



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Public Library

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Internationally Known San Diego Artist Harold Cohen to Exhibit New Works at Taylor Library *Exhibition Highlights 10th Anniversary of Visual Arts Program*

San Diego — The 10th Anniversary of the San Diego Public Library's Visual Arts Program is being celebrated with a series of noteworthy exhibitions throughout 2007 and 2008. One of the most thought provoking, "Harold Cohen: AARON's Garden (New Digital Images by AARON, a Computer Program Written by the Artist)," will open May 23, 2007 at the Earl & Birdie Taylor/Pacific Beach Branch Library and continue through July 8. A reception honoring Cohen and AARON will be held at the library on Sunday, May 27, from 1 to 4 p.m. The exhibition and reception are free and open to the public. A talk by Cohen will be announced at a later date.

Cohen (Professor Emeritus of Visual Arts, UCSD) is an internationally known artist and pioneer in the field of artificial intelligence. For the past 38 years, Cohen, now in his late seventies, has been developing and refining a computer program (AARON) that creates works of art with no human input. Cohen's unique success at the seemingly impossible task of imbuing software with the creative instincts of a human artist (and in the process inventing a completely new and historically significant way of making art) has earned him stellar international reputations in the worlds of science and fine art. Works by Cohen/AARON can be found in major museum collections throughout the world and are frequently shown in important venues internationally.

As ingenious and revolutionary as Cohen's work with algorithms and artificial intelligence is, the ultimate test of its success is the quality of AARON's art. By any standards, it is spectacular.

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Since the last Cohen/AARON library exhibition in 2004, the art has become more complex and abstract. Also, Cohen has developed a new way of presenting AARON's art; archivally sealing the digital prints with layers of polymer. Not only are these works stunning technical achievements, but their originality, scale, graphic power, sophistication, and color rival those of conventionally conceived and executed art. Cohen, in the guise of AARON, raises profound questions about the nature of art, creativity, perception, and even life itself.

The library exhibition will showcase approximately thirty works of art generated by AARON within the past few months. Throughout the run of the exhibition, CityTV 24 will rebroadcast an hour-long interview with Cohen originally taped in 2004 and conducted by Library Curator Mark-Elliott Lugo as part of the ongoing Profiles artist interview series. National publicity for the library exhibition will include a major ad in *Art in America*, one of the world's most influential art periodicals.

The San Diego Public Library's Visual Arts Program is a nationally-recognized series of exhibitions, lectures, a television program, and other art-related activities. The mission of the program is to demonstrate the Library's role as a cultural institution embracing a broad range of disciplines, while assisting San Diego's mid-career and older professional artists in achieving wider local, regional and national attention. Visual Arts Program exhibitions are made possible, in part, by contributions from individuals, volunteer efforts, and The Friends of Central Library. For more information about the Cohen exhibition, or tax-deductible contributions to the Visual Arts Program, please contact Library Curator Mark-Elliott Lugo at 619-238-6627.

The Pacific Beach/Taylor Branch Library is located at 4275 Cass St. For more information, contact the library at 858-581-9934 or visit the San Diego Public Library's web site at www.sandiegolibrary.org. NOTE TO EDITORS: High resolution digital images of AARON's art are available for publication. Please contact the library curator to have these emailed to you. Also available are advance copies of essays by Cohen and Lugo slated for publication in a catalog being published in conjunction with an exhibition of Cohen's/AARON's art in Europe.

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