

## UCSD's University Art Gallery to show "John Ahearn: A Decade of Figurative Sculpture"

January 5, 1995

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UCSD'S UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY TO SHOW

"JOHN AHEARN: A DECADE OF FIGURATIVE SCULPTURE"

John Ahearn is an artist who lives and works in the South Bronx. In the late 1970s he began to make body casts of the men, women, and children who live in his neighborhood, in postures that reflected their actual lives and activities. The casting process was done on the sidewalk, and would draw a crowd of onlookers. It was reportedly considered to be a badge of honor to withstand the discomfort or fear of being encased in a swathe of plaster bandages with nothing but straws up the nostrils to breathe through.

Fourteen of Ahearn's fiberglass sculptures, made from life forms, will be shown from Jan. 14 through Feb. 26, in a show titled "John Ahearn: A Decade of Figurative Sculpture," in the University Art Gallery, at the University of California, San Diego. The works in this exhibition are selected from the Los Angeles collections of the Eli Broad Family Foundation and the Lannan Foundation.

An opening reception will take place from 5-7 p.m., Friday, Jan. 13, at the gallery. The public is invited.

Ahearn's show will include five works from the "Back to School" series, which depict young people from the neighborhood carrying books to school, walking with adults, and bike riding. Some of the figures to be exhibited are "Titi in Window" (1985, "Back to School" series); "Maggie and Connie" (1985, "Back to School" series); "Maria" (1981); "Clyde" (Blue Version, 1981); "Pedro with Tire" (1982-83, "Life on Dawson Street" series); "Thomas" (1983, "Life on Dawson Street" series); and "Samson" (1990).

Many of Ahearn's life casts are included under the umbrella title of "South Bronx Hall of Fame." These works were exhibited at the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, Texas, and then traveled to Witte de With, Rotterdam. They also have been exhibited at the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati; the Contemporary Museum, Honolulu; and the Brooke Alexander Gallery, Soho, New York City.

Admission is free at the UCSD University Art Gallery. Exhibition hours are Tuesday through Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. Parking permits may be purchased at the information pavilions on Gilman Drive and Northview Drive. For additional information call 534-2864.

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