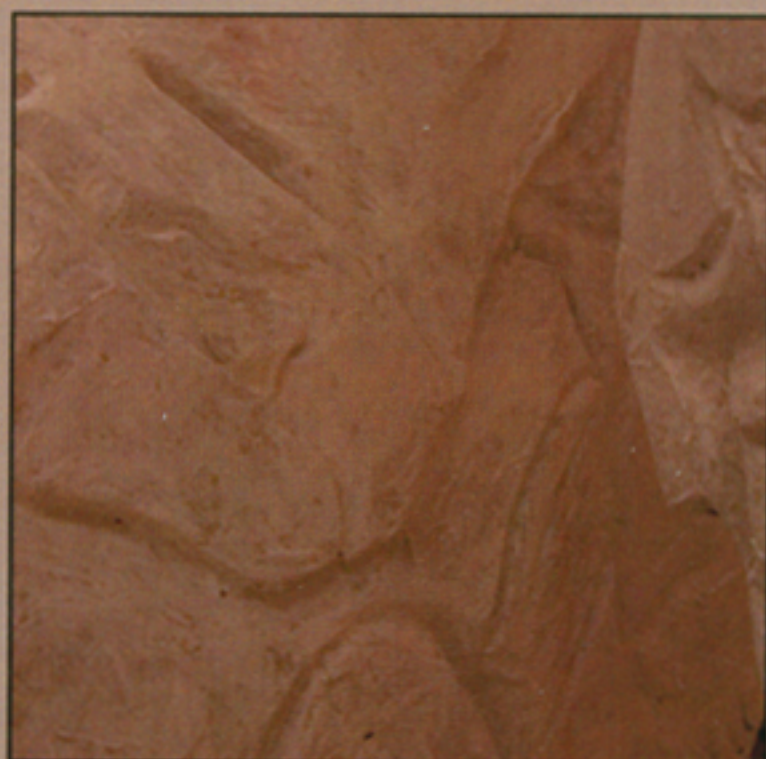
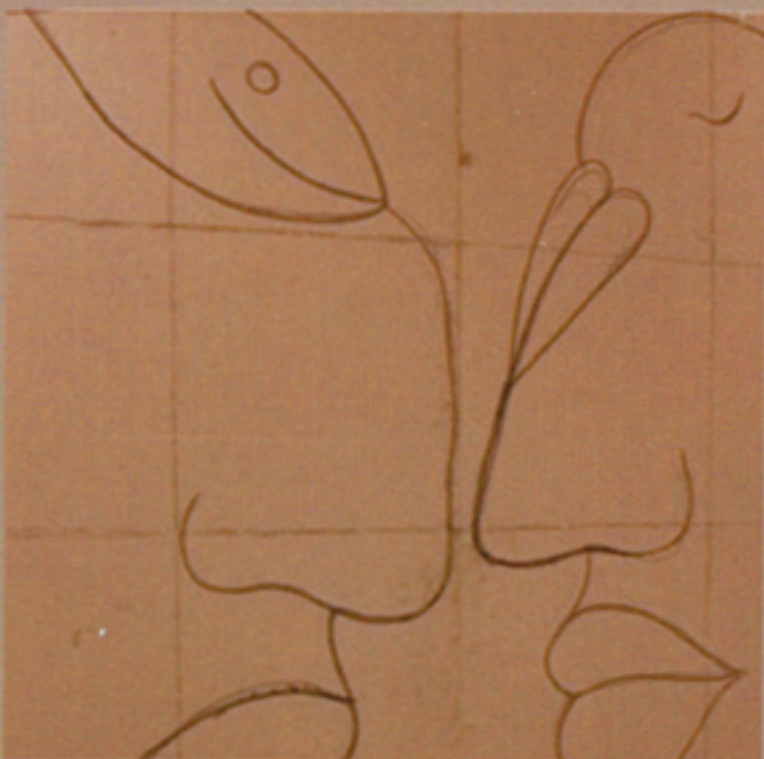


Laura Hernandez

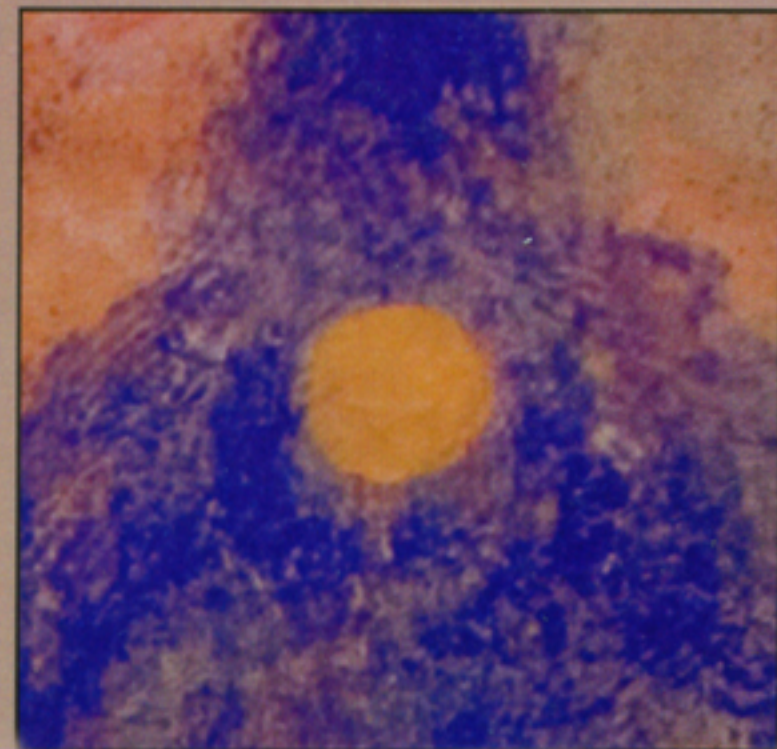
“YIN”

“A project to benefit the Art Student Scholarship Fund”
Sculpture, Painting, and Drawing with Amate paper and Cochinilla





It is not unusual to have a guest artist at a college, the reasons and hopes for outcomes are universal. One hopes for a dynamic interaction between the invited artist and the constituents, the students. The possibility of the interaction is that it will stimulate, challenge, engage, teach, provoke, and transfer a spark that will translate into a fire of possibilities for young artist. These words of possibility are charged with many implications. They speak to a multi-faceted potential and possibility that can manifest expedientially with each individual who is sparked by engagement with the opportunity. The beauty of the opportunity is that it has both universal and personal lessons and rewards for those who give themselves to the experience.



I want to thank Laura Hernandez who was the Art Department's 'Artist in Residence' for five weeks in the latter months of 2007. During this intense period, with the aid of students and using the Jose' Drudis-Biada Art Gallery as a studio, Laura created all the works for an exhibition on site. Laura was not only the source of all the images for the works but was also the enabler of the collaboration in that she brought the experiential wealth of a professional artist and worked tirelessly for the entire length of the residency. Laura created a working environment that challenged students to experience a method of art making that was laden with physical intensity, showed challenges an artist may have in adapting to limitations of time, materials, and place as well as ones own skill level. The nature of the collaboration with all its manifestations and unfolding dared all of its participants to reflect and measure ones engagement and ponder ones stamina.



Students were invited and encouraged to participate in the process by helping in all aspects of the creative process, assisting in the mundane labors, and in doing so, were purview to the artistic thinking process. The more engaged the greater the learning opportunity. I want to thank Laura for her willingness to open herself to a new situation, a new paradigm for herself. Laura came with ideas for creating her exhibit with Mount Saint Mary's College students in mind and an energy that challenged the students; for that I thank her. I also want to acknowledge the support of so many at the College who were asked to help in making the residency possible. The list of individuals is impressive, from the president, provost, shuttle drivers, kitchen staff, administrative assistants, housing, and on and on. Thank you to all who helped enable this project.

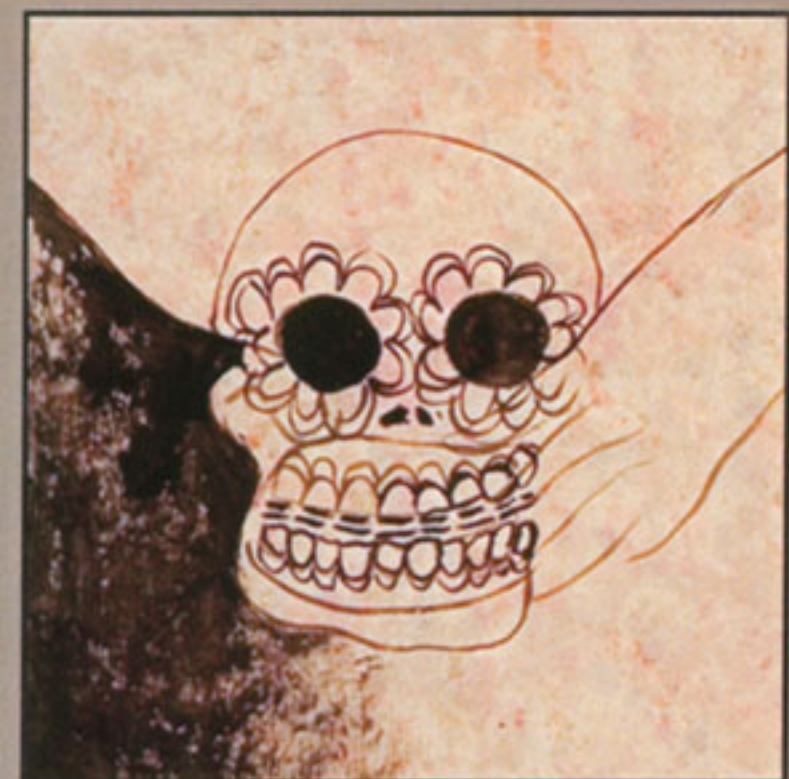


Jody Baral, Chair, Art Department Director, Jose' Drudis-Biada Art Gallery





“Yin”, the title Laura Hernandez selected for her 2007 exhibition at the José Drudis-Biada Gallery reflects her continuous search for women’s primordial identity. Issues related to women have been widely explored in the last decades. Hernandez’s art, however, rises above familiar clichés, superficial depictions and simplistic imagery. The drawings, paintings, and sculptures created for this show are inscribed in a series of reconciled paradoxes between tactile immediacy and cosmic infinite and between primordial beginnings and present identities.



While the artist is clearly indebted to the past on a variety of levels, nostalgia is not part of her work. Instead, Laura Hernandez conveys her views through a lively, yet intricate, visual celebration. The intimately fused shapes and forms, colors, lines, patterns and designs construct an engaging poetic narrative. Simultaneously ambiguous and overt “yin”, the artist argues throughout her art, is to be found in spiritual dimensions. This exhibition is the result of the artist’s residency in the Art Department of Mount Saint Mary’s College and José Drudis-Biada gallery.



Professor Jody Baral, gallery director and Art Department chair, should be applauded for initiating and supporting this extraordinarily meaningful project. The astonishing amount of art produced in these few weeks reveals Hernandez’s intense creativity and intrinsic desire to visually converse with the audience. The residency was a new experience for the artist and had valuable personal ramifications. Working with students rather than specialized assistants prompted Laura Hernandez to contemplate her artistic practices, creative processes and human relationships. “Yin” is not just the theme of the exhibition, but also reflective of art making modalities.



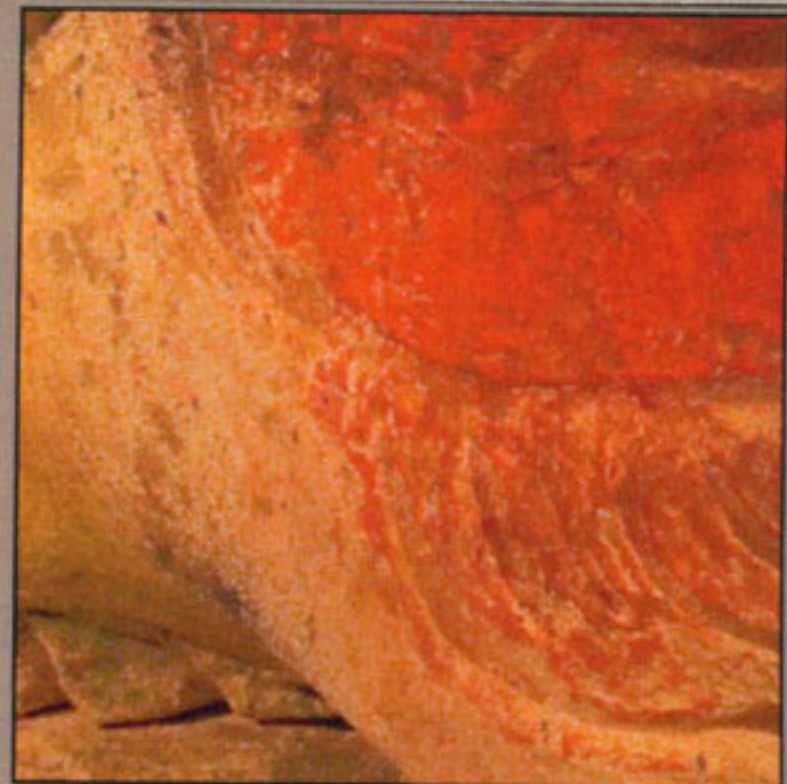
It is precisely this symbiotic connection between ethereal creation and earthly objectification that is at the core of Laura Hernandez's art. The natural materials used, Amate paper and Cochinilla, reinforce the meaning of her unique pictorial journey. Her art transports the viewer into an enchanted realm. The organic shapes and pure colors augment the feeling of an on-going newness. "The Dream of Yin", the largest sculpture in this show, is a perfect example. The solemn and alluring monumentality is contrasted by the unexpected possibility of playfulness. The work comprises three interchangeable pieces.

The transformation of oneness into fragmentary components is evocative of the multiple meanings of "yin". Connections to pre-Columbian art are clearly reflected in both sculptures in the show. These links go beyond mere facile visual correspondences and turn memory into a ritualized cosmic paradigm. The surprisingly distinctive, yet not necessarily divergent sides of the sculpture "Breakthrough" reaffirm the artist's use of celestial order to reconcile apparent dualities. Lines, colors and texture derive from both archaic and post-modern sources.





The paintings and drawings in the show further consider the significance of “yin”. Expressive lines and organic patterns coexist with meticulous forms and intense hues. Painterly surfaces are intertwined with sophisticated calligraphies to create a celebratory ode. Some works more directly hint at familiar themes: death, birth, love and primordial temptation. But the dramatic palette quickly transforms descriptive qualities into introspect reflections. For example, in “Self Source” a mesmerizing cascading blue becomes the primordial symbol of life. Similarly, in “Detachment”, the suggestive fiery reds dissolve the overt representational forms. In other works, such as “Instant of Eternity” and “Giver of Forms” allegorical origins echo the cycles of life. The dichotomy between ethereal energy and solid matter, visible throughout her work, are resolved with quiet subtlety.





"Giver of Formis"

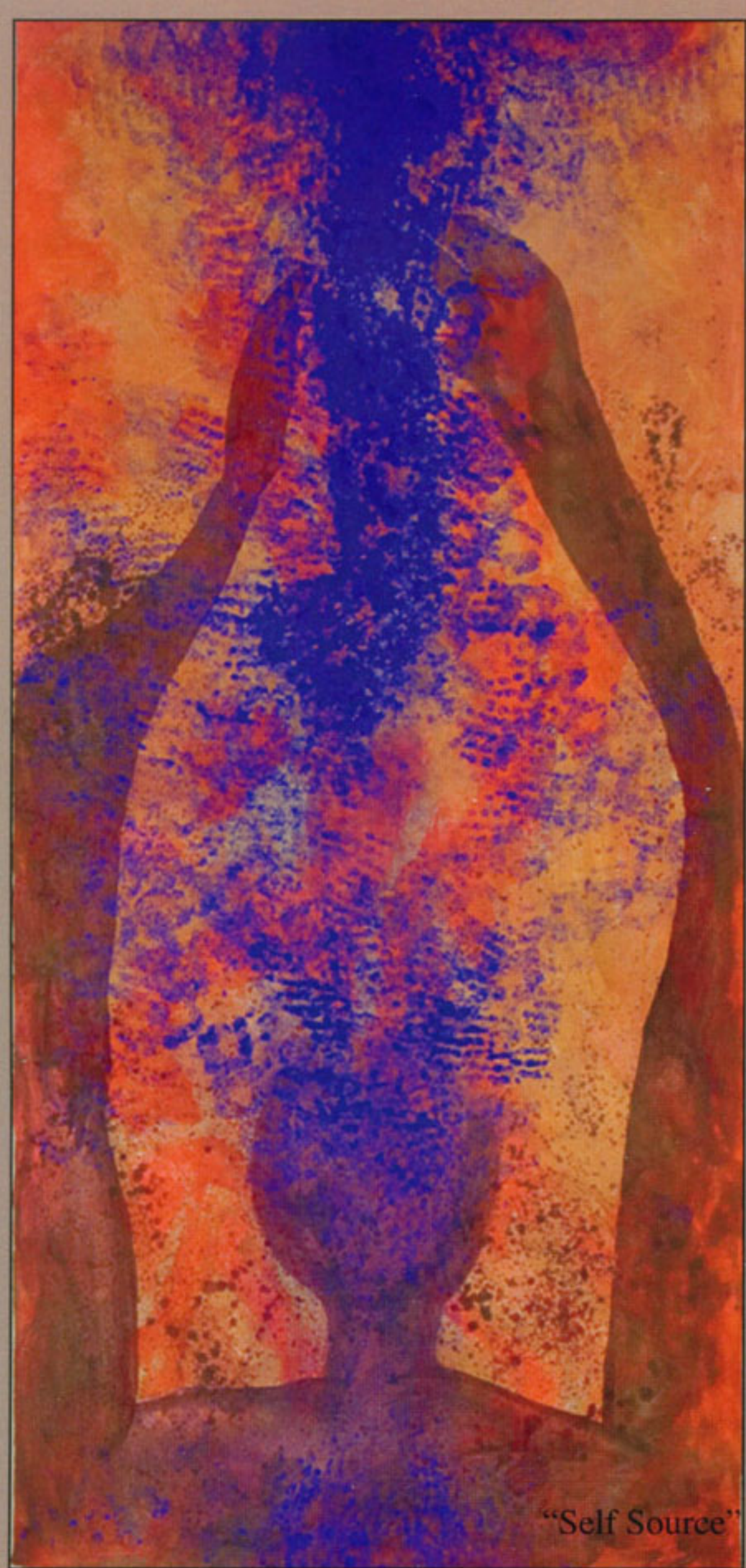


"Detachment"



“Yin” is visually and conceptually a successful tour-de-force for both Laura Hernandez and the José Drudis-Biada Gallery. The fruitful dialogues between the artist and MSMC students augment the inherent symbolism of the exhibition and reaffirm the seminal contribution of the gallery to the Los Angeles artistic arena. The insightful visual voyage Laura Hernandez presents here is as aesthetically pleasing as it is theoretically intriguing. The magical power of her visual world continues to haunt viewers beyond the materiality of the art and the temporality of the exhibition.

Irina D. Costache, Ph.D.



"Self Source"



"EVE"

Mount St. Mary's College
José Drudis-Biada Art Gallery

Presents
Laura Hernandez

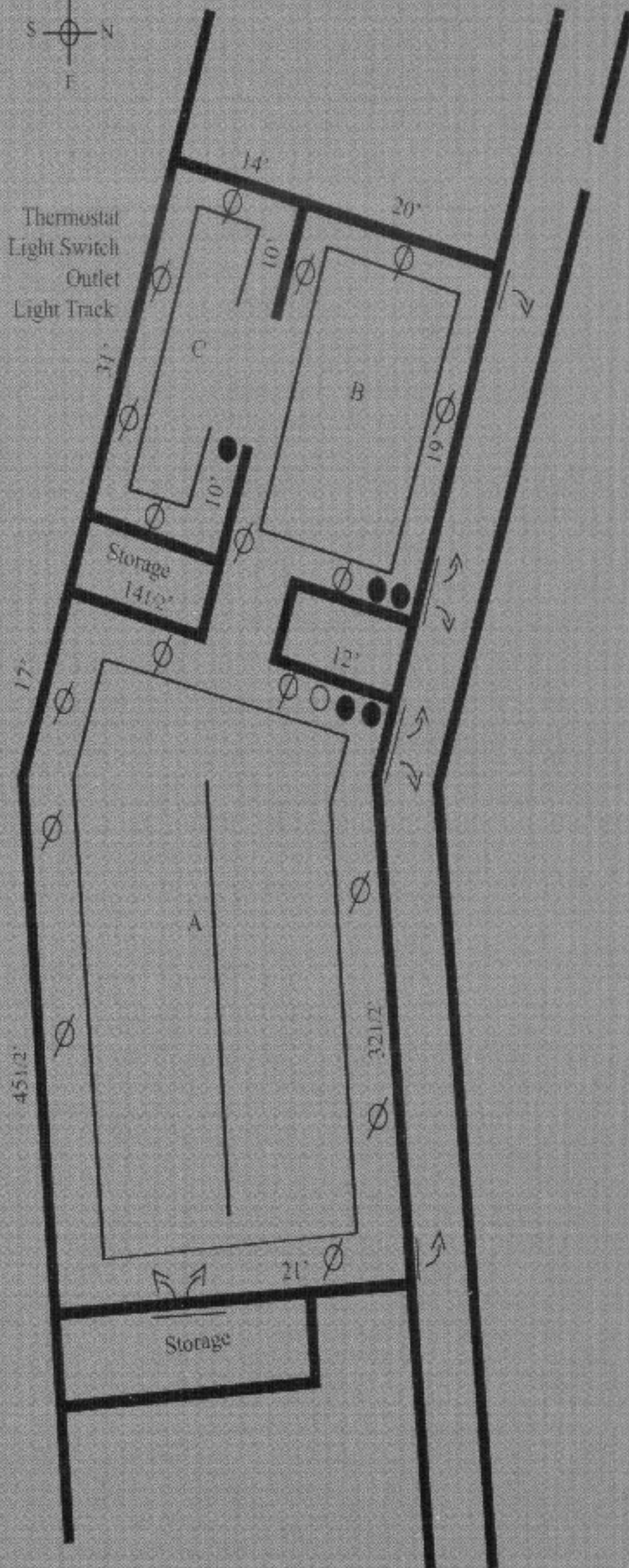
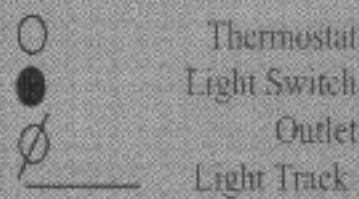
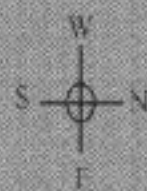
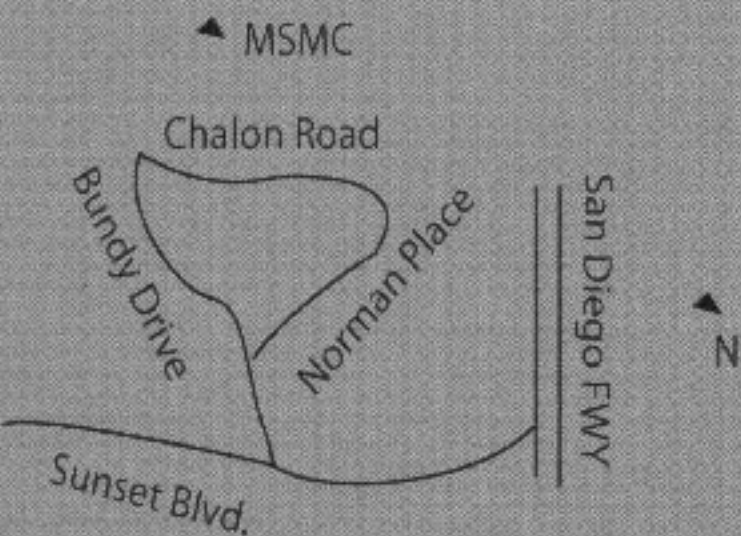
“YIN”

Exhibit Dates
Tuesday, October 30, 2007,
through Friday, January 25, 2008

Gallery Hours
Tuesdays through Saturday,
12-5 pm

Mount St. Mary's College
12001 Chalon Road
Los Angeles, CA 90049
310.954.4360

From San Diego Fwy:
1 mile west on Sunset to Bundy;
North on Bundy to Norman Pl.
Left on Chalon Road.
Free Parking in Structure.
Please leave Campus via Bundy.



Designed by: Evelyn Mireles

Laura Hernandez

“YIN”

“A project to benefit the Art Student Scholarship Fund”
Sculpture, Painting, and Drawing with Amate paper and Cochinilla

Mount St. Mary's College
José Drudis-Biada Art Gallery
October 30, 2007 through January 25, 2008
Project Residency and Exhibition

