



Santa Barbara
CONTEMPORARY ARTS FORUM

For Immediate Release.

Exhibition: *Flights from Wonder*: Christopher Chiappa, Liz Craft, Martha Friedman, FriendsWithYou, Jon Pylypchuk, Carolyn Salas, Mindy Shapero, Shinique Smith, and Phoebe Washburn, and **Bloom Projects:** Afruz Amighi, *Suspended City*

Opening Reception: Saturday, February 25, 6:30-8 pm Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum

Exhibitions on view: February 26 - April 22, 2012, Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum **ADMISSION IS FREE**

CAF presents a visually dazzling, imaginative, interactive museum experience for all ages in *Flights from Wonder*, an exhibition that de-mystifies contemporary art. CAF will also feature an installation inspired by refugee camps, by an Iranian-American artist in **Bloom Projects:** Afruz Amighi, *Suspended City*.



The process of scientific discovery is, in effect, a continual flight from wonder. -Albert Einstein

The pursuit of truth and beauty is a sphere of activity in which we are permitted to remain children all our lives. -Albert Einstein

Religious leaders, intellectuals, and scientists such as Honoré de Balzac, Buddha, Jesus Christ, Albert Einstein, Aldous Huxley, and Marcel Proust, espoused a practice of perceiving art and science through a child's perspective—straightforward, devoid of pretense, and unflinching in its outlook—to invigorate the imagination. Their philosophy encourages us as adults to cast aside preconceived notions and approach the world from this unfettered child's point of view, so that we may broaden our world view, and stimulate our minds, allowing for greater degrees of discovery, curiosity, compassion, and wonder.

Inspired by this perspective, *Flights from Wonder* transforms CAF into a series of engaging, hands-on, interactive installations that heighten the synergy between artists and audience, and challenge all ages to re-imagine their relationship to art. The exhibition explores alternate ways to experience art by posing questions such as: How do children react and relate to the art of our time? How do we experience contemporary art? What new awareness can we acquire from children? Featuring an internationally recognized group of artists including Christopher Chiappa, Liz Craft, Martha Friedman, FriendsWithYou, Jon Pylypchuk, Carolyn Salas, Mindy Shapero, Shinique Smith, and Phoebe Washburn, *Flights from Wonder* empowers audiences to think, play, and create, and rejects the myth that contemporary art is mystifying or elitist, demonstrating instead that art is an enriching and stimulating part of the human experience.

Special thanks to: The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, New York, NY; *Casa Magazine*, Santa Barbara, CA; *The Daily Sound*, Santa Barbara, CA; Jon and Lillian Lovelace, Santa Barbara, CA; *Montecito Messenger*, Santa Barbara, CA; ParentClick, Santa Barbara, CA; *Santa Barbara Independent*; *Santa Barbara News-Press*; and Wayne McCall & Associates, Santa Barbara, CA, X-TRA, Los Angeles, CA.

Flights from Wonder Educational Programming

Learn, play, and discover in CAF's interactive ArtLab activity center during the exhibition *Flights from Wonder*. Fabricate miniature artworks, then transform them to larger-than-life masterpieces in our Magnificent Magnification Machine!

CAF's Youth Docent Crew (YDC), a team of local students ages 7-17, will be providing FREE *Flights from Wonder* tours for CAF visitors every Saturday and Sunday at 1 pm and 3 pm.

Friday, March 16, 6 pm

smART Salon: The Role of Childhood and Parenting in the 21st Century

In accordance with the exhibition *Flights from Wonder*, CAF presents a panel discussion that examines the roles of childhood and parenting in the 21st century. Panelists include Gopal Krishnmurthi, coordinator of the Krishnmurti Teaching Academy; Ellen Stoddard, director of the Lou Grant Parent Child workshop in Carpenteria; Don MacMannis, Clinical Director of the Family Therapy Institute of Santa Barbara; Carolyn Kaster, teacher at the Waldorf School of Santa Barbara; and moderated by Charles Donelan, Arts Editor of the *Santa Barbara Independent*. Join CAF as these pioneering professionals share their diverse expertise and experience, providing an opportunity to broaden and strengthen our understanding of childhood and parenting today.

Special thanks to our media sponsor for *Flights from Wonder* educational programming ParentClick, Santa Barbara, CA.

Bloom Projects: Afruz Amighi, *Suspended City*

Afruz Amighi will create an on-site sculptural installation, which highlights the often ignored and unmonumental architecture of poverty and desperation. Drawing inspiration from the ever-expanding landscape of refugee camps that dot Middle East borders with make-shift tents, Amighi represents these structures as large graphite drawings. Hovering in space, in a realm of permanent dislocation, these drawings are suspended beneath a night sky with stars arranged in the Kufic Arabic script to spell out *surah*, the Quranic word for solace.

Born in Tehran, Iran, Afruz Amighi received a B.A. in Political Science at Barnard College, Columbia University, New York, NY, and an M.F.A. from New York University, New York, NY. A New York resident, she has completed a residency program at the School of Visual Arts, New York, NY, and was selected for the Aljira Center for Contemporary Art Emerge Program in collaboration with Creative Capital. Her work has been exhibited in numerous venues including the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX, and Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, New York, NY.

Special thanks to: The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, New York, NY, Susan E. Bower Exhibition Fund, Santa Barbara, CA; *Casa Magazine*, Santa Barbara, CA; Brush & Associates, Santa Barbara, CA; *Santa Barbara Independent*; *Santa Barbara News-Press*; and Wayne McCall & Associates, Santa Barbara, CA.

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Afruz Amighi, *Locket*, 2010,
Stainless steel and base
metal chain, 102 x 18 in.,
Courtesy the Artist

About the Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum: The Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum (CAF) is a non-profit, non-collecting alternative art space dedicated to the exhibition, education, and cultivation of the arts of our time. Celebrating its 36th anniversary in 2012, CAF is the premier venue for contemporary art between Los Angeles and San Francisco. CAF is located at the Paseo Nuevo Mall Upper Arts Terrace in downtown Santa Barbara, CA and is open Tuesday - Saturday: 11 am to 5 pm, Sunday: noon to 5 pm during the run of the exhibitions.

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