

California Polytechnic State University

Sept. 7, 2004

Contact: Barbara Morningstar
University Art Gallery
805-756-2140

Controversial Political Drawings To Be Featured In First 2004-2005 University Art Gallery Exhibit Sept. 28-Oct. 23

SAN LUIS OBISPO – The first show of the year at Cal Poly’s University Art Gallery, featuring the work of one of the country’s foremost poster artists, promises to be a memorable, controversial and engaging exhibit, according to curator Barbara Morningstar.

The show, from Tuesday, Sept. 28, through Saturday, Oct. 23, will showcase the political drawings of Robbie Conal. “His works take on politics and ‘hot-button’ issues that should be of particular interest, especially in light of the upcoming 2004 presidential election,” Morningstar said.

Conal will present a slide talk from 6 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 6, in Philips Hall in the Christopher Cohan Center, after which a reception will be held in the University Art Gallery.

Conal grew up on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, the son of union organizers who “considered the city’s major art museums to be day-care centers for him,” Morningstar said. He attended the High School of Music and Art in New York, earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from San Francisco State University, and a Master of Fine Arts from Stanford University.

In 1984 he moved to Los Angeles. “Inspired by the Reagan Administration, I began making satirical posters of politicians and bureaucrats who, by my own reckoning, had abused their power in the name of representative democracy,” Conal said. “I developed an irregular guerrilla army of volunteers and put my posters up in the streets of major cities around the country.”

He has created more than 50 posters satirizing politicians from both parties, televangelists and global capitalists. His art also takes on issues of censorship, the environment and women’s reproductive freedom.

“Robbie has gained national prominence as the country’s premiere poster artist,” Morningstar said. “His work has been featured on television on ‘CBS This Morning’ and ‘Charlie Rose’ and in such publications as Time, Newsweek, The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Washington Post and The Wall Street Journal.”

Conal has won a National Endowment for the Arts Individual Artist Grant, a Getty Individual Artist Grant, and a Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Individual Artist’s Grant. He has authored two books, “Art Attack: The Midnight Politics of a Guerrilla Poster Artist,” and “Artburn.” He is an adjunct professor in the School of Fine

Arts at UCLA.

His work can be seen on the Web at <http://www.robbyconal.com/>.

The University Art Gallery is located in the Dexter Building and is open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 7 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday. For more information, call the gallery at 756-6038 or Morningstar at 756-1571 or 927-0785.

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California Polytechnic State University

San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

805.756.7266

polynews@calpoly.edu