SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN NEWS

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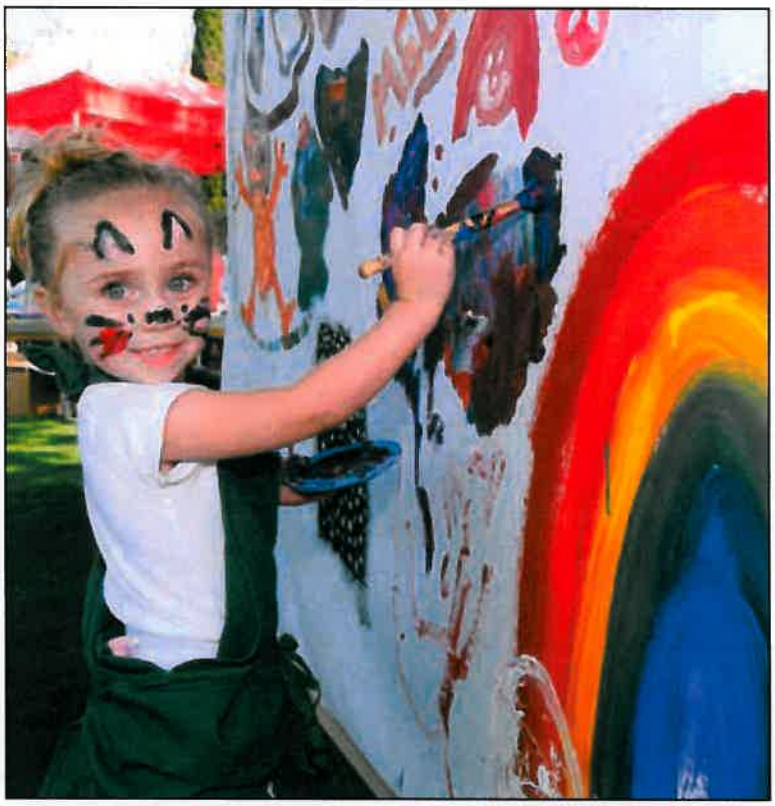
A feast for the eyes awaits at Art Walk in Little Italy

By WILL BOWEN, PhD. | DOWNTOWN NEWS

Each year, Little Italy plays host to several large events, most with an Italian theme. The largest event of all is ArtWalk, now in its 26th year, currently sponsored by Mission Federal Credit Union.

This year, Little Italy will be transformed into a large piazza covering some 16 blocks April 24 and 25, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Visitors will be able to stroll down the middle of the street to browse, admire and buy all different sorts of art, including painting, sculpture, glass and photography which will be shown by more than 300 artists.

There will also be six stages for 39 music and dance performances. Five of the stages will be on each corner of India Street from Date up to Grape streets. The sixth stage will be at the cement amphitheater at Amici Park, corner of Date and State streets. Some of the performers include John Torres, Steph Johnson, Ashley Matte, Steven Ybarra and Tom Griesgraber. There will also be two steel drum bands and dance performances by students from Aire Ensemble, Eveoke Dance Theatre, Malashock Dance School, Coronado School of the Arts, Culture Shock and Ballet Folklorico Tapatio de San Diego.



Activities geared toward children will be offered at Art Walk's KidsWalk area at the merger of Amici Park and Washington Elementary School. COURTESY PHOTO

Activities specifically geared toward children will take place at the KidsWalk area located at the merger of Amici Park and Washington Elementary School. There, kids will be guided to playfully discover their inner artist using recycled and reclaimed materials.

Frankie Augustino, a local artist and employee of Blick Art Supplies on India Street, summed up the potential experience of ArtWalk.

"I really love this event. It's great to just walk around, talk to the artists, and maybe buy something," Augustino said. "I wish they did this more than once a year. It's really fun and great for promoting the arts."

With so many people due to attend, parking will be at a premium. Plan on arriving early if you wish to park on the street. The Ace Parking Lot at the County Administration Building at 1600 Pacific Coast Highway is another option. It's a three block walk up to the activities. Participants can also park at Horton Plaza and take the trolley to the Little Italy stop.