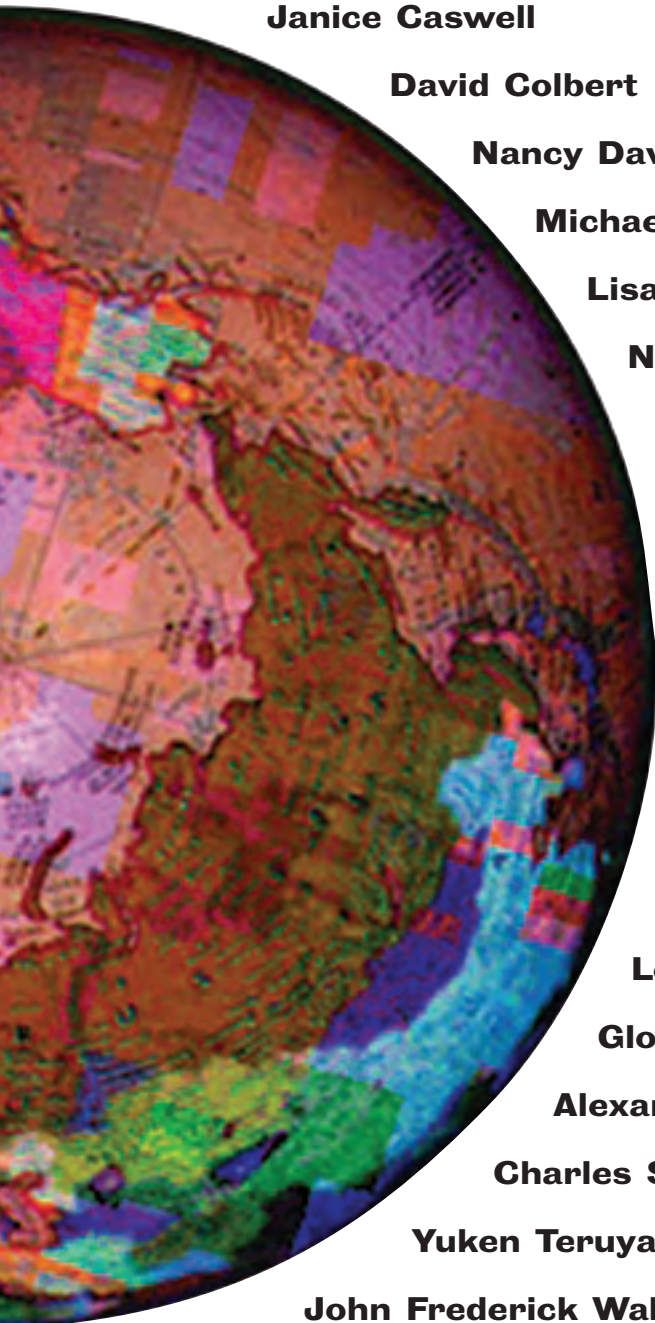


WESTPORT ARTS CENTER PRESENTS

Global



November 3 - December 22, 2006



Janice Caswell

David Colbert

Nancy Davidson & Judy Dunaway

Michael DeFeo

Lisa Hoke

Niki Ketchman

Joyce Kozloff

Eva Lee

Michael Hernandez de Luna

Thomas Mezzanotte

Michael Oatman

David Opdyke

Carolina Pedraza

Scott Richter

Lordy Rodriguez

Gloria Santoyo Ruenitz

Alexander Shundi

Charles Spurrier

Yuken Teruya

John Frederick Walker

Twenty artists utilize the globe

Global



Curated by Richard Klein

as a metaphor for our times

|COVER| Gloria Santoyo Ruenitz

Fusion, 2006

C-prints, 30 x 36 inches each

Courtesy of the artist

|INSIDE FRONT COVER| Eva Lee

Jewel, 2006

Digital animation and DVD installation, 2:43

Courtesy of the Artist

|PAGE 1| Scott Richter

Paradox, 2006

Globe, door-viewer

Courtesy of the artist

Foreword

The world continues to shrink through the inexorable power of technology while it simultaneously splinters apart as opposing ideologies lay claim to irreconcilable differences. As Iran and North Korea confirm the grim reality of a second nuclear age, and trout and salmon continue their desperate search for cooler waters, Google Earth zips us across the surface of the globe through that magic portal on our desktops, and our children embrace life in a global village. “Globalization” is a term we use easily and yet is a concept of astonishing complexity, with implications for every aspect of human experience. Its connotations are at once utopian and dystopian. The globe itself is a cogent symbol of both unity and diversity. Its perfect form suggests the possibility of a sublime harmony at odds with the political and environmental realities of our time. To wrap one’s mind around the globe requires the power of imagination.

For the exhibition Global, curated by Richard Klein, the Westport Arts Center distributed twenty twelve-inch Replogle “Explorer” tabletop globes to twenty artists, thoughtfully selected by the curator. The only imperative was that they use the globe in “some manner as one of the raw materials of a work of art.” Richard Klein’s deceptively simple idea was that the globe should serve as the unifying factor in an exhibition, the themes of which would be revealed in the making. The responses here presented are as simple and complex as the globe itself and reflect the richness and diversity of the world we inhabit. Global is a surprising and thought-provoking exhibition that affirms the relevance and necessity of art to our lives. It is through imagination that we arrive at understanding.

The Westport Arts Center thanks Richard Klein for so graciously sharing his imagination, intelligence and time. We also thank the artists for their provocative responses to his challenge and for the power of their imaginations. We are grateful to Patagonia for their generous support of this exhibition and for their sensitive stewardship of our planet.

Tom O’Connor and Liz Rueven
Co-chairs, Visual Arts
Westport Arts Center

Global

Strangely enough, we seem to have woken up recently and found ourselves living in a world that is global. It is impossible to read more than several pages into *The New York Times* without repeatedly encountering the word “global” or “globalism.” Entering the word global into a *Wikipedia* search produces 39,653 results, a number that is somewhat more manageable than *Google’s* 975,000,000 hits. Virtually everything about the world now is spoken of in global terms: the economy, politics (both foreign and domestic), resources, technology, culture, entertainment, and ecology and environmental-



|LEFT| Janice Caswell
An Alternate Route, 2006
Acrylic, paper, pins, enamel, globe
Courtesy of the artist and Schroeder Romero Gallery,
New York

|OPPOSITE LEFT| David Colbert
Hanging in the Balance, 2006
Globe, steel, chain
41 x 17 x 12 inches
Courtesy of the artist

|OPPOSITE RIGHT| Nancy Davidson / Judy Dunaway
Too Tootrue, 2006
latex, plastic, globe, tubing, CD player, amplifier, driver
61 x 60 x 84 inches
Courtesy of the artist



ism. Earlier this year actor Mel Gibson stated that his recent drunk-driving conviction was “a blessing” providing “global humiliation.” In the not-too-distant past this type of contrition by a public figure would be directed to the guilty party’s family, friends, or immediate constituents. In our present global moment it seems that Gibson’s supposed shame needs to be directed to every moderately aware human being on the planet.

In 1818 the whaling ship *Globe*, whose homeport was Nantucket, headed west from the coast of Peru. By the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century the whale population of the Atlantic was already in decline, forcing whalers to travel further and further from New England for profit. The *Globe*, under the command of George W. Gardner, discovered what came to be known as the “offshore grounds,” the most profitable whaling fishery ever, one thousand miles into the Pacific from the coast of South America. Two years later the *Globe* sailed back to New England, the first ship to return with the then astounding quantity of two thousand barrels of sperm oil.



[LEFT] Michael Hernandez de Luna
As the Squirrel Turns, 2006
Globe, squirrels, barb wire,
wood, moss
Courtesy of the artist

[OPPOSITE LEFT] Michael DeFeo
Untitled, 2006
Metallic paint, globe
Courtesy of the artist

[OPPOSITE RIGHT] Lisa Hoke
Continental Fold, 2006
Paper
10 x 13 x 13 inches
Courtesy of the Artist &
Elizabeth Harris Gallery

It is assumed that the current global energy economy is something that has gradually developed since the discovery in the 1930s of the Middle Eastern oil fields. In the nineteenth century during the heyday of whaling, southern New England was the Saudi Arabia of the whale oil economy, with whaling ships bringing sperm oil back to ports such as Nantucket and New Bedford in Massachusetts and Mystic and New London in Connecticut. The light provided by whale oil was so precious that New England whalers traveled as far as the Bering Sea in search of their quarry, more than twice as far as a present-day tanker travels from the Persian Gulf to the refineries of the Texas gulf coast.

Globalization, the worldwide evolution of interdependence, integration, and interaction between individuals, governments, and corporate entities is clearly a phenomenon whose origins predate the twentieth century. The term 'globalism' was coined in the United States during the period immediately after World War Two that witnessed the creation of the United Nations, followed by Marshall McLuhan's "Global Village" from the 1960s, a term that postulated the world as a community united by instantaneous communication. "Globalism" has recently become a buzzword for the rapidly evolving economy that transcends national boundaries: the world defined by free trade, transnational corporations, increased immigration, and a global telecommunica-



tions infrastructure. Succeeding the concepts of Colonialism and Imperialism, Globalism at its worst is categorized by the exploitation of both the resources and people of the undeveloped, non-industrial world. On the positive side it promises global unity based on pragmatic, economic self-interest, multiculturalism in the arts, the linking of diverse cultures by world trade and the expansion of the middle-class in the underdeveloped world.

The origins of globalism date to the European age of discovery when the “Old World” was first in sustained communication with the Americas. It is not surprising that the first globe used as a mapping object that still exists can be dated to this time. The written historical record, however, mentions an earlier globe: in 140 BC Crates of Mallus, the Greek Stoic philosopher supposedly made a spherical object depicting the known world. The Greeks apparently realized early on that the world was a sphere. Eratosthenes famous experiment in 250 BC where he compared the length of shadows of posts on the summer solstice at noon in Alexandria and Syrene in Egypt allowed him to estimate that the world was 7,850 miles in diameter (the actual diameter is 7,926 miles).



The earliest preserved globe is in the collection of the Nuremberg National Museum in Germany. Created in the pivotal year of 1492 by German cartographer Martin Behaim, this early attempt is remarkably modern looking: a freestanding sphere mounted on a tripod stand. Close examination reveals one major flaw, the absence of both North and South America, which is forgivable considering that it was produced in the year that Columbus first crossed into the Western Hemisphere.

Until quite recently the globe, as a depiction of the earth, was primarily a conceptual object. With the advent of the space age in the 1960s the globe became “real,” its image corresponding to the actual visual reality of the world being perceived as a whole from space. “Global” implies the concept of one world, while “international” recognizes that the world is divided into a multitude of nations and peoples. The typical modern globe, unlike the image of the earth

[OPPOSITE LEFT] Niki Ketchman

2006, 2006

Globe, vinyl tubing filled with oil, ink jet prints on acrylic medium, aluminum rod, rope, paint

52 x 12 ½ x 12 ½ in.

Courtesy of the artist

[OPPOSITE RIGHT] Joyce Kozloff

Untitled, 2006

Globe, 4 cast-paper masks, acrylic, watercolor, collage

16 x 17 x 17 inches

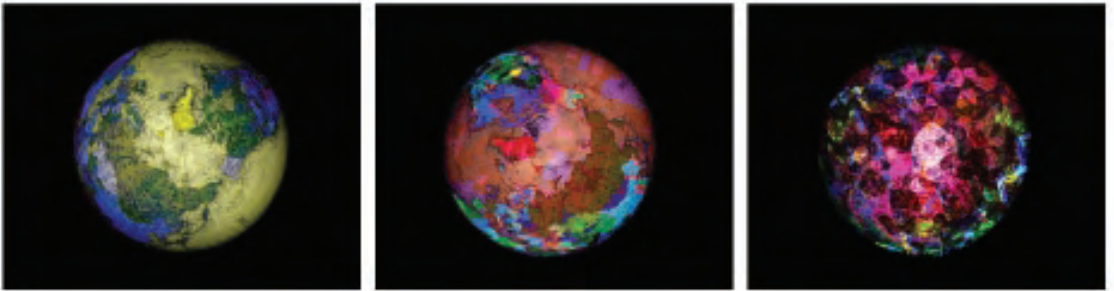
Courtesy of the artist

[BELOW] Eva Lee

Jewel, 2006

Digital animation and DVD installation, 2:43

Courtesy of the Artist



from space, reveals not a unified surface, but rather a patchwork quilt of national boundaries. It is ironic that as the number of languages spoken on the planet has declined, the number of autonomous countries has increased, Do we live in truly “global” times or rather a period of hyper-nationalism? In some areas, such as Europe, national boundaries are breaking down, while in others religious, political, and sectarian conflicts fracture the globe into smaller and smaller colored fragments.

So what do we really all think about globalization? Pulitzer Prize-winning author Thomas L. Friedman in his best-selling book *The World Is Flat* paints a generally sanguine picture of the process: a future of intense economic competition that frees human imagination and encourages the entrepreneurial spirit. In Western society a premium is placed on the qualities of imagination and innovation, not just by economists and the business community, but also by those in the arts. In July of 2006 twenty artists, working in a diverse range of disciplines, were all sent a twelve-inch tabletop globe with the vague instructions to “utilize it in some manner as one



of the raw materials in the creation of a work of art." The results, on display in this exhibition, might be thought of a Rorschach test of our hopes and fears about everything global at this point in time.

Thomas Friedman's metaphor of globalism "flattening" the world is referenced by Lordy Rodriguez in the style of a Zen koan. His piece *The Simple Way to Turn a Globe into a Map* reminds us that we live in a global community, and that the globe has indeed become the map of the modern world. Michael DeFeo and David Opdyke have both presented the world as unified by information. DeFeo's *Untitled* obscures landforms and national boundaries with a circuit-like metallic haze, implying every point on the surface of our planet is electronically linked. David

|OPPOSITE LEFT| Thomas Mezzanotte
In Memory of Giordano Bruno, 2006
Mixed media, found objects
Size variable, approximately 50 x 24 x 48 inches
Courtesy of the artist

|RIGHT| David Opdyke
Peak Production, 2006
Mixed media
25 x 18 x 21 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Roebling Hall

|OPPOSITE RIGHT| Michael Oatman
Ventriloquist, 2006
Globe, acrylic sheet, enamel, amplifier, speakers,
Pioneer CD player, electrical cords and audio:
selected tracks from The Voyager Golden Record
Each die 46 x 46 x 46 inches



Opdyke's world is undergoing a painful acupuncture treatment via the ubiquitous antennas of telecommunication. The mountaintop, formerly the site of religious revelation or the transcendental experience of nature has become a mere node in Verizon and Cingular's battle for hegemony. Gloria Santoyo Ruenitz has approached the globe via photography, capturing the current hyperactive nature of travel, commerce, and the flow of information through the simple analogy of blurring all local details through speed.

It is no surprise that the majority of the artists in Global have responded with work that is quite pessimistic. Eva Lee, Scott Richter, Michael Oatman, and Yuken Teruya have alternately taken the high road in creating works that are not so much optimistic as transcendental in nature. Lee and Richter achieve this state by the use of the phenomenon of light, while Oatman and Teruya via sound. Lee's *Jewel* utilizes two digital animations that are projected onto a blank white globe's northern and southern hemispheres. As the animations play the familiar landforms and national boundaries are transformed into a mesmerizing fractal abstraction, suggesting that



the phenomenal world is a thinly constructed reality. Richter has turned the globe inside out, providing a magnified viewfinder inserted into the South Atlantic. Peering into the aperture the viewer is presented with the blackened interior pierced by a myriad of tiny holes. Richter's sculpture turns the planet into a planetarium, blurring the boundaries between inner and outer space. Michael Oatman's *Ventriloquist* takes on the earth's position in the universe via a different route. The artist's huge pair of dice has a globe's hemisphere replacing the single pip on the two sides that face each other. Each hemisphere contains a speaker that is playing greetings in 55 of the world's languages, taken from the recording that accompanied NASA's 1977 Voyager I spacecraft on its trip that has taken it beyond the solar system. The recording is played through a vintage 1973 "Pioneer" amplifier, referencing the space probe Pioneer 10, launched in 1973. Voyager I is currently the most distant man-made object from earth, and Pioneer 10 and Voyager I are the man-made objects that are by far the furthest away from one another. Yuken Teruya's globe has not been physically altered, but simply plays a haunting recording of the artist

[OPPOSITE LEFT] Courtesy of the artist
Carolina Pedraza
an urge to fill in blank spaces, 2006
Paper, permanent marker, pen, graphite, chalk
Variable size, approximately 56 x 70 inches
Courtesy of the artist

[RIGHT] Lordy Rodriguez
The Simple Way to Turn a Globe into a Map, 2006
Globe, steel
12 x 12 x 24 inches
Courtesy of the artist & Clementine Gallery



humming his favorite classical music from memory. Teruya, who is not a musician by any stretch of the imagination, humanizes the globe with a single soft voice, which is struggling with both the retrieval of memory and the act of learning.

Janice Caswell and Carolina Pedraza have used the globe not for political ends but rather as for a blank canvas for personal geographies. Caswell's *An Alternate Route* has eliminated the globe's usual markings, replacing them with a meandering path interrupted by what one imagines to be either notable locations or events. Caswell's alternate globe replaces the usual highways and jet lanes with pedestrian-like ramblings, promoting travel on more humanistic terms. Pedraza's *an urge to fill in black spaces* presents the world as a place where we each project our own meaning on things and events. This is the subjective globe, where the individual is free to fill in between proscribed lines.

Lisa Hoke has approached the globe as a formal object, turning truths about the world into abstract investigations. In *Fractal* Hoke plays with the colorful patterning created by national boundaries, overlaying the entire surface with a mosaic of brilliantly colored filter gels. In *Continental Fold* the artist has played off the faulting and fracturing that occurs in the earth's surface, creating a planet-in-miniature that is undergoing its own form of geomorphism.



|LEFT| Alexander Shundi
Hope!, 2006
17 x 17 x 45 inches
Metal, plastic, wood, acrylic, globe
Courtesy of the artist

|OPPOSITE| Charles Spurrier
Candy Dish – Atomic Fireball, 2006
Globe, Candy (Atomic Fireballs), Brass Hardware, Paint
Edition of 3
Courtesy of the artist

|BELOW| Yuken Teruya
You Are the Moon
Globe, speaker, MD player
Singer: Matsu
Songs: Symphony No. 5 in C minor (Beethoven),
Clair de Lune (Debussy), 6 minutes silence
Courtesy of the artist



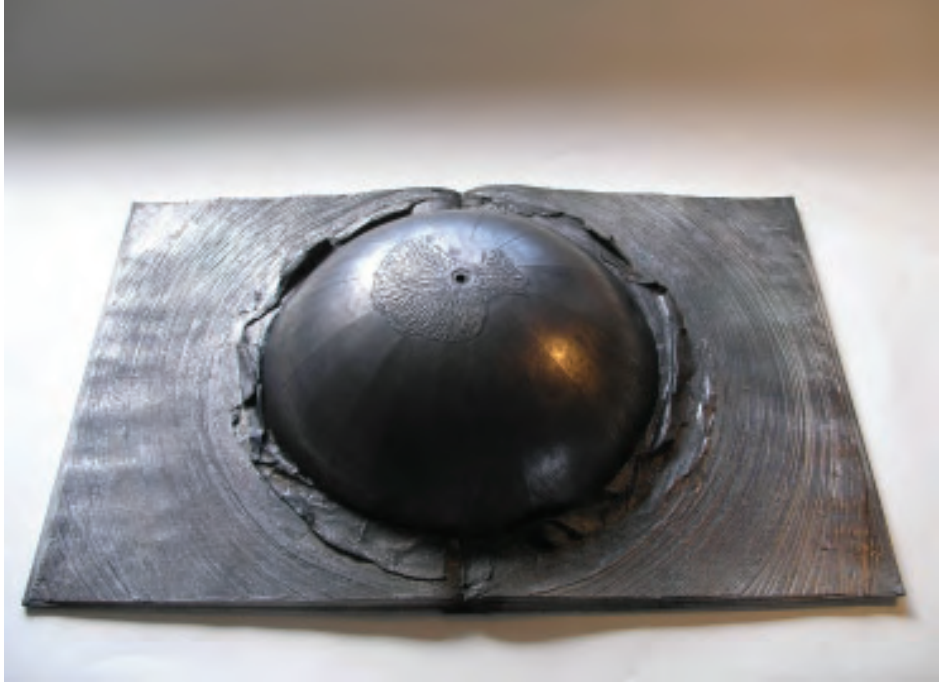
The sobering nature of world politics is referenced by a number of artists in this exhibition, some by using drama and pathos, others with humor. David Colbert's *Hanging in the Balance* literally presents the word counterbalanced by cold steel, while Charles Spurrier has made a nuclear proliferation lesson for a sweet tooth: a globe filled with Atomic Fireballs for the taking. Michael Hernandez de Luna has cast the ubiquitous and pesky squirrel as a surrogate for the agents of



international plundering and profiteering. Niki Ketchman has pictured global conflict with a Medusa head-like object that is literally nourished by oil, while Alexander Shundi presents the world transformed by the kiss of a serpent into a ball of painted confusion, hanging on via an optimistic transfusion of peace. Nancy Davidson, who works exclusively with inflatable forms, has partnered with sound artist and musician Judy Dunaway in the creation of *too toottrue*, a strange hybrid object that is a “breathing machine,” which literally presents the world as a labored asthmatic.

Three artists have made works that deal with globalism as a historical phenomenon. Joyce Kozloff has mounted four wonderfully painted masks on the globe for our contemplation. Each mask references a different culture’s role in global imperialism: Ming Dynasty’s Admiral Zheng He’s map of the Indian Ocean (his fleet was manned by an astounding 27,000 crew members and included 62 ships, some reaching 600 feet in length); Columbus’s landing in the West Indies; the Dutch attacking Portuguese held Timor in the Spice Islands; and Ottoman admiral and cartographer Piri Reis’s map of the Mediterranean. Thomas Mezzanotte has created a poetic installation based on the life of medieval philosopher, astronomer, and priest Giordano Bruno. Bruno was one of the first proponents of an infinite universe, advocating that the earth was not at

John Frederick Walker
*Sudden Emergence
of the Southern
Hemisphere*, 2006
Mixed media
14 ¼ x 22 x 4 ½ inches
Courtesy of the artist



the center of things and that the stars were distant suns similar to our own. Needless to say his opinions were not popular with the church, and he was executed in 1600. John Frederick Walker has brought an ancient atlas to life with the Southern Hemisphere literally rising from its pages. Antarctica was the last continent to be discovered (once again by Nantucket whalers) although its existence had been speculated on since the time of Ptolemy. It is interesting to note that the southernmost continent, due to the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, is the only place on the earth where military activities are prohibited.

The globe is a potent object onto which we can project an almost infinite variety of meanings. It is a sphere, the most perfect and resolved of forms, while at the same time its surface is segmented into a quilt of inequality and conflict. It is covered by the poetry of place names provided by the world's languages, it is layered by the thin veneer of human history, and it is always divided equally into day and night. The works in this exhibition have provided no absolute resolution to the complex questions raised by living in a world that is more and more homogeneous. But they have all clearly proclaimed, as written on placards held by protesters at the 1999 WTO conference in Seattle, that "ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE."

— Richard Klein, October 2006

The Westport Arts Center is a performing and visual arts organization dedicated to providing meaningful arts experiences. With a mission to create arts experiences that contribute to individual growth and enrich the community, the Westport Arts Center believes that encouraging the arts is essential to the well being and renewal of society.

patagonia

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