



COLA Individual Master Artist Project 2024 (COLA IMAP)

Educator's Guide

**Los
Angeles
Municipal
Art
Gallery**

Dca

The Show

Founded in 1997, the City of Los Angeles Independent Master Artist Project (COLA IMAP) is an annual grant awarded by the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) to a selection of the City's most exemplary mid-career artists to support the creation of new works.

Artists are chosen by a peer review panel that includes curators, cultural workers, and past COLA IMAP grantees. COLA 2024, the COLA IMAP design and visual artists exhibition, honors the synergetic relationship between Los Angeles, its artists, its history, and its identity as an international arts capital.

COLA 2024 premieres a new body of work by five Los Angeles-based artists, featuring dynamic installations of ceramic, sculpture, photography, video, painting, and drawing. This year's recipients of the COLA IMAP grants in design and visual arts are Jane Brucker, Mariah Garnett, Janna Ireland, Debra Scacco, and Bari Ziperstein.

The 2023/24 COLA IMAP catalog is designed by former COLA IMAP fellow Michael Worthington and features the selected artists, the history of their exhibited works, and artists' statements written by commissioned writers/essayists who capture the breadth of the artists' practice.

The Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery is a facility of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs.

It is important that the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery prioritize respect for both the historic culture and the contemporary presence of indigenous peoples throughout California, and especially in the Los Angeles area. To that end, and particularly as a public and civic institution, we acknowledge that our gallery resides on what was historically the homeland of Kizh, Tongva, and Chumash peoples who were dispossessed of their land.

If you would like to learn more about the land you are on please visit this [link](#).

The Artist.



Photo courtesy of the artist

Debra Scacco (b. 1976, Staten Island, New York, lives and works in Los Angeles, CA). Scacco's multi-faceted, interdisciplinary research-based art practice includes site-specific installations, curating, community engagement, and social activism. Her artworks address her interest in water systems, water activism and management, the climate crisis, and cartography (map making). Her focus has been on California waterways including the Los Angeles River, its ecology and relationship to the history of the First Peoples. Her work reflects personal experience as the daughter of Italian immigrants whose family spans three continents. Scacco says that being a life-long learner is “the most exciting part” of her art practice.

Exhibitions and awards include: MOAH (Museum of Art and History), Lancaster; Honor Fraser Gallery, Los Angeles; Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles; LAX Airport, Los Angeles; Royal Academy of Arts, London; Viper Basel, Switzerland; Los Angeles State Historic Park, Los Angeles; Royale Projects, Los Angeles; James Cohan Gallery, New York and Patrick Heide Gallery, London. Projects have been supported by National Endowment for the Arts, Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts, The Durfee Foundation, Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, The Wilhelm Foundation, and The Mellon Foundation. She is an organizing member of Artists Commit, an artist-led collective committed to a climate-conscious, resilient, and equitable future.

The Artwork.



Shifting Baseline is a large-scale installation and documentation based on Scacco's research of various water sources in California, including the Los Angeles River, Arroyo Seco, and Anza Borrego areas. The intention of her research and artwork is to discover, emphasize, and consider how we are connected to each other and our communities by water, and to learn how water is managed and diverted. Scacco emphasizes the value and importance of "listening to the land and water."

Shifting Baseline, 2024

Graphite, oil stick, sand on paper
204 x 300 x 96 inches,
unframed; 20 feet x 25 feet x 8
feet unframed

Courtesy of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs/Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery.

Photo by Jeff McLane.

This artwork consists of five very long rolls of paper. The rolls form layers that overlap each other on the long right and left edges. This continuous, multi-layer artwork is suspended from the top of the wall near the ceiling and is rolled out to drape down extending onto a large area of the gallery floor. Her artwork explores mark making through graphite rubbings, automatic drawing, and map making to show the texture of the land and "the conflicting sense of time between humans and geologic time." Scacco combines these processes to document waterways, while using the land and history of water as the base to create the drawings.



Shifting Baseline, 2024

Graphite, oil stick, sand on paper

204 x 300 x 96 inches, unframed; 20 feet x 25 feet x 8 feet unframed

Courtesy of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs/Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery.

Photo by Jeff McLane.

Discussion Prompts.

Debra Scacco uses her art to tell stories, engage communities and communicate about important issues surrounding climate change and the environment. She believes there are many ways in which artists and others can support the environment.

- Think about the importance of water for humans, animals and the environment. What are different ways that water is used in our communities?
- What are some ideas to conserve (save) water?
- What can students do to communicate about important climate and environmental issues?
- What populations, communities or environments might not have access to water?
- How would your life be different if you did not have access to, or have enough water each day?
- If you created a map of the water sources at your school, what materials would you use? How many different water sources can you find such as water fountains, restrooms, sinks or other locations of water? How does their location affect you if they are near or far from your classroom?

The Artwork.



Shifting Baseline (detail), 2024

Entire artwork: 204 x 300 x 96 inches, unframed; 20 feet x 25 feet x 8 feet unframed

Graphite, oil stick, sand on paper

Courtesy of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs/Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery.

Photo by Jeff McLane.

This is a photograph of a section of ***Shifting Baseline***. The artwork combines multiple layers of graphite rubbings and compresses them onto a single plane of paper. The artwork represents the geography of the waterways and symbolizes that everyone is connected by water. To enable understanding of the layers of the drawing, the artist assigned a mark making method to each location of the waterways she documented. Graphite rubbings from the Los Angeles River formed the base layer. The final layer in the process is documented by burying the paper under the sand of a dry lake.

Scacco likes the “idea that life is everywhere, even when it seems like there is nothing there.” The dry areas are often thought of as devoid of life. However, vegetation and insect species that have adapted to this environment and climate are supported, enabling the survival of multiple other species. The different elements of the documentation and research of this ecosystem shows that even though the land and lake beds are dry, barren and look like nothing is happening on the surface - species exist. Ferry Shrimp lay dormant under the dry, cracked lake bed for years, until it rains, when they then become food for other animals in the area, since they are at the bottom of the food chain in that environment.



Shifting Baseline (detail), 2024

Entire artwork: 204 x 300 x 96 inches, unframed; 20 feet x 25 feet x 8 feet unframed

Graphite, oil stick, sand on paper

Courtesy of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs/Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery.

Photo by Jeff McLane.

Discussion Prompts.

Shifting Baseline was created outdoors at different waterways in Southern California. The texture rubbings were made on very long rolls of paper by using graphite, oil stick and sand at each location. The final step was to bury the paper under the dry ground to document the texture.

- What types of marks, lines and colors do you notice in this close-up detail of ***Shifting Baseline***?
- What do you think the weather might have been like where the artist created this artwork?
- Describe the environment, weather and temperature where you live. Is it hot, cold, dry, rainy, windy or any or all of these?
- How do temperature and climate affect waterways, people, animals, nature and the environment?
What happens to the ground and water when the weather is very hot?
- Imagine you are doing a graphite, crayon, pencil, pastel or oil stick rubbing of a section of dry land in your school or community - how would you describe the textures you discover?
- What story would you want to communicate through your art?

The Artist.



Photo courtesy of artist

Bari Ziperstein (b. 1978 in Chicago, IL; lives in Los Angeles, CA) works in mixed media sculpture with a primary focus on ceramics (clay). Her ceramic sculptures reflect her interest in contemporary American culture, consumerism, capitalist economies, propaganda, the built environment and explore connections between current and past socio-political issues. Research is a key component of Ziperstein's practice which includes objects, large-scale installation, site-specific sculpture, and her line of functional ceramics, called BZIPPY. Her artworks are informed by the aesthetic (style) of artists, architects and designers who created ceramics, fashion, silver, furniture and graphic arts with the Wiener Werkstätte (Vienna Workshop). This was the first organization in Vienna, Austria in 1903 dedicated to the production of modern decorative arts that created the foundation for what would later be referred to as 'modernism' in the arts.

Ziperstein received a Master of Fine Arts from the California Institute of the Arts and a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a certificate in Women's Studies from Ohio University. One-person exhibitions include Bethel University; Museum of Art, Architecture, and Design; Wignall Museum of Contemporary Art; Long Beach City College Project Space; The Harris Art Gallery, University of La Verne; and the San Francisco Arts Commission. Residencies include the Wende Museum of the Cold War, Culver City California and The Wolfsonian-Florida International University in Miami, Florida.

The Artwork.



Twisted Arms, 2024

Stoneware and glaze

17 x 10.5 x 32 inches

Courtesy of the artist and
Vielmetter Los Angeles;
Charles Moffett Gallery, NY;
Nina Johnson Gallery, Miami

Ziperstein creates her own visual language, using inspiration from historic styles and designs from the past. ***Twisted Arms*** and her other sculptures are covered with intricately carved and hand-printed collages of patterns, colors, symbols, detailed ornamentation and decoration that honor and celebrate craftsmanship and history.

Through design, two and three-dimensional shapes and forms, Ziperstein explores her Russian, Ukrainian, Polish and Jewish family origins to gain a greater understanding of her “familial connection to these cultures in the diaspora”. The Diaspora can be different locations where people or a culture migrated to, away from their ancestral homeland.



Installation view, Bari Ziperstein, 2024

Various dimensions

Stoneware, underglaze and glaze

Twisted Arms (in background, right)

Courtesy of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs/Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery.

Photo by Jeff McLane.

Discussion Prompts.

Bari Ziperstein's artworks include patterns and symbols that reference her family's heritage. These design elements reference past ceramic traditions.

- If you were to tell a story about your life, family or a friend by creating a three-dimensional ceramic artwork, what colors, patterns, shapes, symbols and marks would you use?
- What title would you give your artwork and why?
- How can decorative ceramic artworks communicate stories and help viewers learn about other cultures, communities and places?
- What are some ways that ceramics can be used in daily life as functional objects? Why do you think that ceramics were important in past civilizations?
- Describe the process you think that the artist used to construct sculpture ***Twisted Arms***.

The Artwork.



Bari Ziperstein

Space House, 2023

Stoneware, underglaze and glaze

14.75 x 9.5 inches

Courtesy of the artist and
Vielmetter Los Angeles;
Charles Moffett Gallery, NY;
Nina Johnson Gallery, Miami

Space House is a two-part artwork where one section fits on top of the other. This artwork shows the multiple ways in which Ziperstein uses stoneware clay to create forms, hollow vessels, carved designs and surface textures. Her designs are storytelling elements that are used as a critique of political structures, domesticity, systems of power, and gender roles.

For the COLA installation, her ceramics are arranged in groups, on top of draped customized geometric pedestals covered with unique mint colored fabric. The transformation of interior spaces and placement of the ceramics in her installation expresses her attention to details, such as the color of fabrics and walls - all which play an important role in the overall experience of viewing Ziperstein's ceramics in the gallery setting.

Discussion Prompts.

Ziperstein uses clay to create sculptures based on her in-depth historical research. Her art is informed by research on global topics, including textiles (fabrics) and artisan manufactured objects from the turn of the century and the designs of these items which inspired this body of work.

- How would you describe the forms and shapes used in this artwork?
- What do the patterns, shapes and designs on ceramic sculptures symbolize to you? What might they mean to the artist?
- What story do you read in this artwork?
- What do you imagine that the surface texture of this ceramic artwork feels like?
- What are other ways that you could display and arrange the two sections of this ceramic sculpture? How would changing the arrangement affect the way the viewer thinks about this artwork?
- Why do you think the artist chose to display her ceramic sculptures on top of pedestals draped with special fabric? How does the way the sculptures are displayed create a connection between each of the artworks?

Art Activity: Textures and Patterns

All Around Us - A Treasure Hunt

What you will need:

- White copy paper, recycled paper or paper bags; 8" x 11" or any size
- Drawing utensils: any or all of the following: pencils, crayons, pastels
- Access to outdoor locations: school yard, sidewalk, found items from nature
- Assortment of textures, including small flat materials in different shapes with patterns
- **Optional materials:** Graphite stick, oil stick, scissors, glue stick

**Please check with a parent, guardian or teacher before using any supplies and items or going outdoors. Make sure the materials you find are safe and clean, and please keep the rubbings on the paper only.*

Art Activity: Textures and Patterns All Around Us - A Treasure Hunt

Step 1: Use your observational and close-looking skills to go on a texture and pattern treasure hunt! Search inside the classroom, at home, or outdoors on a walk with your teacher, parent or guardian. If outdoors, look for dry areas of the ground, sidewalks, safe pathways, yard, playground, a tree trunk or fallen leaves. Search for patterns in nature. Look for surfaces that have different textures such as rough, bumpy, hard, smooth, soft. *Please do not pick or cut any plants.

Step 2: Hold the paper over each texture. If using recycled paper bags, cut or tear a piece that is a bit larger than your hand. If you are working inside, cover the workspace to keep it clean.

Step 3: Choose one drawing utensil to start. Use the side of a pencil tip, crayon, pastel or graphite stick and gently rub it over each texture. Tip: Start with light pressure and slowly increase it until you can see the texture of the item on the paper and to create a darker texture. Don't worry if the paper gets wrinkled or bent - this will add more texture! *Be careful to keep the texture rubbing on the paper only.

Step 4: Repeat the above steps as many times as you like to add layers, colors, tones, shapes, patterns and unique textures. You can do one texture, or multiple by overlapping the texture to create new layers. Color can be added by holding an old crayon or pastel on its side and rubbing it over the textures.

Step 5: On the back of the rubbing, write the types of textures and patterns, and the location you found them. You can also write a few sentences about what you discovered on your treasure hunt.

Art Activity: Textures and Patterns All Around Us - A Treasure Hunt

Optional ideas: Look around your classroom, school or at home to find at least four small flat textured items with patterns. Other items can include: string, flat buttons, coins, mesh wrapper from food bags, wooden craft sticks, or other flat objects.

- Fold an 8 ½ x 11" white paper into four quarters, then open up the paper and you will have four sections.
- Choose one item at a time and place it underneath each section.
- Use the steps above to create textures to fill the paper.
- Repeat this as many times as you like to add layers, shapes, patterns and unique textures.
- Hold the paper on a tree trunk and create a rubbing. Turn it in different directions to get more textures.
- If there are leaves that have fallen on the ground, place them under your paper to make a leaf rubbing.
- Use a scissors or tear the paper into pieces and use a glue stick to collage them onto another piece of heavier paper or a recycled paper bag.

Things to think about: What stories do your textures tell about the environment? Where else can you discover unique textures? What can patterns symbolize about nature, your culture, or the environment? How can your textures be used to make different patterns?

Resources.

Debra Scacco: www.debrascacco.com @debrascaccostudio

Bari Ziperstein: bariziperstein.com @bariziperstein

Cover: Detail of *Twisted Arms*, Bari Ziperstein, 2024, Stoneware and glaze, 17 x 10.5 x 32 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Vielmetter Los Angeles; Charles Moffett Gallery, NY; Nina Johnson Gallery, Miami

Detail of *Shifting Baseline*, Debra Scacco, 204 x 300 x 96 inches, unframed; 20 feet x 25 feet x 8 feet unframed, courtesy of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs/Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery. Photo by Jeff McLane.

Courtesy of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery.

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