



magi amma

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louie meager art gallery

Ohlone College

Gary Soren Smith Center for Fine and the Performing Arts

43800 Mission Boulevard

Fremont, CA 94539

510 659-6178

www.ohlone.cc.ca.us/org/artgallery

Hours: 12-3pm Mon - Fri, by appointment and during Smith Center events



Oct 21 to Nov 22, 2005

Artist Lecture: Nov 16, noon to 1pm

Magi Amma is a contemporary Renaissance woman with skills in sculpture, bronze casting, ceramics and computer science. Her hi-tech qualifications include posts as an art director at Sun Microsystems and Apple Computer. She is an activist who not only has created such political artwork as the Coup d'Etat Coloring Book, but has also served as President of the National Woman's Caucus for Art. She has shown in many venues in California and nationally.

There are selected works from three series in the gallery, The Tarot Series, The Chair Series and the Techno Series. All of the artist's work contains sociological and political ideas, albeit with an underlying feminist philosophy.

Amma's palette consists of subtle weathered greys and rich rusty browns affected by the vicissitudes of time, highlighting the beauty of aged people and objects. Her images combine natural and found materials, recycled into art, which reflect the ecologically concerned artist. Amma uses symbols such as wings, wheels, nests, ladders, cages and confined female figures as metaphors of the questionable state of the social and financial equality of the 21st century woman.

Bird nests and cages add linear elements to Amma's forms. The nests allude to the free flying spirits of birds, the ancient messengers to the gods. The bird's nests are starkly contrasted with the literal traps of cages. One of her cages, The Star from the Tarot Series, shows an elegant bronze woman reaching up in exaltation, although she is entrapped in her metal cage.

Amma's Chair Series has strong feminist undertones. In The Glass Ceiling, the sitting female has her head in her hands in an oppressed or hopeless attitude. Yet there is the hint of a powerful heritage in her feathered arm band. An accompanying commentary explains the artist's views on the discriminatory glass ceiling. The chairs Self Portrait and Madonna and Child reveal aspects of the female persona in both secular and religious garb.

The Tarot Series presents the artist's interpretation of the ancient, fortune-telling Tarot Cards. These include The Fool, Strength, The Star, Justice, The High Priestess, The Tower and The Magician. The artist's use of the Tarot is authentic, as she also "reads" Tarot. These assemblage sculptures are constructed with aged wooden boxes, seashore driftwood from the artist's Santa Cruz hometown, furniture parts, rusty metals, bird nests, natural detritus, as well as bronze and ceramic elements. They are populated with Amma's fully clothed, featureless, female ceramic figures. Most of the female figures are partially hidden from view, some with their faces turned away from the viewer.

Autobiographical elements occur in Amma's work, as seen in Self Portrait and Birdcage of Love, a wedding/divorce piece from the Techno Series. This stark white wedding piece reveals not only traditional wedding paraphernalia trapped within a cage but also a dysfunctional television, while Amma's authentic divorce court documents "paper" the cage floor. A commentary, offering the artist's views, accompanies the piece.

Amma's work is a personal form of visual poetry. It is rich and evocative and pushes boundaries in its use of materials, aesthetics, politics and the psyche.

Margaret Stainer
Director

introduction

tarot series



detail



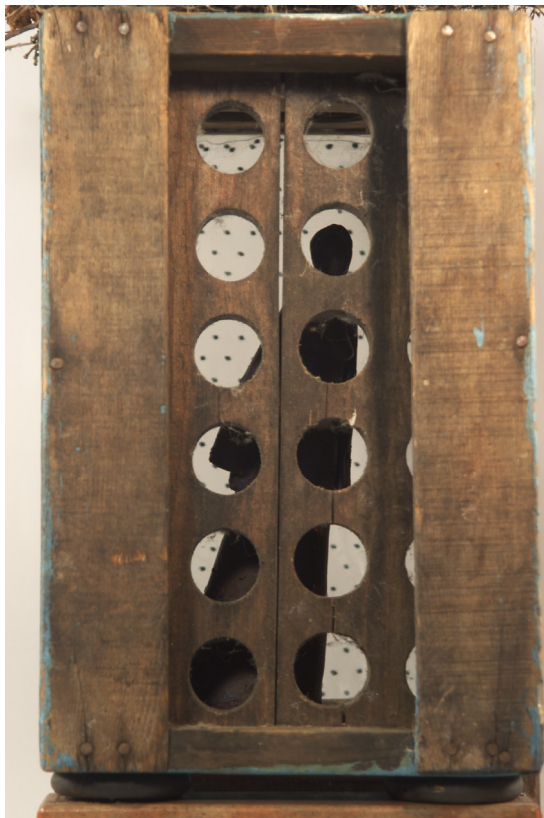
detail



The High Priestess 2002



detail



detail



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The Tower 2002



detail

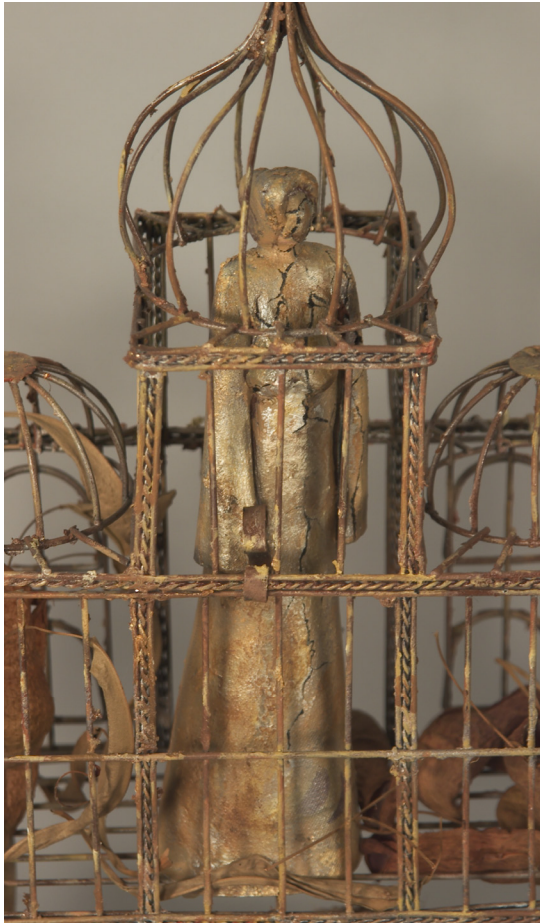


detail



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Justice 2002



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The Magician 2002



detail



detail



detail



detail



The World 2002



detail



detail



detail



detail



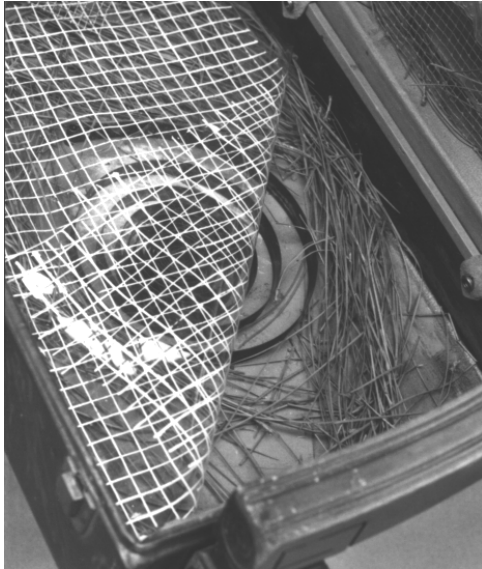
The Fool 2002



detail



detail



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detail



The Wheel of Fortune 2002

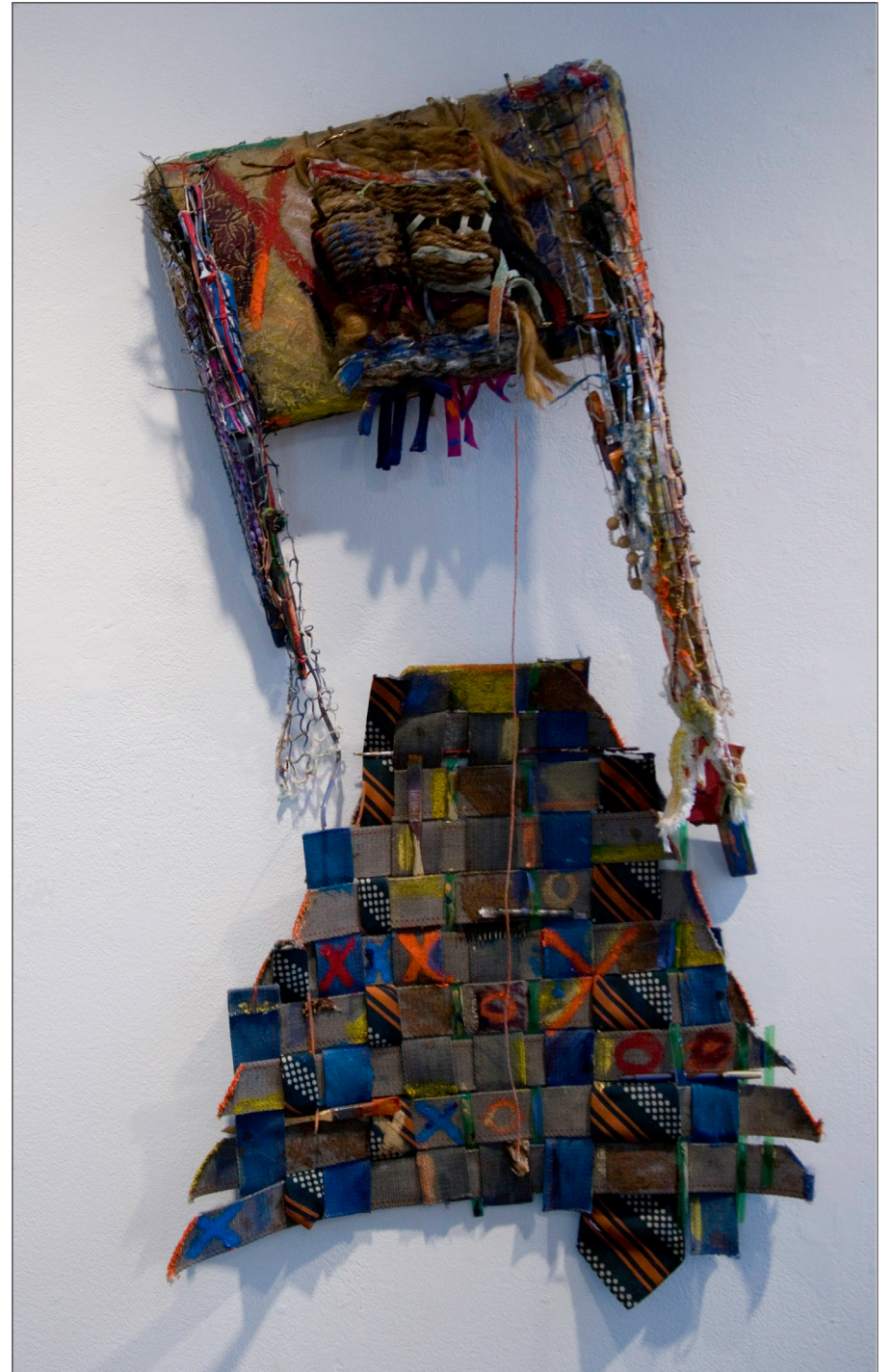


detail



detail

chair series



Fashion Victim. 2005.



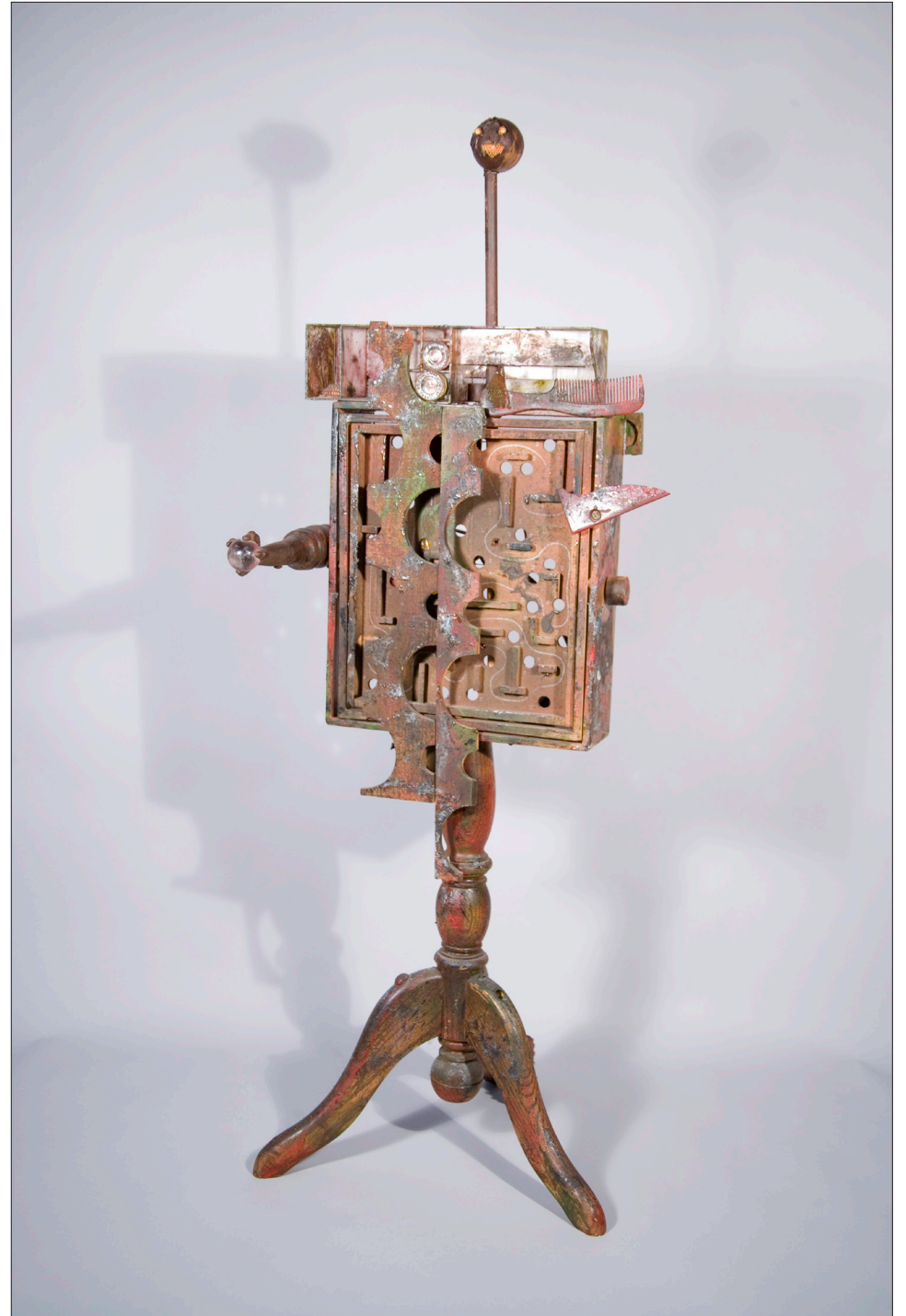
Saint Shirley. 1999.



Saint Marilee. 1999.



Heart of Darkness. 1999.



Labyrinth. 2000.



Self Portrait. 2001.



Welefare Madona Angels in Her Hair. 2000.



The Scream. 1995.



Saint Rosemary Brogan of Cabrillo. 1997.

Selected Chronology

1978 BFA, University of Oregon, Bronze Casting, Architecture and Allied Arts, Eugene, OR.
1979 Ina McClung Scholarship, School of Architecture and Applied Arts, University of Oregon.
1979 Winner, City Competition. Designed and executed life-sized bronze sculpture for the Eugene City Hall.
1979 Invitational Exhibit, Six, Open Space Gallery, Eugene, OR.

1980 Non-Functional Juried Exhibition, Coos Art Museum, Coos Bay, OR.
1981 Lane Community College Juried Exhibition, Project Space Gallery, Eugene, OR.
1982 MFA, University of Oregon, Architecture and Allied Arts, Eugene, OR.
1982 Invitational Exhibit, Five Artists Look at Light, Artists Union Gallery, Eugene, OR.
1983 One-Person Installation, Nexus, Artist's Union Gallery, Eugene, OR.
1984 BS, University of Oregon, Computer Science, Eugene, OR.
1987-1991 Art Director, Sun Microsystems, Mountain View, CA.

1990 Juried Exhibit, Bay Area ACM/SIGGRAPH Electronic Theater, San Francisco, CA.
1991 Technical Coordinator - Artist, Addressing Images, San Jose Art League Gallery, San Jose, CA.
1991 One-Person Exhibit, Faces, Santa Cruz Art Center, Santa Cruz, CA.
1992 Art Director, Advanced Technology Group, Apple Computer, Cupertino, CA.
1992 Juried Exhibit, New Art Exhibit, CyberSpace Gallery, West Hollywood, CA.
1992 Juried Exhibit, Images, Visions, and Voices, Seipp Gallery, Palo Alto, CA.
1992 Invitational Exhibit, From Holy to Whole, Curfman Gallery, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO.
1993 One-Person Exhibit, New Work, Fine Line Gallery, Mendocino, CA.
1993 Invitational, Celebrating Women's Resilience with Maya Angelou, Dinkelspiel Auditorium, Stanford, CA.
1993 16th Annual North Dakota National Juried Exhibition, Minot Art Gallery, ND.
1993 Juried Exhibit, California Heritage: Our Roots Entwined, Gavilin College Gallery, CA.
1994 Juried Exhibit, Women and the Body, Works Gallery, San Jose, CA.
1994 Artists' Choice Award, Santa Cruz County Open Studio Preview Exhibit.
1994 One-Person Exhibit, Galeria Tonantzin, San Juan Bautista, CA.
1994 Panel, Women's International League of Peace and Freedom, Panelist, Art Activists, Santa Cruz, CA.
1994 Juried Exhibit, Art as a Healing Force, Bade Museum, Berkeley, CA.
1994 Juried Exhibit, Visual Cymbals, San Jose State, Gallery One, San Jose, CA.
1994 Juried Exhibit, Site of Crisis, Works Gallery, San Jose, CA.
1995 Juried Exhibit, Women Confronting Issues of Age, San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art, San Jose, CA.
1995 One-Person Exhibit, Celebration of Women, Fine Line Gallery, Mendocino, CA.
1996 Paul Buckner Invitational, Chetwynd Stapylton Gallery, Portland, OR.
1996 One-Person Exhibit, Big Skies, Galeria Tonantzin, San Juan Bautista, CA

1997 One-Person Exhibit, UC Santa Cruz, Women's Center Cardiff House Gallery, CA.
1997 Panel, Carving the Forces of Change, Chair: Contemporary Artists & Computer Technology, Philadelphia, PA.
1998 One-Person Exhibit, Recent Chairs, Santa Cruz Art Center, Santa Cruz, CA.
1998 Invitational, The Age of Women, SomARTS Gallery, San Francisco, CA.
1998 Juried Exhibit, Diverse Origins, CORE New Art Space, Denver, CO.
1999 Juried Exhibit, Igniting the Edge, Forging New Geographies & Identities, Artcore Brewery Annex, LA, CA.
1999 Panel, Igniting the Edge, Chair: Breaking the Silence of Incest, Constructing New Identities, LA, CA.

2000 Invitational Exhibit, Over the Bridge, California Arts Council, Sacramento, CA.
2000-2001 National Women's Caucus for Art, President of the Board.
2000-Ongoing, California Lawyers for the Arts, Board Member, San Francisco, CA.
2001 Juried Exhibit, Pacific Prisms, Coastal Arts League Museum, Half Moon Bay, CA.
2001 Invitational Exhibit, The Impact of Ylem, SomARTS Gallery, San Francisco, CA.
2001 Juried Exhibit, Beyond the Rules, CCAC, San Francisco, CA.
2002 Invitational Exhibit, Picking Up the Pieces, Euphrat Museum of Art, De Anza College, Cupertino, CA.
2003 Juried Exhibit, Violence Against Women, Women Against Violence, Nexus Gallery, Berkeley, CA.
2003 Panel, Violence Against Women, Women Against Violence, Nexus Gallery, Berkeley, CA.
2004 Juried Exhibit, Violence Against Women, Women Against Violence, CIIS, San Francisco, CA.

the studio



checklist

Fashion Victim. 2005.
Mixed media. 50" x 26" x 6.5".

The Fool. 2002.
Mixed media. 32" x 19" x 2.5".

Saint Shirley. 1999.
Mixed media. 51.5" x 16" x 27".

Glass Ceiling. 1993.
Mixed media. 40" x 30" x 40".

Strength. 2002.
Mixed media. 24" x 10.5" x 9.5".

The Star. 2002.
Mixed media. 43" x 11" x 11".

Self Portrait. 2001.
Mixed media. 70" x 26" x 19".

The Scream. 1995.
Mixed media. 56" x 13" x 18".

Heart of Darkness. 1999.
Mixed media. 52" x 19" x 18".

Madonna & Children. 1995.
Mixed media. 74" x 23" x 3".

Mary of the Lamb. 1995.
Mixed media. 51" x 37".

Birdcage of Love. 1992.
Mixed media. 24" x 60" x 24".

Justice. 2002.
Mixed media. 30" x 12" x 7".

Labyrinth. 1995.
Mixed media. 43" x 15" x 13.5".

Welfare Madonna Angels in Her Hair. 2000.
Mixed media. 63" x 25.5" x 12.5".

The Hermit. 2002.
Mixed media. 27" x 25" x 10".

Saint Marilee. 1999.
Mixed media. 49" x 14.5" x 15".

Wheel of Fortune. 2002.
Mixed media. 31.5" x 28.5" x 16.5".

The World. 2002.
Mixed media. 28" x 9" x 6".

The Tower. 2002.
Mixed media. 49" x 12" x 6".

The Magician. 2002.
Mixed media. 23" x 10" x 12".

Saint Rosemary Brogan of Cabrillo. 1997.
Mixed media. 53" x 17" x 20".

acknowledgements

I would like to sincerely thank the staff of the Louie Meager Art Gallery, especially Margaret Stainer and Barbara Hendrickson, for their support and desire to make this exhibit possible. I would also very much like to acknowledge Michael Kaplan for his assistance in creating this catalog. I also thank Bela Ravikumar for her invaluable help with the installation.

Magi Amma



