

SAN FRANCISCO, CA– (June 15, 2001) – **ART DRECO -- BACK BY UNPOPULAR DEMAND**

After a generation underground Art Dreco is back. The infamous Art Dreco collection is making its first public appearance in over 20 years at Paxton Gate in San Francisco, From July 7- August 15th, Hours: 12-7 Monday- Thursday, 12-8 Friday, 11-8 Saturday, 11-7 Sunday

Art Dreco illustrates the circular nature of art, where extremes pass into their opposites. Thus Art Dreco is work that is so badly done, or in such bad taste that it is truly beautiful. From a bear claw ashtray, to *American Gothic* done in stuffed frogs, to rubber dog toys in the shape of Bill Clinton and Bob Dole, “Art Dreco shines and stinks, like a rotten mackerel by moonlight,” says Paul Drexler, Director of the Art Dreco Institute. <http://www.artdreco.com/>

The Paxton Gate exhibition will feature over 80 pieces of Art Dreco, including some new Dreco never before seen. Original Art Dreco will be for sale, as well as Art Dreco inspired paintings, photographs, records and catalogs. The highlight of the exhibition will be the Art Dreco Roadshow on July 28th, between 3:00-6:00 PM where the public is invited to bring would-be Dreco, to be authenticated by the Art Dreco Institute staff. Drexler warns that authentic Dreco is not easily achieved. “In this art form standards are stringently low,” says Drexler. “The work must have a certain purity of intent and an honest lack of taste is required.

“At Paxton Gate we understand the slippery nature of ‘taste’ and we were drawn to Art Dreco’s appreciation of the idiot-savants of aesthetic expression,” says Paxton Gate owner Sean Quigley. In its newest location at 824 Valencia Street (between 19th and 20th) Paxton Gate has quickly become a quintessential experience for Mission District denizens interested in natural curiosities.

The Art Dreco Institute was established in 1975 in Amherst Massachusetts by Paul Drexler, while working as an antique dealer. “I saw pieces at auction that I just couldn’t categorize,” says Drexler. “Pieces so ugly they were beautiful.” “Blanche Du Bois,” often known as the *Mona Lisa of Art Dreco*, was rescued out of the garbage can at an Amherst auction gallery. In 1978 Drexler moved to San Francisco and established the Art Dreco Institute on Noe Street. The Institute was featured on numerous television and radio shows, such as AM San Francisco and Paul Harvey News. In 1980 the Institute closed and the collection has largely been in storage.

“The time is right for Art Dreco,” says Julie Marsh, Development Director of the Art Dreco Institute. “In politics, art, music, everywhere, Art Dreco is abundant. In looking for a place for an Art Dreco exhibition, we ventured into Paxton Gate and fell in love with it.”

Paxton Gate, with its unusual mixture of natural arts and sciences such as taxidermied animals, insects, plants, pottery, object’s d’art is a perfect setting for the unnatural arts of the Art Dreco Institute. The exhibition will last from July 7th to August 17th.

Contacts:

For Art Dreco Institute, contact Paul Drexler or Julie Marsh at 415-333-8372, Website: www.artdreco.com, <mailto:Director@artdreco.com>

For Paxton Gate contact Sean Quigley or Kelly Kozak at Paxton Gate, PaxtonGate@hotmail.com