



**Staff Report for Visual Arts Committee Meeting 10/15/14**

***Aqua Pura, 1993* by Collins + Goto**

(1993.2.2a-mmm)

In 1993, the artist team, Collins and Goto were asked to create a work of art in response to a water treatment upgrade of the peninsula watershed and the San Andreas Water Treatment Facility. The work included extensive review of the SF Water Department (“SFPUC”) archives to understand the iterative development of water in the city; as well as experiential research of the watershed, water delivery conduits and old historic reservoirs.

The result, *Aqua Pura, 1993*, included a curated wall of photographs and text with a computer program that featured “voices” from the past and present, talking about water treatment and processes taking place at the facility. The didactics were triggered by motion detectors as the viewer made their way down along the wall. There was also an accompanying printed book, by the same title, meant to be given away as an educational component.

Staff researched the costs to upgrade the obsoleting sound components and the printed book. While the facilities staff also requested that the sound portion be turned off, noting that the didactics are now obsolete to the current practices of the facility with their recent renovations. In summary, the artwork no longer serves the same educational purposes once intended for that site. Staff feels to continue with the upgrades may not be the best use of funds for a very limited audience.

However, the didactics are still relevant to the history and processes being portrayed in the photographs. Therefore, it is the staff recommendation to preserve the artwork and to explore ways to reconfigure the piece for a broader audience in collaboration with the artists and the SFPUC. Some ideas include the media wall at 525 Golden Gate and/or an educational web application for the SFPUC’s website.

While options are being explored, the artworks components will be archived and the photographs will remain hung at the Harry Tracy Water Facility.

**MOTION:** Motion to disassemble *Aqua Pura, 1993*, with permission of the artist team, Collins and Goto, as currently installed due to the obsolescence of sound equipment and didactics obsolete to the current practices of the facility. The original artwork (Accession ID 1993.2.2a-mmm) consists of 65 framed photographs with accompanying didactic recordings, installed along a wall. All of the artworks’ components will be archived pending its possible reconfiguration. The framed photographs remain hung at the Harry Tracy Water Facility (formerly the San Andreas Water Treatment Facility).

# Aqua Pura: A cultural overview of the development of water systems on the San Francisco Peninsula.



## AQUA PURA

Revealing a water system

**Process:** Interviews, discussions with field personnel, contextual and historical research.

**Product:** Interactive photo wall, switches activate spoken text.

**Product:** Freely distributed book.

## AQUA PURA

Collins and Goto  
San Andreas Water Treatment Facility, CA, 1993

