

"Toys Collected by Jeff Raskin" displayed at UCSD Gallery

November 10, 1969

A collection of hundreds of toys, brought together by artist Jeffrey Raskin and shown by him as a work of art, will go on display Tuesday, November 18, in the University of California, San Diego Art Gallery.

The collection, titled "Toys Collected by Jeff Raskin," will be on display through Christmas. It will feature what is probably the longest "N" gauge railroad layout and the longest slot car racing track in San Diego County. UCSD gallery hours are 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday, and 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. Wednesday evenings. The show is open free to the public.

Raskin has personally collected the kinds of toys that "I would like to play with myself." He calls it a collaboration between himself and the toy manufacturers in which he modifies the toys the way he would if they were his.

The show is not a play show. The toys will be isolated and displayed individually.

Raskin said he is displaying the toys in such a way as to bring out the intrinsic values in each that he likes.

"Some toys and models represent very different aspects of the real objects they model," he said. "Some are aimed at the physical appearance and feature a complexity of detail. Others are aimed at the material finish or luster. Still others are aimed at function, such as a model airplane which may be a good flyer but not very accurate as to detail."

Some are interesting, Raskin said, because they are peculiar in what they represent pictorially. Some car models have the image of the engine or the driver simply printed on the outside. There are several cars which have a frontal image of the driver printed on the windshield, and his side view on the windows.

"I might display some car models up-side-down because of the interesting engine or drive detail printed on the bottom," he said.

"These are all current, commercial toys, not stuff that was designed as an art toy," Raskin said. "However, putting a toy in an art gallery changes it."

The toys in the show will be rotated during the run giving the collection a constantly changing appearance. They have been collected from Eldon Industries, Inc.; Revell, Inc.; and Mattel Corporation, all toy manufacturers, and from Toy-Co in San Diego and Susan's Toy and Hobby Center in La Jolla.

"I play with toys a lot and I get ribbed a lot," Raskin said. "Here, I am going to show what I see in them once I get past its being a toy."

Raskin came to UCSD in 1967 to develop electronic musical instruments for the Department of Music. He later enrolled as a graduate student in music and is currently an instructor in the Department of Visual Arts. He holds a B.A. degree in philosophy from the University of New York at Stony Brook and a master's degree in computer

science from Pennsylvania State University. He served as an instructor in electronic and computer music at Penn State and designed and built an electronic music studio for the University before coming to UCSD.

While at Stony Brook Raskin studied the history of art with Allan Kaprow. One of his art works was selected for "The Machine As Seen At the End of the Mechanical Age," a show organized by G. P. Hulten for the New York Museum of Modern Art last year. Raskin has also had his work displayed in the Brooklyn Museum and is currently one of 28 artists working on exhibits for the Art and Technology show which is scheduled in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art next year.

Last year he designed and built a series of mazes from cardboard boxes for display in the UCSD gallery. The exhibit was one of the most popular ever to be held on the campus.