

17th Annual Arts for Life Conference

Presented by the Richmond School Board and the Richmond Art Gallery

WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2009



What is Arts for Life?

Arts for Life is more than just a conference, it is an art experience you will never forget. Many former participants have contacted us over the years to tell us that this conference was one of those moments in high school where they really became inspired and excited about the arts. This conference is not a series of lectures, it is a sharing of stories and experiences from working artists and designers, providing tips and answering the questions you want to know along the way. All the artist presenters are currently working in their field, so you will also get to see some great contemporary art and design that may not be normally seen in Richmond.

Join us for the 2009 *Arts for Life* Conference—the only event of its kind for youth in the Lower Mainland.

OPENING KEYNOTE (9:00-10:00AM)

Susanne Tabata

FILMMAKER, DIRECTOR

Born in Nanaimo, schooled in Japan and Canada, raised in the 60s with biracial parents, Tabata is a working documentary filmmaker and advocate of social justice.

Susanne broke out as a director with the critically acclaimed documentary on the subculture of Canadian surfing—first commissioned by CBC Newsworld—*49Degrees*. After a surfer walked the program into FUELTV Los Angeles, the station picked up the doc and invited Tabata to enter a filmmaking contest sponsored by Fox in Los Angeles—the Fuel Experiment—running against 250+ filmmakers to be the only female and one of ten directors chosen to make a film. The resulting film *SkateGirl* (FoxFUEL) is the history of women's professional skateboarding, chronicling parallel journeys of women from the 1970s to now. *SkateGirl* is currently airing on US Cable. AKA a producer of Nettfilms's

Barenaked in America, Jason Priestley director—a 35mm feature doc of the first large arena US Tour of the Barenaked Ladies.

On the heels of *SkateGirl* and *49Degrees*, Susanne Tabata returns to her DIY punk roots with *Bloodied but Unbowed*, the tell-all documentary of the first wave of punk rock in Vancouver.

Tabata is also known for early commercial and music video work, but values developing programs for high school students which explore social justice issues like racism and homophobia. She continues to explore these themes having just completed a series of oral histories for the Japanese Canadian National Museum which explore the internment camp experiences of survivors—including her father from Steveston—who recall life before, during and after World War II. Titled *Ohanashi: Stories of Our Elders* this is a very quiet homage to the lives of different seniors in the Japanese Canadian community who



all experienced the same historical events.

Tabata cites her biracial Asian heritage as being an influence but has yet to call herself an Asian filmmaker. She is a UBC Graduate of International Relations and lives in Vancouver with her two teenage sons.

FIRST SESSION (10:20-11:20AM)



Vjeko Sager

INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTIST

Vjeko Sager is former Senior lecturer in Painting Techniques at the University of Arts in Belgrade. Vjeko is an active multimedia artist, awarded and represented in permanent collections in Canada, USA and Europe. In Canada, Vjeko has participated in more than twenty collective and five solo exhibitions. He curated the *Art in Exile* exhibition for Artropolis 2003 at the CBC Studios in Vancouver, and lectured at the Philosopher's Café, University of British Columbia and Langara College. He currently teaches at Emily Carr University as a sessional instructor.

www.ecuad.ca/~vsager



Marilou Lemmens & Richard Ibhgy, *Virtuous Circle 1*, 2009

Marilou Lemmens

MULTIMEDIA ARTIST

Marilou Lemmens lives in Vancouver and has worked in collaboration with Richard Ibhgy since 2002. Since that time, they have developed a multifaceted practice, consisting of installation, video, sound, photographs, printed matter, and works for public spaces. Her work has been exhibited across Canada and in Europe, most recently, at the European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück (2009), the Western Front, Vancouver (2009), the Ministry of Casual Living, Victoria (2008), at Labor K1, Berlin (2007), the Owens Art Gallery, Sackville (2007), the Helen Pitt Gallery, the Belkin Art Gallery and the Belkin Satellite, Vancouver (2007). She has also participated in artists' residencies at Struts, Sackville (2005), L'Atelier de l'Ile, Val-David (2009), and VU, Quebec City (2009). In 2010, she will be presenting solo exhibitions at the Vernon Art Gallery, Vernon; The New Gallery, Calgary; and VU, Quebec City. Marilou Lemmens holds a BFA from Concordia University, Montreal, and an MFA from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. Since 2007, she has been a lecturer at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver and in the Okanagan, with a teaching focus in the areas of photography and new media.



Photo credit: Terra Poirier

Vanessa Kwan

INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTIST,
WRITER, CURATOR

Vanessa Kwan is a Vancouver-based artist and writer. Her work has been exhibited at a number of galleries, including solo exhibitions at the Or Gallery, Access, and the Art Gallery of the South Okanagan. A public art commission for the City of Vancouver is forthcoming in 2010.

Vanessa's most recent curatorial project *Black Hole is Also Supernova* is currently exhibiting at the Richmond Art Gallery from September 18-November 1, 2009.

SECOND SESSION (11:30AM-12:30PM)



Bill Pechet, *The Big Dipper*, Spirit Square Project, 2009

Bill Pechet

ARCHITECT, B.A., B.F.A., B.ARCH.

Bill received degrees in geography and visual arts from the University of Victoria, in 1979 and 1981 respectively. In 1982, he entered the School of Architecture at the University of British Columbia. In his second year, Bill attended a studies abroad program for architecture in Hong Kong and then spent a year living in Manila and Tokyo, working for Rengo Keikakusha on urban design projects.

Bill graduated from Architecture school in 1987 with a thesis project called *The Museum of Sand*, a theoretical zone of touristic and therapeutic spaces set in the dense heart of Tokyo.

After graduation, Bill spent several years working in the offices of Henriquez and Partners, Situ Design, Patkau Architects, and Bing Thom Architects.

Along with his design partner and friend, Stephanie Robb, Bill has developed an oeuvre of interests which synthesizes his love of geography, art and architecture. Bill also teaches at UBC's School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (SALA) where he works with students on such varied subjects as concrete construction, the architecture of cemeteries and the creative application of sustainable building practices into contemporary architecture and urbanism.

www.pechetandrobb.com



Lisa Birke, *Lost Love*, 2008

Lisa Birke

PAINTER, INSTALLATION ARTIST

With a body of work that includes an eclectic mix of mass media, pop culture, and kitsch imagery, Vancouver-based artist Lisa Birke often incorporates black humor into her paintings, drawings and sculptural installation work. While her own unique wit play a large role in her richly colored pieces, social commentary on consumption, human impact on the environment, biological manipulation, and observations on how the technological world is affecting art practice and distribution also play major roles in her collections. In her work, we not only find intricate brushstrokes and pieces that fall somewhere between surrealism and collage, we also find pieces that fall beyond pure aesthetics, and content that challenges the viewer and encourages a personal dialog, be it internal or external. In addition to maintaining a prolific presence on the Vancouver art scene, and with commercial solo exhibitions in Canada, the United States, and the Netherlands, Lisa has also served as an art educator for the past 10 years, and has given numerous lectures on her work, travels, and creative process.

www.lisabirke.com



Gail Conzatti

FASHION DESIGNER

Gail Conzatti began her career in sales in the technology industry where she worked her way through several cities gaining experience and climbing the corporate ladder to senior management positions in international organizations. In 2003, Gail escaped from the corporate world to design handbags. She began by individually hand-painting and sewing each handbag in her basement and her work evolved into a more refined product that retains the original creative flare. Begun as a small project, KAIROS Designs has bloomed into a sophisticated handbag company committed to quality, integrity of design and production and above all its customers. Built on a foundation of high ideals, KAIROS Designs is dedicated to creating relationships that benefit other small businesses and the Canadian economy.

www.kairos-designs.com

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 8:30 am – 8:40am **Registration and Exhibition preview**
Cultural Centre Rotunda & Richmond Art Gallery
- 8:45 am – 9:00am **Opening remarks**
Lecture Hall
- 9:00 am – 10:00am **Keynote: Susanne Tabata**
Lecture Hall
- 10:00 am – 10:15 am **Snack Break**
Atrium
- 10:20 am – 11:20 am **First Session (choose one speaker)**
Vjeko Sager – Lecture Hall
Vanessa Kwan – Art Gallery
Marilou Lemmens – Program Room
- 11:20 am – 11:30 am **Move to next session**
- 11:30 am – 12:30 pm **Second Session (choose one speaker)**
Bill Pechet – Lecture Hall
Gail Conzatti – Art Gallery
Lisa Birke – Program Room
- 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm **Lunch Provided in the Atrium**
- 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm **Panel Discussion**
Bill Pechet, Lisa Birke, Gail Conzatti
Lecture Hall
- 2:30 pm – 2:45 pm **Closing Remarks and Door Prizes**
Lecture Hall

REGISTER BY OCTOBER 9, 2009

We only have spaces for 12 students from each Richmond Secondary School. Additional students can put their name on a wait list for any spaces that open up.

Cost is \$25.00, which includes a morning snack and full lunch.

When you register, you must also select which speaker you would like to see for 2 morning sessions. Please include your 1st and 2nd option for each session, as spaces are limited.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Conference coordinated by:

Kathy Tycholis
RAG School Program Coordinator

Nan Capogna
RAG Education and Public Programs
Coordinator

Wendy Lim
RSD District Administrator

Nancy Brennan
RSD Assistant Superintendent

Participating artists:

Susanne Tabata, Vjeko Sager, Marilou
Lemmens, Vanessa Kwan, Bill Pechet,
Lisa Birke, Gail Conzatti

Thank you to all the organizations and individuals who helped make *Arts for Life 2009* possible:

Richmond Secondary Art Teachers
RAGA volunteers



Opus Framing and Art
Supplies

RAG

richmondartgallery.org

