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FROM: Art From Scrap
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CHARLOTTE VALESTRA TO EXHIBIT AT AFS GALLERY

The assemblages and mixed media work of Charlotte Valestra will be featured in an exhibit entitled "Anything Goes", at the AFS Gallery from August 2 through September 6, 2008. An artist's reception, open to the public, will be held on August 2 from 5:00 pm until 7:00 pm.

Valestra chose the title "Anything Goes" to express the eclectic range of materials that inspire her. Natural materials such as fur and bones, all kinds of artifacts, ceramics, both found and self-made, cast and fabricated metal work, as well as conventional artists' materials, all find their way into her intricate and exquisitely crafted artwork. "I have been a jeweler for thirty years," said Valestra, "and a fine art painter for ten years. In 1998 I began to experiment with the art of assemblage."

"To me, process is perhaps the most important aspect of my work," said Valestra. She has devoted much time to learning the technical skills required by the materials that inspire her. "My background as a jeweler gave me familiarity with metalwork, but later I found that I wanted to work with steel. So I

trained with Richard Yaski at the Mendocino Art Center and learned to weld." A purchase of ceramics from Dresden, Germany inspired Valestra to explore this medium, creating ceramics of her own, which she also incorporates in her assemblages.

Valestra is known for her distinct and elegant style, and her work has a dreamlike quality. "Content and meaning are very important to my work," she said. "However it is my intention to leave the emotional message for the viewer to intuit."

AFS Gallery is located upstairs at the Art From Scrap warehouse, 302 East Cota Street, in downtown Santa Barbara. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm, and on Thursdays from 10:00 am until 6:00 pm. For more information, please contact Art From Scrap at (805) 884-0459 or visit www.artfromscrap.org

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