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City of SLO and San Luis Obispo Museum of Art Partner to Launch First Plaza Pop-Up: Through the Flowers

San Luis Obispo, CA — Spring flowers have come to SLO early this year with the Through the Flowers installation currently blooming in Mission Plaza.

The vibrant, immersive installation is the first of a series of month-long activations that will be adorning Mission Plaza through summer. Due to the great enthusiasm over the holidays with the Mission Plaza activations, the City is extending the art installations with a brand new program — Plaza Pop-Ups. Each Plaza Pop-Up will feature a different cultural nonprofit who, through funding by the City, will create an art installation unique to the nonprofit's mission.

"Arts are an essential part of our community and improve the quality of life for all residents and visitors," said Molly Cano, SLO City Tourism Manager. "We are thrilled to be able to support community partners through this pilot program while safely welcoming people to experience our beautiful downtown."

Together, the City and the San Luis Obispo Museum of Art worked to launch the first Plaza Pop-Up which is up now through the end of the month. As a permanent space to support art and artists, SLOMA was a natural choice to launch this pilot program with. SLOMA strives to make art accessible for any and everyone and this passive art experience is a beautiful extension of the museum, itself just steps outside of Mission Plaza.

"The Museum is honored to be invited as the first partner in this program," said Leann Standish, Executive Director of SLOMA. "The opportunity to present this joyful installation is particularly meaningful right now as we begin plans to reopen."

SLOMA tapped artist Laurie Shapiro, who uses drawn screen prints and layers of painting on transparent vinyl, to create an immersive, outdoor environment for San Luis Obispo's Mission Plaza. With both sides of the artwork rich in layers of color and paint, as well as a custom-lit interior, the piece encourages visitors to enjoy a playful and imaginative experience where they can look to and interact with each other "through the flowers."

"We have all experienced the separateness of isolation due to COVID this past year," said Shapiro. "This installation is meant to invoke creativity and play — a safe way for us to come together and be inspired. I anticipate this installation drawing many visitors to the city center, creating an inspiring space that uplifts, motivates and brings joy."

May's activation will be a partnership with Downtown SLO and their May Flower initiative. For more information or to request an interview with the City of SLO or SLOMA, please contact Jacqui Clark-Charlesworth at jacqui@slochamber.org.

ABOUT THE CITY OF SLO

One of California's oldest communities, San Luis Obispo was first incorporated in 1856 as a General Law City, and became a Charter City in 1876. San Luis Obispo operates under the Council-Mayor-City Manager form of government and is a full-service city that provides police, fire, water, sewer, streets, transit, parking, planning, building, engineering and parks & recreation services to its 46,300 residents. For more information, please visit SLOCity.org.

ABOUT SLOMA

The San Luis Obispo Museum of Art is located at 1010 Broad Street, on the west end of Mission Plaza in San Luis Obispo, California. It is a 501(c)(3) public benefit nonprofit arts organization dedicated to providing and promoting diverse visual arts experiences for people of all ages and backgrounds through exhibitions, education, creation and collaboration. Since 1967 this organization has been the beacon for the visual arts in its region. More information can be found at www.sloma.org.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

[Laurie Shapiro](#) has a BFA from Carnegie Mellon University, and spent a semester at Bilkent University in Ankara Turkey. She has completed artist residencies at Kala Art Institute in Berkeley, and the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles. In Los Angeles, where she lives and works, Shapiro has had two solo shows with Radiant Space Gallery. She has also shown with Mars Gallery in Chicago. Shapiro was the recipient of an Artists' Fellowship Grant, Center for Cultural Innovation Grant, Vibrant Cities Art Grant, and was awarded a fellowship at American Jewish University. In addition, Shapiro's installations have been commissioned for Otherworld and Coffee World. Her paintings are in public and private collections, including the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles and Bilkent University.