



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
**Communications Department**

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Photographs available upon request

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**LIBRARY MARKS CENTENNIAL OF “HATFIELD’S FLOOD” WITH ART EXHIBIT  
ON WATER, DROUGHT AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

*Twelve San Diego-area artists address the past, present and future of water in “Rainmaker”*

SAN DIEGO — One hundred years ago, the Panama-California Exposition was underway and San Diegans were worried about drought. Reservoirs were dangerously low, hindering the young city’s ability to expand. Along came Charles Hatfield, a “moisture accelerator” with a track record of success. He promised to fill Lake Morena to the brim – 10 billion gallons of water – and the City Council accepted his offer.

What followed still shapes the city today. Whether caused by nature or Hatfield, a storm came, bringing the wettest period in recorded history, before or since. More than 30 inches of rain fell over four weeks, resulting in homes and bridges being wiped out, dams collapsing, and farming communities swept away.

Memories of “Hatfield’s Flood” helped drive the creation of the Mission Valley Flood Control Channel and other systems designed to divert rainwater to the ocean – a factor in the region’s ability to benefit from the El Niño predicted for this winter.

Water, drought, history and the future are subject matter for twelve of San Diego’s most notable artists in *Rainmaker*, opening Saturday, September 19, 2015 in the Art Gallery on the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor of the San Diego Central Library @ Joan ^ Irwin Jacobs Common. Curated by Susan Myrland, the exhibition runs through November 29, 2015. A reception is planned for Saturday, September 19 from 12 to 2 p.m.

The artists in *Rainmaker* – Adam Belt, Roman de Salvo, Michael Field, Lisa Hutton, Gabriel Kalmuss-Katz, Dominic Paul Miller, Margaret Noble, Scott Polach, Eva Struble, Joshua Tonies, Jim Wilsterman and Sheldon Wood – fill the gallery with sound, sculpture, painting, poetry, photography, video and digital animation. They explore the presence and absence of water, its mystery and allure, and the futility of our attempts to control the environment.

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Artworks include Margaret Noble's *I Have Arrived*, a sound-sculpture with a witty take on the social importance of lawns, and Joshua Tonies' thoughtful *Kringla Heimsins*, a wall-sized animation that responds to the viewer, with images from international currency reshaped into forms representing ecological conditions such as ocean acidification and variations in the earth's orbit. The title translates to "pretzel world" or "the circle of the world."

Photographer Michael Fields shows us the sea before the sea – islands that rose up from ancient Lake Cahuilla when it filled the desert for almost 100 miles, 300 feet deep, six times larger than the present Salton Sea. Multimedia artist Scott Polach mixes the mundanity of water rights with the magic of water's alchemy in his video and photographs, *Laying Claim* and *Make 'em Hum*, while painter Eva Struble imagines a Navy without water.

*Rainmaker* will also present Charles Hatfield's scales, measuring tools and well-used barometer, which were donated to the library by his brother, Paul, before his death in 1974. Paul Hatfield's descendants will attend the opening reception.

### **About the San Diego Public Library's Exhibition Program**

This program allows free access to cultural exhibitions and the visual arts, while promoting San Diego artists and creative community groups.

Additional information on current exhibitions at the Central Library and 35 branch libraries is available on the Library's website at [www.sandiegolibrary.org](http://www.sandiegolibrary.org).

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