



THE
CENTER
FOR ART
IN WOOD

formerly the wood turning center

The Center for Art in Wood

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Images available upon request

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Philadelphia, PA (March 2013) Philadelphia's internationally renowned The Center for Art in Wood announces the upcoming exhibition *Susan Hagen: Social Studies* curated by Robin Rice and scheduled for June 7 – July 20, 2013. The opening reception will be held on First Friday Weekends, Friday, June 7th from 5 – 8 PM, with a gallery talk by the artist on Saturday, June 8th, from 2 – 3 PM.

Susan Hagen: Social Studies is an in-depth survey of recent work by Philadelphia artist Susan Hagen, which addresses themes of social awareness, personal identity and the human condition. Hagen's detailed, small-scale sculptures are constructed of carved wood (burned, bleached or painted) and mixed media, and her drawings employ conté and ink wash. Though her techniques are mostly traditional, she brings her perspective as a contemporary American woman to her studies of urban life and social issues. In addition to the artworks, the exhibition will also present video interviews with the artist. *Susan Hagen: Social Studies* will be accompanied by a number of public programs, including gallery talks by the artist and curator, demonstrations and workshops. Ms. Hagen's work is represented by the Schmidt Dean Gallery in Philadelphia, where it will be featured in an overlapping exhibition, *Susan Hagen: This Is Real/ New Work About Life In Philadelphia* (May 18 – June 29).

Susan Hagen: Social Studies includes four series of works, which were created over the last decade. Each body of work explores a part of society that is sometimes misunderstood, under-appreciated or marginalized.

- ***The Lost Army (2004-2005)***
- ***Recollection Tableaux (2006-2007)***
- ***Teenager Project (2006-2012)***
- ***Citizens (People of Philly) (2012-present)***

For two of the projects included in the exhibition, *Recollection Tableaux* and *The Lost Army*, Hagen investigated her subjects through archival photographs, newspaper articles, and interviews. For *Teenager Project* and *Citizens (People of Philly)* she worked more directly with her participants, interviewing and photographing specific individuals.



The Lost Army was created as a response to the US government's decision to send troops to Iraq in 2003, but developed into a more personal study of the individuals who served in the war. This series of "pocket" monuments is made up of a company of one-foot tall carved wood soldiers, charred velvety black.

Recollection Tableaux, originally created for Philadelphia Eastern State Penitentiary, consists of ten sculptural dioramas that document ordinary and extraordinary moments from the history of the penitentiary. They incorporate carved, bleached wood figures in monochromatic white settings with mixed-media props and furniture.

Teenager Project is a series of painted carved-wood portraits of teenagers as they attempt to define their identities in modern culture. These works explore the character and sense of style of individual teens, and were created intermittently over 6 years.

Citizens (People of Philly) is Hagen's most recent project, which the artist describes as "an attempt to document the people who make up the texture of urban life around me in Philadelphia." This ongoing project consists of detailed and colorful portraits of people from different communities and subcultures, including homeless people, community gardeners, skaters, and protestors. It also incorporates objects from public life, such as newspaper boxes and parking meters. Hagen says: "My intention is for viewers to take with them a deeper understanding of this moment in the life of our city as well as a more compassionate appreciation of human diversity."

Susan Hagen received an MFA in sculpture from the Cranbrook Academy of Art in 1983 and a BFA in sculpture from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design in 1980. Her work has been included in exhibitions at The Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami Basel, World Tattoo Gallery in Chicago, and many other museums and galleries throughout the United States. She teaches at Bucks County Community College in Newtown, PA, and has written hundreds of reviews and articles for the Artblog, the Philadelphia Citypaper, and other publications. Recent honors have included a fellowship from the Independence Fellowships in the Arts and a residency at the Ragdale Foundation in Lake Forest, IL.

The Center for Art in Wood is an arts and educational institution whose mission is leading the growth, awareness, appreciation and promotion of artists and their creation and design of art in wood and wood in combination with other materials. The Center participates in First Friday Weekends in conjunction with the Old City Arts Association.

Programming at The Center is supported in part by generous donations by all Members and Friends of The Center. **Cambium Circle:** Walter Balliet, Andrew Bender, Lee Bender & Carol Schilling, Fleur Bresler, Carol Bresler & Carolyn Billinghamurst, Edward Bresler & family, Sidney & Phyllis Bresler & family, John Dziejdzina, Susan Ellerin, Connie & David Girard-diCarlo, Richard & Rita Goldberg, Phil & Monika Hauser, Bruce & Eleanor Heister, Robyn & John Horn, David & Jane Hummel, Jeff & Susan Kahn, Bruce Kaiser, Arthur Kaplan & Duane R. Perry, Jerome & Deena Kaplan, Stephen Keeble & Karen Depew, Alan Keiser, Don Roy King, Leonard & Norma Klorfine, Tim & Sheryl Kochman, Alan LeCoff, Albert & Tina LeCoff, Earl Powell, Judson Randall, Seymore Rubin, Ronald Sheehan, Bil Sticker, Robert & Mary Lou Sutter, Matthew Van Dyke, Ronald & Anita Wornick.

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Images (top to bottom)

Susan Hagen, *Soldier #1*, The Lost Army series (2004-2005)

Susan Hagen, *Hooded Man*, Recollection Tableaux series (2006-2007)

Susan Hagen, *Lahn*, Teenager Project series (2006-2012)

Susan Hagen, *September*, *Citizens (People of Philly)* series (2012-present)