

"Snake Path" artist Alexis Smith to speak at UCSD on December 9 in Mandeville Recital Hall

December 1, 1992

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"SNAKE PATH" ARTIST ALEXIS SMITH TO SPEAK AT UCSD

Alexis Smith, the creator of the 560-foot "Snake Path," the newest work to be completed for the internationally acclaimed Stuart Collection at the University of California, San Diego, will speak about her work, at 5:30 p.m. Dec. 9, in the UCSD Mandeville Recital Hall. This lecture is free and open to the public.

Smith will present slides of her work and answer questions from the audience. There will be a reception after the lecture to meet the artist, in the East Room of Mandeville Auditorium. The public is invited to attend.

"Snake Path" is a 560-foot, multi-toned, slightly crowned pathway in the shape of a snake, located on a hillside between the UCSD Engineering Building and the Central Library. As the body of the snake winds its way up the hillside leading to the library tower, its tail wraps around an existing concrete path at the west end of the UCSD Engineering Building Mall. Near the library terrace, halfway up the hill, the snake coils around itself, forming a small "garden of Eden," in which fig, date, pomegranate and orange trees are planted, among other flowers and plants. On the terrace at the top of the hill, the head of the snake points toward the entrance of the library, granite tongue extended.

Below, near the tail, a seven-foot-high granite book of Milton's "Paradise Lost," stands on end. The cover offers the engraved quote, "Then wilt thou not/Be loth to leave/This Paradise/But shalt possess/A Paradise within/Thee, happier far." The actual call numbers of the book are engraved on the spine.

The paradise theme, prevalent in Smith's "Snake Path," was prevalent in several of the works exhibited in her mid-career retrospective, seen last year at the Whitney Museum of American Art and at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. In April, Smith was featured on CBS' "Sunday Morning." Smith, who has been involved in the process of creating public art for the past 10 years, lives and works in Los Angeles. She is currently involved with several projects, including a large-scaled piece for the south lobby of the new Los Angeles Convention Center.

The Stuart Collection, which began on the UCSD campus in 1981, is directed by Mary Livingstone Beebe. It features works by Niki de Saint Phalle, Robert Irwin, Richard Fleischner, Terry Allen, Nam June Paik, William Wegman, Ian Hamilton Finlay, Bruce Nauman, Jackie Ferrara and Michael Asher.

For information call the Stuart Collection Office at 534- 2117.

(December 1, 1992)