

CA 101 art exhibit returns to Redondo Beach to showcase work in unusual spaces

The historic Redondo Beach Public Library will be home to 230 art pieces beginning Sept. 2.

The Redondo Beach Historic Library, at Veterans Park, has overlooked the Pacific Ocean since its dedication in July 1930.

And now, the landmark, which was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1981, will be home to an art exhibit named after another iconic California structure: the 101 Freeway.

The ninth annual CA 101 art exhibition will debut on Friday, Sept. 2, will feature more than 70 artists whose work encompasses all types of media.

The exhibit, hosted by Friends of Redondo Beach Arts, will continue for three weekends before closing on Sept. 18.

The CA 101 exhibit began in 2012 at the since-demolished Palos Verdes Inn, which sat on Palos Verdes Boulevard and the 101 — which has multiple monikers, from Highway 101 to the Hollywood Freeway — in Redondo Beach. The exhibit's name referred to the famous highway on which the inn once sat, but it was also an allusion to its initial goal of featuring artists living and working in California.

Since then, however, the event has expanded to include artists across the United States and globally — but the name still remains.

Over the years, CA 101 has taken place in special, interesting spaces, including inside the AES Power Plant in 2015.

This year, the spotlight will be on Redondo's historic library.

"This is a unique opportunity to really let the community come and see the building and see how artists relate to being in a space like that," curator Nina Laddon said of the library, which was a wedding venue and event space, but has been empty



Pictured is Scott Meskill and his installation that is a work in progress. (photo by Michael Hixon)



The Redondo Beach Public Library in Veterans Park

for two years because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nearly 1,400 artworks were submitted for CA 101 this year, Laddon said, but only 230 pieces were selected.

The selected pieces tackle various topics, Laddon said, from book banning to the war in Ukraine; there will also be installations about the power of words and what other cultures and languages contribute to our collective knowledge.

Below is info about some of the featured artists.

The CA 101 art exhibit opens Sept. 2 at the historic Redondo Beach Library. Friends of Redondo Beach Arts hosts the event, which will continue for three

weekends, closing on Sept. 18. Pictured is a work by Aimee Mandala that will be in the exhibit. (photo courtesy of Aimee Mandala)

Scott Meskill

Scott Meskill's work, "Undeniable Dilemma," features 27 life-size sculptures that represent "unspoken dialogue of emotional gestures."

The work, Meskill said, portrays emotions everyone can relate to.

"It doesn't matter if you're a billionaire, if you're a homeless man, you can understand when someone's got their face in their hands that they're going through an emotional time," Meskill said. "It doesn't matter if you're a man, a woman, it doesn't matter what country you're from, what language you speak, we all have that in common."

The work is steel wire that is welded together, with cardboard taped into different human shapes. The final touch is spray foam from a can.

Meskill, who lives in Redondo Beach, normally works in metal, wood, plaster or clay, but with this medium, he could "express emotion rapidly."

The pieces have been stacked to fit the space at the library as a collective.

"My whole purpose of the piece was really to find the common ground," Meskill said, "and understand we have more in common than we do separate, we're more alike than we are different."

Peggy Sivert

While teaching art for more than 20 years at Mira Costa High School, until her retirement in 2013, Peggy Sivert

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CA 101 art exhibit returns

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collected the discarded pieces of her student's ceramic artwork.

"At the end of every year, instead of throwing whatever students didn't pick up or take home into the dumpster," she said, "I threw them into the back of my husband's (Ben Zask) truck and brought them home and built a wall that goes around our house."

Sivert took some of those pieces

at their Rancho Palos Verdes home and repurposed them into a sculptural assemblage, titled "Reformed Relics," that will be featured at CA 101. The modular sculptures are made of ceramic pieces that she fit together like puzzles.

"They are kind of like in memory of my teaching career," Sivert said. "The student's process and what it takes to learn how to do the craft of pottery and sculpture."

Aimee Mandala

Long Beach's Aimee Mandala said her charcoal drawings are inspired by craftsmen, as well as her father, Paul R. McMahon, Jr., an architect who also did drafting for a steel fabricator and concrete manufacturer during a downturn in the economy in the 1970s.

Mandala, who has four generations of architects in her family, said her father always instilled in her an appreciation for those who make a living with their hands.

"Their hands at the end of the day were completely covered in metal dust or had dirt under the fingernails," Mandala said "I felt like that was something that

wasn't really celebrated as a society. We're always looking at the end result of a product or thing; we're not really looking at all the the process and the heart and the hard work that goes into creating."

"Handmade: A Craftsman Drawing Series" is Mandala's collection of graphite and charcoal drawings that she began in 2019, — and they were her first drawings.

She had been a creative writing major so she focused on that until the pandemic, after which she was "really itching to do something creative."

She has created 45 pieces in all, nine of which will be at CA 101.

"I never wanted to be an architect," Mandala said. "I believe this recent dive into to draftsmanship in my own rite has undeniable roots deep within my heritage, but even more so, my soul."

If you go

What: CA 101 art exhibit

Where: The Redondo Beach Historic Library, 309 Esplanade

When: Opening reception is from 5 to 8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 2; exhibit continues on weekends from noon to 7 p.m. until Sept. 18; a jazz-at-sunset concert, with drinks and appetizers, will take place from 6 to 8 p.m. Sept. 9.

Information: To RSVP for the Jazz concert, email pchca101@hotmail.com or sign up at the gallery; other information is at friendsredondobeacharts.org.



Ben and Peggy Zask