



63 CROSBY STREET, NYC 10012 212-966-0799

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
January 15, 1992

PRESS CONTACT:
Barbara Goldner, 212/685-0839

NANCY AZARA TO EXHIBIT NEW SCULPTURE AT A.I.R GALLERY, NEW YORK CITY
JANUARY 28 - FEBRUARY 15, 1992

Nancy Azara, known for her luminous, hand-carved wood sculptures that evoke goddess imagery and impart a strong sense of spirituality, will have a major exhibition of new work at New York City's A.I.R. Gallery from January 28 to February 15, 1992. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 11 am to 6 pm. The public and press are invited to a reception for the artist on Tuesday, January 28th from 6 to 8 pm.

In the fifteen new wall pieces that will be on view at A.I.R., Azara continues to explore ancient female archetypes, goddesses, spirituality, and the healing qualities inherent in producing her art, bringing the viewer on a Shamanic journey. Azara states, "There's an ancient tradition — a Shamanic tradition — about the healing properties of art making." She hand carves intricate shapes from the wood of trees and branches. After they have been carved, the pieces are painted. Although Azara has always used bright, luminous colors, the new works are slightly more monochromatic and subdued than in previous works. However, she still uses gold leaf representing white-hot sunlight, thereby adding to the mystical quality of these sculptures. The viewer is mesmerized in the discovery of images, shapes, and forms emerging from the wood.

A major focus of the A.I.R. exhibition will be "Goddess Wall" which was originally commissioned specifically for The Arch at Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn and was included in the recent exhibition "Hail Columbia!" at that location. "Goddess Wall", which pays tribute to the goddess Columbia (whose winged image is perched atop The Arch at Grand Army Plaza) is comprised of eight wooden 2" x 12' planks, all sheathed in gold leaf. "Goddess Wall" stands 12 feet high by 9 feet wide. It is a Shamanic journey into the bright light of the darkness.

(over)

Another major new work is "The Dwelling", an altar-like structure carved out of nine large pieces of wood. The viewer may peer inside the partially enclosed space or walk around the 7-foot tall free-standing piece which is painted in an array of subtle, glowing colors on silver leaf.

Azara also gives new life to a variety of found objects which, collected during her travels throughout the world, are incorporated into these works. In "Lost Goddess", pieces of bleached wood and the back of a burnt coconut shell resemble animal or human bones. Pieces of hollowed-out and burnt wood, which were found by the artist during a trip to the Dominican Republic, give "War Flower" a charred, death-like feeling.

Azara explores questions of age and youth in such works as "Young Goddess" and "Old Goddess". And, although most goddesses have self-affirming and positive attributes ("Tender Goddess", "Winged Heart"), several others are connected to issues of war. In some of her new work, Azara takes a new path and examines this darker issue in pieces such as "Split Heart", and "War Flower", which convey a dark, somber mood with their muted, blood-like colors.

Nancy Azara's work has appeared nationally and internationally since 1968 in numerous one-woman and group exhibitions at museums, galleries, and universities. Trained not only as an artist, but also as a psychic healer, Azara lectures widely and conducts workshops which combine art making with psychic vision and psychic healing at a variety of colleges and universities. She was a founding member of the New York Feminist Art Institute (N.Y.F.A.I.) where she served on the Board of Directors for eleven years. Nancy Azara is a recipient of the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation Grant. She currently lives and works in New York City.

For photographs or further information, please contact Barbara Goldner at 212/685-0839.