



Palo Alto
ARTCenter

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(IMAGES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST)

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**The Palo Alto Art Center Announces...
Winter/Spring 2007 Exhibitions / January 28 – April 29, 2007**

**"Correspondence: Masami Teraoka & Ukiyo-e"
&
"Actor! Actor!"**

~ Public Reception: January 28, 2007, 2:30-4:00 p.m. ~

PALO ALTO, Calif. – January 3, 2007 – The Palo Alto Art Center (PAAC) explores the beauty of drama shared by the visual arts and theater in two exhibitions, **"Correspondence: Masami Teraoka & Ukiyo-e"** and **"Actor! Actor!"**, January 28-April, 29, 2007. **"Correspondence: Masami Teraoka & Ukiyo-e,"** selected from a Palo Alto collection, explores the humorous and poignant contemporary work by Japanese American artist Masami Teraoka in juxtaposition with Ukiyo-e woodblock prints by Japanese masters who inspired Teraoka. Teraoka identifies his work as "narrative art theater," and has mined the iconography, vibrant color, and compositional elements seen in Ukiyo-e woodblock prints by mimicking formal components in watercolors for his satirical commentaries. **"Actor! Actor!"** is a broad celebration of the intersection of art and theater with an emphasis on Asian material. Masks, puppets, and stage set design represent subjects that artists have created. While they may embody a cultural practice or theatrical narrative they are visually potent as individual artworks. Conceived as a series of acts, they feature Noh masks with related Ukiyo-e prints; drawings for costume design and set designs by Jun Kaneko for Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* (Opera Omaha); a kimono for *M. Butterfly* (TheatreWorks); contemporary box constructions evoking stage sets by Rick Araluce; Indonesian shadow and French paper puppets; and a display of contemporary puppetry by Basil Twist, Timothy Cummings and Sandow Birk.

A public opening reception for the two exhibits will be held at PAAC the afternoon of January 28, 2007 from 2:30-4:00 p.m. Admission is free. An associated lecture, **"A Conversation with Masami Teraoka and Alison Bing,"** will also be held in the PAAC auditorium on January 28, 2007 from 1:30-2:30 p.m. Advance reservations are recommended. Contact 650.329.2366 for more information. Other associated programming includes free docent-led tours, "Art Dialogues," that are offered every Saturday during the exhibitions at 2:00 p.m. A series of three exhibit-related "Community Sundays" are also planned during the course of the Winter/Spring exhibitions and will include workshops and performances focusing on theater arts including masks, puppets and dance. These programs are appropriate for all ages. Admission is free. Contact 650.329.2366 for more information.

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Masami Teraoka, *L.A. Sushi Series/Tokyo Sushi Leftovers*, 1977, Watercolor on paper, 11.5 x 55.5", Private collection, Courtesy of Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco

"Correspondence: Masami Teraoka & Ukiyo-e"

The exhibition "Correspondence: Masami Teraoka and Ukiyo-e" features twenty watercolors and prints, 1977-2001, by the acclaimed painter and cultural critic, Masami Teraoka, in juxtaposition with fifteen woodblock prints by great Japanese masters, who inspired Teraoka. They include Katsushika Hokusai (1759-1849), Utagawa Kunisada (1786-1865), and Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839-1892).

Ukiyo-e, or 'pictures of the floating world,' celebrated buoyant pleasures in genre pictures of everyday life, landscape views, and erotica in Edo Period Japan. The main protagonists were beautiful courtesans and geisha, swashbuckling samurai, and dashing Kabuki actors. Teraoka noted a historic parallel in the hedonism and consumerism in Edo Japan and Los Angeles, where he received his MFA from Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles. In the 1970s, he peppered stylistic parodies of Ukiyo-e's vibrant dramas with Western Pop Art details for cultural critique. Identifying his own work as "Narrative Art Theatre," he provocatively cast his self-portraits and Western figures in the sensual flourish of tattoos and kimonos, while mimicking special surface effects from Ukiyo-e woodblocks in large-scale, virtuoso watercolors. He adopted the Ukiyo-e practice of calligraphy, as a device to insert hidden meaning, and staged his compelling pieces with motifs and symbols from Japanese legends, including blue ghosts and perilous demons. After a close friend's child received a transfusion contaminated with HIV in 1986, his work turned to Bosch-like allegories. With seductive beauty, Teraoka's work lures the viewer to contemplate contemporary issues, including environmental pollution, cultures in collision, international tourism and terrorism, and AIDS.

Born in 1936 in Japan, Teraoka earned a BA in Aesthetics from Kwansei Gakuin University, Kobe, before attending the Otis Art Institute. His work has been featured in numerous one-person exhibitions, including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. It is featured in major museum collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The National Museum of American Art, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Jose Museum of Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Walker Art Center, and The Contemporary Museum in Honolulu.

The exhibition is presented in conjunction with the Chronicle Books publication of *Ascending Chaos: The Art of Masami Teraoka*, 1996-2006, and a concurrent exhibition of the artist's current work at the Catharine Clark Gallery in San Francisco.

"Actor! Actor!"

Celebrating the creative synergy of art and theatre, **"Actor! Actor!"** presents masks, puppetry, and innovative theatre design that contribute to the transcendent experience of performance. While they may embody a cultural practice or narrative, the pieces are arresting aesthetic works in their own right.

As Prologue to the exhibition, a shaman's coat from the Wao ethnic minority in China speaks to the magical roots of theatre and as specific origin for a 19th c. Chinese Opera coat. In Act I, rare artifacts from two refined court traditions contrast with an in-depth investigation of Javanese Court dance masks, along with Noh masks and related Ukiyo-e prints. Historic British theatre scenes in print grace Act II. Staged on paper, the subject for Act III, presents Theatre



Jun Kaneko, Untitled, Mixed media on digital print, 20 x 22.5"; Courtesy of the Artist

Epinal paper puppets and German toy theatre sheets, predecessors to the paper sets selected from the contemporary film *Dante's Inferno* by Sandow Birk. Act IV focuses on the third-generation puppeteer Basil Twist, who expanded Japanese traditions in puppetry and set design, as seen in examples from the productions *Dogugaeshi* and *Long Christmas Ride Home* (The MagicTheatre, San Francisco) with its Bunraku puppets. In Act V, the iconic and ill-fated *Marie Antoinette* by Timothy Cummings is au courant, as an 8-foot puppet with dangling subjects beneath her satin skirts. Continuity and change mark Act VI with the stunning costume and stage set designs for *Madama Butterfly* (Opera Omaha) by noted ceramic sculptor Jun Kaneko, along with a

masterwork in embroidery in the *M. Butterfly* kimono by Fumiko Bielefeldt (TheatreWorks). The exhibition closes in Soliloquy with miniature, contemporary set-like box constructions from the series *Slow Turning of the Night* by Rick Araluce.

"Actor! Actor!" is sponsored in part by Shari Ornstein/Alain Pinel, Borel Private Bank & Trust Company, and Cornish & Carey Commercial.

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The Palo Alto Art Center (founded 1971) is a nationally acclaimed, regional visual art center whose exhibition program focuses on documenting - and celebrating - the art and artists of the San Francisco Bay Area. The Center's mission is to foster creative process and thought by forging a greater appreciation and understanding of the visual arts through exhibitions, studio experiences, and related educational programs. The Palo Alto Art Center, Division of Arts and Culture, City of Palo Alto, is funded in part by support from the Palo Alto Art Center Foundation and the Arts Council Silicon Valley, in partnership with the County of Santa Clara and the California Arts Council. The Center is open to the public without charge from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday; 1:00-5:00 p.m. Sunday; and 7:00-10:00 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday. The Center is located at 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303. For further information: Phone: 650.329.2366 / Email: artcenter@cityofpaloalto.org / Website: www.cityofpaloalto.org.