



# News Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **SUMMER EXHIBITIONS EXPLORE INTERSECTION OF TECHNOLOGY AND TEXTILE ART AT MUSEUM OF QUILTS & TEXTILES**

SAN JOSE, Calif., May 26, 2006 – The San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles will present three one-person shows exploring the relationship between textile art and technology from July 18 to October 1, 2006. *Art About Art: Weavings from Virginia Davis* spans 25 years of work by the Berkeley-based artist and textile scholar; *Katherine Westerhout: After/Image* features large-scale tapestries from the work of this award-winning photographer; and *Insecurity: An Installation by Julie John Upshaw* offers a searing commentary on privacy in the digital age. An opening reception with the artists is scheduled for Sunday, July 23 from 2:00-4:00pm. The reception is open to the public and free with admission.

The exhibitions coincide with the ZeroOne San Jose Festival, a multi-dimensional event celebrating the intersection of art and digital culture with exhibits, performances, workshops, and youth activities August 7-13 in downtown San Jose. Held in conjunction with the International Symposium of Electronic Art, the festival provides an opportunity for participants to explore the connections between artistic expression and technological advancements.

“Tightly woven into the story of humanity is the history of textiles. Weaving is thought to be one of the more important urbanizing influences on human society, and was one of the first arts to be mechanized,” said Robin Treen, chief curator for the museum. “The invention of the Jacquard loom in 1804, a mechanized loom that ran on an early form of punch cards, sparked the industrial revolution and inspired the design of Charles Babbage’s first computing device.”

*Art About Art* showcases the elegantly modernist work of Virginia Davis. “The weavings of Virginia Davis are imbued with the ancient history of weaving, while drawing on contemporary thought and modern aesthetics for content,” said Treen. “Her work is visually intriguing and intellectually challenging.”

Davis often employs an ikat weaving technique which involves painting or dyeing linen threads prior to weaving them into a linen canvas. She creates evocative abstract landscapes and stunning optical illusions, and draws attention to the sculptural dimension of weave structures. The collection of approximately 20 pieces is drawn primarily from the artist’s private holdings.

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*Katherine Westerhout: After/Image* focuses on the translation of art from one medium to another, in this case photographs taken by award-winning photographer Katherine Westerhout of empty urban spaces in the greater Bay Area. Translated into large-scale tapestries by a unique process developed by Magnolia Editions, Oakland, Calif., these images become an invitation to physically and emotionally enter these empty contemplative spaces that speak to the rise and fall of global economies and civilizations. “Rich with shadows, reflected light and ambiguous horizon lines, the scale and physicality threatens to envelop the viewer in a world only marginally tethered to the temporal realm,” said Treen.

Magnolia’s custom software makes it possible to translate artwork in any medium into large-scale tapestries woven at incredibly high speeds on industrial Jacquard looms at a small, family owned mill in Belgium.

Compelling and disturbing, Upshaw’s installation, *Insecurity*, addresses issues of privacy raised by new technologies that can be menacingly invasive and voyeuristic. This work will transform a Museum gallery into a fitting room with changing booths, a clothing rack of hospital gowns, a metal detector, and peopled with sheer organza figures. “The installation is informed by the ideas of surveillance and detection of concealed information related to the human body,” said Treen. “Burdened with the invasion of personal privacy, technology plays a dual role as it proliferates in our culture: that of mysterious voyeur and that of a tool to serve the greater good.” Upshaw has stitched numerous award-winning art quilts with challenging and at times disturbing content.

Founded in 1977, the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles is the oldest museum of its kind in the United States and in 2005 became one of the top 10 attractions in San Jose. Museum and Museum Store hours are: 10:00am-5:00pm Tuesday through Sunday; open until 8:00pm Thursdays; closed Mondays and major holidays. Admission is \$5 general; \$4 students and seniors; and free to museum members and children under 13. Admission is free on the first Thursday of each month. The San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles is located at 520 South First Street in downtown San Jose. For more information, call 408-971-0323 or visit [www.sjqquiltmuseum.org](http://www.sjqquiltmuseum.org).

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This exhibition and associated programming is supported, in part, by "Advancing the Arts Initiative," an initiative of Community Foundation Silicon Valley, funded by the James Irvine Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation; by a grant from Arts Council Silicon Valley, in partnership with the County of Santa Clara and the California Arts Council; the City of San Jose; the David and Lucile Packard Foundation; and the Santa Clara Valley Quilt Association.