

# PUBLIC ART UPDATES

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## Three major new Public Artworks dedicated at San Diego International Airport

**Works by artists Italo Scanga, Gail Roberts, and Carolyn Braaksma add vibrancy to newly remodeled terminal gates.**

On April 27 the Port of San Diego introduced and dedicated three exciting new public artworks at San Diego International Airport. The artworks, which were selected and recommended by the Port's Public Art Committee, were installed in conjunction with a just completed \$20 million airport improvement project that renovated three international and domestic gates and created a new facility for the Federal Inspection Services in Terminal 2 East.

The new artworks include an oil painting and mixed media piece by **Gail Roberts** titled *Tree Lines*, an acrylic painting and blown glass work by **Italo Scanga** called *Continents*, and a large concrete relief by **Carolyn Braaksma** named *Drifting Beyond Control*.

"The addition of these pieces greatly contributes to passengers' enjoyment as they transit through the airport and creates a wonderful impression of our region for international travelers," said Thella Bowers, Senior Director of Aviation for the Port of San Diego.

*Tree Lines* (shown above) is located on the second floor of Terminal 2 East at the International Gates ticketing area. It is a multi-panel display of oil-on canvas and mixed media depicting branches and trunks of trees found in rural environments throughout Southern California. Together the thirty-four paintings form one large image of a tree, and their backgrounds portray distant vistas of the coast, valleys, mountains and deserts as well as seasonal changes. Images of indigenous bird species are blended in with the scenery on thirteen of the paintings. To the left and right, two ceramic bowls with painted oak trees and birds' nests complement the tree paintings, with scales included to symbolize the pre-



*Gail Roberts introduces the community to Tree Lines, her new airport artwork, which was dedicated at Terminal 2 East on April 27 with two other artworks by Italo Scanga and Carolyn Braaksma.*

*Photo by Dale Frost*

carious balance of nature.

"Each painting is solitary and meditative," said Roberts. "Hopefully the wall imparts a feeling of calm and tranquility for harried travelers."

At the International Gates arrival lobby on the ground floor below, *Continents* extends a warm and cordial welcome to arriving passengers at Lindbergh Field. This artwork by internationally acclaimed artist **Italo Scanga** consists of three large acrylic paintings representing San Diego's landscape, atmosphere and colors, five blown glass flames, and four blown glass cypress trees.

"As an artist and professor who lives and works in San Diego, I appreciate the efforts of the Port of San Diego for making public art accessible to our community and consider it an honor for me to have my work at the airport," said Scanga. "I want people of all ages and from all different parts of the world to enjoy *Continents* and think about beauty and happiness."

*Continued on page 2*



## Public Art Gazette

*A report of official decisions by the Public Art Committee and the Board of Port Commissioners*

### Public Art Committee Action:

*February 15*—Recommended providing funds in the amount of \$2,800 for an informative placard to tell the story of Pacific Rim Park.

*February 15*—Recommended approving a temporary exhibit of “Brown Bag” artworks at the airport gallery.

*April 19*—Recommended approval of changes to the Canyon Path project design proceeding to 30 percent drawings.

*May 17*—Recommended accepting an artwork donation by artist **Becky Guttin** contingent upon identifying a site, determining budget and completing an engineering staff review.

*May 17*—Recommended funding this summer’s Imperial Beach Sand Castle Artist in Residence program in the amount of \$5,000 provided that an equivalent amount of community-obtained matching funds were in place.

*May 17*—Recommended committing to Sculpture 2002 by agreeing to purchase one or two artworks for an amount not to exceed \$50,000.

*May 17*—Voted to refer a proposal called “Media Building” to the Marketing department to further explore

### Board Action:

There were no Public Art issues requiring Board action during this period.

*Next Public Art Committee Meeting:  
August 16, 2001, at 2:00 PM in the  
Port of San Diego Administration Building*

*Continued from page 1*

*Drifting Beyond Control* is a major cast-in-concrete artwork that enlivens a 500-foot long concrete wall with huge and fantastic shapes inspired by marine microorganisms, plankton, and other forms of sea life. The wall is part of an exterior pedestrian corridor that links the renovated International Gates of Terminal 2 with Terminal 1.

The addition of these three new artworks, distinctive and diverse in their style and craft, further enriches the airport’s impressive and growing public art collection, which includes monumental sculptures, colorful mosaics, dramatic murals, paintings and glass artworks that are enjoyed by the over

60,000 travelers who pass through the terminals every day. Temporary and rotating exhibits in a new gallery augment these permanent artworks and further contribute to San Diego International Airport’s growing reputation as one of the region’s great venues for public art. □

**More about the artists and their works below and on pages 3-4.**

**View color images of the artworks at the “Public Art” section of the Port’s web site:**

[www.portofsandiego.org](http://www.portofsandiego.org)

### **Drifting Beyond Control by Carolyn Braaksma**

**C**arolyn Braaksma’s *Drifting Beyond Control* is a perfect example of how public art can enliven with interest and fun many of the otherwise ordinary passages of daily life. At San Diego International Airport, her cast-in-concrete wall reliefs have transformed a 500-foot long exterior pedestrian passageway connecting Terminals 1 and 2 into an arcade of fascinating shapes inspired by marine microorganisms, plankton, kelp and marsh plants. The sea life depicted in the concrete patterns is indigenous to the San Diego region, and the motif was inspired by the window glass panels—resembling water—of the upper story enclosed corridor. The images group together then spread out as if floating or moving in the water. Artist **Carolyn Braaksma** and co-designer **Barb McKee** fabricated the full-scale relief patterns in her studio. These were then used to produce large rubber molds, or form liners, into which the



concrete for the panels was poured. Each concrete panel with reliefs measures 9 x 14 feet in size and weighs over 10,000 pounds. Mounted end-to-end along the curving length of this inter-terminal passageway, Braaksma’s artistry in concrete provides the hurrying air traveler with an unexpected and highly magnified glimpse of the unseen marine world. □

*Left: In the beginning...enlarged sea life forms take shape in Carolyn Braaksma’s studio and are arranged in the patterns that will ultimately appear on the precast concrete panels.*



*Braaksma's reliefs were molded into 5-ton concrete panels 9 x 14 feet in size, which were assembled into a 500-foot long wall connecting Terminals 1 and 2.*

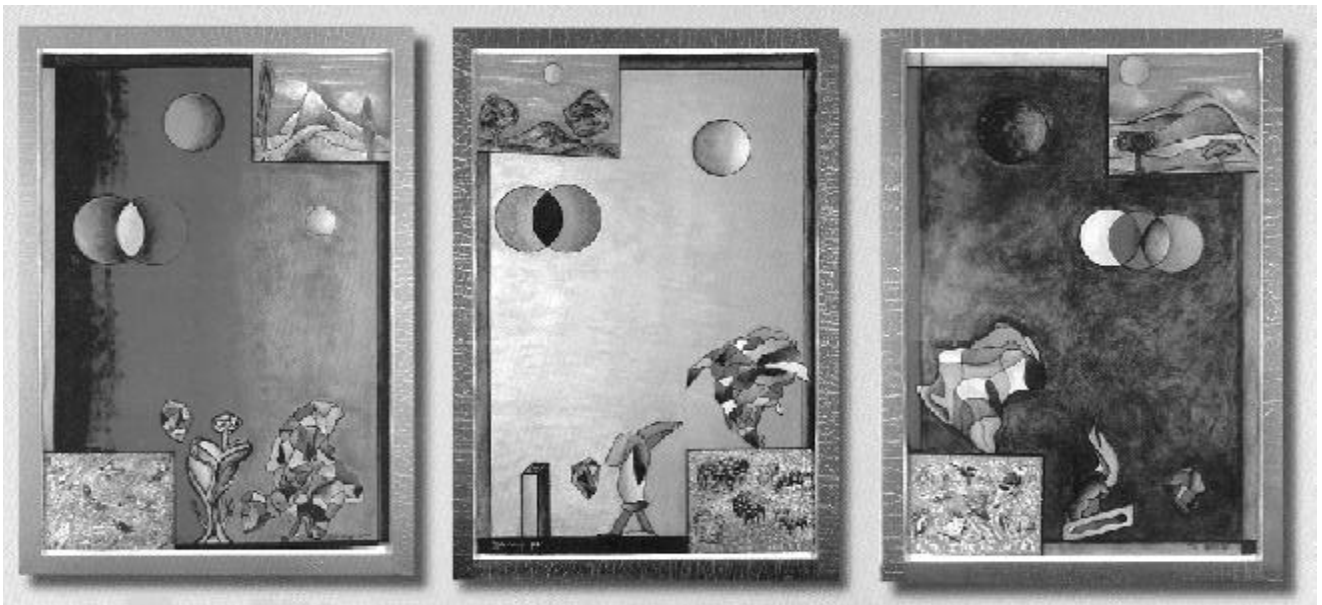
*Photos by Dale Frost*

### **Carolyn Braaksma**

*Carolyn Braaksma is an accomplished architectural artist based in Denver, Colorado. She specializes in creating textures, images and designs that are precast in concrete architectural elements used for sound abatement walls, bridge piers, floors, columns, pedestrian benches, on/off ramps, intersections, and airport structures. She has had numerous commissions for her precast concrete artwork in cities throughout the U.S. including the airports at Denver, Ft. Lauderdale, Miami, and now San Diego. For previous projects she has won awards from the American Institute of Architects and the American Concrete Institute.*

### **Continents by Italo Scanga**

Arriving international air travelers, emerging from the new Federal Inspection Facility at Lindbergh Field will be greeted with a warm and cordial welcome by *Continents*, a vibrant and colorful new artwork by internationally acclaimed artist **Italo Scanga**. *Continents* consists of three large acrylic paintings and nine blown-glass sculptures of flames and cypress trees, all set on a background of gold. The composition begins to describe the landscape, the atmosphere, and the color of the San Diego area. The Scanga-designed glass sculptures were produced by the Pilchuck Studios near Seattle, Washington. Appropriately sited in the International Gates first floor arrival lobby at Terminal 2, **Scanga's** artwork provides an elegant transition from the airport's customs inspection hall to the sun-drenched environs of San Diego. With *Continents*, **Scanga** has succeeded in his original intention of creating a distinctive gateway that serves as a strong visual statement identifying the arrival and departure to and from this city. □



## Tree Lines by Gail Roberts

Spotlighted in a recessed niche of the new International Gates second floor ticketing area (see photo page 1), Gail Roberts' *Tree Lines* provides departing air travelers with a colorful, soothing and engaging visual experience as they prepare for international flight. *Tree Lines* is a large, mixed-media artwork—consisting of an array of thirty-four oil-on-canvas paintings and two painted ceramic bowls—that pays tribute to nature and the cycles of continuous rebirth. The individual paintings, which measure 20 x 20 inches in size, depict segments of trunks, branches and leaves of thirty-four different species of trees in their natural environments throughout Southern California. The paintings combined form a composite image of a single large tree. The backgrounds are distant vistas ranging from the coast to the



valleys to the mountains and to the desert. The paintings also portray seasonal changes and the forces of nature including snow, wind, fire, heat and fog. Keen-eyed observers will be able to discern birds that are indigenous to this area in thirteen of the paintings. Overall the artwork spans 21.5 feet in width and is 12 feet in height. A wall-mounted plaque provides a key to identifying the species of trees and birds depicted in the paintings. The cases on either side contain egg-laden bird nests atop old-fashioned scales and ceramic bowls. The bowls are painted with images of lone oak trees. The scales symbolize the precarious balance in nature with the nests alluding to the ongoing activity of life camouflaged within the landscape.

The passing traveler will surely appreciate the splash of color, light and life that *Tree Lines* adds to the otherwise subdued gray and neutral tones of the terminal's interior décor. But those who have more than a few moments to contemplate this wonderful artwork will find it a vi-

sual delight that reveals more and more of itself the longer one gazes at it, much as nature reveals its innermost secrets to those who have the patience for prolonged observation. Its varied sight lines along horizons, trunks, branches and twigs ingeniously integrate the thirty-four paintings into a fascinating whole and draw the eye through Roberts' subtly-crafted images of the infinitely diverse natural environment of the San Diego region. □

### Gail Roberts

Artist Gail Roberts is a professor at the School of Art, Design and Art History at San Diego State University. The natural themes portrayed in her art have been inspired by her daily observations of nature and the ever changing cycles of life around her rural home in North San Diego County where she has resided for over nine years. Her oil paintings and mixed media artworks depict the landscapes, trees, animals, birds and the natural forces at work in her environment. Gail has influenced many aspiring and emerging artists through her teaching, exhibitions and public artworks.

Photo above left by Gail Roberts

### Italo Scanga

Italo Scanga emigrated to the U.S. from Italy in 1947. He received his undergraduate and graduate art degrees from Michigan State University. Scanga has been a professor of visual arts at the University of California, San Diego, for over 22 years. He has also taught at several other distinguished art institutions such as the Rhode Island School of Design. He is continuing to teach at summer art programs, including the Pilchuck Glass School, Stanwood, Washington, where he creates his glass works. Scanga is internationally acclaimed for his metaphysical fabrications in sculpture and painting. He uses wood and metal in his sculptures and different types of paper in his paintings. His works appear throughout the United States and Italy. Scanga is also recognized for his prints, drawings, painted ceramics, frescoes and bronze artworks.



Artist Italo Scanga (above) discusses *Continents*, his striking new artwork at Terminal 2 East. This colorful mixed media art brings a warm and elegant glow to the International Gates arrivals lobby. Displayed in a lighted glass case recessed into the wall, *Continents* is comprised of three large acrylic paintings and nine blown glass elements-- five flames (left) and four cypress trees. The cypress trees are characteristic of both Scanga's native Italy and the San Diego region.

Photos left and above by Dale Frost

## Art conservators & maintainers sought

As the Port of San Diego's public art collection continues to grow, there is an increasing need for the services of experienced artwork conservators, restorers, cleaners and maintainers to augment the Port's planned maintenance program for art. The Port maintains a wide variety of contemporary and traditional public artworks around San Diego Bay and at the San Diego International Airport. The Port's Public Art Department is implementing an improved planned maintenance program that will ensure that periodic maintenance, cleaning and preservation work is performed on each piece in accordance with a regular programmed schedule.

The Port intends to continue contracting with outside art conservation firms and workers, as required, for the performance of specialized art maintenance and restoration work. The artworks involved are composed of a variety of media including bronze, glass, stainless steel, polished granite, marble, ceramic tile, concrete, fiberglass and wood.

Specialists interested in bidding on future art conservation and maintenance projects with the Port of San Diego are invited to submit their qualifications to:

Public Art Director  
Port of San Diego  
P.O. Box 120488  
San Diego, CA 92112-0488

or fax to: (619) 686-6436

Include a resume and/or brochure describing qualifications and provide a reference list with names, addresses and phone numbers of at least three clients for whom art maintenance, conservation or restoration work has been performed. Qualified applicants will become part of the Port's art conservation registry and will receive Requests for Proposals (RFPs) or invitations to bid on future conservation projects.

## Airport Banner Contest – Phase 2: design submittals requested

The Port of San Diego is sponsoring its second airport banner competition and seeks artists' design proposals for new street pole banners for display at San Diego International Airport. Entries will be judged by the Public Art Committee, which will select thirty designs for rendering as full size banners. The Port will provide selected artists with specially tailored banner material upon which to paint their original works of art. The completed banners will be placed on public display at locations throughout the airport parking lots and approach roads. Artists will receive an honorarium award for their work as well as the opportunity to display their artistry in one of the most highly visible venues in San Diego County.

Residents of Southern California are eligible to participate in this contest. School and community groups and collaborations of artists are also encouraged to apply.

Contestants should submit scale color drawings of their banner designs. The scale should be 1-inch equals 1-foot. Banner size will be 12-feet in height by 3-feet in width, so the scale drawings should be 12 inches by 3 inches in size. The use of bright colors in the designs is recommended. The banner design must be visually acceptable from both the front and backside, with the back being a mirror image of the front. If the design is not a mirror image, submit separate designs for the front and back of the banner.

For complete details, specifications, contest rules and application form, contact the Port of San Diego's Public Art Department at (619) 686-7246 or email: [c victoria@portofsandiego.org](mailto:c victoria@portofsandiego.org). Please provide name, address and phone number.

Deadline for submission of design drawings and application form is 5:00 PM, September 14, 2001. □



Photo above by Dale Frost

### Public Art Calendar for July - December 2001

The Year 2001 promises to be a busy one for the Port's Public Art Program. The following calendar projects a number of upcoming events envisioned for this year:

July – Dec.	Public Art Committee Meeting – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday each month
July	Ground breaking ceremony for Cancer Survivors Park
August 15	Deadline for community-initiated public art applications
Sept. 14	Banner Art Display – Phase II – design entry deadline
Sept. 14	Dedication of <b>Niki de St. Phalle</b> artwork at Convention Center
Dec.	Dedication of Cancer Survivors Park
TBD	Ground breaking Canyon Path pedestrian accessway
TBD	Ground breaking ceremony for Bob Hope Tribute
TBD	Ground breaking for U.S.S. San Diego Memorial

**Subscriptions:** The *Public Art Updates* newsletter is available free of charge to anyone interested in the Port of San Diego's Public Art Program. Contact the Port's Public Art Department at (619) 686-7247 to be added to the mailing list.



**Silent Auction**

of twenty-five "Brown Bag" artworks garnered over \$30,000 dollars for the San Diego Food Bank. The auction was part of the April 27 festivities attending the dedication of the new International Gates and the installation of three new airport artworks.

Photo by Dale Frost

**How to Get Involved**

**Community involvement.** The success of public art depends on the involvement of its patrons. While many artists actively engage the public in their work, community representatives also provide a vital balance to the decision making process by participating on art committees and at project development meetings. Those interested in participating in the development of upcoming projects should contact the Port's Public Art Director.

**Artist involvement.** Artists who wish to be considered for public art commissions should submit the following materials to the Port's Public Art Department, Attn: Artist Registry:

- A current resume or curriculum vitae
- Up to twenty labeled 35mm slides of recent work
- Support materials such as catalogs, reviews, articles, etc.

**Mail to:**  
 Public Art Director  
 Port of San Diego  
 P.O. Box 120488  
 San Diego, CA 92112-0488

**Port of San Diego  
 Public Art Committee Members**

- Margaret Brezel (Chair)  
Imperial Beach
- Melody Cernitz  
Chula Vista
- Martha Ann Youngberg  
Coronado
- Kathleen Smith  
National City
- Janene Christopher  
San Diego
- John Vissat  
Port Tenants Association

Members-at-large:

- Teresa Barker
- Jesus Dominguez
- Debra Owen
- Vacant

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FOR ADDITIONAL PUBLIC ART INFORMATION, CALL (619) 686-7246, E-mail [publicart@portofsandiego.org](mailto:publicart@portofsandiego.org), OR VISIT THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM WEB SITE AT: [www.portofsandiego.org](http://www.portofsandiego.org) (click on the "Public Art" button).

**Port of San Diego**

*Discover what's in it for you*

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