

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Swarm Gallery is pleased to announce the upcoming exhibition

GEORGIA JUNE GOLDBERG | Recent Works

May 10 - 24, 2007

Public Artist's Reception: Thursday, May 24, 2007 6-9PM

OAKLAND, Calif. – 2 May 2007 – Swarm Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition of works by Georgia June Goldberg. A catalogue for the exhibition will be available. Below is an essay about Goldberg's work, written by Glen Helfand:

"Georgia June Goldberg admits that her current working style began with thinking about disaster. Before the dramatic physical and psychological effects of 9/11 and Katrina, she made large paintings of buildings reduced to rubble. In the contemporary moment, when such images are far more prevalent than we'd like them to be, the paintings created a different filter through which to view catastrophe. These weren't dour or depressing works, they suggested that within collapse, there's beauty. An object, a building perhaps, shattered into pieces is transformed into another thing entirely. A multiplicity of pieces not only alludes to the power of what created them, but implies abundance and a vast space for something new to occur. Goldberg's current work veers from a literal destruction to explore a poetic sense of transition, of her elements coalescing into multiple visual possibilities.

Her vertically suspended translucent scrolls and panels contain a hundreds of curving, roughly geometric shapes. These are frozen in space like confetti, snowflakes or perhaps cells that flutter in a drop of water, only visible under powerful magnification. In each case, thousands of little things create a seemingly pure whole. On a visual level, you could call it democratic—no one form takes precedence over the other, it's the group that forms the picture, the associative meanings over a vast expanse. The works bring to mind a filigree of urban density, architectural structure, and engage in a dialog with Julie Mehretu's more motion-oriented paintings and drawings. There's an organic, curving quality of Goldberg's composition and line that suggests the distinct abstract styles of Kandinsky and Pollock, as if exploded and seemingly suspended in space.

Because of their scale—usually large, sometimes intimate—installations of these works are experienced physically. We can face them head on, but they're often taller than we are. We must look up at them, as if at a starry sky. The scrolls either ascend or descend, depending on your disposition. They hang in groups, and to truly experience them, we must navigate a course, and feel enveloped in this universe. The materials allow light to pass through, and make shadow an integral component. That these works are not completely revealed to us—the roll of material is not fully unfurled-- Goldberg embraces the notion of elusive, continuously unfolding narratives. Rather than words or specific stories, she tells them in line.

For the hanging works, Goldberg uses a translucent acetate-like material used for theatrical lighting and custom tinted Plexiglass, and each creates a dynamic between the seemingly organic source of the images and the artificiality of the material. When Goldberg works on thin Japanese *gampi* paper, the results are more purely rooted in nature. The lines form something like constellation maps that grow more intricate with the skin like wrinkles of the handmade material. Ink creates gentle puckers on the surface further deepening the effect. Sometimes she creates lines with threads of silver, adding twinkles of complexity and a sense of the sublime. They're welcome attributes that, like much of Goldberg's work, create productive moments in which chaos is open to gorgeous possibility."

Glen Helfand is a freelance writer, critic, curator and teacher. His writing on art, culture, design and technology, often concentrating on works by Bay Area artists, has appeared in Artforum, Art on Paper, Salon, SFGate, Wired, the San Francisco Bay Guardian, and many other publications. He's a co-founder of the Bay Area-based arts website, Stretcher.org and has curated exhibitions for the M.H. de Young Museum in San Francisco, the San Jose Museum of Art and numerous alternative and commercial gallery spaces. He has taught lecture and seminar courses on contemporary art at SFAI, San Francisco State University, California College of the Arts, and Mills College. He was a 2003 Artist in Residence at the Headlands Center for the Arts in Marin.



PROJECT SPACE

Feeding Our Souls Through Birds at Lake Merritt | Lydia Nakashima Degarrod
May 12- June 17, 2007

Lydia Nakashima Degarrod, a visual artist and cultural anthropologist, will have a video installation based on observations and interviews with a group of men and women who regularly feed birds at Lake Merritt in Oakland. She has found that for this community of bird feeders, the act of feeding birds becomes an arena in which to inscribe a diverse set of feelings about their relationship to other species, and also about their own lives. For some it is place to express their feelings for their native homeland where physical boundaries between people and animals were almost non-existent. For others, feeding the birds brings them back to the last time they nurtured their now grown children. For others, it's a way of fighting loneliness. For others it is a way of communicating with a form of nature that they see as disappearing. And for others, the flight of the birds represents their own near departure from life. This project which combines both ethnographic research and visual art is being made with the collaboration of the Wildlife Refuge at Lake Merritt led by naturalist Stephanie Benavidez.

Lydia Nakashima Degarrod has conducted several interdisciplinary projects which combined both cultural anthropology and visual art. Currently, Lydia Nakashima Degarrod is working on map project which will be conducted as Artist in Residence at the Center for Art and Public Life at the California College of Arts in 2007-2008.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS

- EXHIBITION: **Georgia June Goldberg** | Solo show
Lydia Nakashima Degarrod | *Feeding Our Souls Through Birds at Lake Merritt* in Project Space
- DATES: Georgia Goldberg | May 10 - 24, 2007
Lydia Nakashima Degarrod | May 12- June 17, 2007
Swarm Gallery is open to the public Tuesday – Sunday 12 – 6PM and by appointment
- RECEPTION: Thursday, May 24, 2007 6-9PM
- LOCATION: Swarm Gallery, 560 Second Street, Oakland CA 94607 www.swarmstudios.net

PRESS CONTACT AND IMAGES

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