



News Release

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SAN JOSE MUSEUM OF QUILTS & TEXTILES CELEBRATES NEW DOWNTOWN LOCATION Redevelopment Agency Provides \$1.34 Million for Renovation

SAN JOSE, Calif., September 17, 2005 – The San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles, recognized in 2005 as one of the top 10 attractions in San Jose, opened the doors of its newly renovated facility at 520 South First Street with a Grand Opening Celebration today. San Jose Mercury News columnist Leigh Weimers emceed the event and was joined by special guests Mayor Ron Gonzales, Vice Mayor Cindy Chavez and Bruce Davis, executive director of Arts Council Silicon Valley for the official dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony.

“The power of partnership has made the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles a treasure for our entire community,” said Mayor Gonzales. “I’m proud that this beautiful new museum will be a national showcase for textile arts here in San Jose.”

“The grand opening and inaugural exhibition celebrate the museum’s roots, its traditions and its founders, a forward-thinking group of women who saw the need to create an institution that would raise the visibility of quilts and textiles as an art form,” said Jane Przybysz, executive director of the museum. “This new permanent home will allow us to realize the museum’s potential to become a nationally significant exhibiting, teaching and collecting art institution.”

The celebration featured activities for all ages including behind-the-scenes facilities tours, gallery tours with museum Curator Robin Treen, educational presentations, artist talk by Yvonne Porcella, computerized weaving demonstration by artist Sheila O'Hara, meet-the-artist sessions, raffle drawings, live entertainment and refreshments.

The inaugural exhibition, *Traditions in Transition: Three Views of the Permanent Collection*, is drawn entirely from the museum's significant holdings and will give visitors a taste of the great diversity in textile traditions found around the world by featuring a wide variety of textile forms, many of which are recent acquisitions.

“Traditions in Transition: Three Views of the Permanent Collection tells the compelling story of textiles, a medium that comfortably inhabits the sometimes tense but very porous boundary between art and craft, one that honors the unity of form and function, and embodies the collective vision and wisdom born of centuries of cultural expression,” said Treen. The three new galleries will showcase the museum's diverse collection of historical and contemporary textile art from around the world.

The new facility, an historic building constructed in 1923, is more than four times the size of the previous home of the museum. Designed by Kitty Myers of Hardison, Komatsu, Ivelich & Tucker, the 11,000-square-foot ground floor includes a lobby, gift shop, three galleries, a classroom/event space, workspace for exhibit and collection preparation, and collection storage. An additional 2,400 square feet upstairs will eventually house staff offices, a board room and research library.

In late 2003, the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles partnered with a group of private investors to purchase the property at 520 South First Street. The San Jose Redevelopment Agency (SJRA) provided \$1.34 million in funding for the building renovation through its Commercial Building Loan Program. An additional \$1.5 million was raised through grants, loans and private donations.

Sponsors for the grand opening celebration include Eddie's Quilting Bee; the San Jose Mercury News; Liquid Agency; Altschuler, Melvoin and Glasser, LLP; Brayer Electric Company; Heritage Bank of Commerce; MODA Fabrics; Realty World, California Property Network; Alcal Roofing; Bernina of America; C & T Publishing; Kona Bay Fabrics; NorCal Painting & Waterproofing; Oliver & Company; P & B Textiles; Pacific International Quilt Festival; Peninsula Wearable Arts Group; and San Jose National Bank.

Founded in 1977, the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles is the oldest museum of its kind in the United States. Museum and Museum Store hours are: 10:00am-5:00pm Tuesday through Sunday; open until 8:00pm Thursdays; closed Mondays and major holidays. Admission is \$5 general; \$4 students and seniors; and free to museum members and children under 13. Admission is free on the first Thursday of each month. For more information, call 408-971-0323 or visit www.sjqiltmuseum.org.

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