

**SOURCE: Koreatown/Northgate Community Benefit District**

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"Art Cart" Begins Its Tour of Oakland's Koreatown/Northgate District

OAKLAND, CA--(Marketwire - August 13, 2009) - The Koreatown/Northgate District -- along Telegraph Avenue between 20th and 35th Streets -- is already home to Oakland's largest First Friday events. The Oakland district is now emerging as an even more active focal point for art with the launch of the "Art Cart" neighborhood outreach art program.

The "Art Cart" premise is a simple, but very appealing concept that encourages people of all interests, talents and ages to create art. The Art Cart is a small, four-wheeled vehicle with easels and an array of art supplies including paper, pencils, paints, crayons, and other graphic tools. The cart is wheeled into a neighborhood sidewalk location, and people are encouraged to answer the question, "What does home mean to you?" Participants can express their answer any way they wish; with a drawing, splashes of color, a few words, or however else they choose to express their thoughts about home.

There is no charge to take part in the community-building program, and everyone is welcome to participate. The Art Cart will be officially unveiled at the corner of 31st Street and Telegraph Avenue at 2:00 pm on Friday, August 14. It will be posted at various locations within the Koreatown/Northgate district from August 14 to September 19.

The Art Cart project was conceived by Lauren Odell Usher and Lisa Rasmussen, professional artists who are working and showing their art in the Koreatown/Northgate district.

Usher explains, "There is an incredible amount of art in the district. Galleries. Studios. Displays. It's really amazing." She adds, "And it is growing. The Oakland Art Murmur is held on the first Friday evening of each month with music and art. Each month it's attracting larger crowds."

Rasmussen is excited about the diversity of the participants in the Art Cart project during preview runs in the district. "We're getting people from every imaginable age and interest. It's great to see the breadth of participation." She observes, "Some people with no art experience are a little shy about taking part. But, when they see others doing it, they join in."

When the program is complete, what will happen to the hundreds, or even thousands, of expressions on the meaning of "home"? "We'll be preparing an exhibit as part of the CultureFest that will be held on 26th Street and Telegraph Avenue on September 19," says Usher. "We expect the display will include a thousand or more pieces of art originating from all over the Koreatown/Northgate district."

After the cultural festival, there will be other displays and exhibits to let the public see the art. "We want to have as many people as possible enjoy it," Rasmussen explains. The project is sponsored by the Koreatown/Northgate Community Benefit District.

Starting with the official launch and cart unveiling on Friday, August 14, the cart will be taken to locations in the Koreatown/Northgate District each Friday afternoon, concluding with the display at the September 19th CultureFest. Information about the Art Cart's location will be available on the Web at www.artismoving.blogspot.com

Commenting on the Art Cart program, Alex Hahn, president of the Koreatown/Northgate Community Benefit District, said, "Art is becoming an increasingly important attraction for our district. This program -- and the CultureFest -- are examples of our commitment to displaying the diverse cultural attributes of our district."

Event: Official Launch of the "Art Cart" in Koreatown/Northgate

When: 2:00 pm, Friday, August 14

Location: 31st Street and Telegraph Avenue, Oakland

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