

## Previews

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white marks make up the remaining major element of the image. Looking as though the surface were sprinkled with lots and lots of grains of rice, the marks are bunched together in clusters at the bottom center of the panel, mostly surrounding the dark forms, appearing as though held together by some kind of attractive, magnetic field.

Matthew Alexis, *Sensuous Surfaces* will be on view May 15 through June 19 at Gallery 825/LAAA Annex, 2525 Michigan Ave. E-2, Santa Monica.

### Machiko Agano and Masako Takahashi

Two contemporary fiber artists of Japanese origin plan to transform the Natalie and James Thompson Gallery with unconventional forms and materials. Machiko Agano will create a sculptural installation from stainless steel wire, fishing gut and kozo paper while Masako Takahashi will exhibit bas-relief panels which incorporate an invented alphabet embroidered with her own hair on silk.

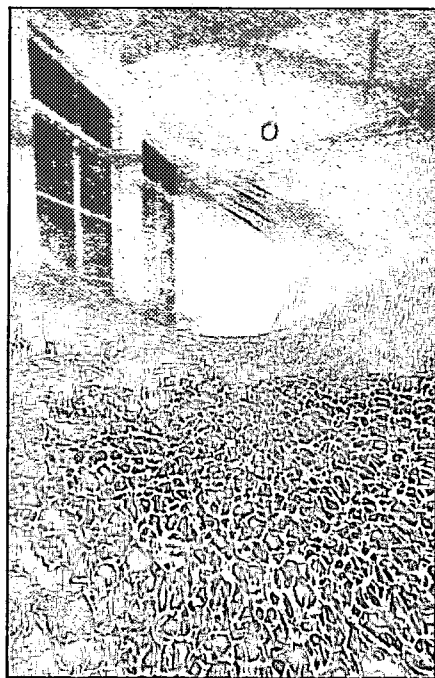
Agano studied traditional weaving techniques in Kyoto, but quickly broke away from traditional methods to pursue conceptual investigations into the nature of wind, light, earth and air. Working

Masako Takahashi, *Centered*, 2000, human hair, embroidery on silk, 14" x 14".



with fiber, light, shadow, movement in space and air currents, Agano explores the notions of being and nothingness via the creative process. The large ethereal, dreamy installation is meant to envelop viewers and moves almost imperceptibly with their breathing. Hanging from points on the ceiling and stretching out to various destinations on the floor, the web-like veils resemble non-manmade structures driven by the absence and presence of the wind.

Greatly influenced by her travels,



Machiko Agano, *Untitled*, 2003, stainless wire, fishing gut, kozo paper, 9" x 10" x 16".

Takahashi focuses on the concept of language as universal, mysterious, enigmatic and evocative. Called *Hair Texts*, Takahashi embroiders "words" into silk panels with doubled strands of her own long hair, collected from her brush. By combining a traditionally feminine craft and with a material also associated with women, adornment and a variety of religious and secular uses and meanings,

Takahashi's letters call out the human need for language and communication. Resembling runes and early alphabets, they point to the multiplicity of ways to create meaning, organize thoughts, record histories and catalog transactions.

The corporeal aspect of Takahashi's process underscores the primal tendency toward record-keeping, meaning-making and the maintenance of cultural memories.

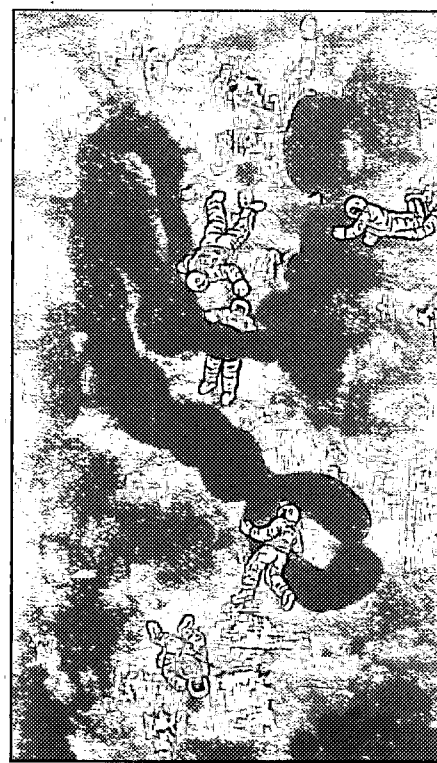
Machiko Agano/Masako Takahashi will be on view April 20 to May 21 at the Natalie and James Thompson Art Gallery, San Jose State University, One Washington Square, San Jose.

### David Huffman and Enrique Chagoya

Two solo (but related) exhibitions by Bay Area artists will be on view at the de Saisset Museum in Santa Clara. Both David Huffman and Enrique Chagoya address social inequality and oppression through the use of carefully rendered, detailed drawings alongside cartoon imagery. Huffman will be showing works on paper, paintings, site-specific wall drawings and ceramic sculptures that focus on the history and legacy of American slavery. The pain and suffering implicit in his message are expressed and obfuscated through references to Japanese animation and cartoon imagery. The figure of the minstrel as a symbol of limited possibilities and stereotyping of an entire group of people inhabits each of the works as the ground onto which the ongoing trauma of slavery is played out. The face of the minstrel, recognizable but obscured, appears ghostlike as a backdrop onto which are painted small, greenish, animated cartoon figures, attempting to move a relatively large, linked, black chain. The contrast between the face—whose mottled surface suggests great age and endurance—and the cutout and pasted-on quality of the smaller overlaid figures sets up ambiguous narratives.

Chagoya will exhibit his series of works on paper, *Conflicting Impressions*, which includes lithographs, monotypes, etchings, Iris prints and codex books. Combining images from sources as diverse as Mexican Catholicism, popular culture and advertising, Chagoya weaves together complicated commentaries on cultural marketing and imperialism. Switching back and forth between precisely drawn, realistic characters and places, and highly stylized, cartoonish figures, Chagoya has developed a personal visual language to chronicle his experience of living between two cultures.

One image, for example, shows an almost-stick figure standing in a scarecrow-like pose in front of an outline of an ancient Aztec temple. The face is replaced with an equilateral cross, the head is topped with a Catholic cross, and surrounded by small dashed lines, a symbol attached to the Virgin of



Guadalupe, the patron saint of Mexico City. Another image features a carefully rendered, sepia drawing of a female figure in the pose and dress common in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century European portraits. Her head is filled with multiple facial features, including a Pinocchio-style elongated nose and her hair is dark and straight, sporting an elaborate, feathered headdress.

Both Huffman and Chagoya combine history and traditional symbols with contemporary visual short hand and techniques to continue the long tradition of social commentary in art.

*Dark Matter: The Art of David Huffman and Works on Paper by Enrique Chagoya* will be on view April 17 to August 1 at the de Saisset Museum at Santa Clara University, 500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara.

Above: David Huffman, *Dark Matter*, 2003, mixed media, 60" x 36"; below: Enrique Chagoya, *Untitled*, 1997, monotype, 40" x 60".



A vertical bar on the left side of the page, consisting of a yellow-to-white gradient with a small red diamond at the top.

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