Two California artists explore the complex relationships and rich metaphors that the physical world offers the artist.

**Artist Reception**
December 8, 4 to 6 p.m.
Thacher Gallery

In “Human/Nature” Sukey Bryan and Janice Nakashima explore the complex relationships and rich metaphors that the physical world offers the artist. Bryan’s work brings us close up to the chaotic elements of fire and water to examine the destructive and regenerative cycles of nature. Nakashima’s work uses map iconography to provide a view from a distance to ask about our place in the world. In both cases, this new work is a response to the turbulent relationship between humanity and the environment.

Sukey Bryan’s large format oil paintings of fire use layers of paint, glazes, drawn marks and scratches, “paring away detail to open the way for metaphorical and emotional possibilities” of the image. The canvases crackle with deep reds and oranges that provide an abstract study of color and stroke as well as the literal image of flames and their emotional connotations. Seen together, including “Fire,” a series of twelve panels extending over nine feet, these works ask questions of consumption, sacrifice, light, and connection. To contrast these, a number of Bryan’s earlier water paintings have been included. Bryan has shown her work widely in the Baltimore area (where she received her MFA at Maryland Institute) and California. Her work can currently be viewed at Hang Art Gallery. She is the recipient of a NEA grant and lives in Stanford.

Working directly with symbol and iconography, Janice Nakashima’s large-scale oil on linen works present elements of a dislocated world. Incorporating text, etched lines and cartographical imagery, the scroll-like panels of unstretched linen remind the viewer of photographs taken from space as well as ancient maps. The artist writes, “by combining map imagery with nature and abstract elements, I’ve found a way to poetically express a kind of ‘wondering’...” In “NY/Africa,” Nakashima has painted torn openings that reveal the title subjects in disproportionate scale. New York is huge and Africa small, calling our point of view into question. Nakashima lives in Sacramento and has shown her work widely in Northern California. She is the recipient of several California Discovery Awards, and is affiliated with 750 Gallery in Sacramento.