

# WE ART IN PARADISE

@santabarbaramag

TOP TO BOTTOM:  
*Colocasia esculenta*  
(2019), 60 x 40 in.;  
*Rosa rugosa* (2018),  
37.5 x 25 in. (both  
acrylic and ink  
over John James  
Audubon prints).



## Paradise Lost

The work of Santa Barbara artist **PENELOPE GOTTLIEB** combines a colorful visual punch with a powerful message about the precarious state of Mother Earth. For several years, she has been “invading” ornithological prints by American naturalist John James Audubon, adding hand-painted invasive plants and other symbols of endangered flora and fauna, thereby interjecting her contemporary views on the state of nature and creating an important dialogue surrounding our planet’s uncertain future.

Gottlieb recently completed a large mural at UC Santa Barbara’s Art, Design & Architecture Museum depicting extinct plants, including a now-vanished plant from the nearby Channel Islands. The public is invited to attend the mural’s formal unveiling on August 8 at 5:30 pm.

Long represented by blue chip gallery Heather James Fine Art (which recently opened a location in Montecito), Gottlieb’s work is widely collected and exhibited.  
*Penelopegottlieb.com*. L.D.P.



## Earthly Delights

*The Garden of Earthly Delights* (c. 1495-1505)—Hieronymus Bosch’s iconic triptych depicting cavorting humans, exotic creatures, and oversize fruit—has amazed and amused viewers for centuries. Contemporary artist **ROBERTO BENAVIDEZ** has turned his admiration for the medieval masterpiece into sculpture: life-size paper piñatas based on Bosch’s fantastical animals. His first museum show—at UCSB’s Art, Design & Architecture Museum from July 13 through September 1—features more than 20 of these exquisite creations. Originally from Texas, where piñatas were a part of his youth, Benavidez identifies with the art form’s origin. “The piñata’s history is very multicultural,” he has says. “In my mind, it’s a reflection of me.” *Robertobenavidez.com*. L.D.P.

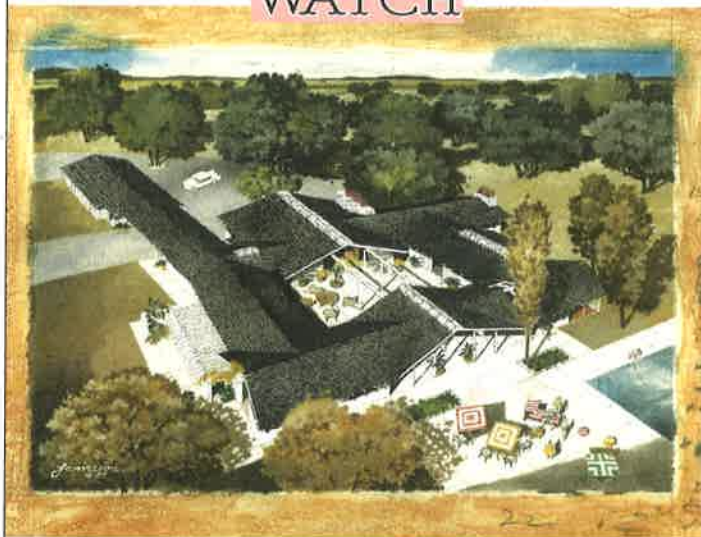
Benavidez’s *Bosch Beasts* No. 1, 2, 3 & 4 (2017), mixed media, various sizes ranging from 24 to 71 in.



PHOTOGRAPH: BOSCH BEASTS: ROBERTO BENAVIDEZ

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## ONE to WATCH



FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO  
CLIFF MAY, EWIN PHILBIN JR. HOUSE, WOODSIDE, CALIFORNIA, CA. 1959

CLOCKWISE FROM  
TOP RIGHT: Portrait of  
Silvia Perea; Walter S.  
White, First Assembly  
of God Church,  
Colorado Springs,  
Colorado, 1969-1979;  
Cliff May, Ewin Philbin  
Jr. House, Woodside,  
California, ca. 1959.



Those outside the architecture world may be surprised to learn that UCSB's Art, Design & Architecture Museum boasts the largest collection of architecture drawings in North America. That's something **SILVIA PEREA**, the newly appointed curator of the museum's architecture and design collection, would like the rest of the world to know. "One of the priorities I have is to grow not only our holdings but our accessibility," she says. "We have an extra-large collection for such a small museum."

To that end, Perea is helping the museum develop and build a new Collection Preservation and Research Center aided by a challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. She's also committed to growing the collection based on a new understanding of architecture as a very broad practice. "That means we're interested in collecting industrial design and different expressions of engineering, among others," she says.

Perea is certainly suited for these tasks. Armed with an architecture degree and a PhD from the Polytechnic University of Madrid (where she grew up), Perea completed postgraduate degree work at Columbia and Harvard, speaks four languages (French, Portuguese, English, and Spanish), and has curated dozens of exhibitions and contributed many essays to leading architecture journals.

For her first exhibition (running from July 13 through September 1; the opening reception is July 26 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm), Perea has invited local artist Mary Heebner to feature her work with selections from the museum's architecture collection, and asked local architect Jeff Shelton to pair his work with holdings from the museum's fine art collection. 805-893-2951, [museum.ucsb.edu](http://museum.ucsb.edu). L.D.P.