

PUBLIC ART UPDATES

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*Restored 1887 NC&O Passenger Coach No. 1
at new National City Historic Railcar Plaza*

Children's Aviation Art Contest set for take-off

With seat backs forward, tray tables up, seat belts buckled, and imaginations prepared for take-off, it's time once again for the International Aviation Art Contest. The Port of San Diego and the San Diego Aerospace Museum invite all eligible youngsters from ages 6 to 17 to participate in this year's contest, whose theme is "My Dream to Fly." Almost everyone at one time or other dreams about flying. This year's contest encourages children to express through art their dreams of flight. Artworks should be created on 11 x 17" paper using any of the following media: watercolor, acrylic or oil paint, indelible markers, colored pencils, felt tip markers, soft ballpoint pens, indelible ink, Crayola or similar mediums. Prizes will be awarded to different categories based upon age groups. Deadline for entries is **January 19, 2001**. Contact the Port's Public Art Department at (619) 686-7246 for complete contest rules and application form, or download same from the Public Art section of the Port's web site at www.portofsandiego.org. □

Community history back on track at National City Historic Railcar Plaza

Absent 87 years, a once familiar and colorful part of local daily life just returned, in all its elegance, to a permanent new home in National City. Nearly 250 people—many attired in vintage 19th century clothing—gathered on September 14 to celebrate the dedication of National City Historic Railcar Plaza and the rollout of the newly restored Passenger Coach No. 1. The railcar was built in 1887 and served for many years as part of the old National City & Otay Railway (NC&O), which was the first commuter-type railroad in San Diego County. National City Mayor George Waters led the festivities and performed the starring role—as National City founder Frank Kimball—in a pageant of local history as guests

enjoyed their box lunches.

The Plaza construction and railcar restoration were funded by the Port of San Diego's Public Art Program and collectively constitute the largest public art project yet completed on tidelands. This is an excellent example of how the Public Art Program, working in partnership with the community, achieves its goal of contributing to the quality and identity of the region. Not only is the railcar a priceless artifact from National City's pioneering days, but its restoration complements an existing community theme of preserving a unique and colorful Victorian past. Railcar Plaza promises to be a great source of civic pride for National City and a catalyst for further redevelopment and increased public access to

a formerly industrial section of the city's west side.

Railcar Plaza also contains four display rooms that can be used by civic groups for historical exhibits relating to the railroads, National City, or the region in general. The San Diego Railroad Museum has completed the first such exhibit, which uses historical photos and three-dimensional elements to tell the story of the NC&O Railway. Groups wishing to sign up for use of the display rooms should contact the Port's Public Art Department at (619) 686-7246. □

Public Art Gazette

A report of official decisions by the Public Art Committee and the Board of Port Commissioners

Public Art Committee Action

May 18— Recommended accepting the donation of a memorial sculpture for a site near the children's playground on Shelter Island.

July 17— Recommended approving the acquisition of a wind harp sculpture by artist Ross Barrable as the centerpiece of the proposed Ron McElliot Memorial at the Chula Vista Marina.

July 17— Voted to defer a decision on selection of artists for the Canyon Path project until the Convention Center and Marriott Hotel staffs had an opportunity to provide feedback on design proposals submitted by artists Buster Simpson and Mags Harries/Lajos Héder.

August 17— Recommended committing to finding a site on tidelands for a Leonardo Nierman sculpture that is being offered to the people of San Diego by the Government of Mexico.

August 17— Selected 30 winning designs from over 50 that were submitted for the Port's Airport Banner Contest. The selected artists will have until the end of November to render their designs as full-scale (16 x 4') street banners, which will be displayed at the airport.

September 21— Accepted the site selection subcommittee's first two choices for potential sites for the Leonardo Nierman sculpture donation.

Board Action

June 27— Accepted from Jackie Mann family the donation of sculpture "Bubble Bath" by Dan Hill for placement at a site on Shelter Island near the Children's playground.

August 8— Approved the design, siting and funding package for the Ron McElliot Memorial at the Chula Vista Marina.

October 31— Approved the appointment of Debra Owen to the Public Art Committee.

There's an elephant in my duck pond!

Coronado residents and visitors were recently startled to discover a blue elephant on a pink rock that seemed to have magically appeared in the middle of the duck pond at the Ferry Landing. This is "Elefount," a bronze sculpture fountain that was donated to the Port of San Diego by its creator, artist **Gary Hughes**. (Lindbergh Field travelers may recognize another of Hughes humorous sculptures, "At the Gate," which is on the lower level of Terminal 2 West.) At the pond, the resident water fowl seem fairly unruffled by the cheeky metallic pachyderm that has taken up residence in their midst. In fact there's some evidence the bemused mallards have adopted Elefount as a sort of surrogate mom! At least Elefount's rock has become a popular place for the gaggle to gather as well as to enjoy a cool shower from his uplifted spouting trunk. There's no doubt this most smile-inducing of Port



public artworks will amuse and delight the many sure-footed and web-footed visitors who flock to this popular Coronado gathering place. Hats off to Coronado Ferry Landing for participating in the Port's Public Art Program by providing Elefount a new home. □

Port reels in St. Phalle dolphin sculpture

World recognized French artist **Niki de Saint Phalle**, now based in San Diego, has graciously agreed to loan her famous sculpture "Nana and the Dolphin" to the Port. This highly colorful and exuberant sculpture features a joyful woman playing beach ball on the arched back of huge fanciful dolphin. This eye-catching artwork is now on display on the sidewalk in front of Terminal 2 at Lindbergh Field. ⇨



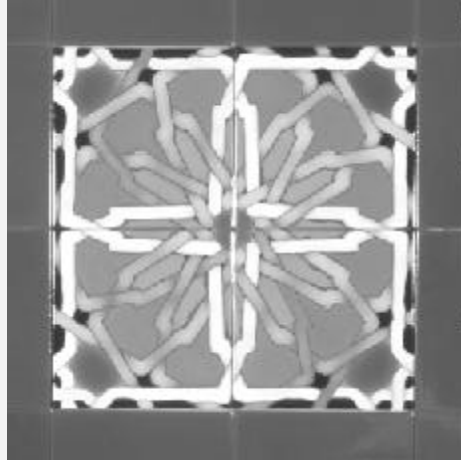
New playmate at children's playground on Shelter Island

A silent bronze playmate has appeared near the children's playground at Shoreline Park West on Shelter Island. The recently installed artwork by **Dan Hill** is named "Bubble Bath" and depicts a life-size toddler blowing bubbles. The 24-inch high sculpture, which sits atop a 4-foot quartz pedestal, was donated to the Port by the Jackie and Charlie Mann family as a lasting memorial to a family member. "Bubble Bath" is fun and playful and is sure to be enjoyed by park visitors of all ages. □



Famous mutiny and tile factory linked at Historic Railcar Plaza

Decorative tile recreations by noted artist **Marlo Bartels** provide a durable, colorful and historic accent to the concrete hardscape of National City Railcar Plaza. Bartels has patterned his glazed tiles after those once manufactured by the old California China Products Company, which operated in National City from 1911. Original faience tiles produced by this factory still embellish domes and other elements of well-known structures in San Diego, including the Santa Fe Depot and the buildings and gardens of Balboa Park. The California China Products company itself lasted only until 1917, by which time co-founders Walter and son **Charles Nordoff** had moved on to separate literary careers. Charles went to Tahiti where, with James Norman Hall, he later co-authored *Mutiny on the Bounty*. □



Spirit of IB takes shape

Artist **A. Wasil's** monumental sculpture "Spirit of Imperial Beach" has taken its final form as a full size clay model. The artist is now in the process of fabricating molds from the model. These will be sent to a foundry near San Francisco where casting of the bronze sculpture will take place during the next six to eight months. "Spirit" will be the focal point of a Port funded street-end improvement program at the seaward end of Palm Avenue and is sure to become an icon to the traditions and community of Imperial Beach. □



There's light at the end of the Canyon Path

Harries/Héder Collaborative, Inc., a public art urban design team, has been chosen to execute the Canyon Path pedestrian accessway project. This summer the Public Art Committee and officials of the San Diego Convention Center and San Diego Marriott Hotel reviewed design proposals from finalists of a yearlong artist search. The Harries/Héder proposal was selected as the most promising for this difficult and challenging public artwork. Canyon Path is a narrow pathway that separates the Convention Center and the Marriott Hotel. It is one of the public accessways that connect downtown streets to the bayfront in this area. However, it is difficult to find, and busy automobile traffic nearby makes it decidedly uninviting for pedestrian use. The Harries/Héder team has been charged with developing a final design proposal for artwork that will prominently mark the entrance to the path and provide an inviting, safe and pleasant transition from the cityscape to the waterfront.

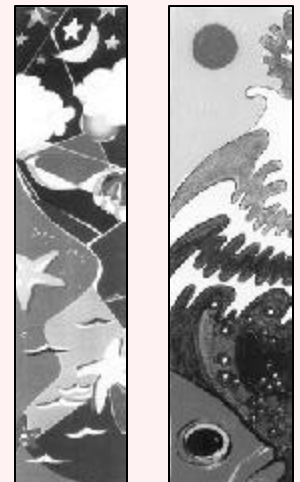
The Harries/Héder proposal keys on elements available at the site, such as topiary plantings and reflected sunlight, to ease the passage through the accessway and provide visible features that will become memorable landmarks. The now-obscure entrances to the "canyon" would be marked by two giant topiary figures. A

large prism-kite suspended above the mid-point of the path will catch ambient sunlight and project a moving color spectrum onto the walls as the sun transits the sky. A series of hedge-lantern structures are planned to guide pedestrians along the path and provide lighting at night. Other proposed features include applied wall coloring, colored asphalt crosswalks, and an ADA accessibility ramp.

The Harries/Héder team will bring its refined design back to the Public Art Committee in the near future for final review before being submitted for Board approval. □

Banner day nearing for Airport

The Public Art Committee recently selected thirty striking designs submitted by local artists for the Airport Banner Contest. Artists have until November 30 to translate their designs into full-size renderings painted on 16-foot banner material provided by the Port's Public Art Program. Completed banners will be displayed on streetlight poles in the parking lots and along the approaches to the airport terminals. This festive splash of color should be in place in time to delight the thousands of travelers who will be passing through Lindbergh Field during the holiday season. □



View all 30 designs in color at the Public Art section of: www.portofsandiego.org.



Public Art Committee visits Children's Hospital

In June the Public Art Committee met at Children's Hospital in San Diego to tour the hospital's beautiful sculpture gardens and meet with the artists and hospital staff who were involved in their creation. Children's hospital has a well-earned reputation for using art to create effective healing environments. It has become an example for designers of pediatric hospitals and a destination for hospital architects from around the world. Artists involved in this project included T.J. Dixon, Mary Lynn Dominguez, John Dougherty, Kim Emerson, Albert d'Matteis, Jim Nelson and Ellen Phillips. Following discussions and refreshments, the Committee toured the Leichtag Family Healing Garden, the Garden of Dreams, the Buggy Garden, the Friendship Garden, and Carley's Magical Garden. The visit helped the Public Art Committee develop a vision for community commemorative art projects. □

Port of San Diego Public Art Committee Members

Margaret Brezel (Chair)
Imperial Beach
Melody Cernitz
Chula Vista
Martha Ann Youngberg
Coronado
Kathleen Smith
National City
Janene Christopher
San Diego
John Vissat
Port Tenants Association

At-large Members:

Teresa Barker
Jesus Dominguez
Debra Owen
Catherine Yi-yu Cho Woo

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How to Get Involved

Community involvement. The success of public art depends on the involvement of its patrons. While many artists actively engage the public in their work, community representatives also provide a vital balance to the decision making process by participating on art committees and at project development meetings. Those interested in participating in the development of upcoming projects should contact the Port's Public Art Director.

Artist involvement. Artists who wish to be considered for public art commissions should submit the following materials to the Port's Public Art Department, Attn: Artist Registry:

- A current resume or curriculum vitae
- Up to 20 labeled 35mm slides of recent work
- Support materials such as catalogs, reviews, articles, etc.

Mail to:

Public Art Director
Port of San Diego
P.O. Box 120488
San Diego, CA 92112-0488

Photo upper left: The Public Art Committee touring Carley's Magic Garden at San Diego Children's Hospital.

Border images top of pages 2 and 3 are Marlo Bartels' tile patterns installed at National City Historic Railcar Plaza.

FOR ADDITIONAL PUBLIC ART INFORMATION, CALL (619) 686-7246, E-mail publicart@portofsandiego.org, OR VISIT THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM WEB SITE AT: www.portofsandiego.org (click on the "Public Art" button).

Port of San Diego

Discover what's in it for you

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