

# Wendy Testu

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

As a full time artist and arts administrator I prefer to work on long-term projects, where the art making involves the community and address's environmental and social issues. Most of my childhood was spent in a small town in northern California. I grew up in a household where my stepfather was part of the lumber industry, when massive deforestation was happening and in 1991 a pesticide chemical spill from a train wreck killed one of the rivers near my house. At that young age I knew I was an environmentalist, but still hadn't discovered how to be part of that movement. I moved to San Francisco when I was 17yrs. old to attend design school. I was a fashion designer for ten years then transitioned from clothing to clay, from functional ceramics to sculpture, to installation art and then to teaching and managing art programs in a public elementary school. I discovered how much I enjoyed the collaborative process in working with youth and the school community and I was drawn into creating more projects with youth that explored local issues. I also discovered how video documentation really tells the fullest story of my work and I am now incorporating environmental activism into community art projects and using film as my medium. I come from a long line of teachers and activists and have come to a natural place in my career as a teaching artist who focuses on environmental and social issues. I value experimental work that shows us how we can use our creative process in our every day lives and brings communities together to explore culturally relevant issues.

Born: Mt. Shasta, California 1971

Lives and works in San Francisco, CA. with her husband and eight year old daughter

2006 – Present / Teaching Artist, Arts Administrator

2004 – Present / Installation Artist, Filmmaker

1997– 2004 / Raku Ceramic Artist, Sculptor

1990 – 1997 / Fashion Designer

## **EDUCATION**

1994 - 1997 Studies at The Clay Studio / San Francisco, CA

1989 – 1991 The Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising / AA in fashion design - *magna cum laude* / San Francisco & Los Angeles, CA

## **GRANTS, AWARDS & COMMISSIONS**

- 2009 • Fellowship / 'National Arts Strategies' Future Leadership Fellowship/ Nominated by the San Francisco Bay Area Emerging Arts Professionals / a pilot program aimed at supporting the next wave of arts and culture executives / October
- 2008-09' • The Welcome To The NeighborHOOD Project / Arts Program creator, administrator & artist / collaboration with four other artists and youth from the non-profit Literacy For Environmental Justice / January 2008 – Present/ San Francisco, CA
- San Francisco Arts Commission, Arts & Communities: Innovative Partnerships – Realization / Cultural Equity Grant
  - The San Francisco Foundations-Koshland Program, Mini-Grant
  - LEF Foundation Grant
  - The Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation Grant
- 2007 • 0 waste Grant, San Francisco Department Of The Environment / SrapEden SF - The Black Rock Arts Foundation, in partnership with the Neighborhood Parks Council & The Mission Parents Group / *Casa De La Imaginación* / Parque Ninos Unidos & Leonard R. Flynn Elementary School/ June-present / San Francisco, CA
- 2006 • Commission / Stanford University – Video project for the *Elision* Dance Premier / collaboration with choreographer Hope Mohr / May 6<sup>th</sup> / Stanford Memorial Theater /Stanford, CA
- 2004 • Award / Redwood Forest Foundation / Sculptural Installation

## **VIDEOGRAPHY**

2008-Present

- The Welcome To The NeighborHOOD Project -Documentary film / Director, videographer & editor
- The Stick / A short Documentary film about the history and founders of Candle Stick State Park Recreation Area in Hunters Point, SF, CA / Mentoring youth from the community In the creation of the film/ assisting with filming and editing

2008-09'

- The Welcome To The NeighborHOOD Project- Youth Film / Collaboration with Youth / assisted youth in producing, filming and editing a 5 minute video installation about Icons in their community

2005 • Nunca Más / video installation/ Director, videographer & editor

## **ARTS ADMINISTRATOR & TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

2008-Present

- The Welcome To The NeighborHOOD Project / Arts Program creator, administrator & artist at Literacy for Environmental Justice / organized meetings with youth & artists for one year, 16 youth 5 artists / attended & filmed every meeting / wrote & managed all grants / creating documentary book, film & gallery installation / January 2008 – Present/ San Francisco, CA

2006-Present

- Leonard R. Flynn Elementary, Arts Program creator, administrator & teaching artist, Parent Lead Visual Arts Program / wrote curriculum to meet the standards, organized & trained parent volunteers (in both Spanish and English) to teach a ten week arts program in all second grade classes (15 adults and 80 students) / San Francisco, CA

## **ARTS ADMINISTRATOR & TEACHING EXPERIENCE Continued**

2006/07'

- Leonard R. Flynn Elementary / Arts Program creator, administrator & teaching artist /after school programs (Child Development Center & YMCA) / (collaborated & co-taught with an Architect) architecture classes, focusing on using scavenged materials in construction + Sculpture classes using reclaimed materials /ScrapEden-0 waste Grant / 1 ½ months / 130 students K-5<sup>th</sup> / students work is presented in the *Casa De La Imaginación* ('A Fort' made from scavenged materials, using their design ideas) the 'Casa' is installed at the school.
- Mission Parents Group / Teaching Artist / Taught architecture and sculpture class to toddlers and parents using scavenged materials.

2005/06'

- Leonard R. Flynn Elementary, Parent Lead Visual Arts Project / Arts Program creator, administrator & teaching artist / organized volunteers, taught four Kindergarten classes / October 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> / San Francisco, CA
- Montalvo Arts Center / Teaching Artist / Young Artists in Residence: Fine Arts Day Camp / creating environmental art on Montalvo's wooded trails / 30 students, 10-13 yrs. old / July 31<sup>st</sup>. – August 4<sup>th</sup> / Saratoga, CA
- Wilson Elementary School / Teaching Artist / 'The Basics of Clay' / teacher assisted artist in residence, Michael Kaplenk /five classes a day / kindergarten – 6<sup>th</sup> grade / March 6<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> / Medford, Oregon

## **PUBLIC & COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

2009 • The Neighborhood Initiative for Cultural Engagement (the N.I.C.E. Project) / The Red Poppy Art House / Panel discussion on sustainability / The Welcome To The NeighborHOOD Community Arts Project

2008-09'

- The Welcome To The NeighborHOOD Community Arts Project at Literacy For Environmental Justice/ a collaboration with four other artists and youth from the non-profit Literacy For Environmental Justice /Together, we are exploring the history, focusing on the environment, celebrating the community, and addressing the future of the rapidly changing neighborhood of Bayview Hunters Point in SF through various artistic mediums. The work will be presented at the EcoCenter in Herons Head Park & at The African American Art and Culture Complex / January 2008 – Present/ San Francisco, CA

2007-Present

- Casa De La Imaginación (House Of The Imagination) / Community Arts Collaboration with Mission parents group and students from Leonard R. Flynn Elementary / to create an interactive public sculpture 'A Fort' made from scavenged materials from the neighborhood June – August Parque Ninos Unidos / August-Present Leonard R. Flynn Elementary School / San Francisco, CA

2006 • Montalvo Arts Center / site specific public installation /Collaboration with students August– present / Saratoga, CA

2005 • Nunca Más / roaming 15ft. truck used as art piece / March 2005-December 2008 / truck roams from San Diego, CA to Portland, OR  
• Nunca Más / Public Event at Ocean Beach, sculpture burning, video projection & audience procession to SoulArch Gallery / March / San Francisco, CA

## **SOLO & TWO PERSON EXHIBITIONS**

- 2006 • *Nunca Más Retrospective* / California Patients Group Gallery / Solo show / October–November / Los Angeles, CA
- 2005 • *Nunca Más* / SoulArch Gallery / Solo show / March–May / San Francisco, CA
- 2003 • *Scars in Dark Water* / SoulArch Gallery / two person show / March – May / San Francisco, CA

## **SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

- 2009 • The Welcome to the NeighborHOOD Project / The African American Art and Culture Complex, Sargent Johnson Gallery / October 21, 2009 – January 10, 2010 / San Francisco, CA
- 2006 • *Visual Aids, Postcards From The Edge* / Sikkema Jenkins & Co. / December 1-3 / New York, NY
- *AVES for National Bird Day* / Space 15 / Invitation by The Animal Protection Institute / January / Sacramento, CA
- 2005 • *It's all the same* / Space 743 / August – October / San Francisco, CA
- *BAYENNALE* / International Biennial Event / July 23<sup>rd</sup> –August 7<sup>th</sup> / Jack London Square / Oakland, CA
- *California Current* / Gallery Route One / June–July / Point Reyes Station, CA
- *Urban Jungle* / 111 Minna / United Nations World Environment Day, Art into Action / Internationally juried exhibition / curator Yuri Psinakis / June / San Francisco, CA
- *Urban Jungle/ Fort Mason Center* / United Nations World Environment Day, Art into Action / Internationally juried exhibition / curator Yuri Psinakis / June / San Francisco, CA
- 2004 • *Spaceholders* / Space 743 / September / San Francisco, CA
- *Environmental Art: Artists Working with Nature* / curator Ursula Jones / Gualala Arts Center / September / Gualala, CA
- *MoveOn.org.* / I.C.A.N. Gallery / Auction (by invitation) / July / San Francisco, CA
- 2003 • *17 + Studio Artists of the Clay Studio* / Space 743 / September –October / San Francisco, CA
- *Art for Aids* Auction (by invitation) / San Francisco, CA
- *Affinity for the cup* / Exploding Head Gallery / nationally juried show, curator Richard Hotchkiss / February / Sacramento, CA
- 2002 • *Art for Aids* / Auction (by invitation) / July / San Francisco, CA
- *Tails Of The City* / sponsored by Microsoft® / Auction (by invitation) / April / San Francisco, CA
- 2001 • *Little Children's Aid Junior Auxiliary* / Auction (by invitation) / August / San Francisco, CA
- *Parts Of A Whole* / Space 743 / October / San Francisco, CA
- 1999 • *Home Grown* / Space 743 / October / San Francisco, CA

## **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- 2009
- Mahmoud, Jasmine / theartpolitical.com / Feature / The Welcome To The NeighborHOOD Project / October
  - Tursi, Alexandra / identitytheory.com / Interview / The Welcome To The NeighborHOOD Project / October
  - Dulin Wiley, Jennifer / Art Business News / *Neighborhood Community Arts Project Helps Inner-City Youth*/ August
  - Sculpture Magazine / On Record / November
  - Yoshihara, Sayako / Eclat Japanese Magazine / Feature Interview / September / Tokyo, Japan
  - Tussing, Jan / ARD German Radio interview / The Welcome To The NeighborHOOD Project
  - Usui, Miki / San Francisco Kitchens Book / SF Artists in their homes/ Shufunotomoshia, édition Paumes Publishers/ April / Tokyo, Japan
- 2008
- Croissant Magazine / Feature / March / Tokyo, Japan
- 2007
- Sculpture Magazine / On Record / November
  - Sean Fisher / Treehugger.com / May 10 / ScrapEden: Recycled Public Art
  - Dorka Keehn / 7x7 magazine / Playa to the People / July / San Francisco, CA
- 2006
- Richard Kearns / Nunca Más Retrospective / Aids-Write.org / Interview / October
  - Valoise, Aurelie/ Enjoy *San Francisco* / L'Art De Voyager / Interview / March-April / Paris, France
- 2005
- Brenneman, Christine / *Marin Independent Journal* / Interview / June
  - Clifton, Penny / *Blackened Innocence* / *getunderground.com* Review of Nunca Más / April 17th
  - Leaverton, Michael / *Urban Experience* / *SF Weekly* / *Tar and Feathers-Ecological disaster inspires fine art*/ March 26<sup>th</sup>.
- 2003
- Westbrook, Lindsey / *Critic's Choice* / *San Francisco Bay Guardian*: Review / September 24<sup>th</sup>
  - Ortiz-Wanlass, Tirza & Ortiz, P Jonathan / Family Spaces book / Gibbs Smith Publishers
  - Johnson, Sandra / *Smith and Hawkins* / Calendar
- 2002
- Nelson, Anne V. / *Elegance Improvised* / *San Francisco Magazine* / February
- 2000
- *Zakka Catalog* / *Zakka in San Francisco and Berkeley* / Feature/ September / Tokyo, Japan
  - Lender, Heidi / *Clay Girls* / *San Francisco Magazine* / Interview / August

## **LANGUAGES**

English, French and studying Spanish

## **TRAVEL**

Egypt, Jordan, France, Spain, Belgium, London England, Portugal, Greece, Amsterdam, Morocco, Mayotte Island, Reunion Island, Tokyo Japan, Indonesia, Thailand, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, Brazil, Hong Kong, Philippines, Seoul Korea, Mexico, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Grenada, Jamaica, Montreal & Toronto Canada and much of the United States