

## Harmony Susalla Introduces a New Line of Fabrics at the de Young Museum in March

It seems that the de Young Museum, in addition to its magnificent overhaul, has discovered some of the wealth of talent in Gualala! On Sunday, March 18 at 10 a.m. Harmony Susalla will give a lecture there on “The Organic (R)Evolution: Inspiring Environmental and Social Change Through Creative, Sustainable Fabrics.”

Local residents may already be familiar with her new line of printed fabrics, “Season One,” which was launched last autumn. In 1998, Harmony, along with husband David “Sus,” founded Harmony Art which had created designs and products for Nordstrom, Karen Neuburger, Williams-Sonoma, Fieldcrest, and many other less well-known clients. However, in 2004, Harmony walked away from her successful career after realizing she needed to be contributing more toward the goal of creating a new standard of more socially, and environmentally, responsible fabrics.

“It’s the right time for a new paradigm in how we relate to the fabrics in our lives. The textile industry affects everyone, everywhere.” She also notes, “It has also been one of the world’s largest polluters. Less than 3% of earth’s arable land



is dedicated to cotton cultivation, yet it accounts for nearly 25% of all insecticide usage. According to the World Health Organization, twenty thousand people die each year in developing countries as a result of the chemicals sprayed on cotton.”

A woman of her word and convictions, Harmony searched for mills producing cloth from only organically grown cotton and manufacturers of fabric dyes made from non-polluting ingredients, and finally found one in South Carolina. Harmony and Sus journeyed there to see the miracle of yards of fabric rolling off the presses in Harmony’s own designs. The inspiration for her patterns

is easy to recognize as being the result of her life and appreciation of the world of beauty on the coastline of Northern California. The drawings for “Whispering Grass” were done with models from her own backyard. The colors are as gentle and friendly as Harmony, herself, is.

Harmony explains however, “The organic shift in fiber production is critical to our collective health. But this line isn’t about guilt; it’s about gorgeous.”

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## Report on the North Coast Artists Guild Questionnaire Bruce Jones

Iris Lorenz-Fife, Barbara Kelley and I went over the thirty responses we got from members, with the following results and conclusions. Eighty-three percent participated in one or more of the previous Wet Paint shows, 60% in both shows, only 17% were in neither show. Seventy-seven percent think they would probably participate in the next show, plus another 10% if the juror was credible in their medium. **This was enough for us to conclude that there is a demand to run the show again.**

Eighty percent are interested in participating in juried shows in general **so most of us want to show our work in juried shows even if all of us didn’t particularly revere the average juror’s judgment.** Twenty-seven percent would be interested in participating in a “day of reception juror feedback session” for another \$10 fee (or so), which would increase to about 37% if they felt the juror was credible. **We’d like to try this kind of a session** because all three of us want the feedback.

Forty percent said that having a gallery owner as a juror would be a good thing, 27% said it would not, and the other 33% had mixed feelings. When we probed on this with a few of our friends, most concluded that **if we had three jurors, with one gallery owner would probably be a good idea.** Several people discussed the tradeoff: gallery owners tend toward safe art that sells, academics tend toward innovative art that is interesting but doesn’t sell well – and most of us want both. We thought juror qualifications should go something like this: Get three jurors. One of the jurors should be a 3-D specialist. One should be a gallery owner or director of a gallery, but not a local one, with diverse media and a good reputation. The third should be a 2-D specialist with good media scope. At least two should have teaching background, which indicates that they can verbalize what they are looking for and how they made decisions. All must say they are willing to provide feedback.

Regarding the number of partitions, it was decided that **we should let the jurors jury and if they started having to reject too much good art, put in a partition or two without blocking sight lines and making it look like a maze.**

We got a couple of “yes” responses to the “Would you like to be a curator of the next Wet Paint show” and since Iris and Barbara would both like to help but not curate in 2006, we will take them up on it. Russ Hardy and Bill Apton will be in charge this year. So the ways they would like to change the show will need to be factored into the new guidelines.

A couple of other changes would be to have bigger labels, probably 2”x 4”, and when we ask the jurors to submit one piece each of their own art we should indicate that on the label. There were some misunderstandings about this in the last show, especially after one of the juror’s pieces sold.

We received a suggestion that we ask local businesses to provide prize money in return for a mention in the program and at the reception. This would enable more prize money without asking the artists for large entry fees or putting the show in a financial bind – probably a good idea. It would also be good to ask local people to agree to house the jurors rather than having to pay for their residences here.