

**Karin F. Giusti, *The World Is Your Oyster*
Interstate 95, Exit 46,
New Haven, Connecticut**

Motorists driving on I-95 last fall glimpsed a huge, yawning oyster and a 150-foot-long pearl necklace in a park by the New Haven harbor. This roadside attraction was Karin F. Giusti's temporary work *The World Is Your Oyster*, which was on view from August through November. The Connecticut Commission on the Arts funded Giusti's proposal for the \$4,000 commission as part of its "Connecticut Roadworks 1990" series. Near the water's edge, a colossal necklace of three-foot fiberglass pearls encircled a tree, and a seven-foot-high oyster, made from animation rubber and powered by hydraulics, opened and closed upon a "globe pearl." Artist Suzan Shutan's soundtrack, broadcast from the oyster, included facts about oyster anatomy and the pollution of their habitat. A 54-foot-long steel sign announced "New Haven...The World Is Your Oyster," linking the highly visible roadside work with what Giusti calls "commuter culture." Though akin to billboard ads and kitschy "tourist trap" icons, the work, Giusti says, presented "art promoting an idea," not a product. New Haven is one of the nation's poorer cities, and its oyster population has been plagued by harbor pollution and oil spills. Set beside the harbor, the opulence and opportunity implicit in the work's title made an ironic commentary. For whom, Giusti asks, is the world an oyster?



Above left: *Found Stump*, 1990. Recycled lumber, 20 high x 15 ft. diameter. Photo: Sandro Oramas.

***The World Is Your Oyster*, 1990. Oyster: rubber and hydraulics, 7 x 6 ft. Necklace: fiberglass and bronze, 150 x 3 ft. Photo: Karin F. Giusti.**