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LEAD Original Programming

LEAD Exclusive – Behind the Scenes: "The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture of the Riverside Art Museum" (2021)

START – 00:00:00

>> My name is Todd Wingate. I'm director of exhibitions and collections for RAM. So I've been working on this project since the very beginning. So we're really excited to have you all here. We've got a really, really strong partnership with Cal State San Bernardino. We've been working with Gomez [phonetic] in the art department and lots of other -- You and other, other entities on there. So we're thrilled to have you as a partner. So we're going to see today -- This is a really live construction site. It's really hot in there, just so you know. We'll go kind of quickly. We're going to see -- This building is 66,000 square feet. We are currently activating 44,000 square feet. We are not activating the basement which is another 22,000 square feet. That'll be in another phase that comes several years down. Yes, [inaudible] is raising money, so if you got some cash that you would like to help us open the basement, talk to [inaudible]. So the main floor will be about 10,000 square feet of gallery space that will house Cheech's permanent collection, as well as new works that we acquire. We're currently in conversation with several collectors about the possibility of their collections joining Cheech's as the core of of the collection for this institution. And so, we're very excited about that. And so, I think that people have been waiting, you know? There's lots of collectors out there trying to figure out what do I do with this collection, you know? Where does my collection go? Cheech is sort of paving the way for that and I think that we are proving to be a good, a good partner and a good repository for that. So our hope is that we continue to augment that collection and build it. We have a small acquisition fund. So we are also currently in the process of acquiring new work that's important, which allows us to be more strategically about either specific artists or specific works of art that we believe enhance our collection and expand the base of knowledge that Cheech's collection shares. So we're going to see the main floor. In the second floor, I'm going to take you in through the side entrance. We'll go past what is a Warren, a back of house spaces. It's the kitchen for the proposed café someday. Some storage. It's the restrooms. We'll go into the main zocalo, which is the big, open space. How many of you have been in the library before? Just you so. You won't know -- You won't see the difference. It's really, really different. And so we have cut a large hole in the floor of the second floor, so there'll be a two-story atrium. We will show you where -- In the zocalo, we have commissioned Einar and Jamex de la Torre to create a two-story lenticular. They will be the focal point of the zocalo, then take you through about ten thousand square feet of gallery space and show you the permanent collection storage space. Then we'll go upstairs and we'll look at about another eight thousand square feet of gallery space, which will be our temporary exhibition space that will rotate several times a year. Our first exhibition is a retrospective by Einar and Jamex de la Torre that we are co-producing with the Smithsonian Latino Center. And so, we were talking with the de la

Torre brothers, Smithsonian has been talking with the de la Torre brothers. We decided to join forces or create that exhibition here and then that exhibition will go on tour, after it leaves the Cheech. We hope ultimately at the -- At the Smithsonian, but we haven't -- They haven't found a space for it yet. So we're hoping --

>> There's a couple of questions. One of them was that someone noticed that the personal collection of Cheech, there's a lot of California, but when people come here and visit, they will be exposed to not just California Chicano art but a national --

>> So Cheech's collection is not encyclopedic of the entire school of Chicano art. Cheech is, you know, they're about a hundred artists in the collection, mostly focused in California and Texas. A lot of Texas and that really had to do with a gallerist that it moved from Texas to California early in Cheech's collection -- Collecting days who introduced him to artists working in Texas. And so, that's really how those relationships came to be. But there are lots of things that are not in the collection, you know, this is what spoke to one guy. And so, you know, we believe that we will continue to collect and sort of fill in, not so much gaps, but sort of augment the collection in ways that make it more encyclopedic, more expensive. That answered your question?

>> Yeah, yeah. Thanks.

>> Who was that Texas' artist?

>> There are several. Ricardo Ruiz is in the collection.

>> [Inaudible] help that Cheech get art.

>> Oh, it was a gallerist and I don't know her name.

>> Her? Ok.

>> Yeah, back in the 90s. I want to say. Late eighties or early nineties.

>> And then, this renditions, this is what's going to look like, right?

>> Right, right. So those are early renderings from the architects. And so, there have been some changes but that's sort of the way that we imagined this will look. They've taken some liberty with the artwork in terms of sizes and, you know, there's a few things that aren't actually in the collection that they put in there just as a placeholder.

>> Would there be other like -- How does the people come to look at the art? Are they going to be like workshops, opportunities for people to learn craft? How do, you know --

>> Yeah, absolutely. So RAM, the Riverside Art Museum, our mission has always been dual. And so we are half education, half exhibition. So we've got a really robust education program, both adult classes, kids classes. We have contracts with multiple

school districts where we're putting artists in the schools multiple times a year and so that will continue to augment and change and to encompass the work that's coming through the Cheech. We've gotten a grant, I believe to add Cheech's collection to the curriculum. And so, I think that's in process, working through that. But, yeah. There's a -
- We will go through the education center here and then the expansion, when we go down into the basement, someday, there'll be about ten thousand square feet of education space. That will happen down there.

>> I have one last question before we go --

>> Absolutely. It's much cooler out here. I think -- Ask all your questions here.

>> Got it.

>> But perhaps Ofelia [phonetic] should answer this. We're interested, our viewers and our listeners want to know how can they help. I know, in our LEAD network, we've put out several calls, people can donate money. At one time, there was a petition to nudge the city of Riverside to, you know, pass a resolution. But at this point and I don't know, Ofelia, if you're -- Or are you tired of -- You can just tell us, people that are watching us and listening to us, what's needed now in order to participate and help?

>> The challenge initially, obviously, was money, to make sure that this happened. And so I shared with a few people Todd was the original idea for this to come to fruition, but we had to raise a lot of money and that was where we reconcentrated. Also to be respectful, RAM was going through a huge change. Growing the limited staff that they had, people wanted to do all kinds of extra things to move it forward and there just wasn't enough bandwidth. So now, what we've gotten through the challenges, getting all the approvals of the contracts done and now the detail is making sure that this is moving along and, at the same time, thinking of future programming. Well, the future programming is also going to necessitate money. And so, grants and things like that, we have a lot of interest and it is nationwide. And so I would tell you, if you're planning to come to the inaugural activities, make sure there's reservations you do it immediately because I am overwhelmed with the thought of who's going to come to Riverside. We're going to have three days of activities, meaning we're going to have the Gala sponsored by Unidos. We're going to have a concert with Los Lobos, here across the street. We're going to have the opening family day and the detail of that is incredible. So the challenge for us right now is, how does that flow given the people we have on board? So it isn't as easy to say you will come, coming -- But we don't know how you're going to need, what help we're going to need at this moment, but we know that there will be assistants needed. [Inaudible] and their brother wants to donate art to the Cheech, you know? They haven't got it yet but this isn't for you will come and this is going to be art or artifacts house at the Cheech. So it's a huge challenge, but the one thing we want to make sure is that we have people such as yourselves from, you know, I have to say this and I know it's probably irrelevant is taking time, but I mentioned to James -- Not a week goes by that I don't think of Graciano Gomez, because he and I are old friends and he we would joke about crossing the line and he's the one that would crossed the line over

here. And he brought Enrique many times to our events for Latino network and it's people like that that if this is going to go, it means that we're going to have to outreach both ways. And because we can't get to San Bernardino as much, it isn't because we don't want to. There aren't enough people to do the work to make sure that it is -- -- impactful. So we can share information with you just like now and then hopefully there'll be other events or you invite us to go talk over there. But if you say to go to meet [inaudible] during that [inaudible] breakfast, you know that he is going to hear you. So, please don't -- And I can say that because I've done that. So it's what can they do? We are going to have opportunities for volunteers and when that is framed, then we will be able to reach out to you. And, by the same token, if you have ideas on what we can do together, then please go through Drew [phonetic], Todd and so forth. So I don't want to talk anymore.

>> That's fine. And please, count on LEAD for whatever it is. I mean, we have volunteers -- We can -- We could do also software. We're highly skilled at large-scale events, so feel free to call on us. We want to be your partner. So thank you for all your work because you, Ofelia, you've been instrumental in getting this to this point and thank you for invoking the name of one of our LEAD padrinos, Graciano Gomez. Muy bien. Thank you. And, of course, we're joined today by one of our other LEAD padrinos, José Ángel Gutierrez. So José Ángel is maybe is one of our eldest here in the Movimiento -- I don't know if there's any words you want to say to our viewers and listeners about the role of Chicano art in the movement? Anything?

>> To the -- Chicano art, to my perspective, became protest and political art. That's what we used to put our posters out, to put our messages out. And we [inaudible] and that sort of thing in t-shirts and we even made our own bumper stickers. So this is long time in coming. I congratulate you for doing it because being and becoming is a big gap and you are becoming. Thank you.

>> This will be what we call the zocalo. So gathering space in the core, where events can happen, lectures can happen. You know, all kinds of community activities. What you just came through is the back of house. So everything from storage to telecom rooms, restrooms. This space here is our future café, space behind it is the kitchen. We are not doing a café at the opening. We've been thinking about -- A lot about restaurants being hit by COVID and we wanted to make sure that we're being a really good community partner in pushing the audiences that are coming to the Cheech out into local restaurants, so that they're supporting our local economy and not -- So our café would compete with that. So we would advocate it at some point. It just seemed like now was not the time. We talk a lot about being a really good community partner. with downtown and the merchants downtown. City Riverside is a great supporter of ours. And so we want to make sure that we continue to be a good partner there. So again, events will happen here. So where you see those two [inaudible], a big welcome is out of the ground and that is where the de la Torre brothers -- It'll be a two-story lenticular piece that we've commissioned from them. There's a freestanding gift shop that happens here. And then, this is a community gallery. So the thought is that you could come into this space, experience the community gallery at some point, go to the

cafe, see a little bit of art, go to the giftshop without having to pay the entrance fee, so that people could come in and get some sort of experience. You know, we have a lot of first time museum-goers who aren't sure that it's something they want to see. So it's really about creating multiple points of entry for them. So any questions about this phase?

[Inaudible]

Is there a fee? Or is it like you just walk in or like, what do people do if they want to [inaudible].

>> There will be a -- So you could come in and experience the community galleries, giftshop. You could be here to see the galleries and to go upstairs, you would pay an admission fee. Alright. Let's go this way. We have about 10,000 square feet of exhibition space on the main floor. Mostly this will house the permanent collection. So the very first exhibition will be all Cheech's collection, but as we continue to augment with new collections and additions, we will continue to rotate those through. We will also rotate some of Cheech's collections through. We do not have enough wall space to show the entire collection all at one time. So some things will be up all the time. There's some iconic pieces that will be, we think, up always. There are other works that are work on paper that will have to rotate every so often for conservation. We don't want things exposed to light for too, too long. And so, we will continue to rotate that. Ofelia asked me to talk a little bit about the elements in the building we retained. What we said said to the architects early on was don't touch anything unless you have to. And so, they've pulled out a drop ceiling and left, you know, which gave us all this wonderful sort of port in place being concrete. All of the electrical and the data and the HVAC systems that are up, the whole thing will get painted out of gray so it'll all sort of disappear. These are the original concrete floors. We pulled the carpet out there being polished and so it'll be polished concrete, the original brick.

[Inaudible]

Over the door, the original stairs, all of those are being retained. So anywhere we could, we maintained what was going to exist.

>> Other than -- You mentioned the lighting, what else kind of degrades art? Like, what other considerations, when you're building a space for art, you mentioned the lighting. So what other factors are --

>> So we watch -- We watch for a standard of humidity control, we watch for scanner so that you're not having a lot of variation in both humidity and temperature. We monitor light so that we can tell you how many hours, at how many candle light, foot candles a piece is getting at any given time and what the duration of that is, so that -- You know, we just pay attention to all of that as we're navigating that. So we have a formula that says if this is a pastel on paper, it's been on exhibit now for five and a half months. We should probably replace it and give it a rest and let it not be sitting in light all the time.

Around, we have lights that come on and off when people -- Whether people are in the space or not, so they're motion sensed. Here, not so much. We anticipate a fairly steady flow of traffic which will not give us that same kind of opportunity. You'll see these stripes in the drywall all along. We have a -- It's a steel hanging system that comes from Japan that will allow us to hang everything from a very thin airplane cable, which will allow us to hang much more quickly, move things around a little bit better. Any more questions as we keep going?

>> And what is the cycle of like special exhibitions? A few months at a time to special exhibitions?

>> Yeah, my guess is upstairs changes probably two or three times a year. This collection, initially, probably, a year. And it won't all change. We'll rotate things in and out that you may not notice or, you know --

>> So some may want to plan, you know, I'm going to go three times, four times during the year, if you're not going to see always the exact same thing.

>> Right. Upstairs will change all the time, downstairs less so.

[Inaudible]

>> So RAM has a membership program that if you are a member, you get in free. If you are a member at RAM, I would just -- I think, because there is -- They're going to be the same, you know? So if you buy a ticket here and it's \$10 to get you in here and get you in there, our plan is that people go back and forth between the two spaces, probably opportunities for exhibition [inaudible] to get the full breadth of the exhibition, you'd have to go to both sides. We may tackle the same topic from very different perspectives, but then bounce you back and forth so that you would get an opportunity to see a wider range of things. There's often -- There are some small galleries there that might work better for an exhibition that could go here. So there's lots of, lots, lots of crossover.

>> Yeah. I was going to say maybe for the folks who aren't familiar with the area, maybe could just kind of like give us a quick [inaudible]. We're right next to the historic [inaudible] and then [inaudible] of the headquarters.

>> So we occupied -- Then the next city block, in the next block there is the Municipal Auditorium and then we are next door. So we're in the next block over. And there's a Metrolink station two blocks away.

>> Oh, so it makes it very easy to --

>> Very easy. Very easy. It's actually a little further than two blocks, but it's just on the other side of the freeway. So people coming in from LA, from Pomona, Orange County, you know, there's a --

>> And we have more hotel space available now too, if people want to make a weekend of it, like for the inaugural activities, you do want to -- For out-of-towners, there's space.

>> Do we have a proposed timeline for the inaugural --

>> Yes, on -- I mentioned that right now, the May 6th, not 5th, but the 6th, we will be having a Gala sponsored by Unidos. All of this is under the Cheech inaugural activities. That will be on Friday night. Then, on Saturday, we're having a concert next door at the Municipal Auditorium. We're looking to book Los Lobos, who are friends of Cheech's and we're trying to make a big deal out of it. But we don't have to make a big deal, just, you know -- So -- And -- So then, on Sunday, we plan to have a family day so that local families can come and have some activities there, have lowrider cars all around here. And then, have the opening ceremony, if you will, the ribbon-cutting on Sunday.

>> So we're talking about May 2022.

>> Yes, yes.

>> May 2022.

>> [Inaudible] the end of the gallery space on this floor, on the other side of this mall, is about two thousand, twenty five hundred square feet of what's going to be exhibition collection storage space, where we will store the collection. Once we do the fundraising for the basement level that we moved down and we will open this wall up and that'll be - We'll just extend like the gallery spaces a little further.

>> There is a question about the interactivity -- Like, these showing museums, where I know the kids and the adults can touch things, do stuff, I don't know this particular Chicano art event itself. I don't know, but do you foresee as part of this Chicano art being some kind of interactive thing? I don't know.

>> So we have just hired the first artistic director of the Cheech and she started on Monday. And I -- And so that's a to-be-determined. I mean, I think she will develop a really robust program but that's in her scope. And so, we've been shepherding this to this point to where now it's Esther's [phonetic] opportunity to flush all that out. [Inaudible]. So I am sure the answer is there'll be all kinds of things, all kinds of opportunities. We do now. We have lots of it at RAM. You can come on a Sunday. There's all kinds of hands on things and things to do. Less interactive in terms of the exhibitions themselves, but, certainly, yeah. And we're surely looking at all of that. Alright let's go to --

>> You're going to -- You're going to love her.

>> Yeah. She's cool.

>> Maria Esther Fernandez.

>> Let's go upstairs. They're bringing in a big beam in the next couple of weeks that will flush this out to where the walkway comes out about eight feet, even with this wall. So a lenticular backwall is right here. So this will be more exhibition space. I think we got about 7,000 square feet of exhibition space on here. We are repurposing the office suite from the original Library, which is behind this wall. There are new restrooms going in at the end of this hallway.

>> This is going to stay open so the people up here are going to be able to --

>> Yes. Yeah, there's a wall here but there is space on this side and space on this side and you can walk all the way around, just not along this particular. So you remember back in the day when you had those little pieces of plastic and you'd see the blinking eye and you turn it one way and it would wink or something, is like ripped plastic? De la Torre brothers have taken that to a new level, where they're doing incredibly detailed big multi-images --

[Inaudible]

-- past the image, it changes completely from one thing to another. That's going to be nine feet wide and two stories tall. Again, polished concrete, original brick painted out gray ceiling to mask all of the -- You've seen it in museum exhibitions where they've built out or carved out small spaces within an exhibition to create video, small video rooms. We had an opportunity with the space here where they had to start training more [inaudible] to the galleries. And so what we've done is converted that into a permanent video gallery. And so, everything from when the de la Torre brothers are here, they've got multiple film reels about their work that they can show. We can show a video of Cheech talking about his collection. Cheech is working with Robert Rodriguez with a possibility of a film program that would be housed during the Cheech that would then create films and, you know, with artists creating content [inaudible] the way they're doing and just everybody doing it with technology being the way it is [inaudible]. There just lots of opportunities for new content.

>> You're expecting here there's going to be a newer technology element?

>> Yeah. I think we're getting prepared for it. You know, what we said to the architects was we want -- Don't touch anything that you don't have to and give us the most flexible space as possible. So because we don't know what's coming next, right? We don't know where artists are going to take us, so let's make sure that we've got capacity to meet them where they're at.

>> And from looking at the rendition, it looks like just a lot of open space. So that you can -- You can move things in on a temporary basis --

>> Exactly, exactly.

>> And be flexible.

>> Exactly. So this is the original children's library for Riverside library. This is going to be [inaudible] education program. So if you're coming in to take a class, do some weekend hands-on projects, this will be the site where that happens. We similar sites around, similar spaces around.

>> So, are there -- And this is not [inaudible] on the spot, but do you know some of the names that people should be familiar with in terms of Chicano art movement? What are some of the names that you think that -- For some who's growing up and doesn't know, they'd be exposed to --

>> In Cheech's -- In Cheech's collection?

>> Yeah.

>> Yeah. Cheech's got this really wonderful range of artists. And so, everybody from some of Los four, Carlos Álvarez, John Valadez, Frank Romero, [inaudible], Patssi Valdez is in the collection. We are just about to announce that we have acquired two pieces by Judith Hernandez, who was the first woman at Los four. And so, you know, a big wide range of the artists there. Ricardo Ruiz in Texas, Cesar Martinez -- -- [inaudible], David Botello, you know? East Los Street Scrapers. Most of them are in the collection. So just depends on, you know, whose work Cheech's came across, what spoke to him, you know there are artists he's got a piece or two of. There's artists for he's got 20 or 30, where he's collected them deeply over a number of years. And I don't know if you asked Cheech, if he'll tell you who his favorite it is because I think it depends, you know? Depends on -- Cheech rotates work out of his house at any given time. And so you can always tell who he's loving by what's, you know, what's in the living room --

>> That leads me to another question and perhaps is a question for Cheech, but -- So this is going to house his collection, but assumably, he's still going to decide what goes in his house, maybe even rotate. I don't know. Is there some kind of agreement where, if he wants to exhibit something at his house from here, it'll go back to his house for a little bit --

>> Yeah. There's a whole agreement in place.

>> Agreement on being able to relocate pieces. And will some of the pieces be available at the headquarters RAM or the other spaces, or just --

>> It depends on what we're doing exhibition wise. So there certainly will be times where if it's appropriate an exhibition at RAM could have worked out of Cheech's collection, you know? If we're doing a, you know, exhibition on portraits at RAM, there will be lots of opportunity to show Cesar Martinez and Yolanda Gonzalez and, you know, several portrait artists that are in that collection over there as part of a broader

exhibition. There also may be times where the space, which is smaller over there, could be very appropriate for a more intimate exhibition that we might house it over there. So I think, you know, we're still -- Maria Esther and I are -- She's been here now for four days. We're just now getting started into, you know, these are conversations that when she gets up and running, we will be having for a long time to come. That's everything I've got to show you. Why not -- We can go back outside. If you think of any more questions, I'm happy to answer them in the parking lot. So I knew Cheech was touring his collection and I said, you know, let's at least test drive this. Let's see what happens.

>> So you're the mastermind? So the connection.

>> Well --

>> Yeah.

>> Not really. I mean -- I mean it was just kind of like let's try this and see what happens, right? And so, but what happened was that the reaction from our community exceeded anything we -- People were lined up around the block to get into the opening. City manager at the time said hey, what's Cheech going to do with his collection? I was like we just met him this morning. We don't know, right? And so four weeks later, we were meeting with Cheech with a quickly designed program that says hey, we've got this building, you know? Is there an opportunity, you know, is there a there there? And you know, so I mean, because Cheech was starting to really think about what happens to his collection? Where does it go? And starting to give it away piece by piece. He says, you know, and if you go back and I think it's on YouTube, if you go back and look at the original press conference, Cheech says I never dreamed this, right? Never dreamed the collection could stay together, there would be a place where all of this happens at once. And so -- You know, I mean, it even, I think, still amazes Cheech.

>> He gets choked up.

>> Yes. A lot. You know, when we talk about what this is -- Because, I don't -- You know, I mean, this is a -- We came to him and said, hey, all you've got to do is give us the art. We'll do the rest, you know? Right? Right.

>> Means a lot to all of you.

>> And who would have thought? I mean, it's insane that it's happening here, right? And so the big question from a lot of folks in LA is wait a minute. How -- Why Riverside? How did you do this in Riverside?

>> That's why it's needed.

>> You know? Exactly. And the other thing that is cool is that, you know, Cheech would be one of a thousand museums if it were in LA. You know, here it's going to be -- It is going to be a cultural center point. I mean, it's going to drive what happens here

artistically for a very long time. And we think, you know, all boats rise. It's going to attract a lot of attention. It's going to attract artists. It's going to attract all kinds of good things to our community in [inaudible] Southern California. But, you know, quite honestly wasn't coming to us before.

>> Right.

>> You know? And allow the artists that are working here to have some opportunities that might not have occurred otherwise. So I think, you know, this is -- It's, you know, nobody was interviewing us for art news two years ago, right? You know, we weren't in the New York Times two years ago, you know? And now, now this project is and I think it only gets better. So it's exciting.

>> So the -- We see the construction is moving along quite well and they're probably going to be done soon. When will the fun process of putting all the paintings and all the hard work in place?

>> So our plan is this. Current day where we get keys, in theory, is the 31st of January, right? Thirty first of January, 22. We anticipate it will take a month to commission the building, move staff in, understand, you know, all the various systems, how the electrical works, how the lighting systems work, how the HVAC works, how security works; get used to the building, make sure that we're comfortable with climate control and security measures in all the various spaces. We think we will move the collection over probably end of February, beginning of March. The plan is to install Cheech's show by the middle of March, install the de la Torre brothers show, end of March, beginning of April because it's a complicated exhibition. Their work is all glass or electric light boxes. Some of the pieces are quite large and multiple pieces are coming from all over the country. So it's a different install than installing the paintings. And so, the anticipation is that we will take some more time to install that exhibition. I didn't work out all the details about, you know, how does traffic flow and where does this happen, where does that happen. You know, you can plan on paper all you want but, you know, once you actually get into the building, there is always something different about the way things actually work. So --

>> It sounds exciting.

>> We're -- We're very excited.

>> What do you see as the economic impact of this Museum to this area, but also to the inland empire as a whole?

>> So John [inaudible] from the economic -- -- partnership has done an economic impact study and is -- We had that out, right? Is that out? So we can certainly get that to you. It's --

>> The initial projection before COVID -- Initial projection before COVID was like 22 million dollars of economic impact to this area. And then, of course, COVID hit with -- Including those reservations, he still maintained that we were going to raise about 23 or 23 million dollars was going to be the number. I would say now that it -- Not being an economist, my gut level of what's going on in Riverside is going to have a huge impact in the city of Riverside, in the surrounding areas. We talked about activities coming here or being presented here and people coming from all over the United States because they want to see the museum. Well, if you see the museum, look at everything else we have in the area. So -- And the fact that this is the first, it's going to be huge. And if you don't think other museums are going to want to see what -- What are they doing over there? We had -- Those of you who know Eduardo Diaz, the Director of the Latino Center at the Smithsonian, he did in Diálogo series that Unidos sponsored and he said he was the moderator. We had -- Who did we have that time?

>> The de la Torre brothers.

>> It was the de la Torre and he said I can't believe this is happening in Riverside. He said, it's not San Francisco, it's not LA. It turns out, as you know, Eduardo Diaz is from San Bernardino. He grew up in San Bernardino, if some of you may not know that. His mother was Elisa Diaz, who was on the school board in San Bernardino with my father-in-law. So when we talk about a small world, it's like, oh. So he was very charmed and [inaudible] that this was happening in an area where -- That he grew up. And so, he ended up being a sponsor of the series because he was so thrilled about it. So the economic impact is going to be huge and more than I can imagine, and more than you can imagine because you're going to be part of it.

>> And so, we have two more [inaudible] education institutions here in this area, UCR and CSUSB. And you know, we have several community colleges. How do you envision partnerships with, you know, higher education institutions and our community colleges, you know, developing between the Cheech and with those institutions?

>> Yeah. So we have -- We have solid partnerships with multiple departments at UCR. We have a really, really strong partnership with the art department at Cal State San Bernardino. We've been working with Ed Gomez. In fact, the exhibition that follows the de la Torre brothers retrospective will be the next iteration of the Mexicali biennale, which happens, as you probably know, on both sides of the border and all over California. And so we've been working with Ed and his team for the last year or so, so that that will happen here next. And so that next iteration, the de la Torre brothers have done a residency at Cal State before in the glass shop. They will go back and we're raising money right now. So if anybody's got a little cash left. You know, we are working to find that -- Or the -- The residency out there, so they can go out and work with students at Cal State in their glass shop with Katherine Gray.

>> We've also had conversations from the beginning with the [inaudible] University, the art department there, and also Cal Baptist. And so, we until we drive in -- Excuse me.

[Inaudible] college district, because we wanted to make sure that we established these partnerships with the education institutions.

>> And other thing that's going to happen, and Maria Esther is going to start working on this when she gets her feet wet, is that we anticipate that this is an education hub. That this is -- There's an educational component built into with access to the collection where scholars can come, study the collection, you know, deeper dives into various artists that are in the collection. You know, there's all kinds of opportunity there. And so development of a research center, we think happens. It's not in place at the moment but it's coming.

>> Please, a short resume on these de la Torre brothers.

>> The de la Torre Brothers. Born in Guadalajara, educated in -- Can I say Long Beach? Primarily, originally glass blowers, doing really incredible glass sculpture. They have you shown all over the world. They're about to have a piece included in the Smithsonian's collection. And then, they started doing these lenticulars a while back. And so, now they have this mix of both. So they've been in Cheech's collection for a number of years. They're in lots of big private collections around -- Around the country. And so Cheech and I started having a conversation early on when we started talking about the temporary exhibition space, about who would -- What would we put there? And we both said ah, de la Torre brothers would be cool. And so, we started having conversations with the brothers, turns out so was the Smithsonian Latino Center. And so, at that point, we came together and said what if we coproduce this? And so, shared some resources. It allows us to make it a bigger, better exhibition. It gives the Cheech some cachet, right off the bat, being aligned with the Smithsonian. Yeah, the Cheech has brought a lot of really interesting projects to us already. Currently at RAM, we have an exhibition that is out of LACMA's collection. And so, we are one of four institutions in Southern California that was funded by the Terra foundation and LACMA to mount a series of exhibitions out of LACMA's collection here. Pretty cool for us, as a small regional museum, to have that collection and have those things keep coming to us. So the Cheech, you know, again, it's that all -- [Inaudible] thing, you know? It's helping RAM rise, Riverside rise. It put us on the map in some interesting ways. So people are paying attention to us now, which is pretty cool.

>> Tell them about the founders' walk.

>> Ah, founders' walk. So, if you have donated to the Cheech 5,000 or above, you know, you go to a museum, you see this standard everybody's name on the walls that donated. And so we thought we'd do something a little different. So we've commissioned the de la Torre brothers to create a sculpture that will include all the names of all of those donors. And so, it is this five foot tall bronze human heart that it is covered in papel picado [inaudible] and then it turns into a nopal and then all of the names are etched in this. So it goes from bronze to steel, and then all the names are etched in the paddles of the nopal, which reminds, Ofy [phonetic], of -- Is it you that

were telling me? When you cross the border, there's a big nopal and people scratch their names then. Did everybody know?

>> That was [inaudible] number.

>> Right? That everybody knows this. So -- So that's coming. It's going to be just a cool place to come hang out and see amazing art, right? Some of it that's toured, some of it nobody's ever seen before, right?

>> So go online if you want more information to stay -- Stay tuned. We keep posting things.

>> [Inaudible], we're hiring for both [inaudible] and Cheech is in there.

>> Is there anything like for more information?

>> Sure. For more information, obviously I'd like you to go online at Riverside Art Museum dot org, the Cheech Center dot org, that will give you updates on what the progress is, programming and so forth. Certainly, if you would like to donate or you know somebody, this is my spiel, so I'll give you my secret. When I asked people for money and I'm not embarrassed to say this anymore. I tell you I'm going to ask for money. Enrique, I'd like to have a cup of coffee with you. I just want you to know I'm going to ask you for money. Now, it's ok if you say no but I'd like to share with you what we're doing. And if I give you the spiel, and then you say, you know, I really can't right now, which a lot of people -- You know, when you're asked for money, you know whether you can give it or not. So I cut through all that, you know? It's ok. But if you can't, you may know somebody that you can direct me to. So please, give me those names. And if you can't do that, I've won still because you have information that you will be able to share with others about what we're doing. And I don't have to make trips to go share that information. So you are a partner with us to make sure that this information goes out to as many people as possible. So that is very simple. We have a nice cup of coffee. Those that know me bring their checkbook already, but that's my spiel. So, anyway, thank you for coming. I hope that you come back. I know you're going to be excited to come. You need to make your reservations for me, well -- No, José Ángel Gutierrez. Sí. Sí. So he was here. He was here at RAM and did a book, it was a book tour presentation. And yeah, they said, oh, look who's coming. So yeah I'm glad. Nice to see you again. Thank you.

>> Thank you so much. Alright.

>> Alright. Thank you.

END – 00:44:15