

Celebrating the XVth Commonwealth Games in Victoria:

**Light on the Turret:  
Exploring the Architecture of Brunei, Darussalam**

**July 12 to August 31 1994  
Maltwood Art Museum and Gallery,  
McPherson Library Gallery**

This collection of prints, featuring the turreted mosque of the Sultan's palace in Brunei, is an exploration of the connection between the building and its surroundings. The artist explores the richness of colour reflected from the large domed building. The shift in light between dawn and dusk is developed, and emphasis is given to purples and golds which are the colours of royalty. The work expresses the spiritual association between building and sky.

This collection includes an animated video which deals with the subject of the architecture in Brunei, Darussalam.

This exhibition is being shown at the McPherson Library Gallery from July 12 to August 31, 1994.

**In the Maltwood Art Museum and Gallery,  
University Centre Gallery:**

Botswana Live: an Exhibition of Art and Craftwork  
June 5 to August 31, 1994

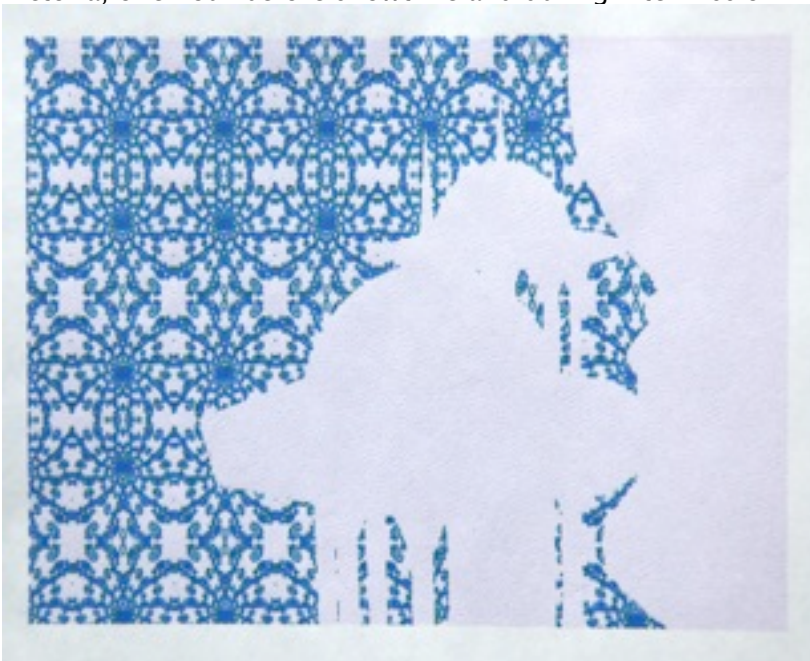
Arts from the Arctic  
September 11 to October 30, 1994

Director/Curator: Martin Segger

Open: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday - Friday

12:00 noon - 4:00 p.m. Sunday

Evening openings in conjunction with events at the University Centre, University of Victoria, one hour before showtime and during intermission.



## Background Information

### **Light on the Turret: Exploring the Architecture of Brunei, Darussalam**

July 12 to August 31, 1994

Maltwood Art Museum and Gallery,  
McPherson Library Gallery

Striking impressionistic watercolour prints are created in the exhibit "Light on the Turret" by printing computer generated images on hand made Japanese paper. Also featured in this exhibition at the University of Victoria is a video which animates the computer images. The central subject in this collection is one of the turreted mosques at the site of the sultan's palace in Brunei, North Borneo; which serves as an icon of Islamic architecture and as a universal symbol of the construction of domes and turrets. There is an Arabic inscription which summarizes the way buildings were constructed, "with such perfection that the entire heaven gnaws its fingers in astonishment, thinking it sees the rising of a new moon." This statement was an inspiration to the artists, Bill Zuk and Paul Marcano, as they developed their ideas on the study of landmarks for the exhibition.

The exhibit is significant because it features sets of serial images in which domes and minarets are reflected and mirrored through mathematical principles of fractal geometry. Each series is begun with a computer assisted design of a mosque or minaret. The artists then demonstrate that even in the complexity of transformation and distortion there is a fundamental logic and symmetry to the architecture they study. A unique point of view is created in each print and video image using a variety of image development strategies and mathematical formulas. Paul Marcano uses his skills as a mathematician and programmer to develop unique pieces of software which make the task of creating and composing images easier.

The artists have explored a variety of themes in this innovative show. Brunei's architectural structures are viewed from a variety of creative viewpoints which provide viewers with the sensation they are on an aerial journey. The subtle gradations of colour and illumination affecting buildings during the passage of a day from twilight until night are detailed. Also investigated, through ingenious use of computerized

blending and fusion techniques, is the relationship between the physical structure of these buildings and the surrounding skies.

One of the most fascinating qualities of the computer medium is that images can be manipulated in an endless fashion. Many ideas come from video footage or from Bill Zuk's sketchbooks of landmarks, which include lighthouses and prairie grain elevators. These are transposed onto the computer screen for further development and refinement. When the images are on screen, they assume a brilliance and illuminated life which is a continual source of inspiration. The other fascinating quality of these images is their colour complexity. Hundreds of colours can be generated at one time with the most subtle gradations imaginable. When one considers that a palette of 16.8 million colours is available, this is a far cry from the 8 colour crayon box many people had as children. Bill Zuk says that "as artists and educators, we [the artists] feel it is important to fully experience what this era of high technology has to offer even with the shortcomings of computer and printing equipment being so complex and expensive. This aside, our goal is to pioneer innovative ways of expressing artist's ideas and to propel the visual arts into the new era of electronic experience."

Paul Marcano and Bill Zuk began a successful collaboration in 1989. As visual artists they shared a simple, common goal — to transform images in novel and imaginative ways using the computer as their primary tool. Marcano has a passion for space age ideas and star studded galaxies which he composes directly on the computer or pulls from video footage. Both artists are keen observers of nature and are strongly influenced by it. Bill Zuk lives in Victoria, British Columbia where he is a professor in art education at the University of Victoria. He is very active in exploring how traditional methods of relief printmaking can be combined with computer generated art. He has expertise as a designer, muralist, and printmaker. Paul Marcano lives on nearby Saltspring Island and is an accomplished painter, computer artist and musician. Both have enjoyed enormous success with their exhibitions of prints, videos and light displays in various galleries across North America. The work of both artists can be found in many private and corporate collections.

This exhibit was recently seen in Brunei, at the Main Lobby of the Brunei Museum Building, Kota Batu, May 10 to May 22 1994; it also toured the Brunei school system. "Light on the Turret" is an event of the Victoria Commonwealth Games Arts and Cultural Festival.

Brunei is a small monarchy situated in northern Borneo in South East Asia. The economy is oil based, yet diversification is strongly encouraged; however, timber cutting is limited to 100,000 cubic meters annually to conserve the forests of Brunei, which cover about 80% of the land. While there are many faiths in Brunei, which include Christianity and Buddhism, the official religion is Islam. The official language is Malay, yet English is widely used. As of 1990, the population was approximately 256,500 people.

