

## Foreword and Acknowledgments

CAF is pleased to present *Jean-Pierre Hébert: Drawing With the Mind*, curated by Elaine LeVasseur. In the early '70s in France, Hébert became a pioneer in computer art and a fiercely independent voice in the international digital imaging community. He was one of the world's first artists to co-opt computer code as a significant art-making tool, writing all of his own software. Referring to computers as "excellent tools for the mind," he expresses ideas in code and "proves them" by connecting his computer to devices—often of his own design—which he creates. These drawings are beyond the capability of the human hand and his investigations have resulted in an oeuvre that is simultaneously analytical, lyrical, and meditative. Hébert's masterful work executed with computers, robotics, and traditional art materials strongly evokes Eastern and Western philosophies and speaks to the history and meaning of creative thought and problem solving via the idea of drawing lines.

The exhibition at CAF is Hébert's premier US solo exhibition. Although he has shown nationally and internationally since 1979, he has been relatively unknown in the "art market" due to his furious work pace and the high cost of making his works. CAF's mission is to give artists like Hébert laboratory experience that supports new work, which would otherwise not be realized. *Jean-Pierre Hébert: Drawing With the Mind* is a proud example of CAF's ongoing mission to provide a forum for the presentation, documentation, and support of a broad variety of visual and other media arts representing a wide range of attitudes. This scholarly publication is a vital interpretive accompaniment to the exhibition giving context and historical background about this important artist.

I am truly grateful to Elaine LeVasseur, the exhibition's curator for the commitment and passion she brought to this project. LeVasseur's enthusiasm for art, the arts community, and Hébert's oeuvre led the way to an unforgettable experience with contemporary art for the public we serve. We are also indebted to Peter Frank for writing a thought-provoking essay that illuminates the complexity and lyrical qualities of Hébert's artistic practice.

We are all especially thankful for the patronage of visionary lenders and sponsors who helped us realize this exhibition and catalog. Herbert and Susan DeFriez generously provided major support for this exhibition. We also thank Meris Barreto, Susan Bower, More Cowbell Productions, Joan and William Crawford, Dressed/Ready, Alice Hutchins, Giles Family Foundation, Mary Ince, and the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

CAF is fortunate to have a dedicated and talented staff that makes these endeavors possible. Tristan Blodgett, Education and Development Coordinator; Saul Gray-Hildenbrand, Head Preparator; Lauren Mermel, Communications Coordinator; Dante Sigismundi, Preparator; Valerie Velazquez, Curatorial and Development Associate; and Margie Yahyavi, Director of Operations are invaluable members of this organization.

Finally, I would like to offer my heartfelt gratitude to artist Jean-Pierre Hébert, who devoted his time, energy, and enthusiasm to the creation, planning, and presentation of this extraordinary exhibition.

-Miki Garcia, Executive Director