

ArtWalk San Diego 2007

Noon to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday; Little Italy; Free; www.artwalkinfo.com

# 'WE CAN SUPPORT PEOPLE WHO CREATE

Bring your checkbook to **ArtWalk**, if you like; more important, bring a sense of fun to annual fest

By Cynthia Jenson-Elliott

San Diego's art scene is in full bloom, and ArtWalk, San Diego's largest celebration of local artistic achievement, is the best place in town to pluck a bright bouquet. Part fertility festival for the arts and part old-fashioned grand bazaar, ArtWalk will dress the streets of Little Italy with tented displays of more than 400 visual artists, musical and performance acts and food vendors Saturday and Sunday. Unlike a static museum exhibit, ArtWalk is all about

## INFORMATION

### GETTING THERE

Taking the San Diego Trolley to the Little Italy station is the best bet for getting to ArtWalk. For committed drivers, however, parking will be available at the County of San Diego Administration Building on Harbor Drive, as well as in lots south of Beech Street and east of State Street.

### ART-BUYING SEMINARS

Learn strategies for selecting and purchasing art from art expert Patricia Frischer of the San Diego Visual Arts Network. Frischer will offer free 10-15 minute seminars at 1:45 and 3:45 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at the CityMark Sales Center located at India and Date streets.

### BINATIONAL SHOWCASE

The Consulado General de Mexico/Mexican Cultural Institute will collaborate with ArtWalk to showcase some of Mexico's finest contemporary artists at the Mexican Consulate (India Street at Cedar Street).

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Jeff Yeomans, another of ArtWalk's featured artists, has been showing his paintings of San Diego's land, sea, surf and cityscapes at ArtWalk since its inception as a mapped, open-studio tour of downtown in the 1980s. Yeomans has appreciated how the San Diego community has grown in recent years to support local art.

"There's been a turning point in San Diego for appreciation of art," Yeomans said. "People are becoming more interested in the natural beauty of our area. I've surfed for 40 years, and surfers never spend money on art. But as my generation has become successful, now when it comes to putting art in their homes, this is what they want to see — they want to celebrate this lifestyle."

San Diego's laid-back lifestyle will be on full

activity — seeing, loving, listening, creating and buying art. ArtWalk is a place where art lives, and hundreds of artists are ready to put local art in the hands of local people as creators, fanciers and collectors.

Ricardo Vela, a photographer and local journalist who is one of 12 featured ArtWalk artists, believes strongly in the importance of supporting the local arts community by viewing and buying original work.

"In a time when we can buy something at Ikea for \$20 that looks original, I tell people that one of the things that keeps us from becoming animals again is our power to create," Vela said. "ArtWalk is a venue where we can support people who create. Buying

original art is a way of making us a better community because we'll keep creating."



ArtWalk San Diego 2007 brings together art, music and dance in Little Italy this weekend. Artist tents will feature painting, sculpture, glasswork and photography.

Street to connect with artists' tents featuring painting, sculpture, glasswork and photography on perpendicular side streets. Sidewalk cafes, food vendors and musical and performance venues with bistro seating will be scattered throughout the event so patrons can experience art of another sort — culinary, musical and performance.

For novice art collectors, ArtWalk is an ideal place to experience art and get an idea of what catches our eyes, says Patricia Frischer, creator of the San Diego Visual Arts Network. Frischer helps artists promote their work and advises collectors about how to connect with art.

Frischer recommends cruising ArtWalk quickly before settling in to spend more time with particular works of art. When a piece of art sings its siren song, Frischer recommends returning to spend time with the piece.

"The most art you can really look at in-depth at any one visit is three or four pieces," Frischer said. "You can note where they are, mark the name of artist and space on the map, and plan to go back and spend more time with those pieces."

Painter Cynthia Colis, another of ArtWalk's featured artists, believes in the art-love connection.

"I want people to buy (my art) because they have an immediate connection, because they love it, not because 'it will go with my couch,'" Colis said. "I want them to be in love with it and to love it forever."

When the visual world becomes too much, a bit of art for the ear is in order, and some of San Diego's favorite acoustic acts and dance troupes will be entertaining on stages scattered through-

Kevin Hellman of *CityBeat* magazine is music coordinator for the event. "Music provides the atmosphere for ArtWalk," Hellman said, "and can't be loud."

But acoustic does not mean dull. Hellman's lineup is as varied as the visual artists, from blue tech punk poets to jazzy torch singers to bluegrass guitarists.

"San Diego has a thriving acoustic scene," Hellman said. "We try to stick with local artists — (at least from other parts of Southern California)

More than a dozen musical acts will perform at ArtWalk, including "TriCultural Pop" musician Carlos Olmeda, guitarist and Elektra Records artist Anna Troy, and longtime ArtWalk participants such as blues guitarist Robin Herkel, Chapman Stick virtuoso Tom Griesgrabe and jazz singer Steph Johnson.

In addition to music, dancers will perform throughout ArtWalk. Participating dance companies include Ballet Folklorico Tapatio, Malashock Dance, Mojalet Dance Collective, Eveoke Dance Theatre and more.

KidsWalk, ArtWalk's hands-on laboratory in Amici Park, is three blocks east of India Street on Date Street. Children of all ages can create original works of art sponsored by organizations including Scripps Birch Aquarium, Cortez Academy Charter High School, Washington Elementary School, Young Audiences of San Diego, the San Diego Museum of Art and the Coronado School of the Arts. Projects will include marine-themed crafts, printmaking and bookmaking.