

## Artist plans to lead SM protest against sculpture in window

By Pat Alston  
STAFF WRITER

A Westside artist who says she has an appreciation for freedom of expression but intolerance for "bad taste" plans a protest in Santa Monica tonight aimed at fellow artist Ed Massey's controversial "Morality Mortality" exhibit.

Mothers, ministers and others offended by Massey's work plan to picket in front of the installation on the southeast corner of 15th Street and Wilshire Boulevard, starting at 6 p.m.

Their banners will proclaim: "Freedom for all. Protection for all."

Their outrage, said protest organizer Cheri Pedersen, has stirred an almost overwhelming desire to smash through the wall-to-ceiling windows that encase the sculptural artwork and rip it out themselves.

The three-dimensional likeness of two ghostly male figures hanging by their genitals while a female rape victim writhes in shock and pain below is not suited to the highly visible office space on Wilshire, Pedersen said.

"People are tormented by it," she said. "It's just obscene."

Protesters have opted, however, for a more orderly demonstration of their objections to the display, which Massey unveiled 10 days ago in Santa Monica and four other cities: Chicago, New York, Miami and Washington, D.C.

The art immediately elicited consternation from some, and applause from others who praised what they described as a thought-provoking depiction of rape and retribution.

"We're not objecting to his (the artist's) work or what his statement is, but its placement," said Pedersen, who works in film animation and makes hats.

"This type of thing does not belong on our thoroughfares and store windows."

The public should have a choice about what it views, she said.

"Nobody has a choice in this matter," she said. "It's in our face."

She said a Santa Monica rabbi with

### IN PROTEST

- **What:** Public demonstration
- **Where:** Southeast corner of 15th Street, Wilshire Boulevard
- **When:** 6 p.m. today
- **Why:** To protest public display of Ed Massey's "Morality Mortality" sculptural artwork

her: "Schindler's List" is a good movie, but I wouldn't take my 5-year-old son to see it."

Pedersen was on her way to a church service a week ago Tuesday night when she spotted the exhibit.

"It horrified me," she said. "It looked like something that belongs in a torture chamber. I just felt sick."

"I don't go to horror movies because I can't handle seeing that type of imagery, and to me this is like seeing a horror movie," she said.

"It's not responsible," added her roommate, Santa Monica businesswoman Brenda Petrakos.

"As an adult, I have no problem with it," Petrakos said. "I think it's a great (anti-rape) statement."

She questions its appropriateness for the general public, however, especially children.

The display is barely two blocks from Lincoln Middle School and accessible to impressionable children, Pedersen said.

"I think it's in very bad taste," she said.

"We're not a political organization," Pedersen said of herself and Petrakos. "We're just two people" who feel pornography in public places has gotten out of hand.

"They have pictures of people having sex in the windows of shops in West Hollywood," Pedersen said. "What's next? We just think the line's got to be