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Installation of Airport's "Hands" Public Art Starts *Innovative design solution for 1200-foot garage façade will create iconic mural for San José and Silicon Valley*

San José, CA --- The hands of 54 Silicon Valley residents will greet the world from Mineta San José International Airport (SJC) on a new mural that will span 1,200 feet, stand seven stories tall, and will be visible miles away when completed this summer. [View Renderings]

Titled "Hands" and created by international artist **Christian Moeller**, the innovative façade will wrap the east side of the airport's new rental car and public parking garage currently under construction. The seven-deck, 3350-space garage is a key element of SJC's comprehensive modernization program and is located directly across the roadway from the new Terminal B, also under construction.

"We knew a garage of this magnitude would be a very visible part of the airport, and we had to make sure that it would be attractive and interesting for the entire community," said Steve Wilson, SJC Project Manager for the rental car garage. "Creating an architectural solution appropriate for this location could become very expensive, however, and we had to stay within our budget established with our rental car company partners."

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The **San José Public Art Program** commissioned Moeller in 2007 to work with the City of San José and the Airport to develop a cost-effective and creative solution for the 1200-foot long east façade of the rental car garage.

“Airports are meeting places where moments of intense emotional connection occur as people arrive and depart. During a considered public process, Christian Moeller listened to our community and captured that emotion and the importance of our airport’s relationship to our region’s people, history, and technology,” said Mary Rubin, Project Manager for the San Jose Public Art Program.

According to Moeller, “Hands are one of the most expressive parts of the human body and have facilitated communication, technology and innovation throughout time.” The image will be approximately 60 feet high, comparable to the height of the faces on Mt. Rushmore from chin to forehead.

Fifty-four Silicon Valley residents posed as models for Moeller’s image composed of hands. Participating community members represent a spectrum of the South Bay’s population, including a tamale maker and a surgeon, teachers and students, technologists and construction workers, musicians and poets, parents and children, police officers and fire fighters.

“Our hands are active in our communications. Our hands facilitate our endeavors, they interpret and distinguish and inspire. ‘Hands’ is a brilliant expression that will be open to many interpretations, but will need no translation for the incredible diversity of the visitors and residents who will engage with the artwork,” said Rubin.

Moeller worked in collaboration with the Airport’s design/build team of **Hensel Phelps Construction Company** and **Fentress Architects** to identify an art solution for the façade that would be within the budget for a conventional garage wall made of pre-cast concrete.

“The artwork is an integral part of the architecture of the garage. It affords an aesthetic enhancement within a budget that would provide a standard precast concrete façade,” said Wilson.

“Although 95 percent of the cost of the garage is paid by rental car companies and their customers, not taxpayers, we’re very proud that we are using every dollar as efficiently as possible to create a convenient structure that both works well for our customers and looks good for the public and the Airport.”

To watch the artwork installation unveil itself over the next weeks, visit the webcam at: <http://oxblue.com/pro/open/sanjoseca/handschristianmoeller>

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Carlson and Co. of San Fernando is fabricating the façade for Moeller, working over the next several weeks in a vacant SJC airplane hangar near the project site. The metal mesh façade will be composed of 107 panels, each 12 feet by 63 feet, with approximately 400,000 plastic disks hand-snapped into place to create a high-resolution pixelated image.

The garage façade is being constructed from two layers of architectural chain link mesh. The outer layer will be covered with what Moeller calls a “Bitwall” consisting of plastic dots mapped on the mesh to create the image. The inner layer will be a denser mesh, providing a background for the image formed by the dots. Each panel will be unrolled as it is hoisted into place and attached to the garage’s exterior wall.

“The only cost above the \$275.2 million rental car garage project budget was the \$100,000 that came from the San José Public Art Program. These additional funds were used to commission the artist to collaborate with the community and the project team for two years to transform an ordinary façade into a high-impact, iconic image,” said Wilson.

The fabrication of “Hands” by Carlson and Co. and its installation by Hensel Phelps are currently scheduled to be completed late August. North American Fence Co. & Supply of Oakland is installing the artwork on-site for Hensel Phelps Construction.

The new SJC garage will house all airport rental car operations conveniently across the roadway from the new Terminal B under construction. The facility will provide state-of-the-art operational efficiencies and relieve traffic on airport roadways by including washing, fueling, and light maintenance operations within the structure. The first floor of the garage also includes 350 public parking spaces and the rental car companies’ customer service center.

About the SJC Terminal Area Improvement Program

Phase 1 of SJC’s \$1.3 billion **Terminal Area Improvement Program** involves the modernization and replacement of the Airport’s terminal facilities. The overall project includes the construction of a new Terminal B that will take the place of Terminal C, originally built in 1965, along with upgrades and expansion at Terminal A to provide more spacious and comfortable waiting areas, efficient ticketing, and faster security check-in.

The program also includes a Terminal B; expanded space for more options for quality food, beverage, and retail services; and improved roadways serving the airport for more convenient access.

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A \$6 million **public art program** has been incorporated into the Airport project, with artwork located throughout the new facilities.

The modernization program is scheduled for completion by the end of next year, and Terminal B and the rental car garage are scheduled for opening summer 2010. Plans for future airport expansion in Phase 2, which would extend Terminal B and add 12 new gates, will be contingent on reaching growth triggers for the number of flights or passengers pre-established in collaboration with the airlines serving San José.

About Mineta San José International Airport

Mineta San José International Airport is a self-supporting enterprise owned and operated by the City of San José. SJC served 9.7 million passengers and handled approximately 162 million pounds of air cargo in 2008. SJC has approximately 145 flights a day on 13 domestic and international carriers to 27 nonstop destinations.

Mineta San José International Airport is located in San José, the Capital of Silicon Valley, California’s third largest city and the nation’s tenth largest city (population 1,007,000). For more Airport information, visit www.flysanjose.com, or call Airport Customer Service at (408) 501-0979.

About the San José Public Art Program

The City of San José Public Art Program seeks to build community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enhance the civic landscape. Through active community engagement, public art strives to reflect the City’s diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future.

The Public Art Program is part of the City’s Office of Cultural Affairs, a division of the Office of Economic Development. The Public Art Program was established by a 1992 municipal ordinance that provides public art through funding from City capital improvement projects and eligible private development.

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