

# DIAZ CONTEMPORARY

**Mowry Baden**

*Califanada* [cal i fan' ada]

2 May to 8 June 2013

Opening Thursday 2 May from 6 to 8

*Califanada* brings together six works by senior sculptor Mowry Baden that bookend an ambitious and extensive practice. The exhibition includes four new works that demonstrate Baden's longstanding commitment to sculpture that is physically engaging and participatory. Also included are two works, *Lintel* and *Shortall*, which date back to 1969. *Shortall* was recently featured in the Pomona College Museum of Art's series of exhibitions entitled *It Happened at Pomona: Art at the Edge of Los Angeles 1969-1973*.\*

Baden says about the new works:

*A couple of years ago, I started making wheeled sculptures that a viewer could push around. In Ark Arc, I started with an ordinary walker. Seizing the handles, the viewer is in a position to see the sculpture itself from a fixed angle and distance. The viewer can also move from place to place, using the sculpture's mirrors to explore the surrounding room and avoid collisions. Then I moved on to utility wheelchairs (Beginning, Middle and End) and fridge dollies (Russian Thistle). Pushing these around my studio, I thought it would be fitting to have at least one wheeled sculpture that couldn't go anywhere – a static, dark centre – Marsupial.*

- Mowry Baden, 2013

Physical involvement with Baden's sculptures rewards the willing viewer with experiences that energize the proprioceptive and tactile senses. What results is an accentuated sense of one's own body in relation to its surroundings. All of the works in *Califanada* de-center the sense of sight and challenge our perceptions of art and space.

Mowry Baden's sculptures have engaged the participating viewer for over five decades. He has exhibited with the gallery since its inaugural exhibition in 2005. Originally from Los Angeles, Baden has lived and worked in Canada since 1971, and currently resides in Victoria. He has taught sculpture at Raymond College, Pomona College, the University of British Columbia and the University of Victoria. In 2006, Baden received a Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts.

Baden has presented solo exhibitions at Artists Space in New York, the Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles, the Pomona College Art Museum in Claremont, CA, the San Diego Museum of Art, the Vancouver Art Gallery, and the Blackwood Gallery at the University of Toronto in Mississauga, among others. His work is featured in many notable collections, including the National Gallery of Canada, the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, the City of Seattle, the Exploratorium in San Francisco, and the American Psychological Association in Washington DC.

*\*The Pomona project was part of Pacific Standard Time: Los Angeles Art, 1945-1980, a wide-ranging series of exhibitions mounted throughout Southern California, supported by the Getty Foundation.*



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