

ART REVIEW

Diverse L.A. fellowship

Recipients of the city's COLA grants display a range of approaches in major mediums.

By HOLLY MYERS
Special to *The Times*

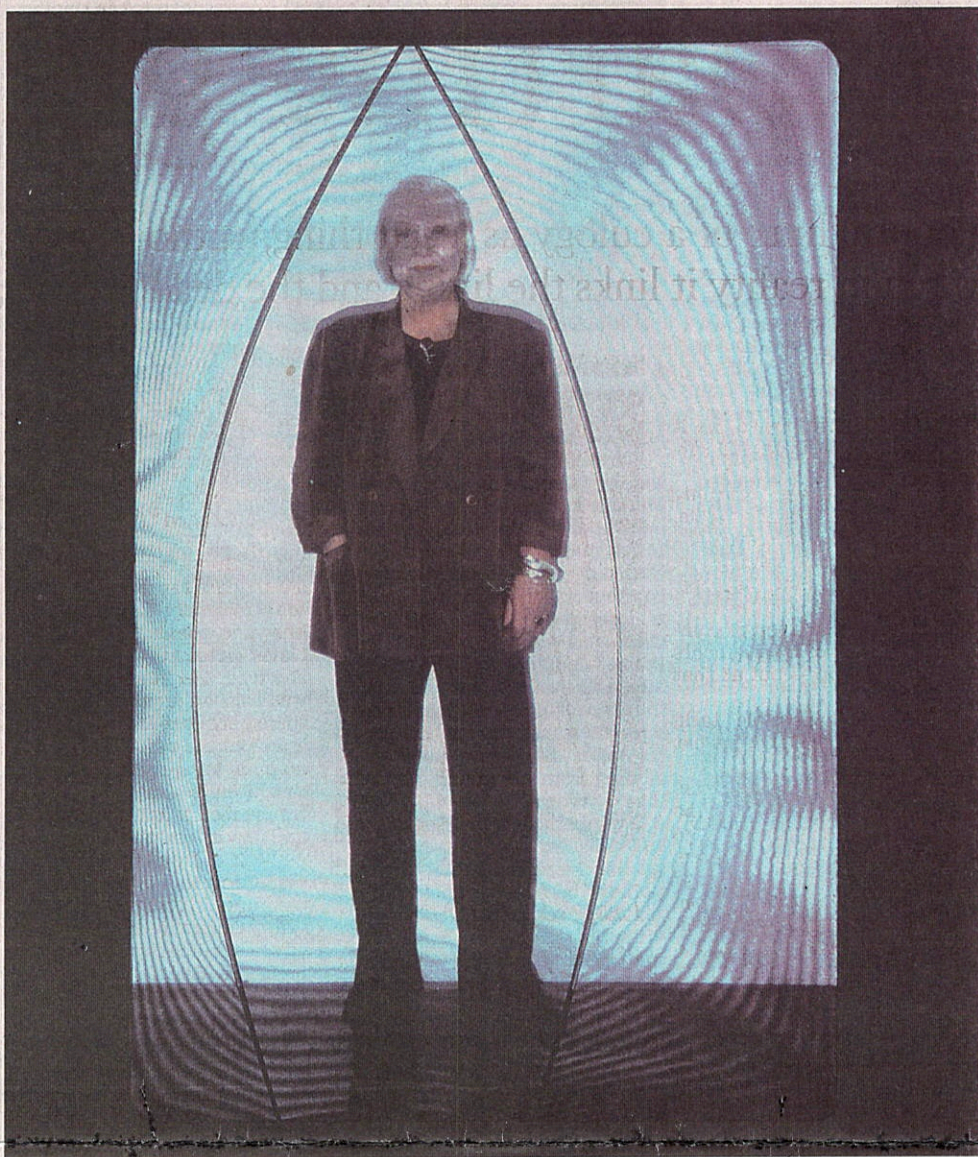
L.A.'s Cultural Affairs Department has had a rocky spring.

In March, word got out that the mayor's budget team had slated the department for possible extinction — a sacrifice on the altar of the city's \$300-million budget deficit. Public outcry ensued, and the mayor quickly recanted, pledging to preserve the department but calling for a change of direction, namely a greater emphasis on the promotion of cultural tourism. A 28-member Mayor's Council for the Arts was established to help facilitate the shift.

Meanwhile, the City Council softened the mayor's proposed cut for Cultural Affairs by \$1.7 million when it ratified the budget recently, but that still left the department nearly \$2 million short of last year's already slender \$11.8 million.

In this uncertain climate, the ninth annual COLA show takes on an added significance. A showcase for this year's recipients of the City of Los Angeles Individual Artist Fellowships, the exhibition is one example of what we stand to lose should Cultural Affairs either dry up or sell its soul to the promise of cultural tourism: a civic venue for the assistance and, more important, recognition of artists.

The 14 represented here — 10 visual artists, three performing artists and one poet — aren't likely to inspire a spike in hotel occupancy or have any appreciable effect on sales tax revenues.



Courtesy of Habib Kheradgar

ALMOST HOLOGRAPHIC: Detail of Habib Kheradgar's image of Patricia Faure.

