

Opening / *A New Way of Seeing*



then and now / 40" x 28", oil on metal retablo

DIANNE BENNETT: *Retablos* FOR THREATENED SPECIES

A folk art tradition from Latin America, *retablos* are iconic, sacred portraits on metal, tin, or wood, often celebrating a miraculous occurrence. Literally translated as “behind the altar” and created by both trained and untrained artists to promote faith and belief, *retablos* have been displayed in home altars and pilgrimage sites from the sixteenth century to today.

American *retablero* Dianne Bennett grew up hiking the hillsides of suburban Los Angeles in the 1960s, when the orange trees outnumbered the houses. Seeing subdivisions spring up where her beloved meadows once bloomed, she developed a passion for land conservation and now uses salvaged building materials, old metal signs, household objects, and forgotten children’s toys for *retablos* and altars.

Says Bennett, “My hope is to shine a light on the ephemeral beauty of life in this world, while raising questions about what we value, what we hold sacred, and what is disappearing before our very eyes.”

Opening Celebration: Dianne Bennett’s exhibit “Before Our Very Eyes” opens January 9, 2010, at the Beato Gallery, Beatrice Wood Center for the Arts, 8560 Ojai-Santa Paula Road, Ojai, California 93023. For additional information, please call 805-646-3381 or visit www.diannebennett.net.



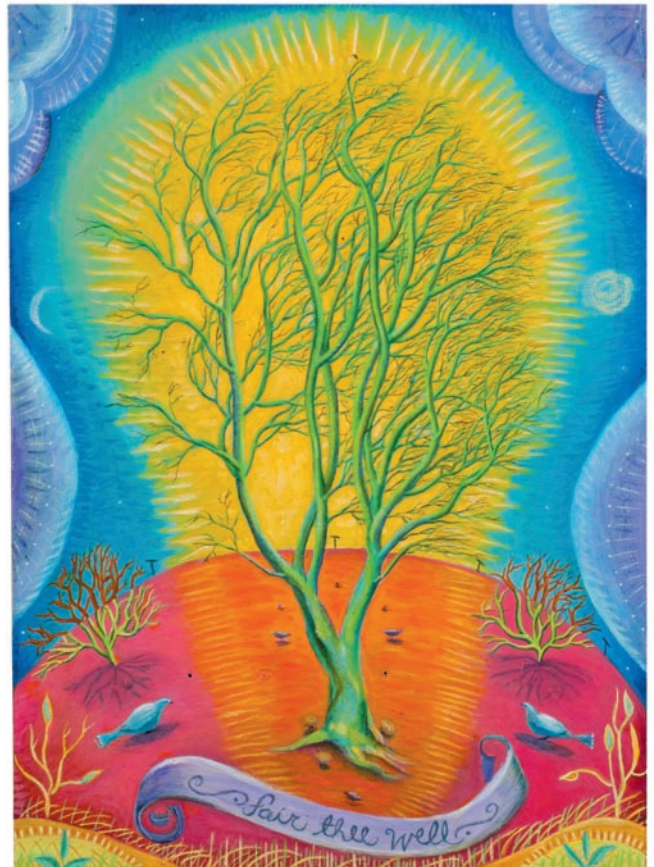
B 4 hour very eyes
24" x 28", oil on section of old metal sign



bluebird of happiness
3" x 4", oil on salvaged metal



peace within / mixed media altar with sculpted bird.
The artist used a silver sugar bowl found in a thrift shop.



fair thee well / 24" x 28", oil on section of old sign.
A Palo Verde tree that died outside of Bennett's studio.



blackbird / 24" x 28", oil on section of old metal sign



el mirage / 24" x 32", oil on metal retablo



I was dreaming you were dreaming
28" x 40", oil on metal retablo



private property

A metal sign found on the side of the Highway 33 became the grounds for this oil painted retablo.