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Mexican Heritage Plaza Presents ***Mi Coche / My Culture---Livin' the Lowrider Lifestyle***

San José, California – February 5, 2008 - Mexican Heritage Plaza (MHP) is once again presenting an exhibition representing the diversity and heritage of South Bay culture.

Mi Coche / My Culture---Livin' the Lowrider Lifestyle is a unique visual arts exhibition that will encompass the art, design, and Chicano subculture of lowrider automobiles from their origins in the 1960's and 1970's. Today's custom car industry and accompanying lifestyle took root in the lowrider genre of 30 and 40 years ago.

"The Plaza is thrilled to present, at long last, this very exciting artistic exhibit that will portray one of the genres of the South Bay---lowriders," said Marcela Davison Aviles, President and CEO of Mexican Heritage Plaza. "This is a unique and singular aspect of American culture and Latino lifestyles."

Long before we were learning how to 'Pimp a Ride' or modify a classic car, retro cars were being suspended just inches above street level. But there was more to it: the music, the wardrobe, and sheet metal that had been metal leafed, airbrushed or pinstriped. Gold, chrome, white-walled tires are only a part of the common traits of the custom exteriors.

Interiors also included the latest in technology: electronic audio and video, amps, subwoofers.

Co-curators Lissa Jones and Marcos Gaitan will bring realism to this lifestyle and culture in a visual art exhibit. This Chicano phenomenon has grown to become a cross-cultural movement, and the exhibit will showcase precious and personal ephemera of car aficionados that denote the lowriders' lifestyle.

"I've been waiting thirty years for this exhibit," said Marcos Gaitan, Co-curator of the exhibit, artist, muralist and president of Hightone Car Club. "To be able to co-curate and to pay homage to the Chicano lowrider lifestyle of an often-overlooked era is a true honor for me."

Gaitan's mural will be a signature piece of this exhibit, and depicts the famous hangout at the corner of Story and King Roads, an icon of that era.

“East San José during the 60’s and 70’s was the epicenter of Lowriding in this area” said Lissa Jones, Co-curator of this exhibit and Development Associate at Arts Council Silicon Valley. “The lowrider lifestyle expanded to be inclusive of the entire family all sharing the collective experience.”

The exhibit will be in La Galería at Mexican Heritage Plaza beginning February 28 and runs through June 30, 2008.

Mi Coche / My Culture---Livin’ the Lowrider Lifestyle is sponsored in part by The Castellano Family Foundation.

The exhibition at The Plaza is open to the public with free admission. La Galería is open Monday through Fridays noon to 5 p.m. Weekends and after-hours are by appointment.

For more information call 408.928.5524 or visit www.mhcviva.org for more information about performing and visual arts events.

Mexican Heritage Plaza is located at 1700 Alum Rock Avenue, San Jose, CA 95112.

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About Mexican Heritage Corporation:

The Mexican Heritage Corporation, the operating organization of the Mexican Heritage Plaza, was founded by a group of San José’s Mexican-American community leaders. That vision grew into a 55,000 square-foot cultural center with state of the art theatrical venues, a Smithsonian-affiliated gallery space and luscious thematic gardens that serve as a regional resource for cultural programming and education. Built in association with the City of San José and the San José Redevelopment Agency, it is one of the largest Latino cultural centers in the nation.

The mission of the Mexican Heritage Plaza of San José is to affirm, celebrate and preserve the rich cultural heritage of the Mexican community and showcase multicultural arts within the region. The vision extends well beyond the boundaries of East San José. The Mexican Heritage Plaza, Centro Cultural de San José, is a destination point for everyone who lives in or visits the Bay Area. www.mhcviva.org

Visit the Art and Soul of Silicon Valley – The Mexican Heritage Plaza Surrounded by the Mayfair and San Antonio Neighborhoods, two of San José’s oldest Latino communities. Plaza programming is supported in part with a grant from the City of San José. and the logos for: City of San Jose, San Jose RDA, Story Road Business Association, Alum Rock Village Business Association,

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