

***Press Release***  
*Office of Cultural Affairs*

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

Contact

**Barbara Goldstein**  
San Jose Public Art Director  
(408) 277-2667 ext., 27  
[barbara.goldstein@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:barbara.goldstein@sanjoseca.gov)

**Steven Brewster**  
Office of Economic Development  
(408) 535-8168 office  
(415) 577-8851 mobile  
[steven.brewster@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:steven.brewster@sanjoseca.gov)

**San Jose Major Temporary Public Art Initiative  
Launches Newest Project: *RFK Remix* by Helena  
Keeffe**

*Who's on 1<sup>st</sup>/What's on 2<sup>nd</sup> enlivens downtown San Jose transit  
corridor*

*Project pays homage to Robert Kennedy's legacy*

SAN JOSE, CALIF. — (April 4, 2008) —San Jose announced today the launch of *RFK Remix* by artist **Helena Keeffe**, as part of *Who's on 1<sup>st</sup>/ What's on 2<sup>nd</sup>* ([www.w1w2.org](http://www.w1w2.org)), a series of temporary multi-media artworks—by Bay Area artists—along San Jose's main downtown public transit corridor.

Commissioned by the City of San Jose Public Art Program, a division of the Office of Economic Development, in partnership with the San Jose Redevelopment Agency and the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), *RFK Remix* is one of eight art projects that are debuting between October 2007 and July 2008 along First and Second Streets from St. James Park to Paseo de San Antonio in Downtown San Jose.

“This project uses art, technology and the inspiration of Bobby Kennedy’s life to engage the community in important issues like equality and freedom of expression,” said San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed. “Such intersections of art and technology are part of what makes San Jose a creative and vibrant place to live, work and visit.”

Helena Keffe’s artwork takes the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Forum in St. James Park as its touchstone and explores the values espoused by Kennedy who is remembered for his dedication to and ideas of freedom, free speech and equality. The monument—in the form of a speaker’s podium—is intended to be engaged by visitors rather than simply admired. The nature of the artist’s temporary renovations will address both the monument’s physical character and intended use. The art project consists of three distinct yet interwoven parts: an audio walk, performances and a tapestry that will encase part of the memorial.

#### Audio Walk:

The RFK Remix Audio Walk will be available from **April 7 – June 15, 2008**. The audio walk will take participants along the downtown transit corridors, including a visit to the monument. The content includes music, interviews and speech reenactments. The tour is approximately 15 minutes in length. CD players will be available for check-out from the following locations:

- San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs, 365 S. Market St. M-F, 8 a.m.– 5 p.m.
- Good Karma Vegan Café, 37 S. First St, M-Sat 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Sun. Noon-7 p.m.
- Circle A Skateboards, 108 Paseo de San Antonio, M-Sun., 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
- St. James Senior Center, 199 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., M-F, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

#### Performances:

On **June 7, 2008**, 40 years after the assassination of Robert Kennedy, local musicians and performers gather at the monument to present music and performances inspired by the words of Robert Kennedy. Audience members will be encouraged to recite parts of RFK speeches. The event will occur between 1-3 p.m.

Additionally, every Saturday in May, starting May 10, members of Toastmasters, students and local activists will engage the monument through the recitation of historic speeches. These speeches will be available for viewing on the RFK Remix website: **[www.rfkremix.info](http://www.rfkremix.info)**.

**Fabric Sculpture:**

During performances noted above, a tapestry of pieces cut from recycled clothing will be installed on the wall of the monument behind the speakers' podium. The t-shirts, have been collected by Claire Madriz-Soto who runs a stand at the Capitol Flea Market and gives away free clothing to the homeless. The fabric encasement pays tribute to Ms. Madriz-Soto's commitment to helping others while creating a visual cue for current activity at the monument.

Helena Keeffe lives in Oakland, Calif. She has developed an art practice based in situations and exchanges, inviting others to engage in a participatory experience. Keeffe was recently awarded a prestigious Creative Work Fund grant. In 2005, she was included in *Bay Area Now 4* at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco. More about the artist may be found at [www.helenakeefe.com](http://www.helenakeefe.com).

**About Who's on 1<sup>st</sup>/What's on 2<sup>nd</sup>**

The art pieces in the *Who's on 1<sup>st</sup>/What's on 2<sup>nd</sup>* project are inspired by the people and activities that take place in Downtown San Jose. A majority of artworks involve an element of public participation and each is intended to stimulate a sense of wonder and surprise. Participating artists: JD Beltran, Jon Brumit, Hector Dio Mendoza, Chris Eckert, Bill Fontana, Jordan Geiger, Helena Keefe, and the team of Chip Lord and Bruce Tomb. Complete project descriptions and current schedules of dates and locations may be found at [www.w1w2.org](http://www.w1w2.org).

**About the Office of Cultural Affairs Public Art Program**

The City of San Jose Public Art Program, part of the City of San Jose Office of Economic Development, seeks to build community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enliven our community. Through active engagement between the artists and project stakeholders, public art strives to reflect the City's

ethnic diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future.

[www.sanjoseculture.org](http://www.sanjoseculture.org).

### **About VTA**

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is an independent special district responsible for bus, light rail and paratransit operations; congestion management; specific highway improvement projects; and countywide transportation planning. As such, VTA is both an accessible transit provider and multi-modal transportation planning organization involved with transit, highways and roadways, bikeways and pedestrian facilities. For more information, please visit, [www.vta.org](http://www.vta.org).

### **About the San Jose Redevelopment Agency**

The Agency is dedicated to improving the quality of life for all who live and work in San Jose. Governed by the City Council, the Agency facilitates and oversees comprehensive programs for development to revitalize and strengthen quality of life and competitiveness for San Jose's downtown, neighborhoods, and industrial areas. [www.sjredevelopment.org](http://www.sjredevelopment.org).

### **About the City of San Jose**

From its founding in 1777 as California's first city, San Jose has been a leader, driven by its spirit of innovation. Today, San Jose stands as the largest city in Northern California and the Capital of Silicon Valley—the world's leading center of innovation. The city, the 10<sup>th</sup> largest in the U.S., is committed to remaining a top-ranked place to do business, work, live, play and learn. For more information, visit, [www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov).

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