



A selective guide to current Northern California events of interest.

### Not for Women Only

The great Dr. Johnson once compared a woman's preaching to a dog's dancing—"It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all." Were he alive today, what comparison could express his astonishment at what women have now achieved in that most sacred of all provinces of male genius: art.

This year a number of California galleries and museums are featuring women's work. The diversity of women's experiences and their various modes of expression is the theme of a new show of painting and sculpture opening at the Walnut Creek Civic Arts Gallery. "Touching All Things," conceived and organized by Myra Sue Hocking, will include works she describes as "personal and autobiographical" by 35 Bay Area women artists. Many of the women teach in the area, some already have well-established reputations both here and in New York.

At least half the women know each other and each other's work and have worked together in two ongoing consciousness-raising groups in San Francisco and the East Bay for the past six years.

Among the artists featured will be painter Judith Linares, who last year was awarded the San Francisco Art Institute's Adeline Kent Award; sculptor Ursula Schneider, who is affiliated with the Quay-Braunstein Gallery and recently had a one-woman show in New York; and painter Phyllis Ideal, who is affiliated with Grapestakes Gallery in S.F. and had a show last year at the De Young Museum.

"Touching All Things" will run from January 7 through February 20 at the Walnut Creek Civic Arts Gallery, 1641 Locust Street, San Francisco. The exhibit will be open from noon to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. For more information call 935-3300.

—Melanie Kask



### Bay Women Display Art

Guest curator Myra Sue Hocking and exhibit specialist Marvin Schenck look at her oil titled New Promise, part of "Touching All Things," an exhibit by 35 Bay Area women artists now on view at Walnut Creek Civic Arts Theater Gallery, 1641 Locust St.

### 'Touching All Things' All-Women Exhibit at Civic Arts

The largest all-women art exhibit ever shown in the Bay Area opens at Civic Arts Gallery in Walnut Creek Jan. 7.



Lulu Stanley's "Pulvis Society," a watercolor, is among the 69 pieces in the exhibit opening Jan. 7 at Civic Arts.

More than 69 pieces will be included by 35 Bay Area women artists. The show, called "Touching All Things," will fill both the museum and main gallery at 1641 Locust St. The paintings, drawings and sculptures reflect diversified and personal approaches to the work. A variety of styles, interpretation and technique is represented.

Guest curator Myra Sue Hocking, a working artist and former teacher at California College of Arts and Crafts, says the show is of particular importance to the Bay Area, which excellent work is being done by women but going unrecognized. At tempted women's shows have been very small and belated sexist and conceited.

Among those included by Jay Brown, Phyllis Ideal, Ursula Schneider, Linares, a San Francisco Art Institute teacher who recently received a \$1,000 award through the Institute for the excellence of her work.

The show continues through Feb. 20. Hours are Tuesday through Sunday, noon to 5 p.m., Friday and Saturday, 7 to 9 p.m. Admission is free.



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# A Gala at the Gallery



"Obsidian Heart Wraps Its Wounds" is the title of painting by Laura Raboff (left) who attended previous reception with friend and fellow artist Eva Vance.



Guest curator for the exhibit "Touching All Things" is Myra Sue Hocking, who is pictured with her colored pencil and pastel, "New Frontier."

The winter season at the Civic Arts Center in Walnut Creek opened with fanfare last week with three big events — a preview reception for the Civic Arts Gallery's all women show, "Touching All Things"; the Valley Art Gallery's exhibit of 28 acrylic landscapes by Eury S. Schmidt, chairman of the art department at St. Mary's College; and finally, the premiere performance of the Repertory Company's "The Importance of Being Earnest."

"Touching All Things" features the works of 35 Bay Area women artists. And this is a real event, for it is the largest showing of women's art ever shown in the Bay Area.

It is an exciting, curious show. There are pieces in ink and adobe, pieces that are abstract and some that are representational. The artist Myra Sue Hocking will interpret and explain various aspects of the exhibit in a guided tour at 10 a.m. Monday. Free to the public — and for more profits, buy blue Mandy chères at home. —Nagge Cross



Ann Mason's self-portrait is a striking study in the all-women show.



John Meles, assistant superintendent of educational services, Mr. Ehaba Ulfahl School District, and Mrs. Melos submit acrylic landscape by Roy Schmitt at Valley Art Gallery.

## The 35 Artists Are All Women

# Right Thing, Right Place and Time



Artist Gray Tashiro is seen in a portrait by artist...

By CAROL POWELL  
The current exhibit at the Walnut Creek Civic Arts Gallery is the right thing in the right place at the right time. "Touching All Things," an exhibit of 35 women artists, is a landmark event in the Bay Area women's art scene. It is a landmark because it is the largest showing of women's art ever shown in the Bay Area.

The women's movement has focused attention on women's contributions to many fields, art is no exception. Several months ago the large "Women of Color" exhibit at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the exhibit of prints by women here last week at the Palace of Legion of Honor was long heralded as a landmark.

Currently a vast, historic survey of art by women from 1850 to 1975 is being shown at the gallery of the Los Angeles County Art Museum.

The Walnut Creek exhibit is the perfect complement, historically picking up where the Los Angeles exhibit left off and focusing on work done in this area. While the exhibit has a somewhat broad, curatorial approach, and the artists often enough to work the diverse work. Many of the paintings and drawings reveal realistic issues, but they are put together in a way that is not only aesthetically pleasing, but also socially relevant.

For example, in Jay Brown's beautiful work we recognize the flowers, but what do the arranged in a vase mean? For one thing, they are symbols in our own culture that include all things.

Because most badge artists who all women were had raised time girls increasing frequency.

Another characteristic of this exhibit was the artists' concern for substance and detail, more realistic and more thoughtful than many of the male counterparts.

It is a timely too limited for the viewer to regard the art of men or women only in light of their sexual identity. While the exhibit has a somewhat broad, curatorial approach, and the artists often enough to work the diverse work. Many of the paintings and drawings reveal realistic issues, but they are put together in a way that is not only aesthetically pleasing, but also socially relevant.

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of watercolor reached an incredible level of distinction in many works. Laura Schmitt's usually intricate wrapped shadow heart in her self-portrait and the use of seal and lattice surface, Ann Shapiro's fish painting, and the work by Lauren Davis, these names and shadows have been under the starry, starry sky.

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# Art That's Fit for 'Ladies'

By Alfred Frankenstein  
Like the Sergeant of Police in "The Pirates of Penzance," I find my duty hard to do today.

My duty today is to say something about the exhibition of women's art called "Touching All Things" at the Civic Arts Gallery in Walnut Creek.

We often don't review exhibitions in the suburban galleries because we have enough to do covering San Francisco, but women's art is the big thing nowadays. Last week I went to Los Angeles to cover the women's show there, and one can't ignore a show on the same theme in our back yard.

Unfortunately, the exhibition in Walnut Creek is not so much of women's art as of ladies' art. Most of it is highly competent technically, but the whole has that suburban-gilded atmosphere which serious women artists have been struggling to banish in recent years.

It's an old, familiar story even the work of highly individual artists can be pulled down in the company of the mediocre and the amateurish. I mean people like Ann Shapiro and Judith Linhares, who can look

wonderful by themselves or in other company, but don't quite make it here.

To be sure, nothing can hold down the power of Phyllis Idea's abstractions, notably the one called "Wash," and nothing can belittle the sad little lyric mysteries, like primitive fetish bags, that Elin Elothson makes.

Marva Cremer's photo-realist portraits would honor any company, Timothea Campbell's abstractions are brilliantly done, and Donelle Estey's mixtures of media are daintily appealing.

That's about it, except for Carla Lis' clever assemblages of bottles, leaves, photographs and things enclosed in plastic boxes and Elin Leptich's landscapes, a kind of poor girl's O'Keeffe, but sensitively adapted from a great model.

Too many of the ladies try to scare you with surreal fantasies that remind one of nothing so much as the noise a child makes in pretending he's a dinosaur. Insight into the feminine psyche doesn't really lie that way. At least not this time.



Elin Leptich's "Wool II," in oil on canvas, is one of the more memorable works in the show.