

"Urban Nature" Exhibition at Quarry Cove Art Gallery, Rockaway Beach. Reception with Artists, Saturday, March 18, 2-4 p.m. Exhibition open through April 1.

Is "Urban Nature" an oxymoron? How does nature exist in an urban habitat? What are the consequences of urban expansion? Pacifica Art Connection proudly presents the work of 10 local artists who explore the convergence of humanity with nature in 28 artworks.

Here is a sampling of the exhibit, which reflects each artist's engagement with this multifaceted theme. The stunning photography of Donna Doney captures nature at its most pristine and brilliant. Her photographs "Yosemite Stream of Rocks" and "Hidden Waterfall at Yosemite" transport us from urban life to the best of nature.

Shifting to the intersection of nature and humanity, Mark Bray honors local animals' adaptation to urban expansion, with four portraits of these animals silhouetted before an amethyst city skyline at dusk. In "Spiral Stair" and "Lake Merced Windows," photographer Larry Rosenstein offers a study of the patterns in architectural design that often mirror those in nature. Photographer and painter Darcy Rowley juxtaposes the human-made with the nature-grown in her playful photograph "Crowns," a cupola alongside the topknot of a palm tree. Reminding us to enjoy simple pleasures, Margaret Weiss celebrates the sparkle and grace of the urban garden in her watercolor paintings, "Water Lily," "Petunias," and "Freesia."

On the flipside of the fruitful urban-nature collaboration is the potential of urbanization causing harm. Painter Victor Carmichael conveys his increasingly serious concerns for the very future of our species and many others in his acrylic painting "Engine," a diagram that graphically portrays the system of capitalism that leads to destructive relationships between the environment, natural resources, production, profits, business owners, and workers.

Glass artist Karen Rosenstein expresses nature's vulnerability in "Sacrificed Oceans." This stand-out sculpture is an inspiring ocean of floating, multi-colored fused glass shards; it is a tribute to our oceans and sea life threatened by chemical pollution and plastic debris. Multimedia artist Judy Quitariano considers how city life may hurt us on the interpersonal level. In her sculpture "Bud Vase," Quitariano portrays the disconnect between people in the urban environment and their love relationships.

In a message of caution and hope, textile artist Anne Puski speaks to our choices and their consequence in "The Survivors," a woven and painted linen wall hanging that centers on a pair of field flowers with seeds pods ascending. Clay artist Cindy Chan embeds nature in her surface design of "Sanctuary of Leaves," an altar/bird home. Her figure and vessel "Constant Hope" has nature as the origin, a seedling bud from which a sweet woman's face emerges.

"Urban Nature" is a thought-provoking exhibit as it inspires yet cautions. Please attend a reception with the artists on Saturday, March 18 from 2-4 p.m. "Urban Nature" will be exhibited through Saturday, April 1. Quarry Cove Art Gallery is at 225 Rockaway Beach Avenue, next to Avani Salon. The Gallery is open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Cindy Chan**