



Press Release
Office of Economic Development

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Jose Debuts Major Temporary Public Art Initiative

*Who's on 1st/What's on 2nd to enliven downtown San Jose transit corridor
with series of "small wonders"*

Project further fuses area as Silicon Valley City Center

SAN JOSE, CALIF. — (October 25, 2007) — The City of San Jose, America's 10th largest city, announced today the unveiling of *Who's on 1st/What's on 2nd* (www.w1w2.org), a series of temporary multi-media artworks—by San Francisco Bay Area artists—along San Jose's main downtown public transit corridor.

Commissioned by the City of San Jose in partnership with the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, the art projects by eight artists and artist teams will debut individually throughout the next year and a half along First and Second Streets from St. James Park to Paseo de San Antonio in Downtown San Jose.

"San Jose thrives on innovation and creativity. It's the backbone of our community. I'm proud that we are investing in San Jose's downtown and further

advancing the creative foundations of our city through the arts,” said San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed.

The art pieces in the *Who’s on 1st/What’s on 2nd* project were 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.

“Public art is an important component of the Redevelopment Agency’s effort to revitalize downtown, as art beautifies an area and enlivens the pedestrian experience, said Harry Mavrogenes, executive director, San Jose Redevelopment Agency. We are always in support of projects, such as *Who’s on 1st/What’s on 2nd*, that showcase downtown San Jose.”

Participating artists include: JD Beltran, Jon Brumit, Hector Dio Mendoza, Chris Eckert, Bill Fontana, Jordan Geiger, Helena Keefe, and the team of Chip Lord and Bruce Tomb.

The first three projects to debut include JD Beltran’s *Video Mirrors*, Hector Dio Mendoza’s *Citizen Tree* and Bill Fontana’s *The Bells of Trinity*:

- *Video Mirrors* is installed at The Globe, a new Downtown San Jose mid-rise residential building, located at 25 S. 3rd Street (between Santa Clara Street and San Fernando Street). The installation appears on the South 2nd Street side of the building opposite the Santa Clara VTA transit platform. *Video Mirrors* consists of video projections that reflect the immediate environment, as well as the rich demographic and historical atmosphere of the downtown area. Beltran interviewed people along 1st and 2nd Streets, asking them: "What are you thinking about these days? What concerns you? What makes you smile? What specifically were you thinking about before I walked up to you? What do you do?" The answers result in revealing, fascinating, poignant and sometimes humorous portraits. As a counterpart, she culled historical images of the Downtown, as well as narratives about what San Joseans would have been concerned about twenty, fifty, a hundred or a hundred fifty years ago.
- *Cultural Citizen Tree* by San Jose artist Hector Dio Mendoza, explores what it means to participate in San Jose society. The artwork has several parts; beginning with a series of portrait posters and banners of people who live, work, play and pass through Downtown, and a website tells the stories and invites others (www.culturalcitizen.org). In late spring 2008, Mendoza will

install in the southwest corner of St. James Park a bright red, 14 ft. high “cultural citizen tree” that symbolizes growth and change.

- In mid, November, internationally renowned artist Bill Fontana will install a sound installation on 2nd Street between St. James Square and Santa Clara Street. Entitled *The Bells of Trinity*, this project uses bell tones from the historic Trinity Episcopal Church, 81 N. 2nd, to create a sound sculpture that interacts with the urban landscape of St. James Park and 2nd Street. A series of minimalist bell compositions will mix and travel into the acoustic surroundings of the Church Bell Tower moving and echoing down the length of the street. A special performance will also be presented at the church in Spring 2008.

In December, Chris Eckert debuts *Light Haiku* on the exterior wall of the of Pavilion Parking facility facing San Fernando at 2nd Street. The project merges haiku with sophisticated engineering and contemporary content. Eckert’s Light Cannon, a computer-controlled spotlight designed and built specifically for *Light Haiku*, will “write” original poetry on a 650 square foot luminescent screen in Downtown San Jose. A focused three-inch spot will slowly play across the screen, its glowing wake gradually producing an ethereal billboard-sized haiku. It emerges from the darkness, and then fades away. *Light Haiku* features over one hundred new poems written by pc muñoz along with contributions by special guest poets from around the world. Part of the exhibition will be entirely devoted to haiku contributed by San Jose grade-schoolers. Anyone may submit haiku for consideration at www.lighthaiku.com.

Spring 2008 sees the unveiling of Jon Brumit’s *South Bay Talent Center*—an artwork conceived as an interactive public project and inspired by the notion that everyone is good at something. *South Bay Talent Center* is designed to explore, catalog and celebrate the numerous varieties of "talent" found within San Jose via its inhabitants, visitors and workers. Attendance and participation will be sought by way of bi-weekly talent showcases within the space and a series of collaborative art projects evolving just inside the storefront windows.

Spring and Summer 2008 will see the debut of other *Who’s on 1st/What’s on 2nd* projects including Helen Keefe’s *The Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Forum*, Jordan Geiger’s *Day for Night* and Chip Lord and Bruce Tomb’s *Zocalito*.

Other key collaborators and sponsors for *Who's on 1st/What's on 2nd* include:

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| ABM | San Jose Downtown Association |
| Camera 12 Cinemas | San Jose Public Library |
| CIM Group, The Globe Building | Trinity Episcopal Church |
| Onomy Labs and Scott L. Minneman | Valley Transportation Authority |
| Ropers, Majeski, Kohn & Bentley | |

Complete project descriptions and current schedules of dates and locations may be found at www.w1w2.org.

Silicon Valley's City Center fills with "Small Wonders"

The project embarks on the creation of the San Jose and 1st ACT Silicon Valley's "small wonders." 1st ACT Silicon Valley, a network of business, civic, and cultural leaders whose mission is to inspire leadership, participation, and investment at the intersection of Arts, Creativity, and Technology, envisions Downtown San Jose as Silicon Valley's City Center.

The vision emphasizes the importance of both "Big Deals" and "Small Wonders" in successful Downtowns. Big Deals are significant development projects that anchor the Downtown Core and draw people initially to the location. Small Wonders are the smaller scale projects providing attractive gathering spaces, and lively street life which "fill in" between the Big Deals, and keep people returning to Downtown as a special place.

According to Connie Martinez, co-founder and managing director, 1st ACT Silicon Valley, this is an example of how San Jose is capitalizing on the region's high-tech success by creating physical improvements and increasing investments in arts and culture.

"Vital, great cities must continue to evolve and enliven creative environments for both economic and cultural growth. *Who's on 1st/What's on 2nd* does just that by providing stimulating, thought-provoking spaces and sensations that further distinguishes the region's artistic and creative milieu," said Martinez.

About 1st ACT Silicon Valley

1stACT (Arts, Creativity, Technology) Silicon Valley is a cross-sector collaborative whose mission is to inspire leadership, participation and investment at the intersection of art and technology. For more information, please visit, www.1stact.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.

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.

About the City of San Jose's Office of Economic Development

The City of San Jose's Office of Economic Development (OED) is committed to a vital, competitive San Jose economy that increases prosperity for people and companies and enhances City revenues. The Office guides the City's economic strategy, provides assistance for business success, helps connect employers with trained workers, and provides art and cultural resources to our community. For more information, please visit, www.sjeconomy.com.

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 10th 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.

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