ALAMEDA COUNTY PUBLIC ART PROGRAM
CASTRO VALLEY LIBRARY AND CREEK
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CASTRO VALLEY LIBRARY AND CREEK

GRAND OPENING OCTOBER 31, 2009

Alameda County Board of Supervisors

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WELCOME TO THE CASTRO VALLEY LIBRARY AND CASTRO VALLEY CREEK

The Alameda County Arts Commission is proud to present this catalogue featuring the Alameda County Public Art Program at the Castro Valley Library and Castro Valley Creek. The Library is an important information hub as well as a multifaceted community center, and the daylighting of the Creek restores a section of the watershed and creates more natural open spaces for recreation and education. The public art plays a vital role in defining these areas, engaging visitors, and enriching the quality of life for the residents of Castro Valley and Alameda County. Visit often — find inspiration and information, explore, and build community.

THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

The Alameda County Public Art Program is based on the belief that the arts are an essential part of every successful and thriving community. The goals of the program are to generate positive, uplifting art experiences that create a sense of place, foster involvement with and respect for the regional community and users of the County buildings, and promote the economic vitality of the County through the enhancement of public areas. At its best, public art creates engaging spaces, serves neighborhoods by giving them identity and focus, and furthers a sense of community pride. The Public Art Program recognizes the spirit, special identity, and character of Alameda County.

The Arts Commission administers the County's Public Art Program with guidance from the Public Art Advisory Committee. Established in 1994 by Alameda County's “2% for Art” ordinance, this program provides for public art elements connected to capital improvement projects undertaken by Alameda County. Funding for the Castro Valley Library and Creek Public Art Program is generated by the County of Alameda's Castro Valley Library capital project, with additional funding from the Public Works Agency's Clean Water Program, and the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

The five site-specific public artworks at the new library and near the Castro Valley Creek as well as the eleven framed artworks created by four Alameda County artists are featured in this catalogue. Twenty-nine Castro Valley community members participated on the selection panels that chose the artists and artworks. Their direct involvement is an important aspect of the overall philosophy of this program that strives to involve community members throughout the project. Additional information about the artwork selection process, community involvement and a list of selection panel members are included in this catalogue.
PROGRAM PARTNERS

ALAMEDA COUNTY ARTS COMMISSION

The Alameda County Arts Commission is dedicated to improving the quality of life in Alameda County by nurturing a thriving environment for the arts and for cultural activities; promoting economic opportunities for Alameda County’s artists and arts organizations through programs such as arts grants, public art, and art in education; encouraging public participation in the arts; and actively advocating for the arts. The Alameda County Arts Commission is a division of the County of Alameda governed by a twenty-two-member commission appointed by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors.

ALAMEDA COUNTY LIBRARY

The Alameda County Library has been working in its communities for 100 years to provide the education necessary for a thriving community, the information that people need to make good decisions in their lives, and recreational opportunities for the families in our communities. As President Obama has said, “Literacy is the most basic currency of the knowledge economy we are living in today.” Throughout the history of America, libraries have been recognized as centers of lifelong learning. In the twenty-first century, libraries are the place to be for fun, inspiration, and the fulfillment of dreams.

ALAMEDA COUNTY CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

The Alameda County Clean Water Program works to protect and enhance local creeks and watersheds. Program activities include monitoring and assessment of watersheds, protection and enhancement of urban creeks, inspection for illicit discharge, promotion of best management practices to prevent water pollution, and engagement with the community to support watershed awareness and stewardship.

ALAMEDA COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District helps protect Alameda County residents and property from flooding while preserving the natural environment. The District is the devoted steward of a valuable resource — a vast flood-control infrastructure including channels, pump stations, dams, and other facilities. The District plans, designs, and constructs flood-control projects; maintains flood-control infrastructure; assists in planning new developments to preserve the integrity of the flood-control system; and preserves the natural environment through public outreach and enforcement of pollution-control regulations governing our waterways.

View of the Castro Valley Creek, pedestrian bridge, and the Castro Valley Library.
View of Library interior and the Children's Room mural by Jos Sances.
THE CASTRO VALLEY LIBRARY

The Castro Valley Library, one of ten in the Alameda County library system, has been designed to serve the growing Castro Valley community and others in Alameda County.

The Library’s mission is to educate, inspire, and inform. The character of the new building was envisioned as one that brings children to reading early in life, includes areas set aside for socializing, and offers everyone a pleasant, warm ambience and sense of community. The Library serves as a venue for community art and gatherings and as a center for technology. A vital partner with schools and other community organizations that offer programs promoting its mission, the Library contributes to the enrichment of lifelong learning for both students and adults.

In the fall of 2009 the vision became reality. The Library is now an important community information hub that serves residents’ needs relating to school, work, career, and personal development. It accomplishes these goals by offering dynamic reference and information services and by building a materials collection that is culturally relevant to the community.

Castro Valley Library offers a range of services for adults, children, teens, and seniors. Each of these services center around three crucial needs identified by the community: 1) an enlarged and up-to-date collection in all formats supporting the need for materials that inform, educate, and entertain; 2) informational, educational, and cultural programs; community events and local art displays; and 3) comfortable, generous seating available throughout the library for individuals and for group study. Technology plays a critical role in supporting and providing effective delivery of services. The Library offers expanded Internet access, providing flexible, mobile connectivity from all spaces in the building and offering new opportunities for distance learning, webcasts, and other alternative modes of communication.

The Castro Valley Library and the Castro Valley Unified School District have entered into a joint-use agreement to meet the needs of K-12 students with fresh and innovative programs. The joint-use projects will center on a Homework Center, Family Literacy Center, Career Center, and Computer Learning Center.
Users’ learning experiences at the Library are enhanced by the features of this innovative, green building. To provide healthy indoor air for children and adults, the County uses green cleaners, and chose paints, carpets, and furniture designed to minimize the release of harmful chemicals into the air. Large windows maximize natural light.

In designing and constructing the Library, with the leadership of the General Services Agency, the County took advantage of opportunities to reduce the building’s impact on the global environment. Located just two blocks from a Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station, the Library provides additional sustainable transportation options through convenient bike storage and preferred parking for fuel-efficient vehicles and carpools. A partnership with StopWaste.Org minimizes the waste stream generated by the library.

Water-efficient plumbing fixtures reduce water use by about 40% indoors, while water-wise landscaping saves water outdoors. A raised floor that maximizes heating and cooling efficiency, combined with energy-efficient lighting and equipment, saves 25% more energy than required by California’s strict energy efficiency standards. Reduced water and energy costs result in substantial savings for Alameda County taxpayers.

An Alameda County janitor uses a Green Seal certified cleaner and microfiber cloths to clean one of the Library’s water efficient fixtures. Green cleaning helps provide a healthy indoor environment for youth and adults alike.

The Library’s innovative raised floor allows for underfloor air circulation, which maximizes the efficiency of heating and cooling, saving energy and taxpayer dollars.

To help encourage sustainable transportation, the Library provides preferred parking for fuel efficient vehicles as well as carpools and van pools.
Covered bike racks and employee showers help encourage biking to the Library and is just one of the sustainable transportation options the site provides.

The Library's design maximizes natural light, providing a pleasant reading environment while saving electricity. View of Children's Room reading area.

View of daylighted creek with pedestrian bridge in the background.

The Library takes advantages of its proximity to Castro Valley Creek. The County has restored Castro Valley Creek, which was partially diverted through an underground concrete culvert, to a sunlit meandering stream lined with native trees and plants. Residents can cross a new pedestrian bridge made from a converted railroad flatcar. Children can learn about nature and science at a creekside amphitheater.

The opening of the Castro Valley Library provides the Alameda County Library with a venue for its mission of Destination, Education, Transformation, and does so in an environmentally responsible way that will safeguard the future of our children and grandchildren.
View of Library interior.
FRAMED ARTWORKS
CREATED BY FOUR ALAMEDA COUNTY ARTISTS

Four Alameda County artists were each commissioned to create a new series of wall-mounted, framed artworks for the library.

View of Library reading areas with framed artwork by Marion Coleman, Karen Frey, and Lisa Kokin.
MARION COLEMAN

*Play On!, 2009, Fiber collage, 38 1/2 x 38 inches*

_Play On!_ showcases a Castro Valley United soccer practice for children eight years old and under. The scene portrays the youthful energy of the game and the diversity of the players involved. Their enthusiasm is quite apparent in their stances around the field of play. Cotton fabrics and various threads are used in a fused appliqué process that is extensively stitched throughout the piece.

— Marion Coleman

KAREN FREY

*The Library, 2009, Watercolor on paper, 22 x 30 inches*

This painting is from a series that provides an intimate glimpse of everyday people doing ordinary things. My goal is to engage the viewer with familiar imagery that upon further scrutiny, creates awareness and a greater appreciation of the nuances of color, lighting, shapes, brushwork, and other techniques I use to express the subject matter. _The Library_ portrays a scene from the old Castro Valley Library.

— Karen Frey
Lisa Kokin

Love Always, Juanita, 2008, Mixed-media discarded book collage, 15 1/2 x 10 1/2 x 1 inches

The theme of this artwork is the interconnectedness of people. I used found photos of women from different eras and backgrounds and "connected" them with thread.

I like my work to be open-ended, which allows the viewer to creatively interpret what I have done. Sometimes people come up with interesting associations and meanings that I have not seen or understood before, and I like that.

This piece is made from an old math primer, found portraits of women that I sewed and stuffed with cotton batting, and cotton twine.

— Lisa Kokin

Mark G. Mertens

Sunrise on Chabot, 2008, Pastel on paper, 19 x 24 1/2 inches

This image shows Lake Chabot as viewed from above the east side trail with the morning light hitting the eucalyptus groves and distant hills. I chose this perspective because of its serenity and calm. The reflections of Live Oak Island in the still morning water are a refreshing break from its nearby urban setting. I was particularly inspired to paint this picture by the "first light" of the morning as it danced across the grass in the foreground.

— Mark Mertens
Tree of Knowledge is a large-scale wall sculpture that spans the exterior entry surfaces of the library. On either side of the front door is an openwork steel grid featuring images that make visual reference to significant works of literature from many cultures and across time. The images provide the opportunity for visitors to create their own reference and narratives. From the base of the grid springs a tree that grows along the walls. The tree symbolizes the far-reaching, deeply rooted powers of literature and reading, envelops the library entrance, and welcomes people to find new things inside.

The public library in my hometown was where I discovered Leonardo da Vinci and Buckminster Fuller, among other inspiring people who had a significant influence on my life. Libraries are not only stunning archives of knowledge and passion, they are also places of quiet contemplation, inspiration, and self-improvement.

— Eric Powell
The composition consists of projecting elements — “leaves” that bend and/or elongate progressively through the length of the artwork, referencing the leaflike qualities of the book page as well as growth patterns in nature. The rows of leaves also evoke crop patterns of the fecund landscape. The variegated colors of each leaf unit create a diversified gradient mix of colors within the entire composition; the viewing experience changes depending on the viewer’s vantage point.

Leaf-scape achieves a “collective” effect — many pieces acting together to portray a textured field, like the stacks of books in a library. The artwork is consistent with what we believe a library is: a collection or aggregate of diverse elements put together to render a holistic, engaging experience. Rather than creating an object or icon, we used the effects of light, color, and material arranged in an architecturally tectonic way to develop a texture for the space.

— Andre Caradec and Robert Fukuda
Leaf-scape, 2009. White acrylic, translucent polypropylene, color filters, 540 square feet
As the title suggests, the mural celebrates the human imagination and our quest for the acquisition of information and ideas. Implicit in the quest is freedom in other areas. Along with “Free Books,” the freedoms that all Americans are guaranteed and hold dear are enumerated at the bottom of the mural in low-relief lettering. Benjamin Franklin is a central figure because, as the “Father of American Libraries,” he well understood how important free lending libraries were, and remain, as supports to and stimulation for the other freedoms contained in our constitution’s “Bill of Rights.” Franklin recognized that the free exchange of ideas is necessary for maintaining a citizenry capable of fostering and continuing our democracy. He and the children on their magic-carpet books fly over the landscape of Castro Valley. Franklin holds a kite (referencing his interest in science and experiments with electricity) with a design that represents the original American flag and a rainbow tail signifying the cultural diversity that is a hallmark of our area.

The border is handmade carved-relief tile. The circular medallions show native flora: sticky monkey, Douglas iris, checkerbloom, Ceanothus, western columbine, yarrow, coyote mint, and blazing star. The phrases include: free speech, free people, free books, free thinking, free assembly, free press, free elections, free education, and free country.

— Jos Sances
Libraries are sites where imagination and knowledge intersect. Similarly, stellar constellations are a reading of nature; a combination of science and storytelling. Throughout history, constellations have provided civilizations a pointillistic canvas within which to perceive shapes and reference myths. Within constellations are the roots of creativity: observation, recognizing shapes, and creating patterns. Both libraries and the stars are portals of possibilities that enable us to reflect upon culture, time, space, and life. They are private sanctuaries yet belong to everyone. Under the stars and among books, we gain solace and stimulation.

The teens are presented as constellations — leaping into the sky, reaching outward, and moving forward. Like the stars, young adults symbolize hope and the belief in infinite possibilities. Their continuous expansion teaches us to embrace the future and leads us in new directions.

— Nancy Mizuno Elliott and Norman E. Moore
THE DAYLIGHTING OF CASTRO VALLEY CREEK

For more than 20 years, a segment of Castro Valley Creek flowed underground through a concrete culvert in Castro Valley. The section of creek was unearthed by the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District in an effort to restore the creek to a more natural state. The creek ‘daylighting’ project provides a diverse array of benefits, including improving water quality, enhancing wildlife habitat, and increasing public awareness of both the creek itself and stream restoration. The project highlights the possibilities for restoring streams in urban areas, which are typically the most difficult to restore, due to limited space availability.

The daylighting project was a two-phase effort. First, in order to restore the creek and make the surrounding area more attractive, the 300-foot-long section of concrete culvert near the new library was removed. The waterway was returned to a semi-natural channel, complete with in-stream rock grade-control structures, contoured slopes and native vegetation to control erosion and provide wildlife habitat. A rain garden and bioswale showcase cutting-edge methods for managing storm water. The second phase involved the adjoining 600-foot-long section of the creek which was enhanced by the removal of invasive species and the replacement with native vegetation to improve habitat. The restored environment also features a new pedestrian trail and bridge made from a recycled railroad flat car, educational signage, and public art.

Led by the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, the project was a collaborative effort of many organizations, including the Alameda County Library, the Alameda County General Services Agency, Alameda County Unincorporated Clean Water Program, the Alameda County Arts Commission, the Hayward Area Recreation and Park District, the City of Union City, and several state and federal regulatory agencies. The Castro Valley Creek daylighting project demonstrates what can be accomplished when the community and public agencies work together to protect and restore the environment.

View of Castro Valley Creek and pedestrian bridge made from a converted railroad flatcar. The creekside amphitheatre can be seen in the background.
CREEK AWARENESS AND STEWARDSHIP

Castro Valley Creek is full of life even though during the summer, its creek bed may be dry in places. Natural creeks are critical to the local ecosystem, providing, habitat and sustaining a vast array of flora and fauna year-round within the riparian corridors. Even a small section of creek like this one, if restored with plants native to the watershed, can harbor an astonishing abundance and diversity of living things. Clean water is essential to life and improving water quality is an important part of maintaining a healthy creek community.

No matter where you live, you live in a watershed. Whether you live next to a creek or miles from one, your everyday activities can affect the quality of water in our creeks and the Bay. Creeks are places of refuge and sustenance for wildlife and people. This portion of Castro Valley Creek has been restored with plants native to this area, and is once again full of life. An ecological community formed by the interactions of a group of organisms within their physical environment. Ecosystems are the webs of life upon which all living things rely and in which each organism has a place. A healthy ecosystem has a great diversity of species.

The Bay Area’s native habitats, and consequently our wildlife, have been reduced to a fraction of what they used to be. The most important way to preserve our wildlife is to protect and restore their habitats. Riparian ecosystems support a greater diversity of life than perhaps any other habitats in the Bay Area. They are essential for all or part of the life cycle of many native plants and wildlife. Preservation and restoration of riparian habitat is vital for all communities. As water from rain or sprinklers washes over landscapes and roads it picks up material on the surface such as oil, pesticides, silt, and trash. It flows down storm drains and into creeks and the Bay. We all must do our part to keep the water in creeks clean.
The design for *Elevated Fence* is driven by transparency, relationship to the site, and the history of Castro Valley. Transparency draws the eye through the design and toward the creek. Loosely arranged vertical forms develop a natural, varied patina and compliment plant life, which can grow up and through the design. While the fence is contemporary, its construction method echoes the rural fencing that was once characteristic of the Castro Valley area, and allows the work to be responsive to the landscape.

Thick bars of hand-forged steel are set at different angles. The tops of the bars invite touch, reference horseshoe nails, and provide desirable perching areas for birds. A ribbon of tensioned, galvanized steel mesh is attached to the posts. The spacing between posts is everchanging, with divisions becoming more numerous whenever the creek bends. In this way, the viewers’ attention is directed toward the curves the creek describes. A tight bend leads to a cluster of verticals and the posts spread out where the creek runs straight. Variations in the height, spacing, and angle of the posts keep the viewer engaged and compliment the landscape that informs the design.

— David Duskin and David Whippen
ART SELECTION PANELS

For this program, the Alameda County Arts Commission conducted an open-call competition, inviting regional professional artists to apply for the program. Following the guidelines within the Alameda County Arts Commission Public Art Regulations, the Arts Commission appointed selection panels to select the artwork. Each panel was comprised of approximately ten members, most of them Castro Valley community members.

At their first meeting, the art selection panels reviewed the artists’ applications and identified semifinalists for each project. The Arts Commission, in partnership with the Alameda County Library, conducted a community roundtable event to provide an opportunity for community members to share their thoughts about the artwork for the future library before the artists created their proposals. Over 150 community members attended.

The semifinalists made their proposals, which were then placed on public view at the old Castro Valley Library and other locations in the community. Community members were able to submit written comments that were shared with the selection panels when they reconvened for the second meeting to review the proposals and interview the artists. The selection panels recommended artists to receive the commissions; the recommendations were reviewed and approved by the Alameda County Public Art Advisory Committee, the Alameda County Arts Commission, and the Alameda County Board of Supervisors.

LIBRARY ENTRY ARTWORK SELECTION PANEL

Seyed Alavi, Oakland artist
Susan Bass, Castro Valley artist; Board Member, A.R.T., Inc.
Ken Carbone, Castro Valley business owner; Vice-Chair of the Alameda County Planning Commission; past member, Castro Valley Municipal Advisory Council
Lilli Wesling Hart, Castro Valley resident
Donna Krehbiel, Castro Valley Library Reference Librarian
Jo A.S. Loss, Castro Valley resident; Vice-President, Castro Valley Board of Education
Carolyn Moskovitz, Castro Valley Library Manager
Richard Stuart, Castro Valley resident; member, Castro Valley Lions Club; commercial artist
Carol Sugimura, Castro Valley resident; member of Castro Valley Municipal Advisory Council; Castro Valley Library volunteer

TEEN ROOM ARTWORK SELECTION PANEL

Mitzi Donahue, Castro Valley Library Clerk
Philip Dow, Oakland artist
Michelle Gaston, Castro Valley High School student
Linda Harris, Principal Librarian, Communities & Collections, Alameda County Library Administration
Christa Schanda, Castro Valley artist and educator; A.R.T., Inc. member
Nathan Silva, Teen Services and Senior Services Library Assistant, Castro Valley Library
Patricia Taylor, Castro Valley resident; active in the Red Cross and League of Women Voters
Julie Tedesco, Castro Valley resident and business owner
Quynh Tran, Castro Valley resident

Karen Frey, Village Barber Shop, 2009, Watercolor on paper, 22 x 30 inches
CHILDREN’S ROOM AND MAIN READING ROOM ARTWORK SELECTION PANEL

Denise Baker, Castro Valley Library Children’s Services Librarian
Matt Clowry, Castro Valley resident
Gloria Delucchi, Castro Valley resident; A.R.T., Inc. member
Mary Dhont, Castro Valley resident; nurse at Children’s Hospital
Larry Duckwall, Castro Valley Library Reference Librarian
Julie Finegan, Gallery Director, Adobe Art Center
Linda Kriletich, Hayward artist; arts educator, A.R.T., Inc. member; Toastmasters member
Al Murdoch, Hayward artist; A.R.T., Inc. member
Cathy O’Dea, Castro Valley resident; elementary school librarian

SCULPTURAL FENCE AND BRIDGE RAILING ARTWORK SELECTION PANEL

Marion Coleman, Castro Valley artist; member of the Friends of the Castro Valley Library
Sharon Gosselin, Associate Environmental Compliance Specialist, Alameda County Clean Water Program
Christin Hablewitz, Public Art Project Manager, City of Oakland
John Hartnett, Heritage and Cultural Arts Supervisor, City of Dublin
Bruce King, Castro Valley resident; member of the Friends of the Castro Valley Library and Friends of the San Lorenzo Creek
Vicki Lewis, Castro Valley Library Page; Castro Valley resident
Scott Miner, Castro Valley artist and business owner; welding instructor at Las Positas College
Paul Modrell, Assistant Environmental Compliance Specialist, Alameda County PWA
Susanne Scott, Castro Valley artist
Katherine McKenney Shea, Castro Valley resident; trustee for the Oakland Museum of California
Carla Schultheis, Associate Environmental Compliance Specialist, Alameda County Clean Water Program

FRAMED ARTWORK SELECTION PANEL

Carin Adams, Museum Curatorial Specialist, Professional Services Department, Oakland Museum of California
Carol Jones Brown, Castro Valley artist; arts educator; Board Member, A.R.T., Inc.
Laura Coon, Castro Valley resident
Doris Ferreira, Castro Valley resident; Treasurer of the Friends of the Castro Valley Library
Ellen Gould, Castro Valley resident
Donald Markos, Castro Valley resident
Maureen Oldengame, Supervising Secretary II, Alameda County Library Administration; Castro Valley resident
Vivian Robinson, Castro Valley Circulation Supervisor
Celeste Steward, Materials Selection Librarian, Alameda County Library Administration; Castro Valley resident
Lawrence Udell, Castro Valley resident

Detail of sculpture, Leaf-scape by Andre Caradec and Robert Fukuda

Detail of sculpture, Tree of Knowledge by Eric Powell
ALAMEDA COUNTY ARTS COMMISSION

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Daniel Woldeisenbet, Director
Alameda County Public Works Agency

Lori Fogarty, Director
Oakland Museum of California

Stephen Beal, President
California College of the Arts

Philip Hofstetter, Art Department Chairperson
Cal State East Bay, Hayward

Lawrence Rinder, Director
Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive

Damien Gossett, Assistant Deputy Director
Community Development Agency (Director’s designee)

Julie Muniz, Associate Curator of Crafts and Decorative Arts
Oakland Museum of California (Director’s designee)

Elizabeth Thomas, MATRIX Curator
Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (Director’s designee)

Ann Wettrich, Co-Director, Center for Art and Public Life
California College of the Arts (President’s designee)

Vicki L. Winston, Management Services Administrator
Alameda County Public Works Agency (Director’s designee)

Public Art Advisory Committee
Current and past members who worked on the planning and oversight of the Castro Valley Library Public Art Program

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Lynne Baer
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Lauren Elder
Steve Jones

Donald Jower
Karin C. Nelson
Sue L. Rose
Francis Rush
Nancy Selvin
Elizabeth Sher

Mark G. Mertens, Crow Creek Morning, 2008, Pastel on paper, 19 x 24 1/2 inches
CASTRO VALLEY PUBLIC ART, LIBRARY AND CREEK PROJECT TEAM

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Hayward Area Recreation and Park District
City of Union City
California State Library
California Department of Fish and Game
Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

(Marion Coleman, Keeping Step (detail), 2009, Fiber collage, 38 x 39 inches)
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This program is funded through the Alameda County’s “2% for Art” public art ordinance managed by the Alameda County Arts Commission, on behalf of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors with additional funding from the Alameda County Public Works Agency’s Clean Water Program and the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

Alameda County Arts Commission Castro Valley Library and Creek Catalogue
Printing: DSL Printing | Printed on New Leaf Paper, 80% recycled / 60% post-consumer waste
Images on cover and title page are details of artwork commissioned for the Castro Valley Library and Creek as well as images of the Library and Creek.
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