

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SOCRATES SCULPTURE PARK

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State Fair

Curated by Alyson Baker, Mark Dion, and Marichris Ty

May 10 to August 2, 2009

Opening Reception: Sunday, May 10 / 2 - 6pm

**Margarita Cabrera
Jennifer Cecere
Emily Feinstein
Charles Gute
Jeanine Oleson
Risa Puno
Dana Sherwood &
the Black Forest Fancies
Stephen Shore
Jason Simon
William Stone
Bernard Williams**

Opening Day Performances at *State Fair*:

Dana Sherwood & The Black Forrest Fancies present...
CAKEWALK an old-fashioned, country fair-style cakewalk with a twist! *Cakewalk* will take place amid the artists' carnival wagon installation, "The Ladies' Society of Alchemical Agriculture". Viewers will be encouraged to participate at the beginning of the game at 4pm. All are welcome.

***The Big Apple Showdown Spectacular* by Risa Puno**
Celebrate your everyday city skills and knowledge with urban themed games like "The Masters of Multi-Tasking," a timed obstacle course where players scramble to send text messages, balance coffee, eat pizza and more! Visitors can register to participate on-site and should wear sneakers and comfortable clothing. *The Big Apple Showdown Spectacular* games will take place throughout the opening reception on Sunday, May 10, 2-6pm.

Long Island City, NY (April 25, 2009) – Curated by **Alyson Baker, Mark Dion and Marichris Ty**, *State Fair* is a group exhibition themed around American rural life and uses the platform of the state fair as a means to examine topics such as animal husbandry, specialized horticulture, small scale farming, culinary arts, and the pageantry within these fields that occurs at fairgrounds across the country. The show will also incorporate work that references traditional craft, and the myriad of amusements, rides, competitions and entertainment that are presented as part of state fairs.

State Fair will feature works by **Margarita Cabrera, Jennifer Cecere, Emily Feinstein, Charles Gute, Jeanine Oleson, Risa Puno, Dana Sherwood and the Black Forest Fancies, Stephen Shore, Jason Simon, William Stone, and Bernard Williams**, and several projects have been commissioned specifically for this exhibition.

The works of both **Risa Puno** and **Dana Sherwood & The Black Forrest Fancies** feature interactive performance components that will operate on specific event dates throughout the exhibition, beginning with the opening reception on Sunday, May 10, 2009, 2-6pm (see box above). Risa Puno will present a second installment of ***The Big Apple Showdown Spectacular*** during the Park's annual Summer Solstice Celebration, on Sunday, June 21, 5pm-sunset. Also on June 21, artist **Jeanine Oleson** has invited a group of girls from an local 4-H club to present and talk about their horses, examining the undying connection between girls and horses that inspired her installation at the Park.

State Fair will also include an online video component by artist **Jason Simon**, which will be featured with the launch of Socrates Sculpture Park's new website in May 2009. Viewers will be able to see the piece within the Exhibition section of the site at www.socratessculpturepark.org. Additionally, Simon has created posters announcing the video, in a style that echoes traditional state fair posters.

Detailed descriptions of the *State Fair* projects are attached, for your reference. Visual documentation of these projects will be also available at www.socratessculpturepark.org shortly after the opening reception on May 10, 2009. For additional press inquiries including high-res images for reproduction, please contact Ellen Staller at 718-956-1819 x 12 or es@socratessculpturepark.org.

Within the framework of a "state fair," a traditional forum for showcasing exceptional craftsmanship, Socrates Socrates Sculpture Park, in collaboration with American Craft Magazine, The Noguchi Museum, and R20th Century, is pleased to launch **Makers Market**, an open air marketplace featuring a curated selection of skillfully crafted products. From Friday, June 26 through Sunday, June 28, 2009, approximately 40 makers will display their textiles, ceramics, glass ware, jewelry, furniture, unique handmade items, and small run productions, within a series of large tents, surrounded by the Park's *State Fair* exhibition. Additional details TBA.

Makers Market- Schedule

Preview Event: Friday, June 26, 6-8 pm / \$50

Be among the first to shop the Makers Market and enjoy cocktails by St. Germain and hors d'oeuvres on the waterfront as the sun sets over the Manhattan Skyline.

Saturday June 27, 11 am - 7pm / Free

Sunday, June 28, 11 am - 5pm / Free

Rain or Shine

Preview tickets for Markers Market are now available online at https://www.nycharities.org/event/event.asp?CE_ID=3779 or by phone at 718-956-1819 x12. A portion of your purchase will support Socrates Sculpture Park and will be tax deductible. All ticket purchases are non-refundable and will be held at the door. Event details will be available soon at www.socratessculpturepark.org.

Socrates Sculpture Park is dedicated to providing artists with the opportunity to create and exhibit large-scale sculpture and multi-media installations in a unique outdoor environment that encourages interaction between artists, artworks and the public. The Park is open 365 days a year from 10 am to sunset and is located at the intersection of Broadway and Vernon Boulevard in Long Island City, New York.

Directions: Monday through Friday take the N or W trains to the Broadway stop in Queens and walk eight blocks along Broadway toward the East River. On Saturday and Sunday take the N train to the Broadway stop. For driving, cycling or walking directions, please visit our website: www.socratessculpturepark.org.

State Fair is made possible by major contributions from: Bloomberg • Henry M. Buhl • Carnegie Corporation of New York • Charina Endowment Fund • The Cowles Charitable Trust • Dr. Jonathan T. Deland & Emme Deland • Mark di Suvero • Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Inc. • Maxine & Stuart Frankel Foundation • Agnes Gund • Hugh & Tiziana Hardy • Emily Fisher Landau • Jo Carole & Ronald Lauder • Ronay & Richard Menschel • Ivana Mestrovic • Margaret T. Morris Foundation • National Endowment for the Arts • Brooke Kamin & Richard Rapaport • Gabrielle H. Reem M.D. & Herbert J. Kayden M.D. • Von Rydingsvard & Greengard Foundation • Rev. Alfred R. Shands III • Mr. & Mrs. Thomas W. Smith • Janice Stanton & Ronald Windisch • Silvercup Studios

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Socrates Sculpture Park is grateful for generous contributions from our many patrons, in-kind support from Harold H. Anthony Inc. • Build It Green! NYC • E&T Plastics • Materials for the Arts • Plant Specialists • R & R General Supply Co. • Spacetime C.C. • Todson, Inc., and the dedication of our volunteers and friends.



socrates sculpture park
city of new york parks & recreation



State Fair - Project Descriptions

Margarita Cabrera

Arbol de la Vida - John Deere Model #790, 2007

Clay, metal

8' 4" x 5' x 8'

Courtesy of Sara Meltzer Gallery

Rooted in the cultural experience of Mexican immigration, the artist creates work which both conceptually and formally explores the impact of border politics on Mexican craft-making traditions. For her work in the Park, the artist has translated the popular ceramic tradition of the Arbol de la Vida, which explains the origins of life. She replaces the usual tree form, creating, in its place, a life sized replica of a John Deere tractor made in clay. By casting the tractor delicately in clay, she juxtaposes a ubiquitous symbol of agricultural industry with a historic narrative popular in Mexican folk art, thus commenting on Mexican immigrant labor and its associations with American agriculture and the decline of craft-making traditions within Mexico.

Jennifer Cecere

Mom, 2009

Acrylic, Rip-Stop nylon

20' diameter, 5' diameter, 4' diameter

With references to traditional craft techniques, such as homemade lacing, embroidery and needlepoint, the artist has created three large-scale doilies, varying in size, which are stretched between tree branches like giant spiderwebs. The doilies are fabricated in rip stop nylon and painted with vibrant acrylic color. The web like structures are visually associated with kaleidoscopes and stained glass, specifically the Rose window at Chartres.

Emily Feinstein

The Ride, 2009

Wood, metal, fabric

Dimensions variable

Special thanks to David Anderson, Buck Jackson, Jerry Lerner, Grace Marlier and Dave Thomas

The artist has created a fragmented slice of a dysfunctional amusement car ride. Quirky and animated, the cars come in pairs, each slightly different, resembling bumper cars, sleds and toboggans. Some sit on fabricated tracks, suggesting a past mobility; and are infused with a sense of nostalgia for a past event which is now long gone.

Charles Gute

More Matter in General, 2009

Wood, paint, vinyl lettering, steel hardware

13' x 9' x 7'5"

This work suggests an unlikely crossover between the dry semantics of historical conceptual art and the distinctive qualities of state fair cuisine. Taking as its launching point a seminal Joseph Kosuth work from 1968, in which that artist presented a partial taxonomy of all things and conditions within the universe, the artist's playful, but austere freestanding sign posits a continuation of that universal taxonomy; one that is specific to the signature delicacies offered by state fair food vendors.

Jeanine Oleson

Retribution, 2009

Wood, gold leaf, herbs

15' x 12' x 6'

Special thanks to Studio Sumo and Plant Specialists

The artist has built a corral like structure, which upon closer inspection, the viewer will notice, is slightly askew and lends a forced perspective. The corral, treated in gold leaf, is a physical recreation of imagery which appears on the medieval unicorn tapestries. The myth of the unicorn and its capture, as told in Western historical tradition, references basic themes found in Christianity, and courtly love and marriage. This structure is a monument to the unicorn and the maiden able to tame it; thereby highlighting the power of the female. The installation will also function as a garden of herbs known for their restorative properties, which visitors are invited to harvest for their own use.

Risa Puno

The Big Apple Showdown Spectacular, 2009

Interactive mixed media installation

Dimensions variable

Special thanks to Emilie Boisman, Talisman Brolin, Kaila Bulfin, Kanik Chung, Isaiah King, Jenny Piette, Max Scoppettone, and Ivette Zigelboim

The artist has reinterpreted the state fair competitions that highlight rural skills with content celebrating the special demands of urban living. On various event days, the artist will orchestrate a series of games that will be open to the public and designed to celebrate everyday city skills and knowledge. Examples include: The Subway Stop-Off, a spelling bee-type competition where contestants are asked to

name successive train stops to win pre-filled Metro Cards; and The Masters of Multi-Tasking, a timed contest where Park visitors scramble through an obstacle course while doing things like sending text messages, drinking coffee, and eating a slice of pizza. The structures and obstacle courses humorously reference the urban environment and remain on view even when they are not activated by competition.

Dana Sherwood and The Black Forrest Fancies

The Ladies Society of Alchemical Agriculture, 2009

Wood, metal, fabric, chicken wire, glass, plant and animal matter, confectionery

11' x 12' x 5'

The Ladies' Society of Alchemical Agriculture is a carnival wagon whose form echoes a work shed in the rural American vernacular. It functions as a laboratory and exposition booth, reflecting a collision of 4-H club science, home economics and animal husbandry exhibits. On display inside the wagon are a number of living terrariums, full of natural and cultural materials collected from around the Americas that have been selected on the basis of their purported desirability. These materials include local epicurean delights, urban detritus and the distinct self-contained ecosystems that propagate around these. Also on view are a series of clockwork automata of biological anomalies and artificial confections in varying stages of mutation and putrefaction.

"CAKEWALK"

On the day of the opening of "State Fair" Dana Sherwood and The Black Forest Fancies will be hosting an old-fashioned, country fair style cakewalk with a twist. Traditionally, a cakewalk is a party game similar to musical chairs in which the winner of each round is rewarded with a cake. In their version, a barker will direct the players to live musical accompaniment as they make their way around a series of decorative mats depicting barnyard animals, and the winner will be invited to sit in the prize cake. Participation is open to all. Viewers will be encouraged to play at the beginning of the game at 4pm.

Stephen Shore

Amarillo, Texas, July, 1972, 1972-2005

Inkjet print on seamless vinyl

10' x 28'

Courtesy of 303 Gallery

This image is taken from the artist's larger body of work entitled, *American Surfaces*, a particular series of photographs shot on the artist's first cross-country road trip, taken with a 35mm Rollei in 1972. At the time, Shore was among the very first American photographers who began working in color photography and introduced the medium into the contemporary art dialogue.

Jason Simon

August September, 2003

Digital Video

10 minutes

August September -State-Fair, 2009

off-set litho, letter press and silk screen printing

three posters on 14" x 22" board

As an annual tradition, the artist visits the Wayne County State Fair in Honesdale, Pennsylvania every August and documents random events with his video camera. This specific video piece is based on footage that was shot in August of 2001. One month later on September 11, the artist used the same tape to document the World Trade Center. The video will be on view on the Socrates Sculpture Park website and the artist has created posters in a style that echoes traditional state fair posters, to announce the video.

William Stone

Remote Arm Wrestle, 2009

Galvanized pipe and fittings, wood, cast aluminum

7' x 3' x 56"

Calling to mind "tests of strength" similar to those found at many state fairs, the artist has created an interactive sculpture based on arm wrestling. The whole structure, made out of pipes, references playgrounds and, more specifically, the seesaw. Similar to the seesaw, this piece invites an audience member to engage with another participant, without direct physical contact with each other. At the center of the sculpture are two hands cast in aluminum, creating the platform for which a remote arm wrestling game can transpire. There is a wall separating the players, who appear to be arm wrestling the fabricated hands but are actually arm wrestling each other. The whole event presents itself as a visual pun.

Bernard Williams

Socrates Ply- Teck Barn, 2009

Painted plywood, mixed media

16' x 36' x 12'

Special thanks to Prem Makeig, Yao Buckman, and Dan Berger

This barn-like structure incorporates aspects of modern and rural architecture, southern quilt-making patterns, and the graphic design of folk art; including barn symbols, often called Hex Symbols of the Pennsylvania Dutch communities, metalwork, needlework, spirit drawings, and manuscripts. Patterns and symbols, which are gig-saw or machine-cut out of plywood sheets, interact with light and the environment. The artist has built a sculptural structure which serves to reference a distinctly American visual vernacular.