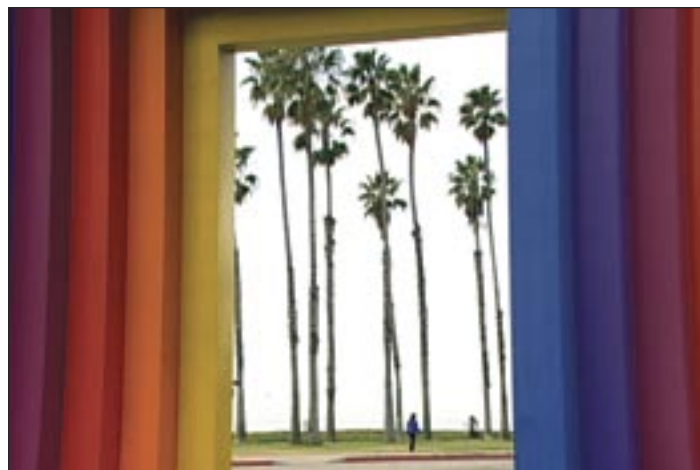


In Plain Sight. Public Art in Santa Barbara

by Devon Pettengill / CASA

INTEREST IN FILM STARTED EARLY for Tony Ruggieri and Christy Zwicke, co-producers and co-directors of *In Plain Sight*, a documentary about public art in Santa Barbara, which will have its world premiere at this year's Santa Barbara International Film Festival. Both filmmakers graduated with degrees in film, Ruggieri from the Brooks Institute and Zwicke from UCSB. Ruggieri says his interest in filmmaking can be traced back to an interest in photography when he was in high school and even earlier. At a certain point, he decided that he thought film would be a more interesting career path.



Herbert Bayer's *Chromatic Gate* in *In Plain Sight*

Zwicke grew up in a home that loved movies, which no doubt influenced her interest in movie making. She is a self-proclaimed cinephile.

Their film *In Plain Sight* started with a request from the County Arts Commission. Former Executive Director Patrick Davis and current Executive Director Ginny Brush had been organizing an annual guided bus tour of Santa Barbara's public art and asked Ruggieri and Zwicke to videotape it.

"I thought it would be a better idea to make a documentary," said Ruggieri. The Arts Commission provided them with a manuscript of the tour. "One of the only things missing was the voices of the artists."

Shooting the first footage for the film followed shortly. Ruggieri says there was no script at first, only ideas.

"When you do a documentary, the story starts to come out when you go out shooting," he said.

The filmmakers contacted the artists, or the relatives of artists who had passed away since their pieces were created, as well as

other members of the community.

"It was interesting to hear the history and stories about the art," Zwicke shared, "to know the effort and the process that went into it."

Public art can be found all over the city, but it may often go unnoticed, even by locals. One of the filmmakers' major goals was to help viewers appreciate Santa Barbara's public art and to recognize what the artists and the people who might have funded the project went through to put it there for all to enjoy.

The film highlights the interesting balance between the new and the old in Santa Barbara, featuring art from a wide variety of time periods, including pieces commissioned as part of Roosevelt's New Deal. The film also includes perhaps the earliest example of public art in Santa Barbara, ancient cave-paintings created by Chumash Native Americans.

Zwicke insists that the film is best seen on the big screen, where the art can



Detail of SB Cemetery Chapel fresco by Alfred Ramos Martinez in *In Plain Sight*

be viewed up close in detailed shots and appreciated from all angles.

The film is available for purchase on DVD from the County Arts Commission. The film will premiere on January 26, at 12:30 pm at Victoria Hall.



Detail of Marge Dunlap's *It's Raining* in *In Plain Sight*