

FEATURED ARTISTS

The innovative works of two young artists, **Kara Tanaka** and **Marcos Rios**, are included. Tanaka's delightfully extroverted sculpture features a giant, mechanical skirt swirling open like a whirling dervish. Rios plays with perspective with an installation that invites curious visitors to enter into an "Alice in Wonderland"-like space.

Politics plays a vital role in many works. A powerful suite of drawings by **Raymond Pettibon**—who gained early fame for his album covers for the punk rock band, *Black Flag*—comments on the Iraq War in the artist's trademark style. **Andrea Bowers'** straightforward and poignant mixed media works tell the story of *Elvira Arellano*, the Mexican American activist who took shelter in a church with her eight-year-old son during the immigration sweeps that followed 9/11. She later spoke out in support of immigrant families before her eventual arrest and deportation.

One particularly compelling work is not in the museum at all, but just outside its doors. **Patrick "Pato" Hebert's** installation of colorful placards festoons neatly mowed patches of grass. In a mixture of sentiment ranging from *New Age* to *Green Power* to *Kindergarten Rules*, the signs include sayings like, "Humor is sometimes hurtful," "Time and mistakes have taught me integrity," and "I want to play by the ocean." Speaking of which, OCMA is located mere blocks from the Pacific; a walk along Balboa Island's jaunty main street is the perfect follow-up to an afternoon of art.

Annie Buckley is a writer, editor, and artist based in Los Angeles. Her writing about contemporary art appears regularly on *Artforum.com* and in *Glass Quarterly*, *Craft*, and *Yoga Journal* magazines. She is the editor in chief of *Artweek*.



Patrick "Pato" Hebert
Text Messaging: 1,000 Points of Might, 2008
Mixed-media installation
Dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist

Felipe Dulzaides
Now Hope, 2008
Site-specific billboard for the Orange County
Museum of Art's 2008 California Biennial
96 x 144 in. Courtesy of the artist

Art By The Sea: the california biennial

By: Annie Buckley

CONTEMPORARY ART HAS enjoyed an expansive boom in recent years. In particular, one art world tradition, the biennial, has blossomed internationally over the past few decades. Starting in 1895 with the Venice Biennale, these exhibitions aim to present the best contemporary art of their time. Like the Italian predecessor, most biennials feature the work of artists from around the globe. In contrast, the California Biennial has remained steadfastly regional since 1984, dedicated only to artists from the Golden State.

The 2008 California Biennial (CB08) keeps the focus on California while expanding its reach, both literally and figuratively. Grounded by an impressive exhibition at the Biennial's host institution, the Orange County Museum of Art (OCMA), this year's rendition includes the debut of satellite shows from San Francisco to San Diego and into Tijuana. This widespread and ambitious program is the brainchild of CB08 curator, Lauri Firstenberg, founder and director of the nonprofit LA><Art.

Visitors can be forgiven for not grasping (or even seeing) the full extent of this far-flung show, but a trip to the hub at OCMA provides a snapshot of art from the state. Inspired by the Southland's numerous art schools, Firstenberg opted to include established artists (many of whom are also teachers) along with up-and-coming artists. Though the interconnections between them are not readily apparent in the over 100 videos, sculptures, paintings, and other works included, viewers can explore the scholarly and communal influences in a comprehensive catalogue accompanying the exhibition.