



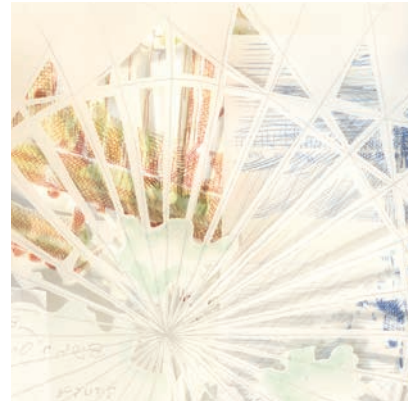
she came to know the city and region through its topography, archaeological sites, waterways, rock distributions, population dispersals, city layout, fire-burned areas, migratory pathways, and other factors. Students from the Departments of Environmental Studies, Geography, and Sociology and research staff from the University's Map & Imagery Laboratory conducted research for Siegel to conceive these drawings.

The drawings or "units," as the artist refers to them, can be configured in an endless number of ways, incorporating anywhere from the full suite of fifty to only a handful. Like the city and landscape itself, *Translocation and Overlay* will never remain fixed. Future installations will be unique and respond to the spaces in which the drawings are presented. They will also elaborate alternate ideas related to the city depending on the selection of images. In this configuration, all of them are

Translocation and Overlay explores the landscape, history, and current state of the Santa Barbara region through fifty drawings and related porcelain components. Siegel's project is sprawling, filling Nachman Gallery with data and images from multiple time periods. Arrayed across the gallery walls and overlapping one another, each of the drawings is unique and represents contemporary or historic images she found during the research phase. Interspersed with those images are drawings based on typical and atypical data sets. Working with this scientific-based information was a first for the artist. By utilizing this information

FRAN SIEGEL

examines the nature of specific places through her large-scale drawings. She frequently turns her analytical eye on the ever-changing quality of the landscape in relation to urban development. Her innovative drawing project for the Art, Design & Architecture Museum was developed over the course of a year and a half. Aside from her home base of Los Angeles, this is the first time Siegel has investigated a place for such an extended period of time. In studying a new terrain and city, Siegel was inspired to consider new techniques and formats that would allow her to more readily reflect the character of the city. Based on scientific data, historical research and personal experiences, Siegel's work upends the physical layout of the area and melds past and present together. The result is a poetic, multi-faceted interpretation of Santa Barbara.



on view. Nine contour drawings of the coastline between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara form the spine of the installation and wrap diagonally around the gallery walls. The remaining drawings were, for the most part, placed in relation to this spine in broadly interpreted groupings, such as: sea, sky, fire, or land.

The drawings, are complemented by porcelain facsimiles of an area stratigraphic map and "artifacts" Siegel collected or encountered. The stratigraphic map is of the Mountain Drive area, which is the highest point in the city and is known for its bohemian history. But the map also functions as a loose key to the drawings. Distinct symbols on each of the porcelain pieces correlate to a different drawing and its topic. Another key is available in the gallery and lists the drawings chronologically according to subject along with an informative statement about each one. Siegel's porcelain artifacts replicate the leaves she gathered in the Coronado Butterfly Preserve, the chandeliers in the Santa Barbara Mission, and the designs utilized by the Chumash Indians, among other items. They are displayed in a vitrine, atop cyanotypes of the locations where they were gathered or seen by the artist. These cyanotypes were made by exposing negatives to sunlight on light-sensitive paper. The sunlight turns the paper dark blue and renders the image a ghostly white. These sculptural elements ground Siegel's work and research in the physical world as a result of their handcrafted nature. Their presentation takes on the appearance and feel of an anthropological museum display case, revealing the specimens and fragments she encountered in her research.

Translocation and Overlay is sweeping in its physical sprawl, incorporation of many different types of drawings and multiple media as well as in its conceptual underpinnings which are broadly conceived. The overarching theme of the project, however, is that of transience and movement. Siegel was fascinated by Santa Barbara's beauty and reputation as an idyllic, even utopic, enclave maintained through strict building codes and dictates preserving the landscape and ecology. But



there are forces that remain outside of the city's control and have spurred sudden or gradual change. Indeed, like any other place, Santa Barbara, is always undergoing some form of transformation. To illustrate that Siegel pictured area fault lines and fires, the 1969 oil spill, and an image of the aftermath of the 1925 earthquake that leveled the city, allowing it to reinvent itself in a Spanish Colonial Revival style. Siegel's emphasis on movement is more directly addressed in other drawings that represent motion like wind and wave patterns in the area, clouds, Highway 101, waterways and the ubiquitous bicycles seen throughout the UCSB campus and the city at large. Visible sporadically throughout the installation are excised images of high-wire act performers from the circus. This is a reference to an 1890 circus that passed through town and made headlines with daredevil feats from hot-air balloons, as well as a nod to the unceasing travels of the circus caravans. For Siegel, the circus is also symbolic of the fringe or outsider groups that have passed through Santa Barbara.

The more Siegel learned about Santa Barbara, the more she was intrigued by the contrast between its highly planned character and the peripheral, transient segments, human and otherwise, that are found in its environs. The Santa Barbara city plan appears in various guises in the installation, acting as a foil to these "off the grid" populations that are nomadic and flit in and out, running counter to the strictly-ordered nature of the city. For example, the monarch butterflies that yearly

Fran Siegel earned her M.F.A. in Painting from Yale University School of Art, New Haven, CT and B.F.A. from Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA. Her drawings are in the collections of Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles and Yale University Art Gallery. She is a Map & Imagery Laboratory, Sloane Kochman '13 Art History, Erik Nielsen ABD Sociology, Jessica Pham '12 Environmental Studies and Geography, Michael Redmon, Director of Research, Santa Barbara Historical Museum, Christina Rubio '14 Art, and The School of Art at California State University, Long Beach. The paper used in this work is Grafik Drafting Film and has been generously donated by Grafik Consumer Products.

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nest in Santa Barbara for a short period are the subject of one drawing. Other examples allude to the homeless populations that are presently in Santa Barbara and those that were situated here in the past. Siegel's contemporary image of a shopping cart filled with a person's belongings is complemented by another that shows "Hobo Village," a depression-era encampment for the homeless on the grounds of Lillian Child's estate, now the Santa Barbara Zoo. Siegel also sees the bohemian, artistic community of Mountain Drive, represented in porcelain, as another example of a countercultural community that lends a decidedly non-conformist aspect to the city.

Siegel is deeply influenced by Italo Calvino's book *Invisible Cities* (1978), which consists of a series of passages that describe impossible, fantastical towns that defy gravity, time, and space. She is drawn to the work because Calvino uses, as she states, "minute descriptions to create believable but invented worlds." Through *Translocation and Overlay* Siegel is able to create her own alternate, imaginary version of Santa Barbara that collapses time and space. Her drawings reduce the city to a series of patterns based on events or data from various time frames and locales. By rendering her images on drafting film, a translucent paper, and installing them in an overlapping manner she makes it possible for viewers to see these disparate time periods and places in direct relation to one another. New patterns, even those that may be irrelevant or nonsensical, are revealed and in so doing present a more nuanced portrait of this place, one that takes into account the experience of Santa Barbara. With this work, Siegel demonstrates how the city is a rich mélange of the past and present as well as stunning geographic location, catastrophic events, topographic diversity, competing interests, geological shifts, and differing populations, among other factors. *Translocation and Overlay* reveals the multifaceted quality of the city, allowing viewers to see and experience its compelling character and striking complexity.

Elyse A. Gonzales, Curator of Exhibitions

"For me, drawing is a malleable medium with a realm of possibilities for exploring itinerant and transitory subjects. I'm interested in investigating things that aren't still, such as shifting light and movement."



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