Siah Armajani gives art presentation

October 1, 1984

Artist Siah Armajani will give a talk with slides about his work at 2 p.m. Friday, October 5, in the North Conference Room of the Student Center at the University of California, San Diego. The presentation is part of the UCSD Department of Visual Arts Visitor's Program and is made possible through the cooperation of the Stuart Collection.

Armajani's sculptures, or structures, such as "Reading House," "Meeting Garden," "Newsstand" and "Poetry Lounge," employ elements of architecture and furniture to create settings that relate to everyday, common human activities. His intention is "to build open, available, useful, common, public gathering places" that are activated through the participation of the public.

Armajani's structures are constructed in a direct and obvious manner; their simplicity is reminiscent of the pragmatism of early American folk architecture. Lettered quotations appear as embellishments to the architecture, the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Thomas Paine, Herman Melville and others acting as referents for the viewer, connecting them to the concerns of the artwork and the more generalized commonality of American culture. Thus, Armajani strives for a fusion between the structural and ideological elements addressed in his work.

In his own words, Siah Armajani believes a work of art "should be grounded in the structure of its political, social and economic context because that context gives a work of art its meaning."

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