

Chinatown Business Improvement District Bulletin Summer 2001 Newsletter

[Page 1]

Chinatown BID Kicks Off Summer with First Chinatown Art Festival

The Chinatown Business Improvement District launched a fun-filled summer event schedule with the first Chinatown Art Festival, which began on June 23 and continues through July 22. The festival showcases "plein air" or representational paintings of Chinatown's historic structures and colorful byways created by nearly 100 of California's foremost artists. These paintings, all of which are available for acquisition, are now on display at a special exhibition at 951 North Broadway in Central Plaza.

All participating artists are juried members of the California Art Club, one of the nation's oldest and largest fine arts organizations dedicated to the support of contemporary, traditional art. The California Art Club, with its mission to preserve California history, co-sponsored the festival with the Los Angeles Chinatown Business Council.

"We were honored that such a prestigious organization as the California Art Club was so interested focusing on Chinatown," said Roger Hong, an LACBC board member who was instrumental in the planning of the Art Festival. "Since these artistic efforts coincide with the beginning of the BID's decade-long effort to revitalize this multicultural region of the city, these artists will capture images of Chinatown during a period that one day will be considered a turning point in the history of the area."

To mark the start of the Art Festival, the LACBC and the California Art Club hosted an Artists' Gala Reception on Thursday, June 21. The event attracted nearly 300 art patrons and Los Angeles City officials interested in an opportunity to view the artwork prior to the opening of the public exhibition two days later. Proceeds from the \$100-ticket event have been earmarked for a Chinatown building restoration fund and educational programs of the California Art Club.

A number of prominent art and community groups will make special trips to Chinatown during the month-long exhibition to specifically view the artwork and tour historic sites in the area. These groups include members of the Bowers Museum, Natural History Museum, Pasadena Art Alliance, and Women's City Club of Pasadena.

In addition, a variety of Chinese cultural activities and entertainment are planned for each weekend of the festival, including performances by Chinese dancers, crafts for children and musical performances. The featured event on each Saturday evening of the Art Festival will be an outdoor Chinese Film Festival. As a tribute to Ang Lee, his classic films will be screened, including "The Wedding Banquet," "Eat Drink Man Woman," "Pushing Hands," and "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon."

The Art Festival will conclude with a Fashion Finale featuring the Asian-inspired fashions of California designer Peter Lai. The event will be held at the exhibition gallery on July 21 from 5 to 8 p.m. Tickets are \$30.00 per person. For ticket information, call (213) 680-0243.

Other events planned for this summer in Chinatown include a Multicultural Music and Dance Series, to be held on Saturday evenings in August, and the annual Moon Festival Celebration, scheduled for Saturday, September 29.

Information on all events in Chinatown can be found by visiting the official website of the LACBC - www.chinatownla.com - or by calling (213) 680-0243.

[Page 2]

A Message from the President

The establishment of the Chinatown Business Improvement District in January has generated a flurry of activity in our community. BID funding has allowed us to expand upon the Clean and Safe Program. As a result, our streets and alleyways are the cleanest they have been in years, and we continue to see a downward trend in crimes committed in the district, making Chinatown one of the safest areas in the City of Los Angeles.

During the past six months, we have also been able to take a proactive stance in fostering an inviting environment in Chinatown for Southern California residents and visitors, who in recent years have chosen to spend their dining and shopping dollars in Monterey Park and Alhambra instead of Chinatown.

We worked with community groups in the opposition to a proposed nude dancing club at 211 Alpine. By rallying community-wide support and filling the Council Chambers at City Hall, we demonstrated unprecedented solidarity for Chinatown. And City Council took notice, unanimously voting to fight the lawsuit filed by the adult entertainment company and preserve the family-oriented culture of Chinatown. These efforts generated a prominent front-page article on Chinatown in the Metro section of The Los Angeles Times and in-depth reports on both KABC-TV and KNBC-TV.

We have also received a tremendous amount of positive media coverage for Chinatown - more in just the last six months than we have probably seen in the last decade - as a result of an active special-event schedule. The Los Angeles Times, Downtown News, Los Angeles Times Sunday Magazine, LA Weekly and the New York Times have all featured articles about events happening in Chinatown - particularly the blossoming art scene. The contemporary art galleries in West Plaza have helped put the spotlight on Los Angeles Chinatown among art collectors around the world, which encouraged The Los Angeles County Museum of Art to hold one of its premier annual events - the Muse Art Walk - in Chinatown during early June.

We envision that the attention on Chinatown will continue with our largest event to date - the Chinatown Art Festival, which recently began on June 23 and kicked off our summer event schedule. We are fortunate that the California Art Club, the co-sponsor of the Art Festival and one of the largest fine arts organizations in the country, was so enthusiastic about making Chinatown the subject of their artists' paintings.

California Art Club artists have been painting the street scenes of Chinatown during the past several weeks, capturing quintessential images of our community on canvas. Tens of thousands of people are expected to travel to Chinatown to view these paintings during the exhibition, and we believe that these works of art will make people see Chinatown in a completely new light. We hope you, too, will join us for this special celebration.

Patrick Lee

[Page 2 - cont'd]

Important Telephone Numbers and Information

LACBC Event Information
(213) 680-0243

Operation Clean Sweep
(800) 611-CITY
To report new incidences of graffiti for removal.

PEPI Security
(626) 282-8880
To call for assistance from the BID-sponsored security patrol.

[Page 3]

Chinatown's First Street Banner Program Debuts

The 25-block area that comprises the Chinatown BID took on a new look during mid-June, as the first street banners created specifically for this historic area of Los Angeles were installed on lightposts throughout the district.

The banners, which measure 2" by 8", feature an abstract representation of Los Angeles Chinatown, with imagery that graphically presents the sun, sky, land and sea, set off against the profile of a Chinese architectural rooftop. The BID banners are accompanied by special event banners to promote the Chinatown Art Festival. During mid-summer, the Art Festival banners will be replaced by banners promoting the annual Moon Festival, scheduled for September 29.

The design for the BID banner was created by Ulla Hansen, a graduate student at the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc), a top-ranked architecture school located in downtown Los Angeles.

Hansen was one of eight students working under the direction of SCI-Arc Shopmaster Randall Wilson to develop banner designs for Chinatown.

The students' designs were created as part of a 15-week course, made possible through a grant received in September 2000 from the Neighborhood Matching Fund Program of the City of Los Angeles Board of Public Works. During the course, which began January 8, the students spent many Saturdays in Chinatown to familiarize themselves with the area. They worked on preliminary designs at the Inmo Gallery, a contemporary art gallery located on Chung King Road in Chinatown's West Plaza. The gallery's owner, Inmo Yuon, served as the Project Coordinator for the banner design project.

SCI-Arc generated additional funding to support this project through a grant from the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department. These funds enabled SCI-Arc to augment their efforts on behalf of Chinatown with the design and fabrication of new benches, which have been placed in front of the wishing well in West Plaza.

[Page 3 - cont'd]

LACBC Names Winners of Logo Contest

The LACBC announced a logo contest on March 1 to generate creative ideas for a BID logo that would serve as the centerpiece of all materials to promote the rebirth and renewal of Chinatown. Information about the contest, including its \$1,000 prize for the selected logo, was distributed to the area's prominent art schools and various professional organizations involved with graphic design and marketing.

Submissions were accepted for one month, during which time nearly a dozen entries were received. The logos were reviewed by the LACBC Design Committee, which selected an image that was submitted by two SCI-Arc students, who also happened to participate in the Chinatown street banner program. The winning design was created by Ulla Hansen and Jeff Kleeger.

The logo features a graphic image of the Chinatown Gateway, with the entrance resembling the well-recognized building elevation of Los Angeles City Hall.

Congratulations to Ulla, once again, and to Jeff.

[Page 4]

Summer Event Schedule

Chinatown Art Festival

Saturday, June 23 to Sunday, July 22

Location: 951 North Broadway

Exhibit Hours: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday - Sunday

Chinese Film Festival - A Tribute to Ang Lee

Saturday evenings, June 23 and 30, and July 7, 14 and 21

Location: Various outdoor venues in Chinatown (for film titles and screening locations, visit www.chinatownla.com or call (213) 680-0243)

Time: 8 p.m.

An Evening for Art in Chinatown

Saturday, July 7

Location: Chung King Road and Bernard Street

Time: 6 to 9 p.m.

Fashion Finale for the Chinatown Art Festival

Saturday, July 21

Location: 951 North Broadway

Time: 5 to 8 p.m.

Multicultural Music and Dance Series

Saturday evenings, August 4, 11, 18 and 25

Location: Jade Pavilion, 686 Spring Street

Time: 7 to 10 p.m.

Moon Festival

Saturday, September 29

Location: Multiple sites throughout Chinatown
Time: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

For more detailed information on these events, visit www.chinatownla.com or call (213) 680-0243.

Special Note for Chinatown Property Owners:

Information about the hardship applications and the nomination process for the Chinatown BID 2001-2002 Board of Directors will be mailed shortly in the beginning of July. Keep an eye out for this important information in your mailbox.

FL: 6/27/01