

Get Ready, Tucson Local Performance Art Creation to Challenge and Engage a Thinking Community

by Paul Tumarkin

In general, we think of artists as creative individuals. For Tucson photographer, videographer and Splinter Brothers & Sisters Warehouse owner Elizabeth Tobias, art is just as much about community. Founded as an artists' collective in the 1970s, the Splinter Brothers & Sisters Warehouse today represents a thriving microcosm whose challenges, concerns and diversity reflect the realities of the surrounding city.

"We wanted to create something totally new for the Splinter Brothers & Sisters Warehouse. We wanted to do something with other people. The TPAC Open Studio Tour was the perfect opportunity," says Tobias. So, if you're ready to experience Tucson in a whole new way, be sure to put Sublimation at Splinter Brothers & Sisters on your list of stops on November 10 and 11.

So what can you expect from Sublimation? Expect to see four totally unique artists and creative approaches. Expect to be engaged, thrilled and challenged. Expect to leave with new ideas as well as new questions. Expect, well...the unexpected.

Internationally presented performance artist Denise Uyehara offers modern dance combined with music and video, using her own body as the projection screen. Timor Siqin, working with Adam Cooper-Teran and calling themselves "Press Conference," meld media images with the music of Natalie Brewster Nguyen on cello, to create a series of narratives that culminate in an ecstatic, frenetic dance. Sculptor Eliane Paulino transforms industrial materials like recycled plastic bottles and bicycle inner tubes into a series of forms that imitate life, from single cells to plants to underwater creatures to human organs.

Just as a solid loses its form and becomes a gas through the process of sublimation, so Sublimation draws on concrete concepts drawn from personal ethnic identity, today's news headlines of war and climate change, and transforms them into an ethereal, shared community experience through dance, music, multimedia, installation and imagery.

According to Uyehara, the show challenges audiences to consider some pretty big questions: How can we be part of the larger world community? How can we listen and participate? How do we talk about identity in a way that we can learn from our challenges and be part of the larger community?

Tobias agrees. "I hope that we can really stir up conversation, shift some desires and, in the end, have everybody dancing to Timor's music. It'll be participatory in that a thinking audience will get the most out of it."

And community is what it's all about. Tobias, through pouring her time, energy and finances into the Splinter Brothers & Sisters Warehouse, represents a driving force for the arts in Tucson. She sees the potential and the creativity. She knows Tucson's artists as well as her audiences. With her energy and that of more artists like her, the Tucson arts community will continue to expand our horizons and challenge us to experience the world in new creative ways.

The Sublimation performance begins at 7:00 pm on November 10 and 11 at the Splinter Brothers & Sisters Warehouse. Doors open at 6:30. Studio installations will be open for viewing on both days. For more information about the TPAC Open Studio Tour on November 10 and 11, 2007, visit www.tucsonpimaartscouncil.org/ost/. To learn more about the Splinter Brothers & Sisters Warehouse, call 520.798.6009 or e-mail info@splinterbros.com

<http://www.downtownucson.org/downtownucsonan/current/arts.html#ready>