

VISUAL ARTS



Jon Ross



Barbara Brown

Left: "Dreamland," built by the San Francisco artist team Flux for Burning Man last year, is to be re-created at the 2017 Venice Biennale.

Above: Eva Hesse is the subject of a film by Marcie Begleiter. The film's narration is drawn from journals, correspondence and interviews of the sculptor, who died at 34.

CHARLES DESMARAIS *Art*

More exposure for Burning Man creations

As we near the end of summer, the scent of Burning Man is in the air. Tickets to this year's Labor Day weekend desert encampment are long gone, but San Francisco author (and Burning Man Project board member) **Jennifer Raiser's** book "Burning Man: Art on Fire" has been released in a "new and expanded edition." The large-format, color-filled album makes a case for the best of the attempts at art, which from all appearances range from the sophomoric to the splendiferous. (I have to go by photographs, not having attended the event.)

Meanwhile, plans are afoot to introduce the art of Burning Man internationally, concurrent with the 2017 Venice Biennale, which is to take place May 13-Nov. 26. We Are From Dust is a nonprofit startup that intends to bring large-scale interactive works to one of the many small islands near the Italian city during the 57th Biennale. A representative said in an email that the group is "looking at two islands off Venice to install the art. It's being sorted now."

With a budget of \$1.6 million, We Are From Dust announced a four-person board of **Timur Sardarov**, co-founder of Black Ocean, a technology investment company; **Keith Greco**, a designer for Cirque du Soleil special events and his own firm, Greco Decor; Italian businessman **Marco Podini**; and **Katz Kiely**, described as a digital entrepreneur.

A total of 80 artists submitted proposals for the Biennale exhibition. Nine proposals were accepted, with budgets ranging from about \$30,000 to \$160,000. The orga-

nization's grant support is expected to average about \$70,000.

Those receiving initial grants include artists **Flux Foundation**, **Charlie Gadeken** and **Laura Kimpton** of the Bay Area, as well as **Kirsten Berg**, **Jen Lewin**, **Sema Payain**, **Kate Raudenbush**, **Rosanna Scimeca** and **Rebekah Waites**.

Art on TV: The dazzling, obsessive, hippie baroque sculpture of San Francisco artist **David Beck** is the subject of a new documentary film that will air on KQED at 6 p.m. Aug. 14 and at 1:30 p.m. Aug. 18. A press release calls Beck "the smartest, most creative artist you've never heard of," though if you have ever seen a Beck work you will surely recall its brain-teasing design, meticulous detail and, often, kinetic ingenuity.

"Curious Worlds: The Art &

Imagination of David Beck" was produced by independent filmmaker **Olympia Stone**, who grew up with Beck's art: Her father was the iconoclastic **Alan Stone**, a famous New York gallery owner who eventually came to San Francisco. Stone père offered Beck his first exhibition at first sight of the work, as Beck tells it; today, he is represented by Hackett Mill Gallery in San Francisco.

The film is a worthwhile dive into a large selection of the art objects, and it keeps its focus there, seemingly in recognition that the artist's concepts are best expressed as astounding feats of engineering and craft.

To see a trailer: www.floatingstone.com/curiousworlds

Art on film: As fun as the David Beck movie is, "**Eva Hesse**," a documentary feature on the life and work of one of the greatest sculptors of the

A new film about artist **David Beck** shows him with his work "Kowtowed in Bovineville." The documentary, "Curious Worlds: The Art & Imagination of David Beck," examines the dazzling, obsessive, hippie baroque sculpture of the San Francisco artist.

Marie Chao

late 20th century, is on an entirely different plane. It opens Aug. 19 at the Roxie Theater in San Francisco and the Smith Rafael Film Center in San Rafael.

Quick-paced but heart-tugging from the start, the film is narrated in the words of the artist, drawn from her journals, correspondence and interviews. It ends with her embrace of death from a brain tumor at 34, having rapidly achieved a height of artistic acceptance matched by few women in the 1960s in any field.

"Her idea was to make an art that was on the borderline of uncontrollability," says one commentator. She began as a precocious painter and quickly progressed to pioneering work in such unconventional materials as fiberglass, plastic and latex. What she left behind was a legacy of suggestions for the future of sculpture that have

yet to be followed to their resolution.

To see a trailer: <https://youtu.be/l2b8m9DomKo>

Art as education: In response to the XQ Challenge, a national competition for proposals "reimagining the American High School," a local consortium of California College of the Arts, Summit Schools, the Silicon Schools Fund and the architecture and planning firm Gensler has advanced to the final round. Funded by **Laurene Powell Jobs**, the widow of Apple's **Steve Jobs**, the \$50 million challenge will award grants of \$10 million to each of five winners.

XQ: The Super School Project attracted more than 700 applications; the Bay Area proposal is one of 50 to advance to the final round. Winners will be announced the week of Sept. 12.

Last chance: **Elizabeth Bowler**, winner of the 2015-16 Tournesol Award, shows bony, bruised and swollen canvases that glow from the outside and literally glow from within, through Saturday, Aug. 6, at the Luggage Store Gallery ... "Take This Hammer: Art + Media Activism From the Bay Area," a challenging and ambitious presentation that, in the end, overshoots its laudable goal of social change, is well worth checking out at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts before it closes Aug. 14.

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