

cinco de mayo
2024

BLINTZES & BURRITOS BRUNCH

**FEATURING
JOHN PAUL THORNTON
AND
BREED STREET SHUL PROJECT**

**CONNECTING THE JEWISH AND
LATINO COMMUNITIES THROUGH
ART AND ARCHITECTURE**



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and
So We Plant for
Our Children"*



*Nancy & Steve
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**VALLEY JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER'S
ANNUAL CELEBRATION:**

“BLINTZES AND BURRITOS BRUNCH”

**FEATURING
JOHN PAUL THORNTON
AND
BREED STREET SHUL PROJECT**

**CONNECTING THE JEWISH AND LATINO
COMMUNITIES THROUGH ART**

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Welcome by Board President Ollie Haas
and Executive Director Jeff Rubin
Brunch

Presentation by John Paul Thornton

Video Presentation by Breed Street Shul Project

Presentation of Youth Art Scholarship - Celeste Herrera

Presentation of Certificates

Raffle

Silent Auction



Catering by Silver Spoons

Musical Entertainment by Joan Persky

Interactive Art by Toby Salkin

Westfield Topanga

JOHN PAUL THORNTON



John Paul Thornton is an American artist, educator and speaker. He is the author of the book: "Art And Courage: Stories to Inspire the Artist-Warrior Within."

Early in his career, while teaching art to underprivileged children, he learned that one of his students was reported as "missing." As a way to honor the families who have endured such a loss, John Paul created a series of paintings depicting the faces of America's missing children. Numbering in the hundreds, they have been exhibited in many public installations, most notably Washington, D.C. He worked in Haiti through a grant from the United Nations Foundation (Merridian Health, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) through the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs).

He has taught at The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California State University of Los Angeles, The Skirball Cultural Center, American Jewish University, Pierce College, the Los Angeles Unified School District Conservatory of the Arts, Valley JCC and the Sophia School of painting in Tokyo, Japan. He also served as Art Education Coordinator with the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs working on projects with MOCA, the Getty Research Institute and on International Sister-City exchanges with Taxco, Mexico. John Paul's paintings are in numerous private collections.





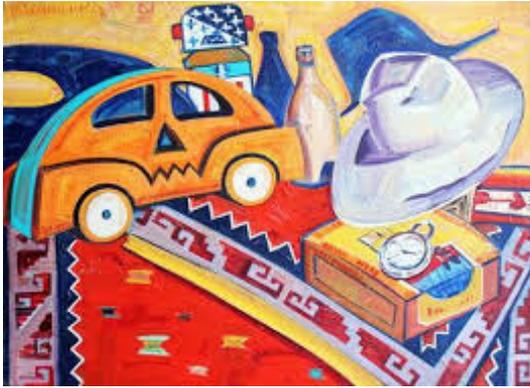
The Breed Street Shul Project is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to bring together the Jewish, Latino and other communities of Los Angeles by rehabilitating the landmark Breed Street Shul in Boyle Heights. By transforming the campus into a center of arts, culture, education, and service for its current neighbors, we will make it a place of learning, teaching and wonder for all.

In the middle of the 1990's, Jewish community activists saw that unless the Shul was restored soon, a precious part of the city's Jewish heritage would disappear. Along with Boyle Heights residents, we envisioned an adaptive reuse that would not only preserve the past but would also energize the neighborhood. Together, both groups formed a new organization that would broadcast this vision to the city and make it a reality. After acquiring the buildings, we have spent the last several years engaged in doing the emergency structural work to prevent ongoing deterioration of the landmark Byzantine Revival Building and completing the rehabilitation of the Historic 1915 Building behind the larger structure, which had been the original synagogue. Now, for the first time in decades, the Breed Street Shul is a center of activity and a resource for Boyle Heights.

Our goal is not just to restore a building: it is to assist in revitalizing a neighborhood and enriching our city. The Breed Street Shul Project (BSSP) has been commended by Partners for Sacred Places (a national interfaith group) as being the only preservation project of a former religious property that is focused not merely on a "museum" use, or on a completely new use unrelated to the site's past, but rather as one that combines preservation of an icon of Jewish history with engagement with another community and the creation of opportunities for educational advancement, social justice and volunteerism.

From Breed Street Shul Project 2024

FRANK ROMERO



**CALavera CAR, 1997
OIL ON CANVAS**

Frank Romero (Born 1941 in Boyle Heights) grew up in the Hispanic, Asian, and Jewish communities of East Los Angeles. He began painting when he was five years old and as a teenager attended LA's Otis Art Institute, one of the best art schools in the nation. Romero did not think of himself as a Chicano until he began to work with three other artists in an informal group known as Los Four. Los Four and other Hispanic artists throughout the West used wall murals, graffiti, and street theater to protest America's involvement in Vietnam and Southeast Asia.

Romero has successfully balanced a career in both the public and private arenas. He has completed over 15 murals throughout Los Angeles and was a key contributor to the 1984 Olympic Arts Festival with "Going to the Olympics," a large-scale mural which adorned one of Los Angeles' busiest freeways (Highway 101). In 2012 he created a print of the same image after the mural was painted over. Romero's brightly colored paintings celebrate the Los Angeles culture of lowriders and "rascuache," the art of making something beautiful out of the ordinary.

Romero has exhibited extensively in the United States, Europe and Japan. His work is featured in many permanent collections, including the National Museum of Art in Washington, D.C., the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Carnegie Museum in Oxnard, CA.



We would like to recognize Big O Tires in Tarzana, who have provided ongoing, generous financial support to the VJCC in the past few years. Their contributions have supported the Wayne League, The JPT Scholarship Fund, and the Center as a whole. They are a family owned business which has been actively involved in the community for many years. Please feel free to drop by and get acquainted--and of course consider using their services which include all types of automotive repairs as well as tires.

We want to offer a special thanks to Lisa Rubin for her generous donation of time and artistic talents. She has provided a colorful and creative addition to our special events--both in designing our Tribute Journal, assisting with our decorations, and sharing her graphic arts skills. Thank you so much for all your efforts.

Finally, I want to recognize all the Volunteer members of the Fundraising Committee who have worked diligently behind the scenes year-round to ensure that the VJCC can continue to offer the community such enjoyable and informative programs: Stephanie DuCaine, Debbie DuVal, Elaine Fox, Michael Fishman, Donna Haas, Phyllis and Andy Levy, Suzanne Victor, Madeline Angel, and Marty Hall.

It's been a pleasure working with you all.
Susan and Gabriel Menkes

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE OF THANKS

Welcome to the Valley JCC Brunch with our goals of connecting the Jewish and Latino communities through art and architecture and giving to the Center at our biggest fundraiser of the year.

We have a wonderful professional staff and truly appreciate their hard work on behalf of the Center and all who belong and participate: our outstanding Executive Director, Jeff Rubin, who works hard with his team and is leading us into the future; the amazing Chereen Peritti, Today's Montessori Preschool Administrator and her staff of teachers and crew; Ellen Cohen, Program Director extraordinaire; Lois Julien, our fantastic Marketing, Publicity and Media Director; Jason Moser, our incredible Wayne League Supervisor and Coordinator who has increased the number and types of basketball teams over the past year by leaps and bounds; and Rick Lupert, our talented flyer creator and webmaster. And, a special thanks to Lisa Rubin, whose artistic ability and technical expertise have made possible this Tribute Journal as well as the event decorations.

Thank you to all our amazing Volunteers, Sponsors, Donors, Members, Family and Friends who have joined with us today to help support the Valley JCC and the community as a whole. Thank you to my Board of Directors who have helped and continue to do so much to ensure the continuing existence and growth of the JCC!

Again, Thank you to the hardworking, dedicated Chairperson of the Fundraising Committee, Stephanie DuCaine, and my hearty appreciation and kudos to all of the Committee Members who have worked so consistently, diligently and effectively to make this event the success that it is today!





As always, ALL the good things that occur at the Center happen because of the work, participation and devotion of our members and volunteers! Our Community as a whole benefits from your efforts. Please continue your memberships, join in the programs, activities, classes, and other Center events. Be sure to check out our website, valleyjcc.org where you can see what's happening, make suggestions for things you want and want to do and, of course, please continue to support the Valley JCC.

THANK YOU!

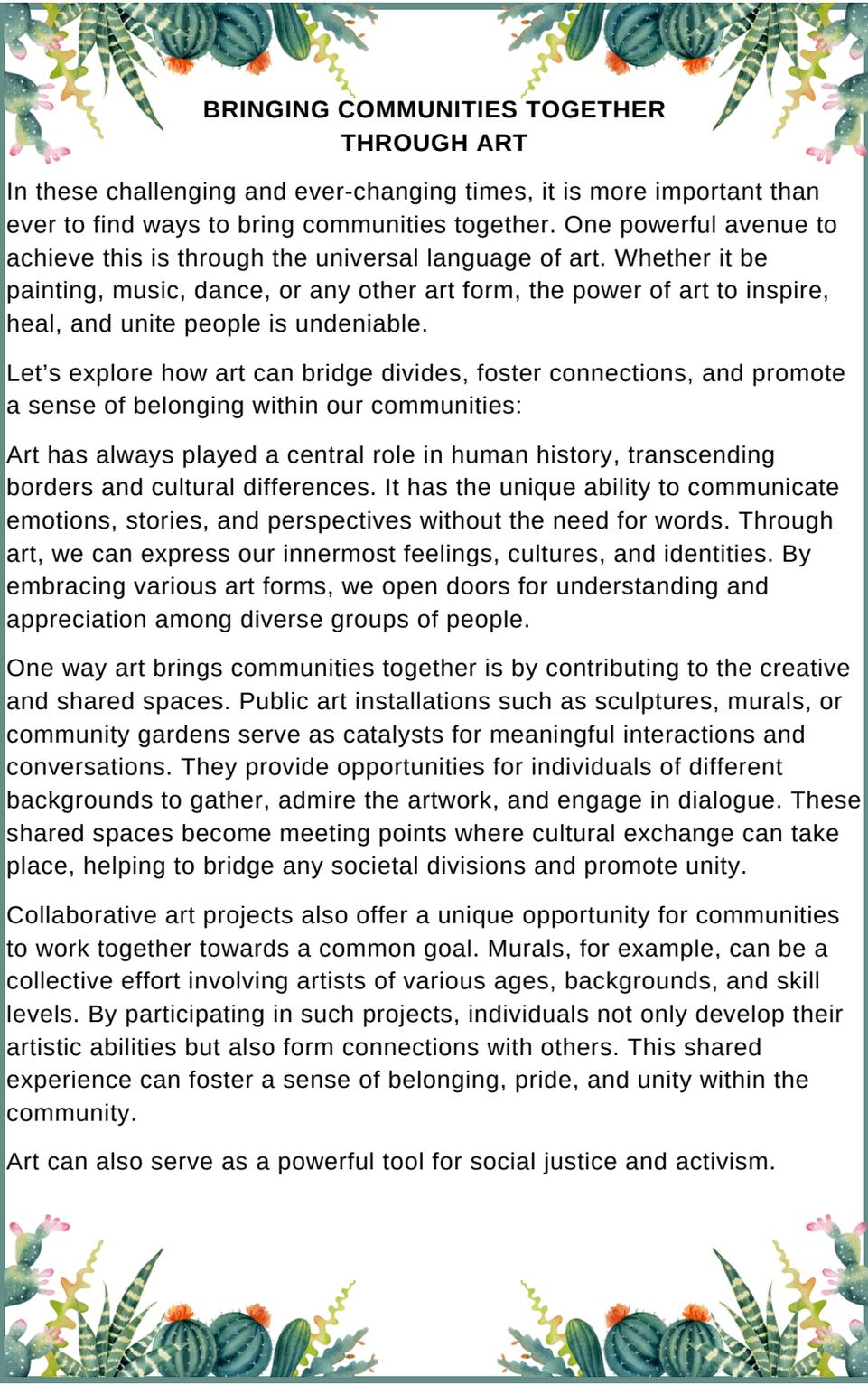
Ollie Haas
Valley JCC President



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BRINGING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER THROUGH ART

In these challenging and ever-changing times, it is more important than ever to find ways to bring communities together. One powerful avenue to achieve this is through the universal language of art. Whether it be painting, music, dance, or any other art form, the power of art to inspire, heal, and unite people is undeniable.

Let's explore how art can bridge divides, foster connections, and promote a sense of belonging within our communities:

Art has always played a central role in human history, transcending borders and cultural differences. It has the unique ability to communicate emotions, stories, and perspectives without the need for words. Through art, we can express our innermost feelings, cultures, and identities. By embracing various art forms, we open doors for understanding and appreciation among diverse groups of people.

One way art brings communities together is by contributing to the creative and shared spaces. Public art installations such as sculptures, murals, or community gardens serve as catalysts for meaningful interactions and conversations. They provide opportunities for individuals of different backgrounds to gather, admire the artwork, and engage in dialogue. These shared spaces become meeting points where cultural exchange can take place, helping to bridge any societal divisions and promote unity.

Collaborative art projects also offer a unique opportunity for communities to work together towards a common goal. Murals, for example, can be a collective effort involving artists of various ages, backgrounds, and skill levels. By participating in such projects, individuals not only develop their artistic abilities but also form connections with others. This shared experience can foster a sense of belonging, pride, and unity within the community.

Art can also serve as a powerful tool for social justice and activism.



Through their creations, artists often shed light on social issues, challenging the status quo and stimulating important conversations. By sharing their work, artists bring attention to topics that might otherwise go unnoticed, encouraging individuals to reconsider their perspectives and take action. This collective response to societal challenges strengthens the community's spirit and resolve to make positive change together.

Furthermore, art programs in schools and community centers can be transformative in fostering connections and nurturing creativity. By providing access to art education, we unlock the potential of individuals who may have otherwise been overlooked. Art programs create safe spaces where individuals can develop their artistic skills, build self-confidence, and express themselves freely. As a result, these initiatives empower individuals to engage with their communities, find common ground, and celebrate their unique talents.

Art has the power to bring communities together, foster connections, and promote a sense of belonging. Through shared spaces, collaborative projects, social activism, and art education, we can harness the transformative power of art to create vibrant, inclusive, and united communities. Today we connect the Jewish and Latino communities through art. Our lineup is truly exceptional! The esteemed Art Historian, John Paul Thornton, will be delighting us with another enthralling art history lesson. And brace yourselves for the insightful session by Dan Tenenbaum from Breed Street Shul, who will be unveiling the rich history of their building and all the exciting renovations currently underway.

So, dear guests, kick back, relax, and immerse yourself in this phenomenal program we've curated just for you and let the magic of art sweep you off your feet and bring us all together.

Jeff Rubin
Valley JCC Executive Director



Message from Fundraising Committee Chair

Today we recognize the genius and talent of renowned art historian and lecturer John Paul Thornton, who will present a program featuring Jewish and Latino art and architecture through the prism of the growth of the Jewish community in the East Los Angeles area. John Paul has a unique ability to weave a story by touching on art, architecture and culture and tie it together as part of a narrative. He provides an artist's perspective on the melding of communities and cultures. We are fortunate to welcome him once again to participate in our annual event.

I want to express my gratitude to each individual member of the Valley JCC Fundraising Committee, acknowledge their efforts, and express my appreciation for their creativity, humor, common sense and brilliance. These committee members, as well as other volunteers, continuously provide services and programming to our membership.

A special thank you is directed to the following committee members who have worked on fundraising this past year: **Elaine Fox, Donna Haas, Suzanne Victor, Susan Menkes, Phyllis Levy, Madeline Angel, Michael Fishman, Andy Levy, Debbie Du Val, and Marty Hall.**

Much appreciation to the staff of Valley JCC who work with us to handle the day to day aspects of running the Center and keeping us on track during our meetings and as we implement our decisions. They are: **Jeff Rubin, Ellen Cohen and Lois Julien.** We thank you so much and recognize your hard work and energy.

Our committee is committed to helping Valley JCC continue with the mission of community service and helping families. Thank you for your support and donations and let us look ahead to the next generation of membership, our children and grandchildren, and to building a better future.

Stephanie DuCaine
Valley JCC Fundraising Committee Chair





Members from left to right:
Stephanie DuCaine-Fundraising Committee Chair
Lois Julien-Marketing Coordinator
Elaine Fox-Administrative Vice President
Phyllis Levy
Susan Menkes
Jeff Rubin-Executive Director
Donna Haas
Ellen Cohen-Adult Program Director
Suzanne Victor
Michael Fishman-Board Member
Madeline Angel
Marty Hall-Board Member
Debbie Du Val-Board Member
Andy Levy-Not Pictured





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Congratulations Valley JCC!
The Center has always been a huge part of our family.
Donna and Ollie Haas, you are the best! We love you so much.
-Amanda, Aaron and Zach Prosin

2024 VALLEY JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER / JOHN PAUL THORNTON YOUTH ART SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT CELESTE HERRERA



Allow us to introduce you to an exceptional individual who is poised to make a significant impact in the world of user experience design. Meet Celeste Herrera, a high-achieving student with a GPA of 3.9 from Reseda Charter High School, who has recently been accepted to the prestigious UC San Diego to pursue her passion for UX Design.

Celeste has demonstrated her dedication to academic success and excellence. During high school, Celeste was actively involved in various leadership roles, including serving on the 2024 class committee, student council, and managing the volleyball team. Her commitment to teamwork and community engagement sets her apart. In addition to excelling academically and artistically, Celeste is also a dedicated athlete who competes in Division 3 track and field while also playing volleyball. Her determination and sportsmanship are truly admirable.

Celeste's passion for the arts shines through her involvement in the Ryman Arts (Advanced Studio Arts) Program and the SPMAP Community Arts Program (Multimedia Animation). Her creative talents complement her analytical skills, making her a well-rounded individual. Celeste holds certificates in Photoshop, showcasing her proficiency in graphic design and digital imaging tools and Premier Pro for her work in professional digital video. Her technical expertise adds another layer of depth to her already impressive skill set.



As she embarks on her journey at the UC San Diego, majoring in Interdisciplinary Computing and the Arts Major (ICAM), Celeste's career goal is to become a user experience designer, where she will combine her creativity and technical skills to shape innovative digital experiences.

Join us in celebrating Celeste Herrera's accomplishments as she embarks on this exciting new chapter in her life. We have no doubt that she will continue to inspire others with her talent, dedication, and vision for creating exceptional user experiences.



Congratulations Celeste on being awarded the 2024 Valley Jewish Community Center / John Paul Thornton Youth Art Scholarship.

**THANK YOU TO RICHARD DOSS FOR
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Richard Doss, P.E., AICP, LEED A.P. is a founding partner of Pacific Coast Civil, Inc. since its inception in December, 1996. He has worked in the land development field for more than forty years, as a design engineer, project planner, and project manager for residential, recreational, municipal and commercial developments including senior/assisted living projects throughout Southern California and Nevada. He has served as project engineer and manager on a variety of major developments, including the Lake Sherwood Ranch, Belcaro Active Senior Community, Villa Metro and Homes for Heroes Veteran Community to name a few.

As Director of Planning his duties include preparation of project master plans and land use feasibility studies, and coordination with government agencies through the entitlement and construction document approval process. He supervises project design through every phase of responsible development, from the mapping of sensitive species habitat to the creation of long term restoration plans.

Richard E. Doss has been a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners since July, 1991. He has been a Registered Civil Engineer in California since July, 1992 and has also achieved the designation of LEED Accredited Professional.



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AND THANK YOU TO JEFF, CHEREEN, ELLEN,
LOIS, RICK, JASON, AND ALL OF OUR STAFF AT
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THANK YOU JOHN PAUL THORNTON
for your generosity and for inspiring us
all to pursue fine art and art experiences.

THANK YOU TO OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS
for all that you do and for just being you!

THANK YOU TO THE SPONSORS, DONORS,
MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF for
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OLLIE AND DONNA HAAS

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