



Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE AUGUST 8, 2016

PRECITA EYES MURALISTS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Nomination Date: January 15, 2016
Application No.: LBR-2015-16-005
Business Name: Precita Eyes Muralists Association, Inc.
Business Address: 2981 24th Street & 348 Precita Avenue
District: District 9
Applicant: Susan Cervantes, Founding Director
Nominated By: Supervisor David Campos
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Precita Eyes Muralists Association, Inc. is a non-profit community arts organization that was founded in 1977. The organization is dedicated to enriching and beautifying urban environments and educating communities about the process and history of public, community, mural art. Precita Eyes trains artists in their unique community mural process, offers mural classes, and works closely with the entire community. Precita Eyes gained 501(c)(3) status in 1979 and serves the Mission District and Bernal Heights neighborhoods. The organization's founding location is 348 Precita Avenue and continues to be rented, dedicated to children and youth arts education and mural art programs. Precita Eyes rented a second space at 342 Precita Avenue in 1984, but were evicted in 1997, after which, in 1998, they purchased the current building that they reside in at 24th Street and Harrison Street.

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant has operated in SF for 30 or more years, with no break in SF operations exceeding two years?

Yes, the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

348 Precita Avenue from 1980-Present (36 years)
2981 24th Street from 1998-Present (18 years)

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?

Yes, the applicant has contributed to the Mission and Bernal Heights neighborhoods' history and identity.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the applicant as qualifying, noting the following ways the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community:



SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION

MARK DWIGHT, PRESIDENT
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

- Precita Eyes Muralists Association is unique to San Francisco in that it has provided continual support for art and art education and has specifically been a supporter of muralists and the muralist atmosphere that blossomed in the Mission District beginning in the early 1970s. Since its inception, Precita Eyes Muralists has played an integral role in the city's cultural heritage and arts education and is responsible for over 600 collaborative murals in various San Francisco neighborhoods, including the Mission District and Bernal Heights, as well as other cities in the Bay Area and internationally.
- The organization is associated with the 1970s mural movement that emerged in the United States as a result of the 1960s Chicano (Mexican-American) and Civil Rights movement. The organization is also associated with the development of a community-based mural movement in the Mission District comprised of neighborhood Latino artists and the women's mural collective, *Mujeres Muralistas*.
- The 1900s property at 2981 24th Street has been previously evaluated by the Planning Department for potential historical significance. The property is considered a "Category A Property" that is included as part of the identified-eligible South Mission Avenues and Alleys historic district. The 1900s property at 348 Precita Avenue has also been previously evaluated by the Planning Department for potential historical significance. The property is considered a "Category A Property" that is included as part of the identified-eligible Bernal Heights North historic district.
- The business has been cited in the following publications:
 - SF Gate, 1/4/2014, "Mural matriarch Susan Cervantes makes it big in art," by Sam Whiting.
 - El Tecolote, 6/3/2015, "New mural captures spirit of the Mission," by Alicia Zapata.
 - Mission Local, "17th and Capp Mural Provokes Mixed Feelings," by Christy Khoshaba.
 - SF Gate, 3/21/1997, "Precita's 'sacred ground,'" by Susan Ferriss.
 - SF Gate, "Precita Eyes celebrates three decades of making walls, and community, bloom," by Will Crain.

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?

Yes, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Precita Eyes Muralists Association, Inc, qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Precita Eyes/Bernal landscape mural and organization logo above storefront transom at 348 Precita Avenue.
- Iconic front door with mural at 348 Precita Avenue.
- Interior work spaces and studio space at 348 Precita Avenue.
- Interior paint mixing studio and store room in the middle spaces of the building at 2981 24th Street.
- Administrative, arts education and tour offices at back of the building at 2981 24th Street.
- Studio space used as a multi-purpose space for exhibits, presentations, meetings and mural design workshops at 2981 24th Street.
- Vintage marquee sign displaying Precita Eyes logo at 2981 24th Street.
- Image of Frida Kahlo and business wall sign displaying organization name facing 24th Street.



SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE CENTER / SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION
1 DR. CARLTON B. GOODLETT PLACE, ROOM 110, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102-4681
Small Business Assistance Center (415) 554-6134 / Small Business Commission (415) 554-6481

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CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

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- Storefront system at 348 Precita Avenue including tiled bulkhead, angled vestibule entry, front door, storefront windows and transom band above.
- Storefront system at 2981 24th Street including tiled bulkhead, angled vestibule entry, front door, and storefront windows.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Precita Eyes Muralists Association, Inc., currently located at 2981 24th Street and 348 Precita Avenue in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Manager
Legacy Business Program



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San Francisco Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE AUGUST 8, 2016

PRECITA EYES MURALISTS ASSOCIATION, INC.

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. _____

Nomination Date: January 15, 2016
Application No.: LBR-2015-16-005
Business Name: Precita Eyes Muralists Association, Inc.
Business Address: 2981 24th Street & 348 Precita Avenue
District: District 9
Applicant: Susan Cervantes, Founding Director
Nominated By: Supervisor David Campos
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR PRECITA EYES MURALISTS ASSOCIATION, INC., CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 2981 24TH STREET & 348 PRECITA AVENUE.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on August 8, 2016, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the San Francisco Small Business Commission hereby includes Precita Eyes Muralists Association, Inc., in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.



SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION

MARK DWIGHT, PRESIDENT
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the San Francisco Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Precita Eyes Muralists Association, Inc.:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

- *Precita Eyes/Bernal landscape mural and organization logo above storefront transom at 348 Precita Avenue*
- *Iconic front door with mural at 348 Precita Avenue*
- *Interior work spaces and studio space at 348 Precita Avenue*
- *Interior paint mixing studio and store room in the middle spaces of the building at 2981 24th Street*
- *Administrative, arts education and tour offices at back of the building at 2981 24th Street*
- *Studio space used as a multi-purpose space for exhibits, presentations, meetings and mural design workshops at 2981 24th Street*
- *Vintage marquee sign displaying Precita Eyes logo at 2981 24th Street*
- *Image of Frida Kahlo and business wall sign displaying organization name facing 24th Street*
- *Storefront system at 348 Precita Avenue including tiled bulkhead, angled vestibule entry, front door, storefront windows and transom band above*
- *Storefront system at 2981 24th Street including tiled bulkhead, angled vestibule entry, front door, and storefront windows*

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on August 8, 2016.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –



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1 DR. CARLTON B. GOODLETT PLACE, ROOM 110, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102-4681
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Member Board of Supervisors
District 9

City and County of San Francisco

DAVID CAMPOS

January 15, 2016

Re: Nomination of Precita Eyes Muralists Association, Inc., a non-profit community arts organization to the Legacy Business Registry

Dear Director Regina Dick-Endrizzi:

I am excited to make my first nomination to the Legacy Business Registry - Precita Eyes Muralists Association, Inc., a non-profit community arts organization. One of only a handful of community mural centers in the country, Precita Eyes Muralists was founded in 1977. Operating out of a small studio space in the Precita Valley Community Center, founding director Susan Cervantes along with community volunteers and artists completed many portable and monumental mural projects. Precita Eyes train artists in their unique community mural process, offer mural classes and work closely with the entire community. In 1979, Precita Eyes became a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

This business plays an essential role in the culture and history of District 9 and it is my distinct honor to nominate Precita Eyes Muralists Association to become part of San Francisco's Legacy Business Registry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Campos".

David Campos

APPLICATION FOR

Legacy Business Registry

Legacy Business Registry is authorized by Section 2A.242 of the San Francisco Administrative Code. The registration process includes nomination by a member of the Board of Supervisors or the Mayor, a written application, an advisory recommendation from the Historical Preservation Commission, and approval of the Small Business Commission.

1. Current Owner / Applicant Information

NAME OF BUSINESS:		
Precita Eyes Muralists Association, Inc		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (Identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
Susan Cervantes		
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:		TELEPHONE:
2981 24th Street, San Francisco CA 94110		(415) 285-2287
348 Precita Ave, San Francisco CA 94110		EMAIL:
		susan@precitaeyes.org
WEBSITE:	FACEBOOK PAGE:	YELP PAGE
www.precitaeyes.org	www.facebook.com/precitaeyes	www.yelp.com/biz/precita-eyes-mural
APPLICANT'S NAME		
Susan Cervantes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Business Owner		
APPLICANT'S TITLE		
Founding Director		
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:		TELEPHONE:
3435 Cesar Chavez St		(415) 285-2287
Apt #220		EMAIL:
San Francisco, CA 94110		susan@precitaeyes.org
SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:		SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):
0369916 (1997)		C1978704

NAME OF NOMINATOR: (Completed by OSB Staff)	DATE OF NOMINATION: (Completed by OSB Staff)
Supervisor David Campos	11/6/15

2. Business Addresses

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS:	ZIP CODE:	START DATE OF BUSINESS
348 Precita Ave, San Francisco CA	94110	1977
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	1980-present	
OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
2981 24th Street, San Francisco CA	94110	1998-present

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION

3. Eligibility Criteria

Attach the business's written historical narrative and supplemental documents as described under section three of the application instruction.

4. San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws, and Public Information Release

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- ☒ I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- ☒ I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- ☒ I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- ☒ I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- ☒ I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- ☒ I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- ☒ I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

Susan Cervantes
SUSAN CERVANTES
 Name (Print):

6/20/16

Date:

Signature:

Susan Cervantes

Precita Eyes Muralists Association, Inc., a non-profit community arts organization, 1977-present – One of only a handful of community mural centers in the country, Precita Eyes Muralists was founded in 1977. Operating out of a small studio space in the Precita Valley Community Center, founding director Susan Cervantes along with community volunteers and artists completed many portable and monumental mural projects. Precita Eyes train artists in their unique community mural process, offer mural classes and work closely with the entire community. In 1979, Precita Eyes became a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

In 1980 the group of founding artists rented a small storefront at 348 Precita Ave, the original Home studio for Precita Eyes Muralists, which has served children, youth, and families, muralists designing new community mural art, a community art store and mural tours and more. In 1984 the center expanded, renting an adjacent storefront at 342 Precita Avenue. After Precita Eyes was evicted from the adjoining storefront space in 1997, they pulled together to re-build and expand their operations by purchasing their own building on 24th Street and Harrison Street in 1998. The original studio at 348 Precita continues to be rented, dedicated to children and youth arts education and mural art programs. Demand has grown for our mural and arts education programs. Precita Eyes uses our 348 Precita studio to continue serving the community by bringing art education into the lives of children, youth, artists and families.

The 348 Precita studio, part of a corner mixed-use building at Precita and Treat Street is located across from Precita Park. The storefront exterior façade is approximately 18' wide and interior 45' deep. It is one story with a Precita Eyes/Bernal landscape mural above the front door entrance with the organization logo painted in 1981. The two storefront windows display color studies and documentation of current mural projects, kids and youth art. The front door is an iconic original mural by a well-known local artist/muralist and former youth arts instructor. The interior is full of mural art by students, mural archives; shelves full of art materials, toddler and adult worktables and a staff workstation. Walking into the space one can feel the unique history and spirit of the place, inviting creativity. The park is an extended outdoor studio for our workshops and most of all the site of the past 19 Annual Urban Youth Arts Festivals. The location is a great safe space for local youth to come and explore their potential creativity and the arts as a creative outlet where they can make a positive contribution to their community.

348 Precita Ave. is our Home, our namesake and has tremendous community value to all the people, young and old, from Bernal Heights, Mission and many other neighborhoods whose lives have been transformed while participating in our programs in that space. Our programs need studio space and this is the only affordable space we have to operate. The current demand for our services require more space than what we have in our 24th St. building that we have outgrown. Recently Precita Eyes building was threatened when it was on the market to be sold by the owners. The community rallied their support to help MEDA (Mission Economic Development Association) to purchase the building so that all the long term tenants could stay in their homes at affordable rents. Our original studio has been saved and Precita Eyes has its heritage studio space to continue serving the community.

Our building on 2981 24th Street is where we have conducted our operations, mural art supply store, tours and visitor's center since 1998. Precita Eyes occupies the commercial store front of the 3 story building. The storefront is 25' wide and 80' deep. When you enter the mural center you are introduced to our community art store where murals and

art work decorate the walls, mural paints are on shelves and mural books, cards and posters are displayed. A paint mixing studio and store room is in the middle space. Administrative, arts education and tour offices are in the back of the building where a studio space is multi- used for exhibits, presentations, meetings and mural design workshops. The storefront building on 2981 24th Street is a historic iconic building in the heart of Calle 24 Latino Cultural District. The exterior is painted a turquoise blue with a vintage marquee sign proudly displaying the Precita Eyes logo and an image of Frida Kahlo facing 24th Street.

Precita Eyes Muralists is dedicated to enriching and beautifying urban environments and educating communities about the process and history of public, community, mural art. We maintain a deep commitment to collaborating with the various communities we serve. Our dedication to collaboration guarantees that the creative work produced is accessible, both physically and conceptually, to the people whose lives it impacts. We intend to bring art into the daily lives of people through a process that enables them to reflect their particular concerns, joys and triumphs.

In modern times, murals constitute a tradition of large-scale public art that celebrates history and cultural heritage. Acclaimed Mexican masters Diego Rivera, Jose Clemente Orozco and David Siqueiros emerged from this tradition. In the United States, the Chicano (Mexican-American) and Civil Rights movement of the 1960's inspired a new generation of muralists who rediscovered these masterworks and continued the tradition of using monumental art with culture and community as their themes to address social and political issues.

In the early 1970's, mural movements blossomed throughout the United States. During this boom, San Francisco artists, and specifically those in the Mission District, were extremely productive, and San Francisco became a focal point for this powerful medium of artistic expression. Mission District artists began collaborating on group mural projects and established a community-based mural movement. Neighborhood Latino artists and the women's mural collective, *Mujeres Muralistas*, led this movement and their inspired works were visible on walls throughout San Francisco.

For over 39 years, Precita Eyes Muralists (PEM) has played an integral role in the city's cultural heritage and arts education. PEM offers a unique mix of services and programs that include the following elements:

- Educating through extraordinary and comprehensive community mural arts programs.
- Designing, painting, and promoting community murals locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Providing community mural and arts education classes for children, youth and adults.
- Offering mural tours for schools, private groups, residents, visitors and the general public.
- Operating a successful art supply store that serves community muralists, beginning and professional artists, as well as offering a range of mural merchandise to area tourists and the community.

Precita Eyes has a direct impact on arts education in the San Francisco Mission District by offering free to low-cost, weekly art classes for children, youth and adults. In addition, we provide mural programs and classes in partnership with Mission and SF/ Bay area schools, community centers, parks, hospitals, businesses and organizations. The Precita Eyes Mural Arts Program is the foundation and strength of the organization's programs. To date, all PEM mural projects started via an unsolicited request.

Financing for these projects comes in a variety of ways, including public funding, private foundation support, corporate sponsorship, private commissions, and support from the center's general fund. The financing generally covers the purchase of materials, muralists' fees, and administrative costs.

From Precita Eyes Muralists groundbreaking beginnings to its illustrious present, Susan Cervantes, Precita Eyes founder has served in the role of Executive Director. The leadership and vision provided by Ms. Cervantes has been instrumental in attracting artists to the Mural Arts Center. The organization has gained an unparalleled reputation for producing high quality community mural artwork. Precita Eyes Muralists is responsible for over 600 collaborative murals considered some of the finest in the country, and many view Precita Eyes as the leader in the art of community mural painting. Precita Eyes has collaborated on mural projects in various San Francisco neighborhoods (such as the Mission, Bernal Heights, South of Market, the Tenderloin, the Castro and Bayview-Hunters Point), in the cities of Oakland, Berkeley and San Jose, and internationally in Russia, China, Germany, Spain, and Brazil. These murals are constant reminders of the power this artistic medium has to educate, convey ideas and enrich our lives.

In the past five years alone, Precita Eyes created more than 130 mural projects with 27 trained artists serving over 5,800 children, youth, and adults. In the course of designing and painting a mural, participants learn collaboration and respect for one another's ideas.

Over the past five years, the Precita Eyes Founding Director focused on increasing larger commission mural projects by quickly responding to unsolicited requests. At the same time, the Education Program and Youth Arts Program continue coordinating most of the requests for mural projects involving children and youth. Working in this way increases revenue, allowing the PEM Director more time to concentrate on other opportunities, and few requests are ever denied consideration.

Community mural projects give participants a sense of ownership and responsibility for their art work in their schools, community centers, and neighborhoods. Through individual creation and collaborative community mural projects, participants discover unique qualities in themselves and their peers.

Collaborative projects give voice and recognition to the participants through visual expression of their concerns, hopes and dreams. They also return public visual space to the community instead of allowing it to be monopolized by advertising and directive signage, or potentially exposed to vandalism and graffiti.

Our intention is to expand and grow as a Legacy Business and continue our mission to benefit and serve the community of San Francisco.

June 9, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to support the nomination of Precita Eyes as a Legacy Business.

I have lived Bernal Heights since 1976. I helped found the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center in 1978. The tremendous positive influence of Precita Eyes is everywhere in my neighborhood – on its walls, and among its people. Especially its young, lower income people of color.

Precita Eyes has been in Bernal as long as I have. I especially commend their Urban Youth Arts Festival, which takes place in my front yard, Precita Park.

Precita Eyes makes me proud to be a San Franciscan, and a resident of the Bernal Heights community. I can't imagine any small business, for-profit or non-profit, more worthy of designation as a Legacy Business.

Sincerely,

Buck Bagot
3265 Harrison St., SF, CA 94110
415-385-0389
buckbagot@gmail.com

June 15, 2016

From: Precita Valley Neighbors

A SF Parks Trust Group

Contact: Demece Garepis

59 Manchester Street

San Francisco, CA 94110

Ph: 415.244.3012

Email: precitavalleyneighbors@gmail.com

www.precitavalleysf.org

To: Honorable Supervisor David Campos

City Hall Room

1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244

San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Re: Letter of Support for Precita Eyes Muralists Legacy Business

Dear Honorable Supervisor:

Precita Valley Neighbors, a SF Parks Trust Group whose mission is to maintain and enhance the use and diversity of community use in Precita Park and its Childrens' Playground, strongly supports Precita Eyes Muralists as San Francisco's first Legacy Business. For over 30 years, Precita Mural Eyes has been our parks partner in youth art events and park enhancement. Together we have hosted Youth Arts Festival and commissioned Precita Eyes Muralists to coordinate the Memorial Bench construction to honor Sylvia and Carlos. Thousands of our children, and our children's children, have learned art from the gifted artist teachers of Precita Eyes Muralists.

Established in 1977, Precita Eyes Muralists has worked with over three generations of artists young and old. Precita Eyes Muralists is routinely commissioned, to explore and express our lively community. Precita Eyes Muralists was commissioned to create the Farmers' Market Murals, the Bernal Heights Library, and conducts the nationally known Mural Tours. Precita Eyes Muralists not only inspires and teaches art, captures history in the making, but is the business of empowering diverse artists to explore their roots and their imaginations. Precita

Eyes Muralists should be the first Legacy Business of San Francisco because it presents to the world what San Francisco does best for the world – through business we inspire, we collaborate, we imagine, we teach, we create, we love.

Thank you in advance for your support of Precita Eyes Muralists as the first San Francisco Legacy Business.

Sincerely,

Demece Garepis
Precita Valley Neighbors

PRECITA EYES STOREFRONT



A BOUNTIFUL HARVEST 1978



CLEVELAND SCHOOL 1995



PRIMAL SEA WALL 1977



SOUL JOURNEY 2000





presented: A Tribute to the Mission
Community - ©2015 Precita Eyes Muralists
24th + Folsom streets S.F. CA

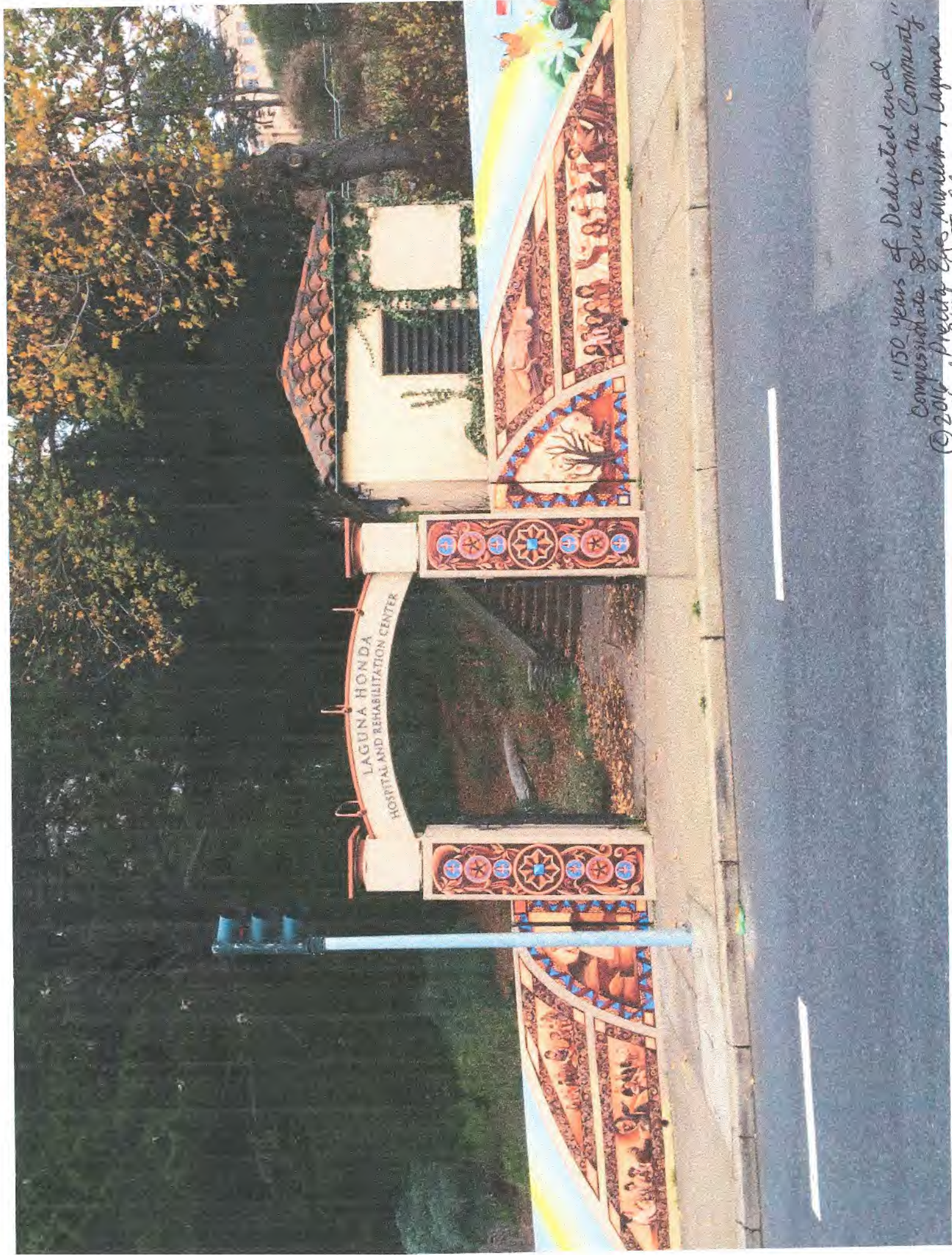


"La Rumba No Para" The Chata
Gutierrez Mural © 2015 Preita
Enes Muralists • 24th + South Van Ness, SF

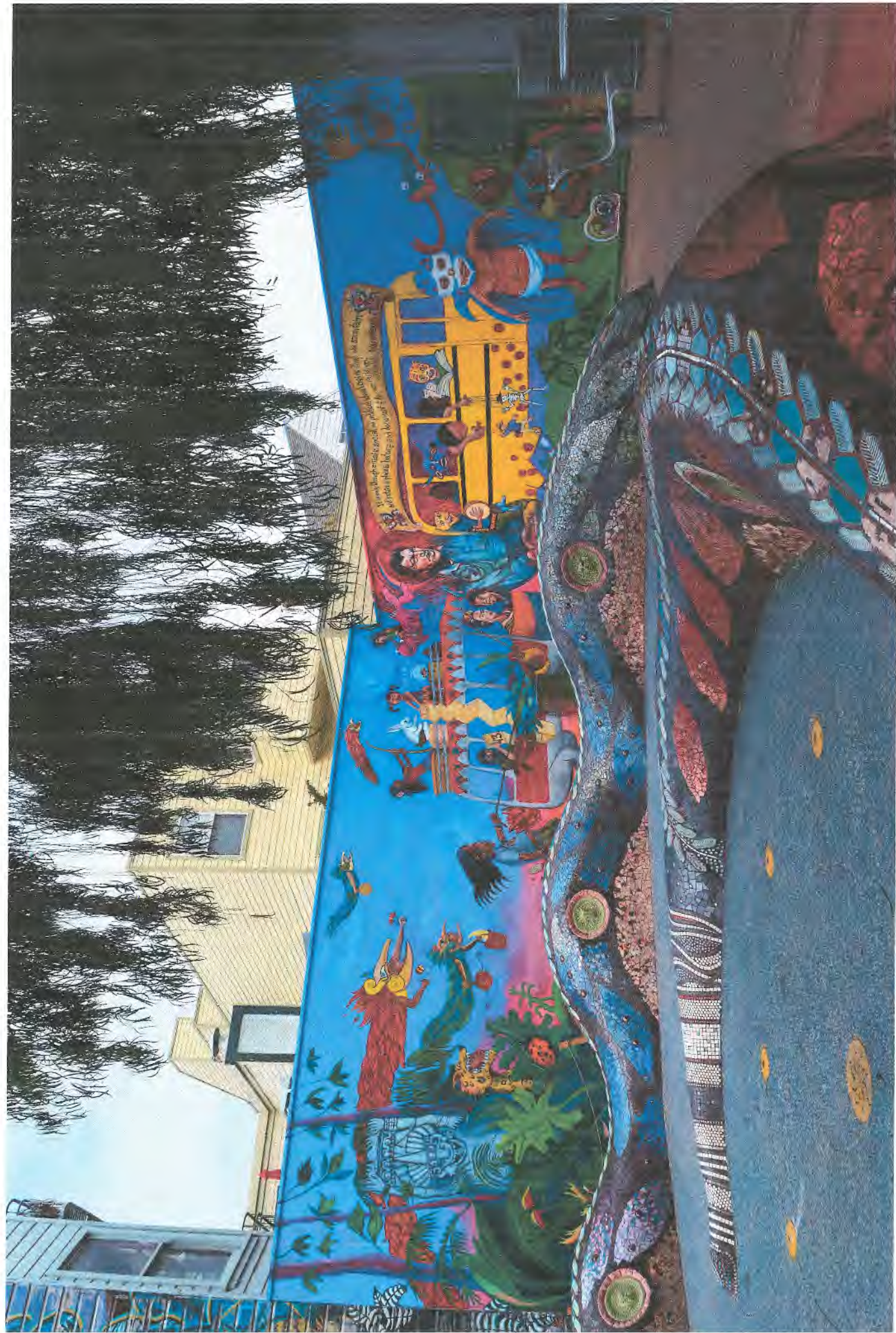


© Joshua Lacayo 2016

Mexican Museum Baricade Mural Project.
© 2016 Precita Eyes Muralists, Jessie Square,
San Francisco CA



"150 years of Dedicated and
Compassionate Service to the Community"
(© 2016) "Priority Eyes Murals, Laguna"



"El Juego de la Resistencia" © 2015
Pecita Eyes Murals, 24th & Mini Park
San Francisco, CA



Community will not end 2015
19th U.S. Festival, Puerto Santo



Children's summer instant
mural workshop



Children's summer mural workshop.



Community Paint Day at Minnie Louis Playground



Summer workshop at 348 Preitar



Christmas craft and Bazaar
at 24th Street.



Christmas MAPP event
with live music and crafts.



Youth painting "presente!"
A Tribute to the Mission Community



Mural Dedication of
apresente: A Tribute to the
Mexican Community



19th Annual Urban Youth
Arts Festival artists and
youth.



15th Annual Urban Youth Arts Fest



198th Annual Urban Youth Arts.



Artist: Moshir Faleh Mune
Date: 1998
Place: ...

SFGATE <http://www.sfgate.com/art/article/Mural-matriarch-Susan-Cervantes-makes-it-big-in-5114764.php>

Mural matriarch Susan Cervantes makes it big in art

By **Sam Whiting** Published 6:20 pm, Saturday, January 4, 2014

ADVERTISING



IMAGE 5 OF 5

Susan Cervantes, founder of Precita Eyes Muralists, poses for a portrait while working with her group as they put the finishing touches on their newest mural titled "Bean Soup" at the arts complex Project Artaud in San Francisco, CA, Sunday, December 22, 2013.

At sunset on the Sunday before Christmas, **Susan Cervantes**, the quiet queen of San Francisco wall art, is among the painters putting the finishing touches on the longest community mural of her long career. She drops down to the pavement on both knees, dips her brush in dark blue and in the bottom corner prints the words "Precita Eyes Muralists."

"I'm not too good at it," says Cervantes, 69, who has had some 500 murals to practice this signature on, but she still smudges the M as her sons Suaro and Monte watch. "Not too fancy - just simple letters. That's the way we've always done it."

The unflashy Cervantes doesn't make a big deal out of it, but murals are all about symbols, and there is symbolism in this moment. Before Precita Eyes was a Mission District arts center with a paid staff of 13 part-timers and with 7,000 visitors and 3,000 students a year, this is all it was - a signature, in the hand of Cervantes, who made up the name Precita Eyes Muralists decades ago on the spot.

ADVERTISING

"We didn't know it was going to last this long - 36 years," she says. Now murals painted by Precita Eyes - where Cervantes is both artist and overseer - are at public schools, hospitals and recreation centers, done in acrylic paint or ceramic tile, from Hunters Point to the Richmond District.

Behind the movement

Tourists come from all over to see the murals in the alleyways of the Mission, and when the artwork of Precita Eyes makes it into books, Cervantes is the one who tracks down the publishers to make sure her artists get paid.

"She is really the epicenter of the mural movement in San Francisco," says [Jill Marten](#), director of the public art trust and special initiatives for the [San Francisco Arts Commission](#). "I've known her for 30 years, and her commitment to the cause has really kept her at the forefront."

A signed work by Precita Eyes, like the one being finished this day on 17th Street, is both a professional and amateur creation. By the time it reaches the designated wall, it has gone through a year of meetings and workshops, been drawn to scale in a studio at Precita Eyes headquarters on 24th Street, and been carefully transferred as a line drawing to the wall. The glamour job of coloring it in is done on weekends as an outreach activity. Some of it is detail work, and some is [Tom Sawyer](#) work.

"I get a lot of people involved," Cervantes says. "If they show up, I ask what kind of skill level they have. If they have none, I'll say, 'Just fill this spot in with green.'"

ARTIST COMMENT

Cervantes does not always get to paint on the mural herself. But she always gets to clean the brushes. The flecks stick to her nails like polish.

Two things Precita Eyes murals are known for are bright colors and people of color, so when you walk into [Precita Eyes Mural Arts and Visitor Center](#) and ask for the founding director, you are expecting to meet a Latina from the Mission; instead, you get a Swede from Dallas.

An education

How [Susan Kelk](#) became Susan Cervantes is a story she doesn't mind telling. It starts in 1961, when she was 16 and graduated a year early from high school in order to advance to art school. Her parents had lost their floral and nursery business when she was young and couldn't afford tuition.

So Kelk won a college scholarship from what was then the [Dallas Museum of Fine Arts](#). She found the [California School of Fine Arts](#), soon to be renamed the [San Francisco Art Institute](#), in a catalog. She'd never been to California before she ended up renting a room on Russian Hill and riding a cable car to class in North Beach.

She wanted to paint large, so one day an instructor showed her the largest painting on campus. It was out of style and concealed behind a curtain. Kelk pulled back the curtain to see the famed Diego Rivera mural "The Making of a Fresco Showing the Building of a City," finished in 1931. It was the first mural she had ever seen.

"Most people didn't even know what a mural was," she says.

One person who did was Luis Cervantes, a mattress builder for McRoskey who lived in the Mission and took night classes at the California School of Fine Arts. Kelk was in the day program, but she stuck to a regimen of painting 15 hours a day, which overflowed into the night.

"Luis got in my space," is how she describes their initial contact. He was 20 years older and invited her out for a drink. She was underage so they went for a milkshake at a drive-in at Columbus Avenue and Chestnut Street.

That was the end of her life on Russian Hill, and pretty much the end of contact with her family back in Dallas. Still 17, she moved in with Cervantes in the Mission. He worked days at McRoskey. She worked part time selling women's apparel at the Sears store on Mission Street and what was then Army Street and crossed town by bus to finish her bachelor's degree, then her master's.

Her first commission was in 1965, to paint a wall inside Coffee Don's, next to their apartment at 22nd and Valencia streets. Her payment was in food. Don wanted something about Custer's "Last Stand" and she gave it to him, with the general flying off his horse. "He's got an arrow going through his butt, and his yellow hair is coming off," she says.

Women paint

By the time that mural was covered up, in the mid-1970s, she had fallen in with a group of women called the Mujeres Muralistas, who were painting the first monumental mural in the Mission, "Latinamerica," at the Mission Hiring Hall. She came every day to bring refreshments and watch them work. (That mural is no longer there.)

When the Mujeres Muralistas started a follow-up project at Paco's Tacos on South Van Ness, Cervantes was invited to paint a face that had been sketched. That was the moment she lost interest in her studio work on canvas.

"What I saw in the murals is that it was really open to bringing art to the community," she says. "It is like a performance when you are outside and painting, with people stopping by and asking you what it's about."

The chain of events that led to Precita Eyes started when the Cervantes family and their first son, [Luis De Veneno](#), were priced out of the Valencia corridor when BART came down Mission Street. They moved farther south to Precita Park, where they converted a storefront into a living space with a studio. She started volunteering as an art teacher at the [Precita Valley Community Center](#). A Thursday night painting workshop led to a mural workshop.

They didn't have a wall, so they painted it on five plywood panels, 20 feet long when put together. From there it was rolled to the [Bernal Heights Library](#), where Precita Eyes Muralists made its debut with the painting "Masks of God, Soul of Man."

That first mural, now in storage, would be the last mural that didn't have a wall waiting for it.

"Walls come to us," Cervantes says. "They've all been by request."

Precita Eyes is a nonprofit with a budget of \$450,000 to support public mural tours and art classes, a store, and a schedule of 20 or 30 murals a year.

"They have an active youth arts education program that gives kids an alternative to graffiti," says Manton of the Arts Commission. "They can learn at an early age to become part of a project to beautify."

Newest big project

Precita Eyes' latest signature mural, the one on 17th Street, is the Bean Soup Literary Mural Project, based on a children's book by local poet [George Argueta](#). Sponsored by the Community Challenge Grant Program, the painting is on a plank fence 8 feet tall and 200 feet long. The fence belongs to the Project Artaud residential artists' cooperative, but the painting on the fence belongs to the 50 artists and volunteers who worked on it under the guidance of the lead artists, Argueta and Cervantes.

"She could easily have (gone) the fine art route and been more focused on herself," says son Suaro, 34, an artist who helps with Precita Eyes projects. "Since the beginning, it has been her life's work to bring people together around public art and give people ownership of their space."

Space is something Cervantes herself has never owned. A cell phone is another. She has rented in the Mission for 53 years. She has been evicted after nine years in one rental and 35 years in another. For the past eight years, she has been in a live-work space in the same former Sears building where she worked soon after arriving from Texas.

"It's been a big circle," she says.

She made one clever real estate deal, and that was for Precita Eyes to buy its headquarters building on 24th Street. She lives there more than anywhere else. When a mural is under way, she spends weekdays in the office and weekends at the job site.

"She doesn't stop," Suaro says. "She's got that 'Don't mess with Texas' drive." It's a seven-block walk to work, and when Cervantes comes through the door, she goes under a framed photograph of her husband, Luis. After raising three boys, the couple finally made it official 20 years ago. Luis died of stomach cancer in 2005, at age 81.

Not finished yet

Cervantes says that someday she will start thinking about a successor at Precita Eyes, but it won't be this day on 17th Street. She is splattered with paint from boots to hat, and she won't wait for Suaro to fetch the right brush to apply the signature to the mural. She just does it with whatever brush she has in hand.

"I'm grateful that I have this. Not too many people get to live their dream," she says, standing back to admire the intricate pattern of the mural. "Not that I dreamed this. It just sort of happened, and it's kept me alive."

That's about all the time she has to talk. It is getting dark. There are buckets and palettes to pick up, and always brushes to clean.

Sam Whiting is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: whiting@sfchronicle.com Twitter: [@samwhiting](https://twitter.com/samwhiting)

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New mural captures spirit of the Mission

📅 June 3, 2015 👤 Alicia Zapata

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Precita Eyes Muralists Association and Center is paying a special tribute to El Tecolote and some of its most respected volunteers by featuring them on a mural in the heart of the Mission District, on the side of Philz Coffee, at the corner of 24th and Folsom streets.

The mural shows the El Tecolote logo above a photo of some of its staff from the 1980s, and also prominently depicts the late longtime translator and calendar editor Alfonso Texidor (who passed away on Christmas Day 2014) reading poetry.

The design was created in April and painting started in the second week of May, said Fred Alvarado, director of the mural. With the help of directors Alvarado and Max Martilla and about 20 Precita Eyes' volunteers, the mural should be finished in mid June.

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Though the recent rise in housing costs has changed the landscape of the community, Precita Eyes is honoring El Tecolote and giving the Mission District residents a piece of history that has been present within San Francisco's Latino community for more than 40 years.

Included on the mural, which is already catching the attention of onlookers, are El Tecolote founder Juan Gonzales and current Acción Latina Executive Director Georgiana Hernandez, as well as former volunteers Carlos Valdes, Tina Avila, Patricia Vattuone, Hilda Ayala, Rudy Gallardo and Ana Montes.

"People connect with it as it keeps developing," said Alvarado.

The words "Presente" and "Familia" are written in big red letters, which represents the Latino presence in the community.

"We're here," said Alvarado. "The Mission was created by middle-class workers. The Latino community is rooted, we're not ready to turn over."

Precita Eyes is dedicated to creating artwork throughout the Mission District that represents the community and simultaneously promotes local businesses. Murals have been seen in the Mission since the 1970s, according to Alvarado, which means more than 40 years of historic art from Chicanos in the Mission is on public display.

"Art can be lifesaving," Alvarado said.

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17th and Capp Mural Provokes Mixed Feelings

By [Christy Khoshaba](#)

(<http://missionlocal.org/author/christy/>)

Posted December 30, 2011 6:16 am

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The intersection of 17th and Capp is no pretty sight. It's littered with empty Cheetos bags, Red Bull cans, Trojan condoms and the occasional heroin needle.

"It's a bad neighborhood," says Max Marttila, an instructor and muralist at Precita Eyes Mural Arts Center. "There's prostitutes walking around all night long."

And there's graffiti too — lots of it. Businesses located at the intersection bear the cost of cleanup. Now, a mural going up on the walls of the art space Engine Works might help deter the graffiti — but it's not winning the approval of the artists who occupy the space.

Graffiti for Days

"We are people who have to cover [the graffiti] — with our money and time," says Jennifer Bromme, owner of Werk Statt, a motorcycle repair shop.

Graffiti, says Bromme's co-worker Ed, is "exactly what the Mission doesn't need." He calls tags "visual garbage — there's no art to it."

He compares tagging to peeing on the street.

Nearby business Twin Brothers Auto Glass, an auto service shop, deals with the same issue. "The owner has to paint [the graffitied wall] today and tomorrow," says Hector Galarza, sweeping leaves on the ground.

The walls of Engine Works are hit the hardest in the intersection. Graffiti has become so common that it leaves the artists inside no choice but to cover the tags. "It's just something that has to get done," says Engine Works artist Sam Ferguson. "I've embraced it as part of the culture."

Enter Youth

But his culture is about to change. The owner of his building decided it was time to bring an end to the graffiti on his walls. He approached Precita Eyes with the idea of creating a mural along Engine Works' walls. He wanted one done by youth, with a multicultural theme.



"I've learned not to see lines, but to look at shapes and tones," says instructor Fred Alvarado.

Precita Eyes agreed. The organization turned to its Urban Youth Arts Program. The program is "for kids who don't have an outlet for the energy and potential talent they have," says Eli Lippert, the program's coordinator and muralist.

For this project, the youth took that energy and talent and put it to use. "We researched different types of patterns, like Indian, Arabian and Hawaiian ones," says Jose, 17, a participant who also goes by the name Sonie. They also integrated cultural motifs and

symbols.

"They become conscious, awake and creative," says Fred Alvarado, an instructor and muralist with the youth program. "They'll ask, 'What's a Ganesh, where's India?'"

From there, a final design blossomed. Mexican mariachis, Hawaiian hibiscus flowers, ancient Aztec heads and Palestinian checkered kafias blend together, representing unity. Incorporated within are urban patterns, including brick walls, barbed wire and broken windows, indicating an end to barriers.

The youth made sure to give their design a spin. Within the mural, a man pans for gold — but with a 49ers hat. "It gives it San Francisco relevance," says Marttila.

Not to Their Liking

The young people have been painting for a few weeks now on the walls at Engine Works, which are 130 feet wide and 10 feet tall. But a few Engine Works artists wish things had worked out differently. "We could have very well painted this mural," says Engine Works artist Sam Ferguson.

He's also displeased with what the mural represents. "The Mission Mural Association or whoever is in charge of these murals needs to stop illustrating multiculturalism on every single mural," he says. "It's getting monotonous." He says he would expect San Francisco, a creative place, to break out of the box. "There's more room for creativity."

Some, like Bromme, don't even like the idea of having to use art to deter graffiti. Although she likes murals in general and is happy to see one across the street, she doesn't see the mural as a solution to tagging. "I shouldn't have to paint a mural to stop graffiti," she says. "I just want a clean wall." She adds, "Are we gonna have murals all over the city?"

But some people, like Victor Perez, owner of Twin Brother Auto Glass, believe the mural might help stop the graffiti. In fact, Perez says that if he notices less tagging, he'll consider a mural on his garage.

Wishful Thinking

That's not to say that the mural won't get tagged.

Ferguson believes it's a possibility, but he says, "It won't be nearly as much, which is cool."

Marttila agrees: "We have a pretty cool rep with most graffiti artists. We're still young and in to find out who the taggers are," he says, only half joking. "Yeah, we'll call their moms," adds Sean Vranizan, a local artist and volunteer on this project.

But some have hope. "If the mural is well done, it won't get tagged," says Ed. "But if it's not, then it'll get tagged."

That's not to say it will solve all the intersections' problems. "If there's a mural over there," Bromme says, pointing across the street, "then they'll tag us instead."

For now, nearby neighbors are glad to see anything but tags.

Pamela G., who lives around the corner, says she could stop by the mural every day. "It's nice to see the work and talk to the artists," she says, a huge smile on her face.

Others do what Pamela wishes she could. A couple in their mid-20s veer over to the mural and spend a few minutes in silence, holding hands and observing the artists. Another man sips orange Gatorade until it's almost done, watching each stroke the muralists make. A man in his 20s even gets down on the ground near Lippert and gives a two-thumbs-up sign while his friend snaps a picture.

Tourists do the same as the locals. "We just popped out of BART," says Michele Leblonc, a former Mission resident with a camera around her neck. "This is awesome," she says, staring in amazement. "This is what I miss about the city."

Doing Bigger Things with Art

Leblonc's excitement is shared by the artists. "I've always wanted to paint a mural," says Cathi Picconi, a middle-aged Mission resident. "But I always talk myself out of it." Not this time. "Here's my chance," she says, looking down at a bucket of paintbrushes.

"What can I do?" asks Picconi. Alvarado hands her a grid and some charcoal. She's quick to situate herself on the ground and start imitating what she sees on the grid. "I'm going so slow," she says. "No, you're doing great," Alvarado assures her.

Experienced artists want in on the project, too. "I was super down to help out," says Vranizan, who cruised to the scene on a skateboard and is wearing a brown beanie. "I'm stoked that it's youth-related and art-related."

Jose, a youth participant, says that if he weren't painting today he'd be at home playing video games. "It feels good to meet new people — older people — and get to know them well," he says from atop a ladder, brush in one hand and paint in another.

http://i2.wp.com/missionlocal.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/IMG_51632.jpg

"It's special to work with a collective of like-minded individuals," says local artist Sean Vranizan.

Other youth face some motivational challenges, however. “Is your buddy gonna come through?” Alvarado asks Jose. “Yeah, he’ll come later,” Jose nods his head.

When young people don’t show up, teachers don’t mind coming to the rescue. “When nobody comes, you still work,” says Alvarado, blending his charcoal lines with his index finger. “It’s not all give-give. I take a little, too,” he says with a slight smile.



Alvarado and other instructors push the project forward. “Some people own it more than others,” he says. Like Jose, who was the first youth participant to arrive on the scene.

And Jose’s behavior is what this program aims for: teaching youth to set goals and achieve them, in both art and life. “They get out of that block mentality,” says Alvarado, meaning that they leave their neighborhood and begin to see more to life.

Jose was once on probation, but when his officer noticed improvement, she helped him land a job with City Youth Now, an organization with programs and services that encourage personal growth. That program led Jose to Precita Eyes. “I realized I could do bigger things with art,” he says, bundled up in a gray hoodie. “Like clothing designs and doing it big with graffiti.”

His future goal? “To have a class of my own, to teach other youngsters and to have my own store.” It helps that he’s gotten his feet wet on previous murals — one on Balmy and 24th, and another on Potrero and 17th.

Most recently, he applied for the Gateway to College program, to catch up with high school credits. “Yesterday they called me for an interview,” he says, trying to hide his smile. He credits part of his success to art.

“Art changed my life,” he says, taking a step back and realizing its impact. And perhaps his assistance on this project will help bring new life to the intersection of 17th and Capp.

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Precita's "sacred ground"

Susan Ferriss, OF THE EXAMINER STAFF Published 4:00 am, Friday, March 21, 1997

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FRANCISCO -- SINCE LAST SUMMER, the senseless shooting death of two San Francisco teenagers has haunted muralist **Susan Kelk Cervantes**.

The site of the teens' June 23 slaying, still marked by a wreath of dried chiles, crosses and teddy bears, is in Precita Park - just steps from Cervantes' **Precita Eyes Mural Arts Center** and the Victorian home where she has raised three

sons.

Seven cathartic months after the tragedy, thanks to Cervantes and neighborhood kids, the site is also just a block away from a brilliant three-story mural the art-ist and the kids designed so the victims will not be forgotten.

On Sunday afternoon, the **Precita Valley Community Center** - whose facade is home to the mural - will dedicate the painting to **Sylvia Menendez**, who was 15, and **Carlos Hernandez**, who was 18, when they died together at Precita Park. They were gunned down in broad daylight as they picnicked beneath a tree in the park at the foot of Bernal Heights.

"It was such a tragedy and a shock for all the community here," said Cervantes, who's been painting murals in San Francisco for 25 years. "We needed to do something. We needed to put (the slain teens) in a safe place."

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Today, the teens are immortalized on the double doors of the community center at 534 Precita Ave., where the mural vibrates with color, history and intricate symbols of faith and nonviolence the kids suggested.

The doors are "sacred ground," Cervantes said.

The delicate portraits of a red-lipped Menendez and the slender Hernandez remind those who enter the building of two young lives shattered by violence. A fiery pink rose blossom is directl over the teens, a symbol of the potential of youth and young love and a remembrance of the many roses left at a shrine that sprang up in the park after the killings.

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The man accused of killing the teens is **Margarito Franco**, 71, whose wife used to baby-sit Menendez. No motive has been suggested for the killings, but Franco's attorney has cited a psychologist's report that Franco is not mentally competent to stand trial.

Children in the neighborhood were deeply affected by the deaths, Cervantes said. And they wanted the mural to reflect their concern for violence and hopes for the future.

Near the roof of the building, peacocks stride as a sign of rebirth. At the request of kids who play sports at the center, a 20-foot baseball player on the left side of the mural smacks a home run. An equally tall girl on the right side leaps to dunk a basketball.

"They're shooting for the sky hole at the top of the building," Cervantes explained. "That's where the spirit of your ancestors are - and your potential. And that's what you are always aiming for."

At street level, Cervantes designed a composite portrait of a Latino man whose hair is emerald green, representing the rectangular, grassy park. Framing the man are copper-colored hands

beseeching passers-by to reject violence.

"His tears make a pool of water someone is sinking into," Cervantes said, "and the hands of the community are reaching to help him."

Above the door, a woman cradles a family, while a faint gold halo shimmers about her and parrot-green wings form an arch.

The figure, Cervantes said, "is a composite of the Virgin Mary, an angel and a vision that was c a church."

Two days after the killings, Cervantes explained, hundreds of pilgrims started flocking to the Roman Catholic Chapel of Immaculate Conception - not far from the park - where a parishioner noticed a nocturnal glow on the roof that resembled a silhouette of the Virgin Mary.

"Whole families would walk down the street at night to look at it," Cervantes said. "You had to go at least once."

Cervantes said she and the kids also wanted to portray Precita Park's joyful history. So she painted scenes from San Francisco's first Carnaval in 1979, when she and other celebrants danced an uninhibited samba around the park: In the mural, women pound congas and men frolic in top hats and costumes.

An odd sphere-shaped object in the lower left of the mural was the kids' idea, Cervantes said. It is the "thunder chicken," a piece of play equipment that many enjoyed climbing on before it was removed from the park.

Next to the portraits of the slain teenagers, images of children and counselors at the community center welcome kids into the 75-year-old building.

"I'm happy to be in it," said **Ruben Marquez**, a tutor and recreation director whose portrait graces the right side of the door. "It says a lot. And it's very spiritual." <

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SFGATE <http://www.sfgate.com/entertainment/article/Precita-Eyes-celebrates-three-decades-of-making-2496623.php>

Precita Eyes celebrates three decades of making walls, and community, bloom

Will Crain, Special to The Chronicle Published 4:00 am, Tuesday, October 16, 2007

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#1 Reason Men Pull Away

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The Biggest Mistake Women Make That Kills A Man's Attracti



Mark Costantini / The Chronicle

IMAGE 1 OF 5

Web-celeb Heather Champ leads a walking tour of Mission Murals this weekend

Painting a mural is not like painting a picture on canvas and then hanging it on the wall of a gallery. The kind of painter who creates museum pieces doesn't usually have to worry about the effects of sun and rain, for instance, or about the work being painted over or defaced with graffiti - much less being hit by a truck.

But one day last week, walking past the colorful works of art that cover nearly every wall in the Mission District's Balmy Alley, Precita Eyes Muralists founding director **Susan Cervantes** pointed out one of her



murals that had fallen victim to just such an accident.

A large garage door and its surrounding wall had first been painted in the 1980s, but some years later a driver smashed through it. Once a new door was in place, Cervantes painted a completely new design and blended it in with the surviving parts of the original work. The result, "Indigenous Eyes: War or Peace," is one of the most striking and popular murals on the alley.

"It's a continuous event, because it's always changing," Cervantes said. "Not that you see so much changing on other murals, on other buildings, but for the alley, it's always been something that changed."

Cervantes has seen just about all of that change close up. Precita Eyes Muralists, the organization she founded with her late husband, Luis Cervantes, is celebrating its 30th anniversary Saturday with a gal affair. In those 30 years, Precita Eyes - one of just five community mural groups in the nation - has helped put together more than 450 murals on schools, parks, businesses, private residences, even a series of utility boxes.

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Beyond that, Cervantes has tended to the flowering of a mural art movement not just in Balmy Alley, not just in the Mission and the Bay Area, but all over the world.

Cervantes, who was born in Dallas, came to San Francisco in 1961 armed with a scholarship to study at the [San Francisco Art Institute](#). (She notes that the school's now-famous Diego Rivera mural was draped at the time because the administration thought it was old-fashioned.) After she met Luis, himself a well-known muralist, they raised a family together in the Precita Park neighborhood. When her children were young, she began looking for ways to get involved in her community and brighten up her neighborhood. This eventually led her to join the arts group Mujeres Muralistas, and ultimately to start Precita Eyes.

Today, the group, in addition to organizing dozens of mural projects, runs a small art supply store, holds walking tours and teaches classes. Last week, behind the art store there was a large plan for a mural under way in one room, while another room was decorated with wall-size paintings of great muralists who have passed on. Cervantes knew them all.



#1 Reason Men Pull Away

beirresistible.com

The Biggest Mistake Women Make That Kills A Man's Attraction

"When we started the organization, maybe at that time I was managing three projects a year," Cervantes said. "Now I'm managing maybe 30."

Some of these works are the familiar Latin American images of oppressed farmers and raised fists - images of "the struggle," as Cervantes calls them - but an increasing number are something completely new, inspired by cartoons and hip-hop and surrealism. Some things haven't changed, though. Noting the lack of up-to-date computers, she said: "We pretty much stick with pencil and paper and paint."

Clearly, that isn't slowing her down. This past spring, Cervantes went to China to teach people in the still nominally communist nation how to paint together communally. "They had no concept of community art," she said. "They were afraid to touch each others' drawings. Or even to paint in someone else's design. But once they got into it, and everyone else came up to them to help, they learned to let go. That's part of the process even here, is learning to let go, giving this gift to your whole community."

"Community" is a word that comes up often when Cervantes talks. And when she says it, she doesn't sound like a politician. When she says mural art is "art that's for the people, by the people," she's not just speaking in platitudes.

Precita Eyes' projects may be shepherded by an experienced artist, but ordinary people are doing much of the planning and painting. "It's what makes the difference between what we do and what other people may do," she said, "or what has happened in the past. Originally, that's what mural art was about. If you think about going back thousands of years to the cave paintings, it really was a community thing for spiritual, ritual or educational purposes."

That kind of spirit shines through in some unexpected ways. Cervantes points out that while the few plain walls in Balmy Alley are covered with graffiti tags, the murals are rarely touched. People in the community are less likely to damage the art because "they've been involved in the process," she said.

And even the notorious inflation of San Francisco real estate prices has done surprisingly little to slow the growth of murals. When pressed, Cervantes noted that a recent project at a school in Noe Valley was stopped by neighbors anxious about their property values, but she said she only rarely encounters that kind of resistance. Indeed, she said, many property owners see murals as an asset.

Homeowner Richard Purcell agrees. "Oh my God, yes," he said. In 1993, he was looking for a new home for himself and the AIDS nonprofit Aurora Dawn Foundation, which he runs out of his house. "I had

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1) Enter a Name Background Ch

looked at about 100 different places," he said. "The minute I saw this place, I said, 'This is it.' "

The place is the site of the "Indigenous Eyes" mural. "A lot of people know Balmy Alley," he said, "a lot of people in San Francisco, but also from all over. A lot of the visitors we get in the alley are from other countries. If we ever come to the point where we have to sell it," the mural is "definitely a selling point

Purcell was so enamored of the mural that he ended up joining Precita Eyes to help paint its dozens of murals at the Alemany Farmers' Market. Eventually he served the organization as a member of its board of directors for nearly 10 years. "It's just barely keeping its nose above water in terms of funding," he said, "but it's great for community building."

The life of a muralist is a hard one. You can't sell a mural the way you can sell a canvas. Grants and compensation for the work are hard to come by, and often there's more in the budget for materials than for the artists. "Our time was sometimes not equal to a bucket of paint," Cervantes said. "Not a good way to make a living."

Cash flow is always a concern, but it's clear that for Cervantes, the rewards outweigh the headaches. "We want to keep it going another 30 years," she said.

Precita Eyes celebrates its 30th anniversary with a gala benefit featuring live mural painting, live music, refreshments and a silent auction of art donated by master muralists. \$30. 6-10 p.m. Saturday. Project Artaud, 450 Florida St. Call (415) 285-2287 or go to www.precitaeyes.org for tickets and information.

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Filing Date: June 20, 2016
Case No.: 2016-008450LBR
Business Name: Precita Eyes Muralists Association, Inc.
Business Address: 2981 24th Street & 348 Precita Avenue
Zoning: NCT (24th-Mission Neighborhood Commercial Transit)/
45-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 4270/034 & 5524/001
Applicant: Susan Cervantes, Founding Director
2981 24th Street
San Francisco, CA 94110
Nominated By: Supervisor David Campos, District 9
Staff Contact: Stephanie Cisneros - (415) 575-9186
stephanie.cisneros@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Precita Eyes Muralists Association, Inc. is a non-profit community arts organization that was founded in 1977. The organization is dedicated to enriching and beautifying urban environments and educating communities about the process and history of public, community, mural art. Precita Eyes trains artists in their unique community mural process, offers mural classes, and works closely with the entire community. Precita Eyes gained 501(c)(3) status in 1979 and serves the Mission District and Bernal Heights neighborhoods. The organization's founding location is 348 Precita Avenue and continues to be rented, dedicated to children and youth arts education and mural art programs. Precita Eyes rented a second space at 342 Precita Avenue in 1984, but were evicted in 1997, after which, in 1998, they purchased the current building that they reside in at 24th Street and Harrison Street. The headquarters for the organization at 2981 24th Street are located at the ground floor of a three-story, mixed-use, Italianate style building that was previously used as a store, according to the 1915 Sanborn map.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

1977

2. *Is the business unique to San Francisco?*

Yes. Precita Eyes Muralists Association is unique to San Francisco in that it has provided continual support for art and art education and has specifically been a supporter of muralists and the muralist atmosphere that blossomed in the Mission District beginning in the early 1970s. Since its inception, Precita Eyes Muralists has played an integral role in the city's cultural

heritage and arts education and is responsible for over 600 collaborative murals in various San Francisco neighborhoods, including the Mission District and Bernal Heights, as well as other cities in the Bay Area and internationally.

3. *Is the business associated with culturally significant events?*

Yes. The organization is associated with the 1970s mural movement that emerged in the United States as a result of the 1960s Chicano (Mexican-American) and Civil Rights movement. The organization is also associated with the development of a community-based mural movement in the Mission District comprised of neighborhood Latino artists and the women's mural collective, *Mujeres Muralistas*.

4. *Is the business associated with culturally significant persons?*

No.

5. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art/craft/cuisine/tradition?*

Yes. The organization is associated with the production of murals.

6. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant building/structure/site/object/interior?*

Yes. The 1900s property at 2981 24th Street has been previously evaluated by the Planning Department for potential historical significance. The property is considered a "Category A Property" that is included as part of the identified-eligible South Mission Avenues and Alleys historic district. The 1900s property at 348 Precita Avenue has also been previously evaluated by the Planning Department for potential historical significance. The property is considered a "Category A Property" that is included as part of the identified-eligible Bernal Heights North historic district.

7. *Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?*

No.

8. *Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?*

No.

9. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?*

Yes. SF Gate, 1/4/2014, "Mural matriarch Susan Cervantes makes it big in art," by Sam Whiting; El Tecolote, 6/3/2015, "New mural captures spirit of the Mission," by Alicia Zapata; Mission Local, "17th and Capp Mural Provokes Mixed Feelings," by Christy Khoshaba; SF Gate, 3/21/1997, "Precita's 'sacred ground,'" by Susan Ferriss; SF Gate, "Precita Eyes celebrates three decades of making walls, and community, bloom," by Will Crain.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Recommended by Applicant

- Precita Eyes/Bernal landscape mural and organization logo above storefront transom at 348 Precita Avenue
- Iconic front door with mural at 348 Precita Avenue
- Interior work spaces and studio space at 348 Precita Avenue

- Interior paint mixing studio and store room in the middle spaces of the building at 2981 24th Street
- Administrative, arts education and tour offices at back of the building at 2981 24th Street
- Studio space used as a multi-purpose space for exhibits, presentations, meetings and mural design workshops at 2981 24th Street
- Vintage marquee sign displaying Precita Eyes logo at 2981 24th Street
- Image of Frida Kahlo and business wall sign displaying organization name facing 24th Street

Additional Recommended by Staff

- Storefront system at 348 Precita Avenue including tiled bulkhead, angled vestibule entry, front door, storefront windows and transom band above
- Storefront system at 2981 24th Street including tiled bulkhead, angled vestibule entry, front door, and storefront windows



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 769

HEARING DATE: JULY 20, 2016

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ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR PRECITA EYES MURALISTS ASSOCIATION, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 2981 24TH STREET & 348 PRECITA AVENUE (BLOCK/LOT 4270/034 & 5524/001).

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the Mission and Bernal Heights neighborhood's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on July 20, 2016, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends that Precita Eyes Muralists Association qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

- *Precita Eyes/Bernal landscape mural and organization logo above storefront transom at 348 Precita Avenue*
- *Iconic front door with mural at 348 Precita Avenue*
- *Interior work spaces and studio space at 348 Precita Avenue*
- *Interior paint mixing studio and store room in the middle spaces of the building at 2981 24th Street*
- *Administrative, arts education and tour offices at back of the building at 2981 24th Street*
- *Studio space used as a multi-purpose space for exhibits, presentations, meetings and mural design workshops at 2981 24th Street*
- *Vintage marquee sign displaying Precita Eyes logo at 2981 24th Street*
- *Image of Frida Kahlo and business wall sign displaying organization name facing 24th Street*
- *Storefront system at 348 Precita Avenue including tiled bulkhead, angled vestibule entry, front door, storefront windows and transom band above*
- *Storefront system at 2981 24th Street including tiled bulkhead, angled vestibule entry, front door, and storefront windows*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file 2016-008450LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Historic Preservation Commission on July 20, 2016.



Christine L. Silva
Acting Commission Secretary

AYES: Hyland, Hasz, Johnck, Johns, Pearlman, Matsuda, Wolfram

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ADOPTED: July 20, 2016