

# TRANSPORT!

trans.port

1. act of transporting: transportation
2. strong or intensely pleasurable emotion; ecstasy, rapture
3. a vehicle (as a truck or plane) used to transport persons or goods
4. a system of public conveyance

Syn. see Ecstasy

-Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary

TRANSPORT! presents vehicles of imagination by folk and contemporary artists from Bay Area sources. These artists are associated by their imaginative spirit and their use of icons of popular culture. Painting, sculpture, and ceramics range from the humorous to commentary on serious issues involving transportation. Automobiles, boats, bicycles, animals, and skateboards are represented as anthropomorphic entities, fantasy, or as cultural statements.

The polychrome ceramics by Candelario Medrano Lopez are marked by a vigorous creativity, free imagination, direct rendering, and Mexican character. The highly animated fantasy train, spaceship, airplane, and "Nahual" are handwrought folk art pieces that take on an extended meaning in the dominant electronic mass society of today.

Many of the artists in this exhibition have recognized and been influenced by the emotional presence and symbolic power of folk art material. Candelario's Nahual figure, half beast with human head, is a spirit guardian manifested from Indian myth. The magic realism of the Nahual is visually associated with the human-headed animals in the color-rich, supernatural festival of Maximino Javier's lithographs and with the delicately rendered spirit porcelains by David Best. Figures in Inez Storer's tin sculptures and paintings relate directly to Mexican tin folk pieces in their angular simplification. An equestrian, a romantic couple dancing on the water next to a steamship, and the flying figures of a woman riding the back of a man with a trapeze transform folk elements through a unique sensibility. In his career, artist Gilbert Lujan has made a direct effort politically and socially to connect the Meso-American heritage to American life. His work honors the folk art venue and lends vibrant humor as seen in the brilliant ceramic improvisations on a 1939 Chevy.

The automobile has long been associated with independent freedom and seen as an extension of self in the American culture. Dennis Clive gives palpable speed to the elegantly detailed ceramic Bugatti, "Black Beauty", by altering the fenders into a herd of black stallions. A consummate craftsman, Clive has heightened the sophisticated machine with a reflection of a galloping horse on the windshield. The piece epitomizes our long-standing romance with the automobile. Peter Toft-Nielson's miniature sculptural fantasies continue this notion. In Adam Schnitzer's elegant, contemplative paintings the moving geometry of the automobile is seen fused with the landscape in closely allied hues. The car becomes an anthropomorphic entity in L.G. Williams' reductive views of headlights and reflections at night. Its aggressive character is manifested through the vibrant bravado of Carlos Almaraz' color in "Perpendicular Crash", the fluid paint in Scott Greene's "Car Pool", and in the whimsical, manic expressionism of Mark Bulwinkle's steel sculpture, "Driving". In "Something more Convertible" by Greene, the clothing which a man appears to wrench off his back is actually a car—a metaphor for man's dependence on the automobile laced with humor and irony.

The servicable truck in James Torlackson's realist watercolor is shown wrecked, abandoned, and with human expression. Willy Scholten and Tom Foolery have used toy trucks and models which we associate with youth and innocence. Foolery's voyeuristic views into theater lights present miniature scenarios of the artworld and his personal art transport. Willy Scholten intimates dire consequence in her sculpture from torched car hoods with a drawing of a skeleton that forms a freeway for miniature cars and trucks.

Jose Vermeersch's ceramic Boy on Dog is an animal in service of man with an unsettling combination of naturalistic eyes and abstracted clay bodies. Rand Schiltz' sculpted bronze animals fly, have wheels, and assume roles which allude to human condition with gentle humor.

E.Z. Smith's altered photograph, "Floating Landmark" alludes to levitation as transport as a young boy surfs on a roadway arrow.