SAN DIEGO UPTOWN NEWS

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Open-air fest to accent Mexican artistry

By Christy Scannell
SDUN Editor

More than 16 blocks in Little Italy will be the two-day home of 300-plus artists during the Mission Federal ArtWalk, April 24 and 25, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day.

In its 26th year, the open-air fine arts festival invites participants to meet artists, buy original art, create their own work and enjoy entertainment and an array of food and beverage options.

Photography, sculpture, painting and metalwork are just some of the media that will be represented at the free event, which annually attracts more than 100,000 people. A special feature this year is "Artes de Mexico," an exhibit at the Mexican Cultural Institute located in the Consulado building at India and Cedar streets. Also, people can bid on a silent auction

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for a chance to win an original portrait of themselves or their families with proceeds benefiting ArtReach, a local non-profit art education program.

KidsWalk at Amici Park will provide children and families hands-on activities such as Shoes of Hope, ocean art, face painting, animal masks, mini kite-making, art projects made from recycled and reclaimed items and interactive music performances.

The festival will include more than 25 musical performing groups on six stages, including Steph Johnson, who was nominated for Best Acoustic at the 2007 San Diego Music Awards, and John Torres, who performs a mix of folk, pop and indie music. Blues, jazz, classical and other musical genres will also be represented.

The ArtWalk will be centered on India Street between Grape and Beech streets with booths extending onto Fir, Date and Cedar streets. For a map, performance schedule and other information, go to missionfederalartwalk.org.◆