. To Holbrook, these endangered pines are symbolic of our society's ambivalent relationship with the natural environment.



An early ambition of C.G. Simonds was to become a comic-strip artist and magazine illustrator, but in college he turned his attention to the fine arts. He majored in painting as an undergraduate, and then earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in sculpture at the University of California, Berkeley. He received a National Teaching Fellowship to work at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, where he ran the foundry while making sculpture and exhibiting. In the 1980s, Simonds resided in Europe, primarily in France, where he produced the body of work from which Beam Ends evolved. Simonds is currently based in Palo Alto, California.

BEAM ENDS STRUCTURAL STEEL I-BEAMS

The work that artist C.G. Simonds created for the Sacramento courthouse is a sculptural triptych: three individual pieces that together constitute a unified work of art. He chose this format as an allusion to the three-member judicial teams used by some Pacific Rim cultures. These sculptures, with their strong, upright, yet independent characters, are intended as a broad comment upon an ideal judicial nature. The individual works are titled Turner, Pointed Out, and Follow-Up. Their collective title, Beam Ends, refers to the structural steel I-beams from which they are fabricated.



Oakland-based sculptor Steve Gillman studied art at San Francisco State University. He later received a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Oregon - which also awarded Gillman his first public commission. In the subsequent two decades he has been prolific in his production of public work for such groups as the Washington State Arts Commission, the Metropolitan Arts Commission of Portland, the University of California at Davis, the San Francisco Art Commission, and the Oakland Cultural Arts Council. Gillman's work is exhibited regularly, particularly in the Pacific Northwest.

PASSAGE NO. 3
MARBLE AND NEON SCULPTURE

Steve Gillman likes to characterize his work as "place making." His installations respond to the specifics of a site - sometimes by acknowledging its formal qualities, sometimes by referencing its history - in order to add another layer of spatial or intellectual experience to a place. For the Sacramento courthouse, Gillman created a monumental marble bench, from which emanates the cool glow of neon light. Both the materials (marble and light) and the form (a bench) of Passage No. 3 draw upon traditional physical and symbolic accoutrements of the judiciary. However, the artist has reformulated these elements into a contemporary and functional work of art, which invites visitors to sit and contemplate the institution of the courts, and its impact on American life.



COMMUNITY ART PANEL

Conrad Atkinson
Chair, Art Department
University of California, Davis

Gale Jesi
Chair, Art Department
University of California, Davis

Gloria Burt
Representative of
Senator Barbara Boxer

Robert Carter
Project Architect
Nacht & Lewis/Hansen Lind Meyer

Jong Wong
Project Architect
Nacht & Lewis/Hansen Lind Meyer

Robert E. Coyle
Senior Judge
United States District Court

Sally Davis
Manger, Public Art & Design Program
California Arts Council

Oliver Jackson
Artist

Collette Johnson Schulke
District Director
Office of Congressman Robert T. Matsui

Anne Valenti
District Director
Office of Congressman Robert T. Matsui

John Moulds
Representative for Mayor Serna

Richard Raisler
Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission

Gregory B. Walters
Circuit Executive for the Ninth Circuit

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