

Barbara Stauffacher Solomon's famous supergraphics take center stage in a new show at Placewares Gallery

By **Liz Stinson** May 16, 2019, 3:45pm EDT



The Sea Ranch's Moonraker Athletic Center, featuring supergraphics by Barbara Stauffacher Solomon. Jim Alinder/Princeton Architectural Press

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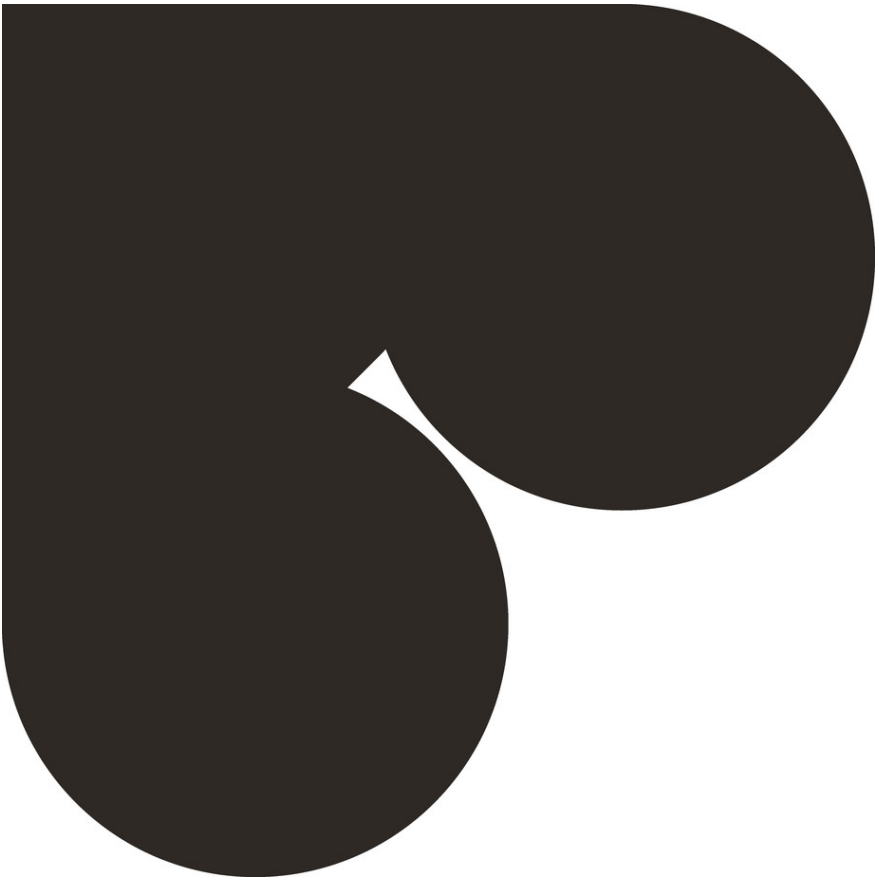
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Throughout her long career, [Barbara Stauffacher Solomon](#) has made a large mark on the world of graphic design—and we mean that in the most literal sense of the phrase. The 91-year-old designer is known for pioneering the genre of supergraphics, large-scale works of graphic design that often co-exist with architecture.

Solomon is probably best known for [her work at The Sea Ranch](#), a design-forward residential community on the coast of Northern California, where she crafted bold, geometric wall graphics for the community’s recreation centers. Solomon’s painted work blurred the lines between art and wayfinding, and created a bright contrast to the Sea Ranch’s intentionally neutral palette.

Discussing the community bathhouse she worked on in a [1967 issue of “Progressive Architecture](#)”, Solomon said, “It’s a bit like a three-dimensional internal sculpture house that you can walk into and it’s a bit of a shocker: The exterior is all wood and shingles. The inside is a kinesthetic world of shapes and color.”





Courtesy Placewares



“SuperSigns” will show two iconic graphics—the heart and arrow—and three new designs by Solomon.

Now, a new exhibition celebrating Solomon’s brilliant supergraphics is open at [Placewares Gallery](#), just a mile north of the Sea Ranch. Placewares’s Kevin Lane worked with Solomon over the course of 18 months to develop “[SuperSigns](#),” which will introduce three new designs rendered in porcelain enamel on 4x4-foot steel panels—the same production process she used in the ’60s.

Two historical pieces—her iconic arrow and heart designs—will also be on display. The works play with shape, color, and negative space. And like her earlier work, they’re probably best experienced in person. [The show](#) will run through July 14, and then head to Palm Springs, where Placewares is opening a new gallery later this year.