



the new children's museum

news release

For immediate release

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THE NEW CHILDREN'S MUSEUM ANNOUNCES EUREKA! EXHIBITION

Four Artists Featured in New Exhibition Set to Open in October 2015

June 8, 2015 — Downtown San Diego — There's always something **new** at The New Children's Museum, and this fall the Museum will introduce a major thematic exhibition celebrating California creativity.

Eureka! is The New Children's Museum's newest thematic exhibition opening on October 17. Children and adults will discover California through the imagination of artists and explore the power of creative thinking. *Eureka!* features new works that will be featured alongside the Museum's current exhibition, *Feast: The Art of Playing With Your Food*. Exhibition development was led by Tomoko Kuta, Director of Education and Exhibitions and Megan Dickerson, Manager of Exhibition Development.

Continuing the Museum's pioneering legacy of commissioning contemporary artists to create engaging artworks for children and families, *Eureka!* will feature new art installations created by local, regional and national artists. Additionally, the Museum will develop art workshops, educational programs and lesson plans to complement each installation.

"Through inventive art installations and studio activities, *Eureka!* will encourage visitors to explore the Golden State, by 'digging deeper,'" explained Executive Director & CEO Julianne Markow. "This exhibition is all about the '*aha!*' moments that we provide every day at the Museum."

As part of *Eureka!* families will be able to climb a tower that tells a visual story about a century of California dwellings and belt out "car-a-oke" in an immersive music experience. Visitors will also be able to experience the highways and byways of California with miniature vehicles, and make rewarding discoveries about California's interconnected waterways and freeways. Visitors can also check out an indoor beach unlike any seen before - and so much more.

"Our exhibitions team is working with each artist to ensure that children of all ages are able to engage in open-ended play with each work of art as they learn and develop new skills," said Tomoko Kuta, Director of Education and Exhibitions.

Eureka! will be previewed during an invitation-only donor event on Thursday, October 15 and open to the public on Saturday, October 17.

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FEATURED ARTWORK AND ARTISTS

Car-a-oke – by Nick Rodrigues

A karaoke makeover transforms the ever-present California car into a karaoke booth, creating a place for connection, caring and shared family memories.

Californians have a love-hate relationship with their cars. We love our mobility. Californians boast that they can travel to the beach, the desert and the mountains: ALL IN ONE DAY.

The problem is that we all want to be mobile at once– which, of course, leads to legendary California traffic. During the almost universally dreaded commute, the car becomes a protective barrier—we yell things at our fellow drivers that we would never say to a stranger face to face. On the flip side, some of us joyfully rock out, singing along to the radio like there’s nobody looking.

Car-a-oke is a professional-level karaoke booth housed in a full-size vehicle chassis. Karaoke videos, created in collaboration with California visual artists, pair song lyrics with classic California scenes. This installation ties into one of our key educational practices by promoting child-centered play and asks questions that will follow visitors all the way home. What if the California car united us, not divided us?

About Nick Rodrigues – Los Angeles, California

Rodrigues is a Los Angeles-based performance sculptor whose unusual work is themed on human interaction. In his work, Nick addresses the way humans relate with one another and how technology and innovation can dramatically affect these interactions. Rodrigues’ artwork *Porta-Party* was featured in the 2008 Museum opening exhibition *childsplay*. Nick received his BFA from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design and his MFA from California Institute of the Arts.

Desert Derby – by Roman de Salvo

A landscape of reservoirs and roads inspired by Southern California’s true nature as an engineered phenomenon in the desert.

Roman de Salvo started his *Eureka!* journey by bike. An avid cyclist, Roman is fascinated by his experiences biking local dams and reservoirs. In his research on how water moves through the state, he had a simple but provocative “Eureka” moment. The ancient California rivers that carved our canyons are now perfect places for freeways. Our cars flow through ancient riverbeds that now support a very different kind of spawning run.

Roman’s project, *Desert Derby*, is a sculptural landscape inspired by California as an engineered phenomenon in the desert. Beautifully carved wood ramps, constructed from invasive species such as eucalyptus, will emanate from 8-foot dam and reservoir sculptures. The ramps zig zag across a gallery, tracing the pathways of California’s water and freeway system.

Visitors will navigate these hybrid waterway-freeways using hand-carved abstractly shaped vehicles, which are at once reminiscent of classic pinewood derby cars as well as water droplets. This installation is a great example of promoting the importance of group play, as children will need to navigate not just the roads, but each other.

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In a time of drought, *Desert Derby* will refocus our attention on the engineering required to bring water to our tap. It asks the compelling question: What if Californians were as intimately knowledgeable about our water system as we are about our freeways?

About Roman de Salvo – San Diego, California

As a sculptor, conceptual and installation artist, de Salvo works with the ordinary and familiar in an infusion of surprise, intrigue and visual poetry. He makes generic and vernacular objects into peculiar and often humorous sculptures. Employing materials normally associated with domestic construction and decoration, de Salvo fashions art and anti-art objects that continually question the meaning of things. His kid-powered *Legways* and *Apex Chariots* were big hits in past Museum exhibitions. A large part of de Salvo's work is site-specific and he has a knack for integrating his work well with the character of the hosting venue. In addition to The New Children's Museum, these venues include the San Francisco Art Commission Gallery, inSITE'94 at the San Diego Natural History Museum, 96 Containers in Copenhagen, Caltrans District 11 Headquarters, San Diego and the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego. Roman de Salvo is currently on the Artist Advisory Board of The New Children's Museum.

Reconnecting to Home – by Alison Pebworth

A fantastical tower that offers opportunities for open-ended play, exploration and the discovery of California's real gold - the connections we have with each other.

Reconnecting to Home celebrates California's reputation as the home of Silicon Valley as well as more overlooked innovations: the resourcefulness required to transform California's native resources into homes.

Pebworth's artwork will layer the histories of people who have lived on this land through a sculptural, 3-D collage of buildings handmade by Californians from resources available in the region. Inside the tower, Pebworth both spoofs and celebrates California's computer innovations through "snail mail" versions of ubiquitous social media platforms: "selfies" become stations for hand-drawn self-portraits, and "the cloud" becomes an expansive net that collects and recycles paper used daily in the tower. The tower itself references both mining shafts as well as the omnipresent cell phone towers, two drivers that changed California forever.

Pebworth redirects our attention to what "home" might mean. Is home a "homepage"? Or a place where we connect with our loved ones? What does it mean to be home in California? This demonstrates open play as well as how we promote authentic experiences for children - by exposing them to real art that fosters learning through real life experiences.

About Alison Pebworth – Huntsville, Texas

Alison has been making "street side" projects in California and nationally since 2004 under the rubric of the *Roadside Show & Tell*, a series of interactive nomadic projects created in the spirit of the 19th century American traveling show. In 2006, she traveled cross-country for eight months developing *Looking for Lost America*, a research project of the *Roadside Show & Tell*. This trip laid the foundation for *Beautiful Possibility*, her current traveling exhibition and research project.

Globos – by Collective Magpie

A monumental balloon, shaped by the people of Tijuana and San Diego, Globos symbolizes California's dual nature and enables cross-border connections.

“California” is not one, but two: Baja (Mexico) and Alta (United States). Collective Magpie, a collaboration composed of MR Barnadas, Tae Hwang and project-specific participants, will highlight California’s dual nature through *Globos*: a series of cross-border workshops that will lead to the creation of giant, golden paper balloons that will occupy The New Children’s Museum’s atrium.

Collective Magpie’s primary inspiration for the *Globos* project comes from the 1915 Panama California Exposition. One hundred years ago this year, the Exposition kicked off with the launching of a hot air balloon that rose to snap a photograph of the entire San Diego-Tijuana region. Two years of celebration ensued, spurred on by the hope and speculation of the opening of the Panama Canal to travel and commerce.

Globos will result in a different kind of portrait of the region. In 2015, Collective Magpie will convene hundreds of people in San Diego and Tijuana to create *Globos de Cantoya*: fantastically engineered, unmanned air balloons with a history in both cities.

Through the process of crossing the border to make these works of art, Collective Magpie will act as artistic matchmakers that help the people of the San Diego-Tijuana region connect. The end result will be an illustration of how we develop visual literacy skills - by presenting an amorphous beautiful structure with multiple meanings.

About Collective Magpie - San Diego, California

Tae Hwang and MR Barnadas are two-thirds of Collective Magpie. Their “third” collaborator includes the hundreds of people who have engaged in their large-scale projects. Projects have included a 30-foot long paint-by-number mural of a pair of walking feet for the Toronto Shoe Museum; an expansive structure inspired by the US-Mexico border fence and populated by delicate light-up birds created by hundreds of people at the La Jolla Playhouse WoW festival; and a Candyland-like tower of striped bags, inflated and constructed by festival-goers at Art San Diego 2015.

Sandbox Gallery – by Jesse Kaminsky and the Museum’s Creative Team

The ultimate indoor beach, featuring rotating works of video art.

To give their visitors a little “taste” of *Eureka!* the Museum recently opened the *Sandbox Gallery*. This blank canvas of sand will act as a platform for new media work by rising contemporary artists. With comfortable beach-style seating on a surrounding wooden “boardwalk,” the *Sandbox Gallery* engages children in the joy of discovery.

The gallery’s first installation is by Jesse Kaminsky. *A Distant Episode* is a room-sized projection that recreates the sights and sounds of being at the beach. But listen and watch closely, and you will be surprised: every few minutes, surround sound speakers announce the approach of a plane, which casts its shadow over the sand. In addition to promoting open-ended play – where children dictate the activity they engage in – it encourages visitors to not only look closely, but to dig deeper: a central concept of *Eureka!*

About The New Children’s Museum Creative Team

The Creative Team is composed of artists from many Museum departments. Core members include Exhibitions Coordinator Matthew Bradley; Exhibition Development Manager Megan Dickerson; Visitor Programs Manager Lani Bautista; Studio Arts Preparator Matthew Dunn; and many Teaching Artists drawn from the Museum’s talented exhibitions floor staff.

About Jesse Kaminsky

A Distant Episode was created by Jesse Kaminsky, a Boston-based artist who transforms everyday materials—such as kitchen foil and red rubber balls—into immersive installations that make the familiar unfamiliar. These sculptures often include repeated shapes and forms. Jesse received his MFA in Sculpture from the Rhode Island School of Design and currently lives and works in Boston, Massachusetts.

ABOUT THE NEW CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

The New Children's Museum is a new model of children's museum whose mission is to stimulate imagination, creativity and critical thinking in children and families through inventive and engaging experiences with contemporary art. Serving San Diego for 30 years, the Museum opened in 1983 in La Jolla as the Children's Museum/Museo de los Niños and reopened in downtown San Diego in 2008. The Museum brings families together in a rich educational environment that fosters creativity — blending elements of children's museums and art museums. The Museum collaborates with contemporary artists on an ongoing basis, both for large-scale thematic exhibitions, individual installations and educational programs for children. The New Children's Museum is a non-profit institution funded by admissions, memberships and community support. To learn more, visit www.thinkplaycreate.org.

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