



## *At the California Center for the Arts, Escondido Museum*

ESCONDIDO, Calif. (Feb. 5, 2007) - The California Center for the Arts, Escondido Museum presents *Innocence is Questionable*, the newest exhibition on view from March 1 through May 31, 2008. *Innocence is Questionable* is comprised of work by six renowned San Diego based artists: Jean Lowe, Ernest Silva, Raul Guerrero, Iana Quesnell, May-ling Martinez, and Yvonne Venegas. Each artist is the recipient of the [2006/2007 San Diego Art Prize](#), a prestigious award given to both established and emerging local artists. The San Diego Art Prize which is sponsored by the [San Diego Visual Arts Network](#) and presented in connection with [SanDiegoArtist.com](#) recognizes the outstanding achievements of local artists and honors artistic expression. The recipients win a cash prize as well as the opportunity to exhibit their work. Recognizing the profound success of each artist and their connection with the art of this region, the Center Museum staff has chosen to curate this exhibition featuring the work of these six artists.

Jean Lowe, a California native and 1988 MFA graduate of the University of California, San Diego, is one of the university's most prominent lecturers. Her work has been included in more than fifty exhibitions both nationally and internationally. Lowe has created a series of four large-scale interior landscape paintings depicting familiar settings, such as retail spaces and entertainment venues, where the contemporary public spends so much of its time. These spaces, devoid of the people that are meant to inhabit them, force the viewer to confront retail consumerism and the collective devaluation of the natural world caused by consumer greed.

Ernest Silva, painter and sculptor, has been a professor of Visual Arts at the University of California, San Diego since 1979. He has been in over 45 solo exhibitions featured in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Diego and Europe, as well as numerous group shows. In his work, Silva charts the relationship between figures and the landscape, expressing humankind's eternal longings and fears. After 9/11, Silva found comfort in what he calls "an antiseptic but familiar past." As a result he fills his artwork with images from storybooks of the 1940s and 1950s.

Raul Guerrero has been an important presence in the Southern California art scene, particularly in the San Diego/Tijuana region, for more than twenty years. Guerrero focuses on familiar cultural clashes that continue to shape history. Guerrero states: "For about ten years I have

examined the history of Latin America, European America, and the way in which these histories converge in Southern California in contemporary time." He has been a lecturer for the Department of Visual Arts at the University of California, San Diego for the last nine years where he teaches oil painting and drawing.

Iana Quesnell brings rigorous discipline and attention to detail in her work, a result of her training in the US Army as a systems analyst. She is currently a full time graduate student in the Visual Arts Department at UCSD. Her work has been part of sight specific installations in Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco. For Quesnell, everything we do is scripted by where we live, work, and play. Questions of ownership and occupancy are an underlying inspiration for her recent work. With exquisite draftsmanship, her large-scale pencil drawings map her physical spaces, such as her studio, or elements of her space such as a love seat.

May-ling Martinez was born and raised in Puerto Rico but now calls San Diego home. She is a recent MFA graduate from San Diego State University after earning her BA in communications and visual arts in Puerto Rico. With the belief that we inherit certain ideals and perceptions from our parents, Martinez includes relics of mid-century, middle-class suburban America such as cake toppers, plastic figurines, and chair legs in her mixed-media installations, sculptures, and collages.

Yvonne Venegas grew up in Tijuana, Mexico and studied in both San Diego and Mexico City before moving to New York to study at the International Center of Photography. Her work looks beyond her own space, using color photography to document issues of class in Tijuana, revealing the universal complexities of an upper class lifestyle. Alternating between a public and a private space, Venegas' large format photographs explore what lies beneath the polished exterior of upper class society. Venegas is currently a graduate student at University of California, San Diego.

In conjunction with *Innocence is Questionable*, the Center Museum will offer a series of gallery talks led by the participating artists as well as after-hours events to create a unique social experience. In addition, the [San Diego Visual Arts Network](#), in partnership with the Center Museum, will host a **Performance Slam**. This multi-genre invitational will showcase the creations of eight artists or groups whose performances will comment on, critique, glorify or shed light on the visual art work featured in *Innocence is Questionable*. The audience will be asked to select the winner, who will receive a \$100 cash prize. The **Vision to Page** art writing competition is sponsored by the North County Times who will supply judges and publish the winning entries from a student and young/adult writer about this exhibition. Entries are accepted online from March 1 to March 28. San Diego Visual Arts Network is awarding \$400 in cash prizes and two internships as well as the possibility of an online by line.

**Calendar:**

Fall Exhibitions: March 1 - May, 31, 2008  
The California Center for the Arts, Escondido Museum  
340 North Escondido Blvd.  
For information: 760.839.4120  
[www.artcenter.org](http://www.artcenter.org)

**Museum & Museum Store Hours:**

Tuesday - Saturday: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Sunday: 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.  
Closed Mondays

**Admission:**

Adults - \$5  
Seniors - \$4  
Students with ID - \$3  
Children under 12 & Center Members - Free

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**About California Center for the Arts, Escondido Museum:**

The Center Museum, widely recognized as one of San Diego County's premier visual arts venues, features three galleries, a sculpture court, secure collections storage and receiving areas, administrative offices, and a Museum Store. The Museum's indoor exhibition space totals 9,000 square feet. Each gallery has varying ceiling configurations and heights ranging from 19 to 35 feet, skylights with controlled access for natural light, and 24-hour computerized environmental and security controls. The Center also houses a permanent collection of modern and contemporary art, studios for visual art education programs, a Museum volunteer meeting room, and an exhibitions preparation area.

It is the goal of the Center Museum to expand the public's understanding of the importance, depth, and breadth of the visual arts in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Focusing on the art of this region, coupled with internationally and nationally known artists and traveling exhibitions, the Museum aims to integrate the visual arts into our daily lives through public programs, exhibitions, and educational outreach. The California Center for the Arts, Escondido Museum offers a unique and accessible experience to all within its reach, but especially to the residents of San Diego North.

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***Note to Editors:***  
*High resolution photography & artist interviews are available upon request.*