

EXHIBIT CHALLENGES STEREOTYPES

Cal State San Marcos art installation shows 'many layers' to California Indians

By [Pam Kragen](#) 12:01 a.m. Oct. 18, 2012 Updated 6:55 p.m. Oct. 17, 2012

Art exhibit at university challenges Indian stereotypes

North County's American Indian tribes are most associated these days with casinos, but a new art exhibit at Cal State San Marcos aims to show there's more to the local tribes than gambling and buffets.

"More than Casinos: California Indian Culture, Contributions and Communities" is on display through Dec. 14 in the Kellogg Library Gallery. The exhibit of paintings, basketry, historical photos, tribal artifacts and mixed-media works was created to broaden the public's awareness of local tribes, their cultural traditions and their art.

"This exhibit was born out of an idea to challenge misconceptions that many people have about today's California Indians," associate professor Joely Proudfit, who directs the university's California Indian Culture and Sovereignty Center, said in a statement. "Many people see us in relation to the casinos, but there is so much more. There are many layers to California Indians."

For example, Proudfit said, a recent survey conducted by her students showed that North County residents believe most local tribe members are wealthy because of the casinos, when in fact only a few local tribes benefit from casino operations.

The centerpiece of the exhibit is the 2009 installation "One Tract Mind" by Gerald Clarke. Filling a 10-foot square on the gallery's floor, it's a scale model of a new-home subdivision built on top of paintings that symbolize sacred Indian grounds.

A similar piece by Clarke, who is vice chairman of the Cahuilla Band of Mission Indians near Palm Springs, is "Perspective," a photograph of a sacred rock formation that's littered with car tires. The photo is partly obscured by an etched glass covering carved with Indian imagery.

Also represented by several works is artist Robert Freeman, a Luiseno/Hunkpapa Sioux artist who was born on the Rincon Indian Reservation and grew up in Escondido. Freeman's colorful, surrealistic takes on traditional subjects include the paintings "Guarding the Village," depicting a young woman in front of a tepee, and "Dolphin Stallion," a spiritually inspired seascape.

There are also carved and colorfully painted gourd rattles used by bird singers from the Ipay Kumeyaay nation; shiny sticks hand-carved by children on the Rincon Indian Reservation (shiny is a hockeylike game played on grass); a traditional willow skirt and quiver from the San Pasqual Culture Center; and handwoven baskets, jewelry and clothing. There's also a display of educational software, games and books that the Pechanga Band of Mission Indians is using to teach its children their native language.

The gallery is on the library's third floor and is open to the public from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays-Thursdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fridays and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Admission is free, but a parking fee is required on campus. Visit biblio.csusm.edu or call (760) 750-4348.

pam.kragen@utsandiego.com

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