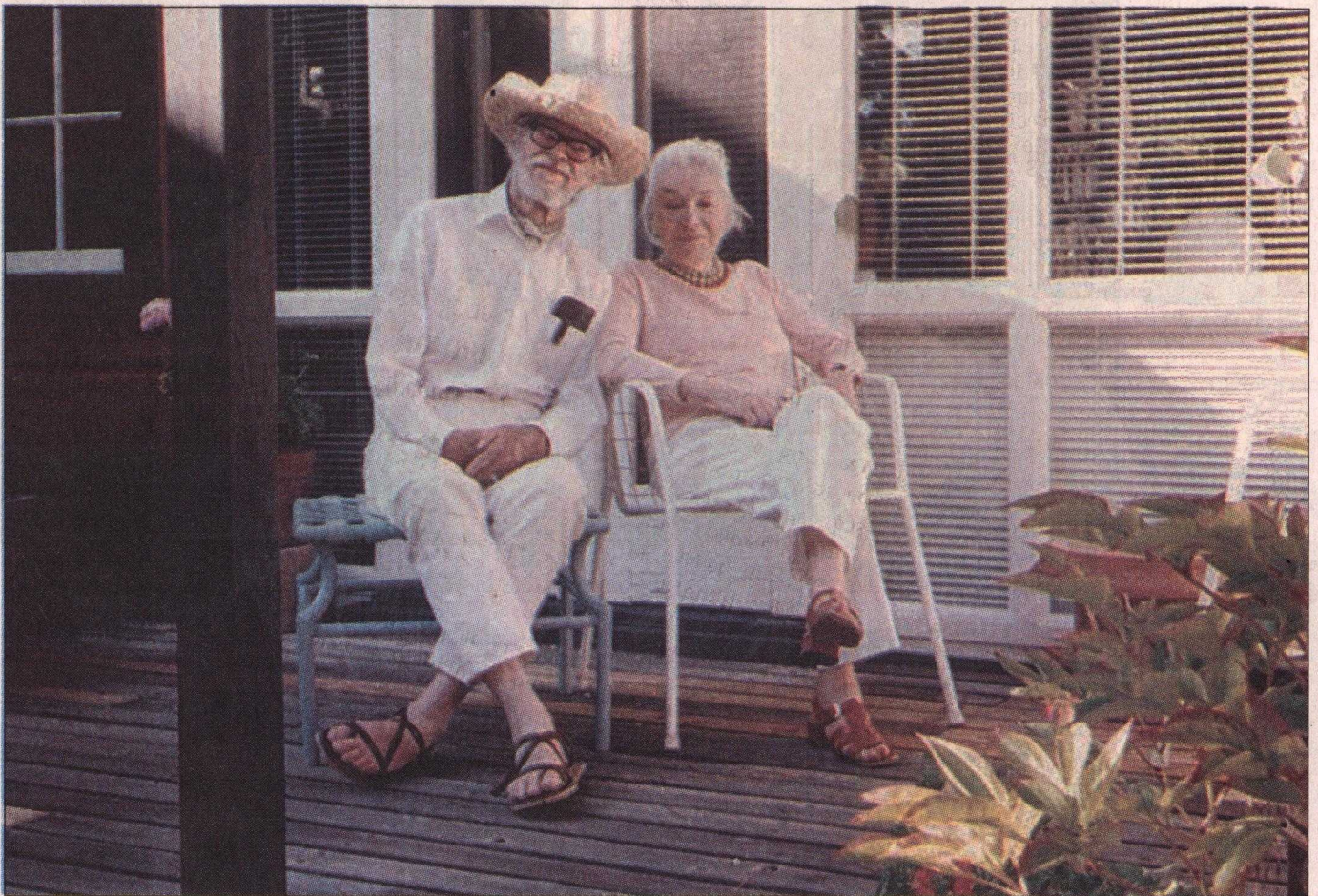


# SANTA CRUZ STY

SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL

SUNDAY, MARCH 26, 2006



Contributed photo

The late Roy and Frances Rydell donated their entire estate to the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County.

Art & Artists 2000

## The Legacy

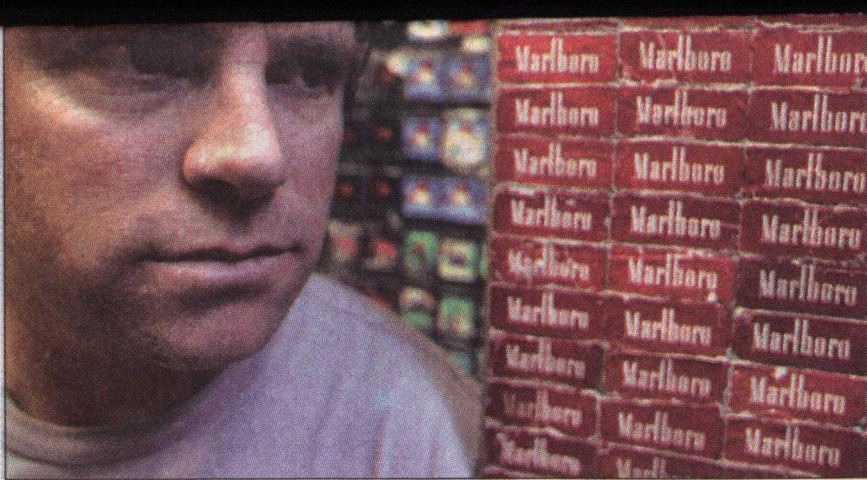
3.26.06  
The late Roy and Frances Rydell gave their worldly goods in support of Santa Cruz's working artists

By WALLACE BAINE

Sentinel staff writer







Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel

Rob Larson's 'Evidence' works will be part of a future display by area artists.

## Robert LARSON

Rob Larson's Santa Cruz studio is full of garbage, but it's the most cleanly separated garbage you'll ever see. Larson has collected enormous bags full of gum wrappers, juice bottles, matchbooks and cigarette packs, especially cigarette packs.

Larson works with all these materials, but he's become particularly seduced by the iconic red Marlboro cigarette pack. From those packs and

wrappers, all of which he's picked up from the ground during various jaunts in Santa Cruz and Oakland, he creates vivid and vibrant abstractions, reminiscent of Warhol's famous Campbell soup cans, but infused with the imagery of Marlboro Country.

"This is not meant as some kind of anti-smoking statement," said Larson, who doesn't smoke. "It's really just my investigation on the residue on the sur-

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Dan Coyro/Sentinel

Artist Will Marino has won the Rydell award for his recent works assembled from dartboard paper.

## William MARINO

Will Marino will occasionally come home to find a dartboard on his front porch. He's already got several of the things, the old-fashioned kind with the baseball game on the flip side. That's fine with him, because for more than a decade now, Marino has used the dartboards for a thoroughly beguiling medium to his art.

Marino has long used found-object household items in his work as an assemblage artist, refashioning things such as brooms, brushes, skateboards and baseball bats into delightful abstract sculptures that crowd the walls and corners of his Westside home. In the early 1990s, however, he serendipitously discovered the medium that led to the

See **MARINO** on **PAGE B2**

They still talk about the parties, up at the Rydells' beautiful Bonny Doon home, a renovated 19th-century schoolhouse stuffed with artworks from around the world. They still talk about Roy — genteel, kind, intellectually voracious — and Frances — feisty, vivacious, sharply opinionated — and how they loved to host friends, artists and fellow bohemians for wide-ranging and free-wheeling discussions about art, travel, politics.

They still talk about Roy and Frances Rydell in Santa Cruz long after both have passed away, because even in death, the Rydells are influencing and inspiring the creative life in Santa Cruz County. In fact, the Rydells, through their posthumous generosity, are a vital part of the Santa Cruz arts community's future.

After Roy Rydell died in 2000 — two years after the death of Frances, his wife of 55 years — the Rydells' home and estate, according to their wishes, was given in entirety to the Community Foundation of Santa

See **RYDELL** on **PAGE B2**

## The Rydell Artists' Work

Hanna Hannah — Hannah's work will be part of 'Faculty Works: 2006' at the Mary Porter Sesnon Gallery on the campus of UC Santa Cruz. The exhibit opens April 5. Hannah is expected to be part of a Faculty Lecture Series on April 19 at 5 p.m.

William Marino — Marino's work will be part of the 'The Fine Art of Textiles' at the Pajaro Valley Gallery, 37 Sudden St., Watsonville. The exhibit is ongoing through May 21.



## RYDELL AWARDS

## HannaHANNAH

Born and reared in Central America and having lived in various corners of the world, Hanna Hannah has seen much. But her art is inspired by the visions of other people, namely press photographers.

Hannah's inspiration are the kind of newspaper photos that most of us take for granted. Hannah uses the imagery of news photos usually taken in combat or war situations and re-creates them on rice-paper scrolls, an effect that gives new resonance to images that are often merely glanced at as part of the media maelstrom.

"It's not like she's romanticizing war," said Shelby Graham, curator at the Sesnon Gallery at UC Santa Cruz who brought in Hannah's work as part of the 2003 "Collapsing History" exhibit. "It's the opposite of that, really. These photos in the newspaper are like wallpaper. They're part of our everyday experience.

But she's forcing us to really look at these images in a way we don't when we see them in the newspaper. She looks at stuff we don't."

Hannah, a lecturer in the art department at UCSC, is sensitive to the accusation that she is exploiting war. She admits to seeing a kind of terrible beauty in images of carnage and ruin from places like Palestine, Kosovo and Grozny in the Russian province of Chechnya.

"I've been working with images from the newspaper that I find arresting and that trigger a live emotion in me," she said. "And they are images that are beautiful in a traditional sense. Grozny reminded me of a 18th-century landscape with ruins. Now, I'm sitting here in my comfortable place, allowing myself to see it as beautiful. But I think we're hard-wired, that it's part of our survival equipment as a whole human being, that in the most extreme, dire situation, you can find something beautiful."



Dan Coyro/Sentinel

Rydell award winner Beverly Rayner with her mixed media of photos and metal.

## BeverlyRAYNER

Mixed-media artist Beverly Rayner uses photographs as the basis of her work. But the photographs serve a distinct thematic purpose. They could be anything from old snapshots to discarded X-rays, but Rayner is fascinated with using photography as a way to illustrate themes of memory, perception and cognition.

Rayner's artistic appetite has a wide range, but to take a representative example of her work, she has set photographs into blocks of amber bee's wax to suggest the indistinct haziness of memory. In another work, she mounts old letters in translucent envelopes to evoke

the emotions of "Letters Never Sent" as she calls the piece. She uses everything from old cigar molds to discarded gas-mask lenses to explore her abiding interests in perception, memory and neuroscience.

Rayner was a traditional ceramics artists until a fateful trip to Europe 20 years ago with friends. "When we came back, we all had a totally different memory of what had happened. So that started me on that whole question of what is memory."

Other instances of her work included the image of a body made up entirely of discarded X-rays — "It's about putting yourself together after a trauma. When you go through a trauma, you feel like that, like the whole world can

see right through you" — and several projects using photographs and letters she found at flea markets, as way to comment on the cultural amnesia of such artifacts divorced from their personal meanings.

"I've known Bev's work for a long time," said Karen Kienzle, curator at the de Saisset Museum at Santa Clara University. "With her work, there's this epiphany that happens. An artist uses mundane materials and turns them into something with whole new meanings. It's wonderful and magical."

"I'm always interested," said Rayner, "in how we try to control our humanity, our destiny and our biology through science. And, on that subject, I never get bored."



Dan Coyro/Sentinel

Marino's studio is a sea of unraveled dartboards.

## Marino

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Rydell fellowship.

He was throwing darts with some friends one day, when he noticed that the red bull's-eye had worn out. When he took it out, he found that it and the dartboard from which it came were made of tightly wound cardboard loops. Soon, Marino was unraveling dartboards and working with the loops, finding them an ideal medium for curvy, Dr. Seuss-like sculptures as well as reconfigured abstract imagery.

"Once I saw what I could do with this stuff, I was amazed," he said. "So I starting thinking, 'Hey, how

"His work is really exemplary, aside from the medium," said Chip, co-director of the Santa Cruz Institute of Contemporary Art of Marino. Chip has worked with Marino at a mixed-media show a few years ago and found his work entrancing.

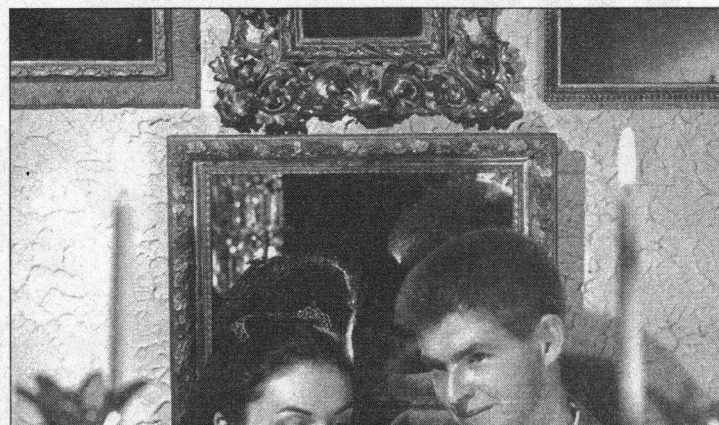
"He makes these incredible cone-like sculptures from the dartboard material," said Chip. "And, I thought they had a very Andy Goldsworthy feel to them. It was beautiful, imaginative, exciting work."

Other than the cone sculptures, Marino also refashions and rewraps the loops to make abstract images, using needle-nose pliers and brute strength inside a strong, thick wooden frame, all held together with tension.

## Rydell

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Cruz County (the Rydells had no children). The Rydells had wanted to establish a fund to support Santa Cruz artists in perpetuity and this year, the Community Foundation delivered on the first of those awards. The newly minted Rydell Visual Arts Fellowship has rewarded four Santa Cruz visual artists with gifts of \$20,000 each for 2006 and '07.



people," said Mary Kate Lezin, a Rydell friend of long standing who remembers watching the Army/McCarthy hearings with the politically volatile Frances. "They were both just so full of life and curiosity. And their personalities really complemented each other."

The Rydells knew nothing, of course, about the work of the four recipients of the fellowship that bears their name. But those who knew the Rydells say that Roy and Frances would be pleased at the outcome of the fellowships.

The Community Foundation will use the \$2.4 million fund to



lar can I go with it? How much I can bend it, tweak it. How tall can I make it?"

"I'm sure the money will help him tremendously," said Chip. "But he'd keep doing it anyway."



Dan Coyro/Sentinel

Marino unravels dartboard paper and reassembles strands to make his pieces.

## Larson

Continued from Page B1

face of the urban landscape."

He is similarly interested in other cigarette brands, Camels and Kools. But, he said, "Marlboro stands out. There are visual reasons for that, but also Marlboro has a really strong cultural identity."

A big part of Larson's fascination with his Marlboro wrappers comes from the fact that they're trash. He is something of a student of what natural processes can do to the detritus of urban living such as cigarette wrappers, and uses the degradation of the paper in his art.

He often will use his mass-pro-

duced materials in uniform rows or patterns, that from a distance lose their familiar commercial recognizability. If his works make any "statement," it's less about smoking and more about the staggering production of trash that American culture produces.

"Smokers react most strongly," he said, "as do people who have had someone in their lives die from cancer, but for everyone there's associations with this stuff."

"He's taking trash," said Kathleen Moodie, formerly of the Museum of Art and History who was one of Larson's nominators for the Rydell award, "and made it into this monumental work. He's squeezed beauty out of something ugly."

It is really rare for a community to give this level of support to an artist," said Courtney Fink, the executive director of Southern Exposure in San Francisco, one of the panelists chosen to select the winning artists.

"The Rydells were interested in art is its broadest, grandest form," said the Community Foundation's Christina Cuevas, the director of the grant program. "And our mission was to honor their original vision."

The artists were chosen on the basis of blind judging; the panelists were not given the artists' names. The four winners, each nominated for the award by local arts professionals, were chosen among 50 applicants. The winners were announced at a lavish reception at the Museum of Art and History in January.

The artists, all Santa Cruzans — Robert Larson, Will Marino, Hanna Hannah and Beverly Rayner — do, however, have similar artistic orientations. Three of them can honestly be called found-object artists and the fourth can indirectly be called such. All of them take unconventional, even commonplace materials and recontextualize them in exciting,



Contributed photo

Frances and Roy Rydell created a supportive environment for artists. The fellowships will help continue that support.

mind-tingling ways.

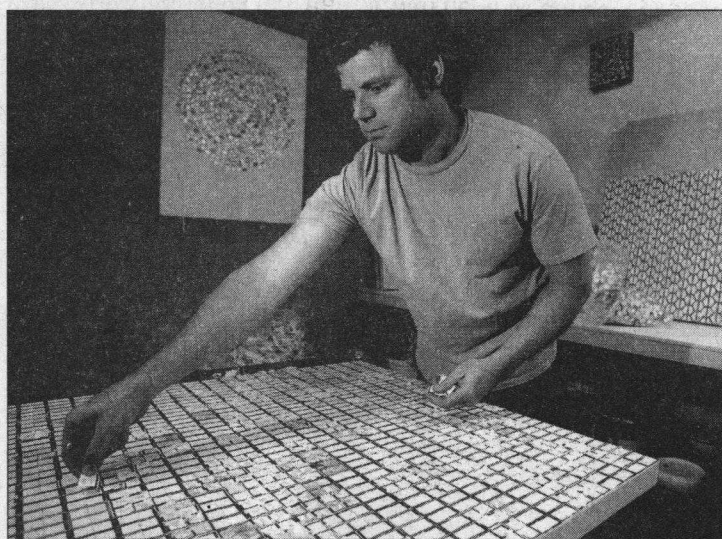
The Rydells were known for their broad support of artists of all kinds. Wide travelers, they brought home artifacts of many different styles and kinds. "Their tastes were maverick and eclectic," said longtime Rydell friend and artist Hardy Hanson.

Roy Rydell is one of the most important figures in recent Santa Cruz history. One of the designers of the original Pacific Garden Mall and a central force in the creation of the Museum of Art and History, Roy was an award-winning land-

scape architect whose primary artform was his gardens, most celebrated at the headquarters of Sunset magazine near Menlo Park and at Alfred Hitchcock's former estate in Scotts Valley.

He also served on several boards and committees, was an enthusiastic supporter of the Cabrillo Music Festival and engaged in painting and drawing as well. Frances was more behind-the-scenes, the more literary and politically oriented of the two, say those close to the couple.

"They were just wonderful




Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel

Rob Larson works on another project using found materials.

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support both artists and arts organization every year. The foundation will also work to help artists get exposure in art circles outside Santa Cruz County.

"They been excellent at fulfilling what Roy and Frances really wanted," said Earlene Overend, a friend of the Rydells.

Contact Wallace Baine at  
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