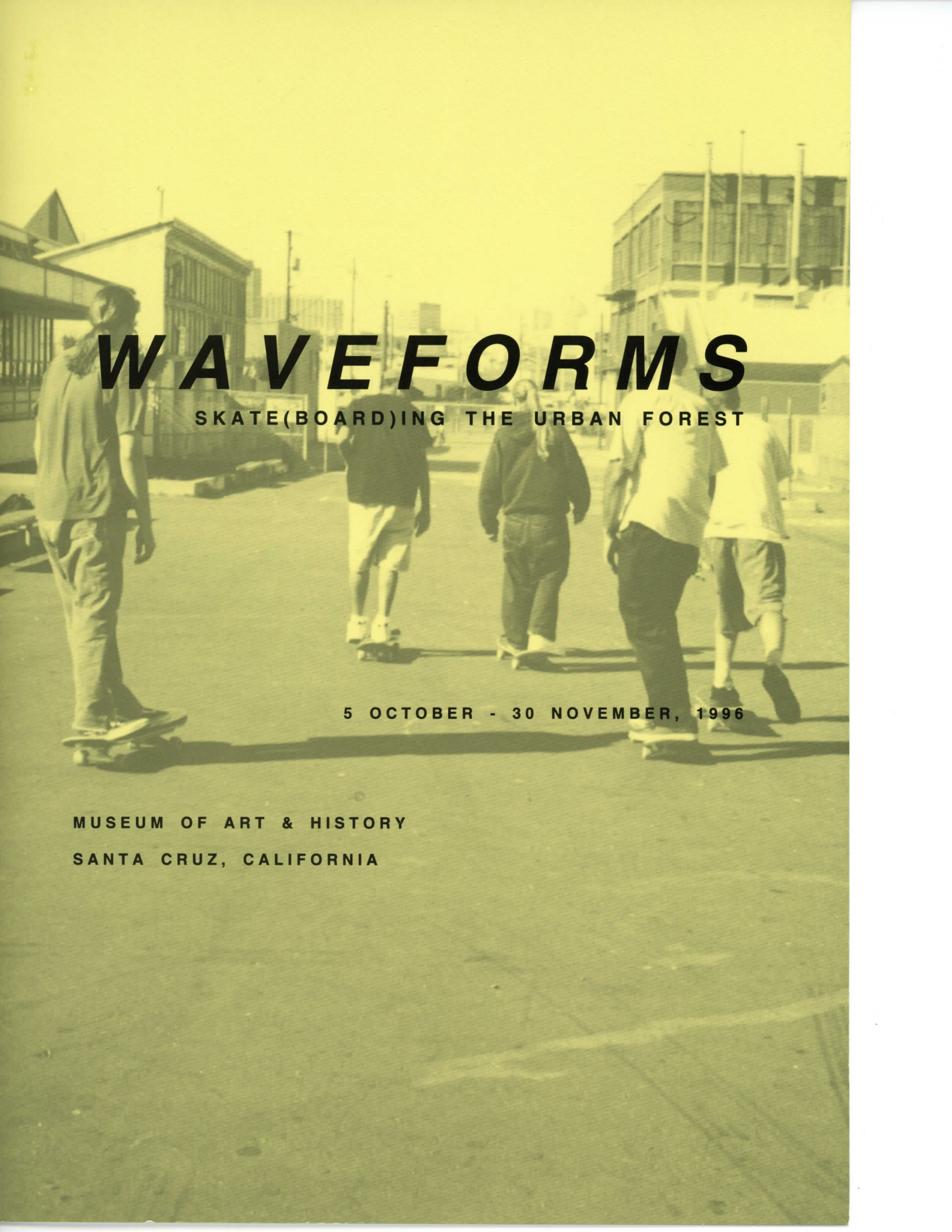




WAVEFORMS

SKATE(BOARD)ING THE URBAN FOREST

5 OCTOBER - 30 NOVEMBER, 1996

MUSEUM OF ART & HISTORY

SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA

"The only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved . . . who burn, burn, burn like the fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars."

—Jack Kerouac, *On the Road*

"We decide to start out with *Teenage Riot* just to get things going with a flurry. Usually we'll creep into the set with more intricacy such as *Skink* or *Schizophrenia* but we decide to flail tonight to keep the energy peaked."

—Thurston Moore, Sonic Youth, from his tour diary 4/26/96, moments before playing Roseland, NYC. *index*, 6/96.



Transcendent Clamor (Grind)

"Beneath the asphalt the Beach," read the counter-culture slogan graffitied on the walls of Paris in the Spring of '68. The student revolt had ignited a world-wide youth culture that would no longer abide by the rules of those who had brought the Cold War and Marshall Plan. Underneath the concrete urban polity, so the slogan advised, lay planet earth in all its splendor, unmediated by the effects of civilization.

But before the sixties' student movement, came the Beat Generation, laying the foundation for a cultural program attempting transcendence, autonomy and resistance against the prevailing social order of the tight and repressed Fifties McCarthy era. You take the contemporary debate of private vs. public space --the regulation of social relations imposed by the state upon the individual subject's rights, both on the streets *and* in the privacy of the individual's own home-- and find roots of that discourse embedded in the cultural legacy of beat writers Charles Bukowski, Jack Kerouac et al. It's no minor miracle that forty years later, a Nineties youth movement has rediscovered the spoken-word poetics of visionary William S. Burroughs, and found in the core of his zero-degree plenitude an example to live by.

Progeny of the New Revolutionary Class (a homemade launch ramp)

Reflective of visual cultures that have emerged on the streets of America within recent decades, this project attempts to create a context for some of the popular imagery, language, visual mythologies and cultural codes that are associated with skater populations in the contemporary urban domain.

Waveforms (skateboarding is not a crime)

Highlighting the historical evolution of the sport/lifestyle from its seminal roots in fifties' Santa Cruz surfer culture, a primary concern of this project is to address the emergent artform --here and now-- of skating's unique symbolic nature. A subtext of the exhibition speaks to skating's *alternative mobility* beyond fossil fuel consumption to the broader implications of a visible youth presence of skaters in the public domain. Though this project does not purport to define all of skating's many pathways, inclinations and intentionalities, one angle that is operative, however, is that of the exhibition space as cultural status report; a work in progress that attempts to foreshadow the cross-section between life and newer skate-tropes that have recently emerged from some of the core geographic areas that contributed spawning what is contemporary skate(board)ing.

The New Power Differential (trucks, wheels, bearings, bolts, bushings, grip tape, decks)

Speed and mobility: crucial factors that define contemporary survival/existence in navigating the everyday medium of life. Intended to amplify the subcultural phenomenology of skating's forms and attitudes, *Waveforms* comprises painting, video, graffiti wall drawings, electronic media, sculpture, silkscreen posters, skatetrack architectural models, photography, skateboard reproduction artwork, alongside skater printed matter, paraphernalia and related inspirational material from the core scenes of music and popular culture into a single free-flowing installation.

Hazardous Sport (fs 180 to switch 50-50 to 180 out)

Circa 76 while driving southbound on interstate 405, near Long Beach, the afternoon traffic is at a complete standstill for what has appeared to be eternities, an entire freeway system demobilized, static, all drivers sitting there re-enacting that same motorist waiting game of everyday. Suddenly, with the shifting focus of the eye, a most remarkable image: at a close distance beneath a massive overpass, a crew of about twelve youth enthusiastically skating the round inner surfaces of the concrete underbelly of that five-lane monster. A memory imprint that serves as a perfect archetype for the sublime poetics of econo/alternative/functionality on the desolate ramparts of that industrial California edgecity ultraviolet afternoon. Circa 66 our posse --East Side Calecia-- skate(board)ing Jefferson Elementary when our star, daredevil Ernie Rivera, slams high-speed onto a brick wall, breaking his left arm in several places. Next day, we honor his bravery by signing his cast everywhere until there is not a single space left to deliver marks upon.

I read somewhere that the average skate customer is a male, between 14 and 18, with 10 to 13 year olds a close second, and, that most younger skaters have been skating only one to two years. Supposedly, 30 percent of skate customers at the local skateshops are beginners. According to recent surveys, only 19 percent of skaters live in cities that have skateparks. This would lead one to conclude that skate(board)ing in the U.S. --street, verticle, & otherwise-- is pretty much a youth phenomenon taking place on streets, alleyways, strip malls, roadways, empty poolsites, parking lots and every conceivable stretch of the concrete urban forest inviting and/or challenging enough to skate.

SpeedTrials (playing smart safe hard: the greater part of valour is knowing when to let go)

Skating populations are everywhere the motif of our times despite the surveillance and strict enforcement of anti-skating statutes that forbid skating in most downtown commercial shopping districts during the day and *all* public streets at night. In the Nineties, skating has not yet on the whole been perceived in the light of other alternative modes of transportation -- such as bicycles and scooters-- though a number of younger people nevertheless make daily use of the skate as a means for getting around urban space. Skaters' activism in 1996 has not yet resulted in skate(board)ing being added to a lengthy list of "hazardous recreational activities" for which cities are immune from most liability under Government Code section 831.7. Local government is usually protected from liability suits related to these recreational activities unless plaintiffs can prove gross negligence on the part of local officials. Adding skating to this list would ease the pressure on everyone and create the context for added responsible behaviour on all our parts. On the eve of the third millenium, we continue to play physical semantics in negotiating Public versus Private space in Post-industrial society. No doubt, much work remains in (y)our attempt to legalize skating (if you wish to get involved, check out <http://www.skateboard.com/iasc>). Skateboarding is not a crime.

Silkscreen (production/distribution/consumption)

Far be it for me to suggest anything, reader: but feel free to conceptualize and realize in (y)our own real lif: the many alternative discourses offered by the popular culture of (y)our time. Staying loose will encourage others to develop *their own free-hand style* design for living (this equals advocacy and solidarity with mass-struggle for emancipation of the mind), rejoinder to the free speech movement and the first amendment combined. These are American freedoms, there for your pleasure, yours for the taking. Skate(board)ing is an expression of pure physical control over time, space, energy, gravity and motion. Mind over matter, but with style. Enjoy!

Artistic Survivalist Responses (works/ideas/models/concepts/solutions/visions)

My heartfelt gratitude to the artists of Waveforms: Moish Brenman, William S. Burroughs, Nathan Carrico, Mark Gonzales, Chris Johanson, Mike LeSage, Barry McGee, Johnny Mojo, Jennifer Hardison, Frank Kozic, Jim Phillips, Jimbo Phillips, Demetrie Tyler, Richard Wang & Bryan Nuñez, Sunde White, and Ken Wormhoudt. Kindest appreciations to Charles Hilger, Kathleen Moodie and all of the great people of Santa Cruz, ¡órale!

--Armando Rascón
Guest Curator



EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

MOISH BRENMAN

Daredevil, 1993
Paint on wall; dimensions variable.

MIKE LeSAGE

Black Book, 1996
Designs for wall graffiti.

JOHNNY MOJO

Silkscreened & sublimated skateboard decks, 1992-96
acid trip
bee
blues guitar
big eyed girl
cyclops
drumkit
japanese toys
metropolis

JIMBO PHILLIPS

Designs for skateboards, 1996
Silkscreen designs:
Rob Facelli; 30 x 10"
Felix Unger; 31 x 7.5"
Moon River; 31.5 x 7.5"

SUNDE WHITE

Guard Me Angel, 1996
6 panels, 8.5 x 11" each.
Image/text collage on paper.

Alive

1994
Mixed mediums on paper;
75 x 62"

Hospital

1994
Mixed mediums on paper;
85 x 42"

Divine

1994
Mixed mediums on paper;
77 x 42"

Beautiful

1994
Mixed mediums on paper;
76 x 42"

WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS

Speculator in Biological Futures,
1992; Acrylic on cadillac paper.
17.5 x 13"

The Green Gun & His Adolescent
1992; acrylic on cadillac paper.
17.5 x 13"

Who Runs May Read, 1992
Acrylic on cadillac paper.
13 x 17.5"

Screen in Carved Ivory & Rose Coral
1991; Acrylic on cadillac paper.
17 x 13.5"
courtesy TERRAIN, San Francisco

FRANK KOZIC

Silkscreened rock posters 1995-96
Ear

Mermen

Kyuss

Green Day

Steel Pole Bathtub

Dogs w/ Boy

Penny Wise

Claric Nova

Beasties

Green Day

Ravine

Rolling Stone

Babes in Toyland

Man's Ruin

NATHAN CARRICO

Tim Brauch, Sketchbook, 1996
Silkscreen; Wheelbase: 14.125"
Width: 8.375" Length: 31.375"
Nose: 6.75" Tail: 6.125"

Jaya Bonderov, Hindu Goddess,
1993, Silkscreen; Wheelbase: 14"
Width: 7.5" Length: 31.125"
Nose: 6.625" Tail: 6.25"

Paul Sharpe, Polar Bears, 1993
Silkscreen; Wheelbase: 14"
Width: 7.875" Length: 31.25"
Nose: 6.75" Tail: 6.25"

Ryan Aningalan, Devil Dog, 1994
Silkscreen; Wheelbase: 13.875"
Width: 7.625" Length: 31.25"
Nose: 6.75" Tail: 6.125"

Tim Brauch, Wheelchair, 1995
Silkscreen; Wheelbase: 14"
Width: 8" Length: 31.125"
Nose: 6.5" Tail: 6.125"

RICHARD WANG & BRYAN NUNEZ

Blair Skate Team, 1996
Electronic publishing.
<http://www.blairmag.com>

KEN WORMHOUDT

Architectural models:
Santa Rosa Skateboard Track,
Built 1994; Size = 14,400 sq. ft.
Milpitas Skateboard Track,
Built 1996; Size = 8,000 sq. ft.
Bend Skateboard Track, Oregon,
Built 1996; Size = 11,400 sq. ft.
Yuba City Skateboard Track,
Built 1996; Size = 11,250 sq. ft.
Carson City Skateboard Track,
Nevada, 1995; Size = 12,000 sq. ft.
Petaluma Skateboard Track,
Built 1996; Size = 14,000 sq. ft.
Wasilla Skateboard Track, Alaska,
Built 1996; Size = 12,500 sq. ft.

MARK GONZALES

Skateboard with Photocollage, 1996
Skateboard, photography.

BARRY MCGEE

Wall Drawing, 1996
Acrylic spraypaint, varnish, ink.

JENNIFER HARDISON

Wonder Girls, 1996, video.
8 min. excerpt, work in progress.

CHRIS JOHANSON

Cityscape, 1996
Wood, paint, hardware.
Freestanding painting/construction.
Dimensions variable.

JIM PHILLIPS

Seminal skateboard artwork:
Black ink on illustration board.
Silkscreen designs, 1970-1996

DEMETRIE TYLER

Brian Childers, City, 1996
Silkscreen; Wheelbase: 14.375"
Width: 8.25" Length: 32.25"

Tim Brauch, Legs

1996
Silkscreen; Wheelbase: 14"
Width: 8.125" Nose: 6.5"
Tail: 6.25" Length: 31.25"

Israel Forbes, Men

1996
Silkscreen; Wheelbase: 14"
Length: 31.25" Width: 7.75"
Nose: 6.75" Tail: 6.125"

William Nguyen, Smiles

1994
Silkscreen; Wheelbase: 14"
Length: 31" Width: 7.625"
Nose: 6.5" Tail: 6.25"

Santa Cruz, Hammer

1996
Silkscreen; Wheelbase: 14"
Length: 31" Width: 7.75"
Nose: 6.75" Tail: 6.125"

From the Director's Office:

This past summer the Museum of Art and History was created by merging the two existing museums at the McPherson Center. Our decision to merge came from a desire to enhance our program services and become more responsive to the needs of our community. We also expanded our statement of purpose to provide for the opportunity to exhibit multiple aspects of contemporary culture.

In *WAVEFORMS: skate(board)ing the urban forest* our Guest Curator Armando Rascón, has created just such an opportunity. His powerful, thought provoking, multi-dimensional exploration of the subcultural phenomenon of skateboarding reveals a highly charged history of imagery, cultural codes, myths, youthful perceptions and attitudes. His free-flowing installation of dynamic artworks mirrors and complements the skaters and their alternative forms of mobility.

I want to thank the artists and skaters for their participation in *WAVEFORMS*. Kathleen Moodie, Curator of Art, and Celeste DeWald, Program Education Curator, deserve generous appreciation for their openness and commitment to the important concept of the museum as a "visual marketplace" which looks for its audience in all age groups and areas of interest.

Charles Hilger
Executive Director



MAH



MUSEUM OF ART & HISTORY
@ THE MCPHERSON CENTER

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