

# Packing materials inspire L.A. artist

## Pomona College Museum of Art opens 3 provocative exhibits

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CLAREMONT — Wait! Don't throw away that cardboard box and Styrofoam your computer came in. It could be art.

A close look at one of three new exhibitions at the Pomona College Museum of Art will make electronics enthusiasts rethink the packaging from their recent purchases.

"Project 15: Jason Rogenes" showcases a 8-by-7-by-4-foot Styrofoam sculpture that looks like an intergalactic vehicle straight out of Stanley Kubrick's "2001: A Space Odyssey."

Rogenes' work is featured with two equally thought-provoking exhibitions, "Globalize This! International Graphics of Celebration and Dissent" and "Goya to Cage: Pomona Collects." The three new exhibitions opened on Monday at the college's Museum of Art.

"Globalize This!" features 39 political posters from 16 countries with images covering racism, child labor, AIDS, reproductive choice, nuclear proliferation, global warming and capitalism.

Organized by the Center for the Study of Political Graphics, a nonprofit education archive based in Los Angeles, the "Globalize This!" exhibition explores the role of graphic art in the expression of political opinion.

"Foreign Debt," by Cuban artist Rafael Enriquez, shows an image of a farmer crucified on a dollar symbol. INRI, the Latin initials that appear above Jesus in traditional portrayals of the Crucifixion, have been replaced with the initials of the International Monetary Fund.

According to the exhibition's museum guide, Enriquez's poster illustrates the burden of increasing debt that developing countries carry and the IMF's reluctance to lower the debt so countries can stabilize themselves.

"The best political posters make you look at things that you might never have thought about before," said CSPG

archivist Michele Urton.

"Goya to Cage: Pomona Collects" reflects the growth of the museum's permanent collection. It includes recent acquisitions, including four etchings by Spanish artist Francisco de Goya, a series of layered Plexiglas constructions by artist and composer John Cage and three preparatory sketches of Mexican artist Jose Clemente Orozco's "Prometheus" mural.

The Museum of Art's permanent collection also features lithographs by prominent artists including Diego Rivera, Ernst Barlach and Man Ray. According to Steve Comba, the museum's assistant director, the selected collection is a tribute to Pomona College benefactor Fred Marer, who died last June.

"I consider these works the 'greatest hits' of Fred Marer," Comba said of the retired mathematics professor from Los Angeles City College. "This work is the best of his collection."

Los Angeles-based artist Jason Rogenes fuses themes of industrialization and science fiction in his latest work, "project 9.03g" which is a part of the museum's program of one-gallery exhibitions called "The Project Series."

Museum curator Rebecca McGrew says the purpose of "The Project Series" is to show art that is experimental and that introduces new concepts, techniques and forms.

Every year, four artists are invited to participate in the program. Rogenes is the 15th artist featured in the series, said McGrew.

Rogenes' fascination with space travel, science fiction and machinery is reflected in the way he transforms post-consumer waste into interplanetary-inspired installation pieces like "project 9.03g."

A glowing, white Styrofoam sculpture hangs from a gallery wallpapered with cardboard. Strategically placed cardboard pieces jut out of the floor and ceiling, serving as the cardboard cave's stalagmites and



TERRY PIERSON • STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Pomona College Museum of Art Curator Rebecca McGrew and Assistant Director Steve Comba stand in a work titled "project 9.03g." The work was produced for the museum's "Project 15: Jason Rogenes," part of a series of invitational exhibits.

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"I like the idea of using pedestrian materials that can become otherworldly," said Rogenes, 31. "I have a fascination with stuff like what your television or computer is packed

in. There were these piles and piles and they looked like some part of machinery. (Styrofoam) is a transient material, it's essentially made to transport things. But it's the fact that these materials are familiar

and that you can take them to another place."

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