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PALO ALTO ART CENTER CONTINUES SERIES OF SITE-SPECIFIC INSTALLATIONS WITH JUDITH SELBY LANG'S *LawnBowls*

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL WORK CALLS ATTENTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

INSTALLATION FEB. 1 2012 THROUGH FEBRUARY 2013 AT PALO ALTO LAWN BOWLS CLUB

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS NOV. 10 AND JAN. 21

Palo Alto, CA, October 20, 2011—The acclaimed Palo Alto Art Center will present Bay Area artist Judith Selby Lang's *LawnBowls*, the next new temporary site-specific installation in its series exploring art in public and community spaces. Opening February 1, 2012, *LawnBowls* will be installed on the grounds of the Palo Alto Lawn Bowls Club, 474 Embarcadero in Palo Alto, through February 2013. Lang's work has been celebrated for its striking focus on the relationship between humans and the environment. *LawnBowls* will be created by the public in several community workshops using recycled plastic bags to create monumental ball sculptures. Free community workshops are scheduled Thursday, November 10, 4-7pm, Cubberley Community Center, Room H-1 and Saturday, January 21, 10am-2pm, Lucie Stern Community Center. For information, visit www.cityofpaloalto.org/artcenter.

"As a mixed media installation artist I am exploring the personal and global impact of detritus," says Lang. "Through my art, I hope to bring awareness to crucial environmental issues and enliven public space. Plastic is my primary material because it's free, it's ubiquitous, it's archival. As we come to the end of the Era of Oil, plastic seems to be the material most expressive of our times. And, like diamonds, it is forever."

LawnBowls will be an installation of 10-12 large balls created from single-use plastic bags arranged on the lawn space adjacent to the Palo Alto Lawn Bowls Club. The balls will appear as a game in progress—as if some giant players had just left the scene. These colorful sculptures will provide a compelling example of a playful reuse of what might otherwise be trash or perhaps recycled.

The creation of *LawnBowls* will involve a community effort. Workshops with the public (including youth, veterans, seniors and others) will be held at several locations in Palo Alto and East Palo Alto. Participants will help cut hundreds of bags into strips to form the wrapping and will help to twine the bags around the form. Working together, participants will gain pride in crafting something bigger than they could do on their own. And they will help to make an important statement about plastic pollution.

The awareness of the problem with single-use plastic bags is increasing. The City of Palo Alto has been proactive, banning the bags in larger grocery stores in 2009. Efforts to

educate the public about this important change continue. In a fun and eye-catching way *LawnBowls* will contribute to this effort.

LawnBowls is presented in conjunction with the Palo Alto Lawn Bowls Club, (www.palbc.org), is co-sponsored by the Palo Alto Public Art Commission and is supported by the Palo Alto Art Center Foundation. *Double Take* and *Clear-Story* were funded, in part, by the Palo Alto Art Center Foundation through an IMLS grant.

In addition to *LawnBowls*, Judith Selby Lang will also create a second related site-specific installation in the Palo Alto in the spring of 2012, dates and details to be announced.

About Judith Selby Lang

Judith Selby Lang explores the global impact of plastic pollution in her mixed media artworks and installations. She is committed to the creation of new symbols and life-affirming images to help shape the dialogue about personal, social, and environmental issues.

By giving aesthetic form to what is considered to be garbage, she serves as both cleaner and curator. While the content of her work has a message about the spoiling of the natural world by the human/industrial world, her intent is to transform the perils of pollution into something beautiful and celebratory.

Ms. Lang has a BA in art from Pitzer College, 1972 and MA in interdisciplinary arts from San Francisco State University, 1994. She is the Communications Director for Electric Works, a gallery and fine art press in San Francisco.

To support her innovative video productions Ms. Lang was awarded a Career Grant by the Marin Fund for Artists in 2006. As a recipient of the Marin Arts Council New Work Fund for her project *Recycle Ryoan-ji*, she presented in 2007 a re-creation of a Japanese sand garden at the San Francisco Civic Center Plaza. Over 6,000 white plastic shopping bags were re-purposed to create the "sand" and the "rocks" were made from beach plastic. In 2008, *The Last Dance*, an interactive art work was displayed at the plaza of the New Federal Building in San Francisco. The Yale University Art Museum acquired two of her beach plastic necklaces for their collection of contemporary jewelry in 2011.

In an ongoing project about beach plastic she collaborates with her husband Richard Lang. They combine their love of nature with their interest in science to produce art works about the oceans and the environment. Their work has been featured in over 40 exhibitions in art galleries and museums; educational and science centers including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Café Museo and Artist Windows, the United Nations World Environment Day, the Thoreau Center for Sustainability in San Francisco, the Cummings Gallery at Stanford University, and the University of San Francisco. The Feigenbaum Nii Foundation and the Open Circle Foundation have supported their work. In 2009 they received the Arts And Healing Network Award. *One Plastic Beach*, a documentary about their work premiered in 2011 at the Geography of Hope Film Festival then played at Mountainfilm in Telluride and the Lincoln Center in New York City.

About the Palo Alto Art Center Transformation

The nationally acclaimed Palo Alto Art Center temporarily closed its doors to the public on April 4, 2011 through the fall of 2012 to undergo a substantial \$7.9 million transformation of its facilities and re-envisioning of its extensive programs in order to serve a broader

public in its mission to engage the community in the arts as both observers and creators through exhibitions, studio arts and education activities.

"The renovation of the Palo Alto Art Center facility is an opportunity for us to reflect on our mission and programs, and to re-envision how we can better serve the community that has engaged with us for 40 years in the seeing and making of art of all kinds," says Karen Kienzle, Palo Alto Art Center Director. "During this time our public programming will continue, and we are excited about bringing exhibitions and participatory activities for all ages directly into the community while we ready the Center itself to welcome more of the public next year."

The Palo Alto Art Center's transformation is inspired by the Center's mission to engage the community in the creative process as both observers and creators through exhibitions and studio and education programs. The transformation will enable the Palo Alto Art Center to expand its programs and services to a broader base while maintaining its high level of quality and enhance its reputation as a leading regional art center.

The Palo Alto Art Center has been one of the country's most popular and unusual facilities since it opened its doors to the public in 1971. Serving 70,000 residents annually, it combines both an internationally acclaimed exhibitions program with studio art, art instruction in painting, drawing, ceramics, glass, media arts, extensive art activities for school children including *Project LOOK!*, publications and a variety of public events including lectures, interpretive programs and meet-the-artist opportunities.

***On the Road* Events Bring Palo Alto Art Center's "See and Make" Approach into the Community During the Transformation**

During the transformation, Bay Area residents will be able to continue to discover, learn, create and be inspired by participating in its innovative *On the Road* programs that will bring the Center's popular and acclaimed "see and make" approach to the arts directly into the community. *On the Road* will continue during the Center's transformation with a variety of activities throughout Palo Alto.

On the Road events are designed to give the public opportunities to see art in exhibitions and site-specific art installations, and to make art in a variety of participatory classes, demonstrations and programs for all ages. In addition to Judith Selby Lang's *LawnBowls*, current and upcoming *On the Road* activities include the Art Center's new Art Truck at locations throughout the community, Mildred Howard's 97,000 bottle house *Clear-Story* on King Plaza in downtown Palo Alto, *Double Take*, Patrick Dougherty's beguiling environmental sculpture made of willow branches, on the grounds of the Center at the corner of Embarcadero and Newell Road through July, 2012; third annual Day of the Dead celebration October 30 at Lucie Stern Community Center; Holiday Family Day and Cubberley Artists' Open House December 3 at Cubberley Community Center; art classes at various locations in Palo Alto and more. A regularly updated schedule of *On the Road* events may be found at www.cityofpaloalto.org/artcenter .

On the Road programs are supported by the Palo Alto Art Center Foundation through an Institute of Museum and Library Services grant.