

## Ann Page: *Winged, Fluted and Reticulated* October 3 through December 31, 2015

Opening Reception: Saturday, October 3, 2:00-4:00pm with Artist talk at 2:00pm

Ann Page is the sixth TPF Artist-in-Residence. Her work has been exhibited nationally in private and university galleries and in group shows in museums beginning in 1968. Since 2000, she has been a full-time faculty member of the USC Roski School of Fine Arts. In 2008, she introduced 3D rapid prototyping as a contemporary tool to the Fine Arts Department. This spring, the artist was interviewed by Pamela Burgess, Chair, Theodore Payne Arts Council.

**Describe your 2015 TPF Artist-in-Residence project.** The exploration of California native seeds and seed imagery is the focus of my project. My exhibition at TPF includes drawings of large seeds floating in "galactic space" and rendered in charcoal and Prismacolor pencils, as well as sculptures of enlarged seeds created with 3D print technology and displayed in baskets to encourage people to pick them up and experience their textures and forms. *Winged, Fluted and Reticulated* refers to the textures and shapes of the seeds.

**TPF has an extensive seed program that was founded in 1960. What fascinates you about native seeds?** Living in the high desert, I am always amazed at how wildflowers manage to grow in such seemingly harsh conditions – heat, wind, low humidity and, sometimes, lack of rain. It is always interesting to see which wildflowers will bloom and when, in regard to environmental conditions. Pods have always attracted me as sculptural forms, and now I have found even more wonderful geometry in the seeds themselves, and in their textures that allow them to grab onto the earth and grow.

**What are your impressions of the TPF Seed Room and all those jars of seeds?** The Seed Room at Theodore Payne is an amazingly well-organized library of plant life and beautiful natural forms.

**As an artist and educator, you have a strong interest in merging art and technology. When and how did this focus begin?** I think that all artists, in creating their art, merge with technology. Today there is a tendency to separate art making into the categories of traditional or digital (or the hand versus the machine). Technology is the application of discovery. In art, anything that can create "contrast" is useful to an artist. My work has always worked in more than one dimension and medium. USC encouraged that "bent" by asking me to create an interdisciplinary class with the Viterbi School of Engineering. [Ann's subsequent collaborations and work with information systems, engineering and 3D printing are fascinating but space limited us from including that part of the interview! –Ed.]

**California has a history of artists working with technology and exhibitions addressing that subject. Why is that?** Beginning in the 1960s, California artists began looking for other ways to make and treat sculptural surfaces. They also explored industrial means of making things, such as vacuum forming, and plastic was one of the newer materials being utilized by artists. Research universities were always looking for applications for their scientific discoveries and oftentimes artists were asked to be the guinea pigs that tested those applications. Artists were the ones who would make unusual and interesting use of technology in order to express their ideas.

**Do you envision a disappearance of the artist's "hand" in art making? Will the mark of the hand be replaced by holograms or robotic artists?** Even if the artist's hand (modeling of a surface or directing mark making) disappears,



3D Models, 2015  
Clockwise from left: *Delphinium parishii*, *Phacelia distans*,  
*Agoseris retrorsa*  
Sizes range from 3 1/2" to 6 1/2"  
ABS plastic

the "art" will be the expression of the artist's mind and desire to express experience. All technology from the charred stick in a pre-historic cave, to 3D printing technology and digital media are only tools. It is how they are used that creates the art. Bodily involvement with a form of expression is important, in that the hand/eye might be sensing tools in determining the 'rightness' of a given form in three dimensions and in laying down a color or tone in a specific manner to emphasize meaning, and I think that will never disappear. The question is: Will a flat, photo-reproduced image of a Rembrandt be as enjoyable as seeing the actual painted surface?

**How has teaching influenced your work as an artist?** Teaching demands that you articulate ideas clearly, that you understand the fundamentals of building an image. Making art demands the same clarity of process, so in some ways teaching can hone one's skills at problem solving and in analyzing one's own work to understand how it can become a strong, clear and individual statement.

**What is your philosophy of teaching?** Structure and flexibility – structure in the learning procedure but with a mind open to the diversity and level of thinking in students who come from all different disciplines, skill levels and enthusiasm.

*This fall, Ann will be leading a two-part, clay seed-sculpting workshop at the Foundation on Saturdays: November 7 and 21, 9:00am-12:00pm. Details to come in the next Poppy Print and at [theodorepayne.org](http://theodorepayne.org).*