

California to gain access to

Smithsonian art archives

ART NEWS

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For the first time, the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art — papers and writings of American artists as well as extensive oral histories — will be available for study in Southern California this spring. Microfilm copies of the collection will be permanently housed in the new Virginia Steele Scott Gallery of American Art which is set to open at the Huntington Library, Art Gallery and Botanical Gardens in San Marino. The originals will remain in Washington at the Smithsonian. Up until now, the nearest access local scholars had to these valuable documents was in San Francisco, at the M.H. de Young Museum.

Heading up the office will be Stella Paul, who is leaving her curatorial position in the department of 20th-century art at the L.A. County Museum of Art. At the museum, Paul demonstrated that she has the experience for her new position — she compiled the chronology of the 1980 exhibition catalog for "Art in L.A.: 17 Artists in the '60s," which stands as the most complete documentation of the area's contemporary art history.

Artists are in the subways, artists are on TV and artists are in fashion. There's no escaping. Now the innovative fashion company WilliWear is producing a line of T-shirts, designed by 21 New York artists, including many of the young graffitiists: Keith Haring, Dondi, Zephyr, Futura 2000, Ed Schlossberg, Severo, Todd Siler, S.I.T.E., Kim Steele, David Stoletz, Stuart Wilson, Ida Applebroog, Arman, Dan Friedman, Lynn Herschman, Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger, Suzan Pitt, Kenny Scharf, Christo and Les Levine.

They will be sold as art on a

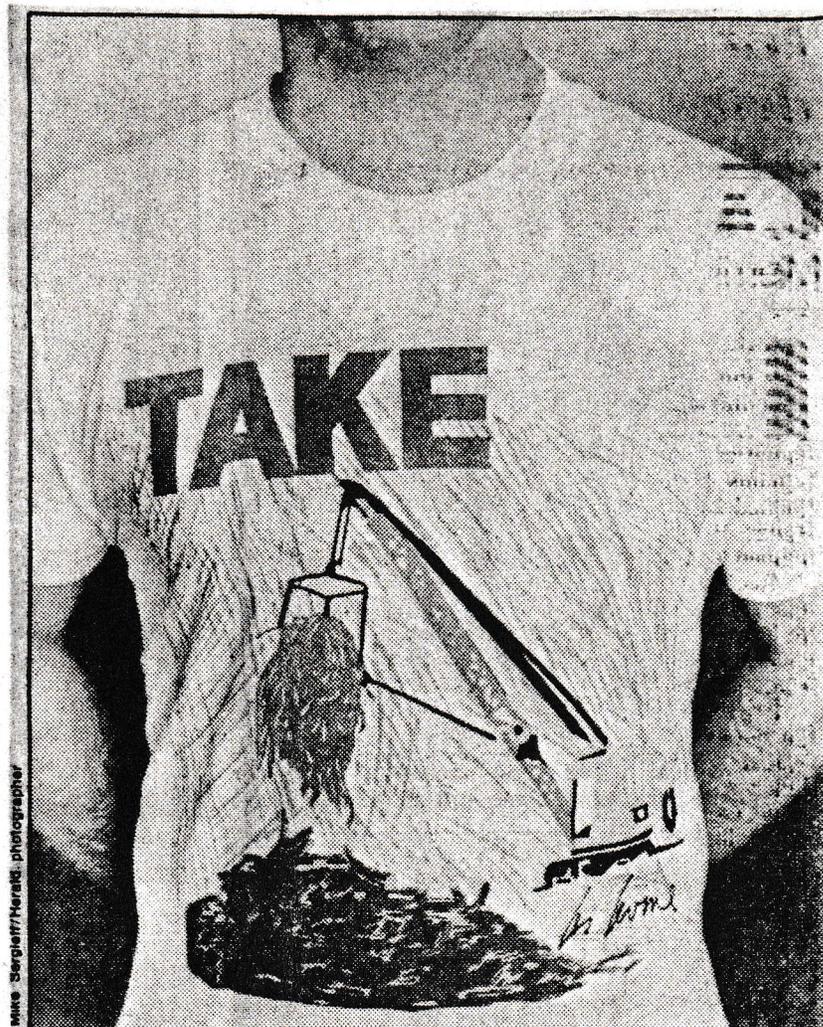
cardboard frame for about \$35 at major department stores. The artists have a licensing agreement to receive a percentage of the T-shirt sales. They debut in New York at Bloomingdale's on March 21. In L.A., the company is negotiating with Robinson's, Bullock's and the Broadway.

WilliWear president Laurie Mallet and designer Willi Smith are well-known for their involvement in the art world. They were sponsors of Christo's environmental sculpture "Surrounded Islands" in Miami. It was there, after selling 2,000 shirts promoting Christo, that they got the idea for the T-shirt project. Mark Bozek, director of public relations for the company, said they "believe in collaboration with artists in other fields and blending them with fashion. We're more unique than the traditional fashion company who manufactures clothes."

Artist Les Levine is creating a video about the T-shirts, which he described as the "first all-artist commercial." There are plans to work with a record company to produce it as a 25-minute video, with a 10-minute version to promote the T-shirts in the stores, and a five-minute version for MTV.

Il Modo Italiano has so far seemed a hodgepodge of art and information. There is plenty of worthy work at this, the L.A. Institute of Contemporary Art's extravaganza of exhibitions and performances by 11 Italian artists at sundry galleries around the Southland — but you need a few tanks of gas to see it.

The art ranges from installations by *Arte Povera* figures Jannis Kounellis at UCLA's Wight Gallery and Mario Merz at UC Irvine's gallery to paintings by "trans-avant-gardist" Mimmo Paladino at the Newport Harbor Art Museum. But Saturday, these artists, along with many others in the L.A.I.C.A.-sponsored exhibitions, will be gathered together in one place. Alighiero Boetti, Alik Cavaliere, Luciano



Steve Bergoff/Herald, photographer

Les Levine's "Take" is one of the T-shirts being produced by 21 New York artists. On sale in major department stores, its cost is around \$35.

Fabro, Luigi Ontani, Antonio Paradiso and Giuseppe Penone will join Paladino, Kounellis and Merz to talk about their work with critics Germano Celant and Melinda Wertz in a symposium sponsored by USC's College of Continuing Education. The symposium meets in USC's Harris Hall from 1 to 6 p.m. The fee is \$25, \$10 for students. More information is available at 743-4560, ext. 500.

Although it seems that a new art gallery is opening every week in

L.A., USC has put together a course to bring even more into the fray. "Introduction to Gallery Practices," taught by Jan Turner, co-owner of the Janus Gallery, begins Feb. 3 in the College of Continuing Education. Topics to be studied include "How to select and show the 'right' artists," as well as business aspects, general operations and promotion. There will be guest lectures by gallery owners and artists. The class, which costs \$100, meets Wednesday evenings at Janus. Further information can be obtained at 743-4560, ext. 500.