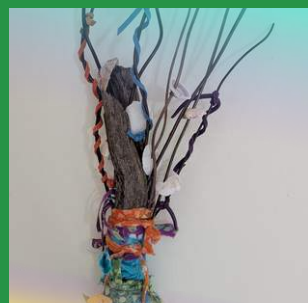




SD River Community Art Day

June 27, 2026



Connecting to the River Through Art

WELCOME



Art has a unique way of helping us see the world differently. It invites us to slow down, notice beauty, and build meaningful connections with the places we call home. SD River Community Art Day was created to celebrate the creativity inspired by the San Diego River watershed while bringing together a diverse array of artists, families, and community members through a shared appreciation for nature and the arts. Throughout the day, visitors explored river-themed art in a variety of

mediums, met talented local artists, participated in hands-on art activities, and experienced the river as a source of inspiration and connection.

This digital showcase celebrates the remarkable artists who generously shared their talents and stories with our community. Each piece reflects a unique perspective on the landscapes, wildlife, culture, and people that make the San Diego River watershed such a special place.

At the San Diego River Park Foundation, our mission is to take action so the 52-mile-long San Diego River becomes a natural, cultural, and recreational treasure. We believe art plays an important role in that mission by inspiring curiosity, fostering stewardship, and encouraging people to build a deeper relationship with our amazing San Diego River. We hope this collection inspires you to continue exploring the river, supporting local artists, and discovering the many ways creativity and nature can come together to strengthen our community and inspire river stewardship.

Thank you to every artist, volunteer, partner, and visitor who made this celebration possible, especially the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture for their generous grant support, ART FORM for providing sustainable art activities, and the San Diego River Artists Alliance for their planning support.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back next June as we continue to celebrate the river through art, creativity, and connection!

The San Diego River Park Foundation Team
sandiegoriver.org



The City of
SAN DIEGO

art FORM
Celebrating 15 Years
FOUND OBJECTS RECYCLED MATERIALS



Celebration ~ Creativity ~ Connection





Anthony Gilbert “Bear” Vallez **Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians Member**

BASKETRY

“I am from the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians. I’ve always been around the basketry after being raised by and watching my grandmother gather materials and create baskets. I wanted to learn because fewer people were carrying on the tradition, and I felt it was important to help preserve this art form. Through my work, I hope to keep our cultural traditions alive and create baskets that future generations can see, learn from, and be proud of.”



Artists



Natasha Papousek
San Diego River Artists Alliance

COLLAGE

"I create mosaic-like compositions from hand-painted found paper, exploring the relationship between humans and the natural world. My work is deeply connected to the San Diego River, a lifeline that threads through an otherwise dry landscape... Through my collage practice, I seek to honor the river as a vital ecosystem and to highlight our shared responsibility to protect and preserve this essential resource."



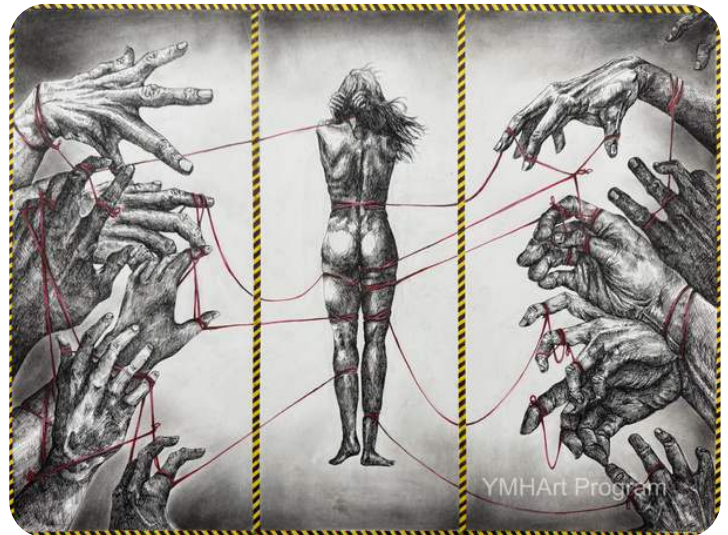


Yangminyan Wu

Youth Mental Health Art Program

DIGITAL AND TRADITIONAL ART ON CANVAS

“My name is Yuki Wu, a rising senior at Canyon Crest Academy. I have always loved art since a very young age, and have been creating since. I create art pieces both digitally and traditionally, usually on large pieces of canvas. Additionally, I founded the YMHArt program and have been working with other passionate people since...My artwork connects to the San Diego River because of the themes of mental health and community engagements. The premise of my portfolio is to address mental health issues prominent among youths, like me, through the use of lines and colors. The river is



important to me because it provides a platform to express outreach to our community, while also promoting our youth mental health program.”

Artists



Kenda Francis

San Diego River Artists Alliance

PAINTING

"I live in San Diego, California, though my heart is wherever the animals are. Born and raised in East County, I've spent my life studying art and the natural world, earning a Master's in Art from CSU Chico and teaching credentials that continue to shape my path as both artist and educator. My colorful, multifaceted paintings are inspired by travel, lived experience, and the quiet connections I share with animals."



Artists



Eva Falvera
Kumeyaay Tribal Member from Baja

BASKETRY

Eva makes baskets with native plants from the Descanso and Cuyamaca areas of the San Diego River watershed. She uses sumac, juncus, and willow plants to make coil and other type of baskets used for cooking and washing acorns.



Artists



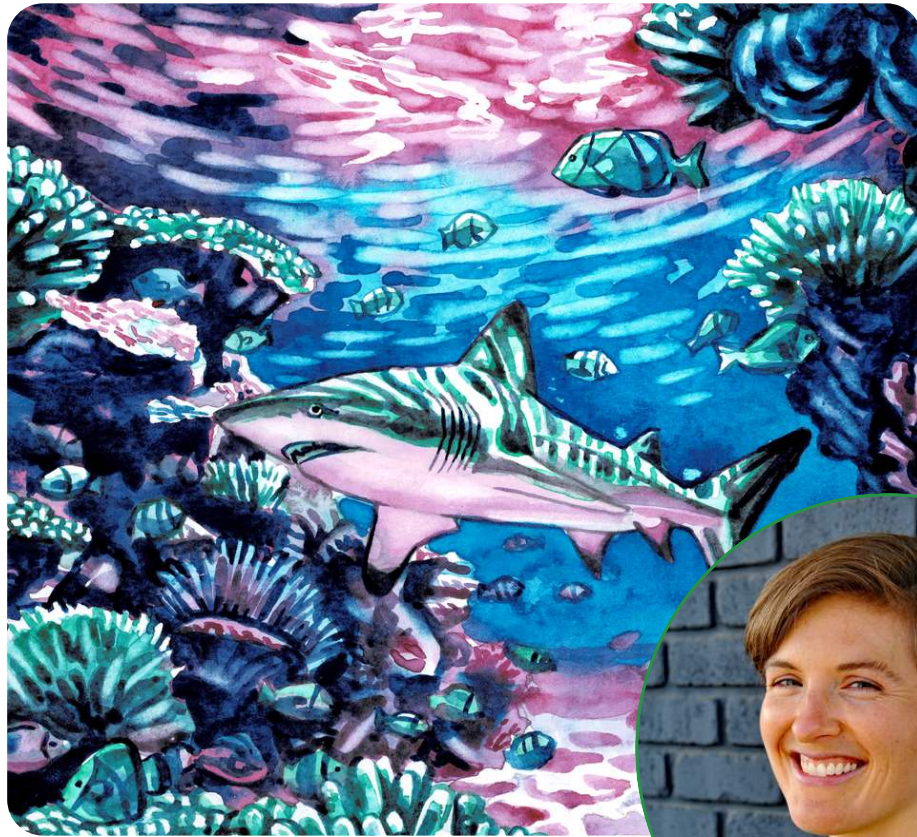
Trudy Pachon
San Diego River Artists Alliance

CERAMICS

"I am a San Diego local and have enjoyed doing artwork of many different media and forms. I landed on ceramics many years ago, and have been obsessed with clay and the process of making ever since...I also am constantly in awe of the life in and around the river. The miracle of all of these and more inspire me to try to express "the river" in my artwork..."



Artists



Kelsey Worth

ILLUSTRATION, PAINTING, DESIGN

"I am a San Diego-based visual artist, educator, and Marine Corps veteran with work spanning illustration, design, and fine art...Through my artwork, I aim to encourage curiosity, appreciation, and a sense of wonder for the species and landscapes that make San Diego unique. The San Diego River represents both an ecological resource and a source of creative inspiration that reinforces the importance of protecting local habitats for future generations."



Artists



Rosie Salinas
Cahuilla Tribal Member

BASKETRY

“My name is Rosemarie Salinas, and I am from the Mountain Cahuilla Reservation. I grew up on the Cahuilla Reservation, where I developed a deep appreciation for our cultural traditions. I learned the art of basketry from Eva Salazar and Lori Sisquoc and specialize in creating coiled juncus-style baskets. Through my work, I honor and help preserve the teachings, techniques, and artistry passed down through generations while sharing the beauty of Cahuilla basketry with others.”

Artists



Inez Nefzi

PAINTING

"I am a local self-taught Transfronteriza Chicana and Arab Artist and Nature Enthusiast, rooted in the dynamic borderlands of San Diego and Tijuana...My artwork is meant to foster curiosity and encourage a relationship between the viewer, the river and Mother Nature....Through this artistic appreciation and documentation of life on the river, I hope to raise the level of environmental awareness of the average person."



Artists



Vicky DeLong

San Diego River Artists Alliance

MIXED MEDIA

“Based in San Diego, I am a mixed-media artist specializing in hand-built pottery, handcrafted artist books, and fiber sculptures. As a member of the San Diego River Artists Alliance, my work connects to the river through the materials I collect. My sculptures incorporate foraged items like sticks, seed pods, and leaves found along the riverbanks and surrounding area. Using the natural items that I find on the ground in my art is a way to highlight the river’s presence and advocate for its preservation, ensuring the community recognizes the river as both an environmental and cultural asset.”



Painting ~ Crafts ~ Basketry ~ Murals





Thank you to Our Partners & Volunteers!

City of San Diego Arts & Culture Commission
ART FORM
San Diego River Artists Alliance
San Diego Plein Air Painter Tricia De Luna

Kona Ice Truck
Point Rock Music
All the wonderful volunteers
who helped put on the event





Join Us Next Year!

June 26 & 27, 2027



San Diego River Community Art Day is a celebration of the San Diego River and the many ways it inspires creativity. This special event showcases the work and voices of local artists, highlighting diverse perspectives and fostering a deeper connection to the river through art.



The San Diego River Park Foundation
sandiegoriver.org
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