**CHARITY EVENT SPEECH**

**FOR**

**MATT BROWAR**

Hello everyone... as most of you might already know, my name is Matt Browar and I’m the chair of Murals of La Jolla. Sustaining and guiding this program, one that enhances our community, feeds our souls, and if it’s even possible, contributes to making La Jolla even **MORE** beautiful than it already is, has been a true labor of love... one that, believe it or not, and thanks to the enthusiasm of everyone here, is celebrating our ninth year since the inception of the mural project. Over the past eight years, we’ve learned, at a visceral level, how researching, curating the selection, displaying these murals, initiating a community conversation, and supporting the exploration of our city and the wonderful imagination of a fantastic group of artists, has enriched our lives tremendously. Thanks to your encouragement and support of this program, we can all be very proud that we are in a position to actively endorse a simple yet profound truth, and that is, “**Art is everywhere**.”

To date we have installed over **THIRTY** murals and have led walking tours for over **SIX THOUSAND** people.  I’m sure the number of “unofficial” views **not** counted... on morning jogs and coffee runs... driving through the community to and from work... passing by on daily errands, would be staggering. Every expression of creativity provokes thought... and every glimpse infuses itself in our minds, hearts, and memories, encouraging conversation... this year’s contribution is a stellar example of, literally.... how art can **MOVE** us...

Alex Katz, the legendary artist who created the mural behind me, was the most challenging creator to encourage to participate in the mural project.  He is in his 90’s, works seven days a week and couldn’t be busier with multiple projects.  It took **OVER TWO YEARS** of probing, phone calls, emails, faxes, and bribes ... (**as a little joke, do you want to add**) ... and crying... maybe there was a **little** bit of crying involved... (**and wait for the laugh**) until he finally surrendered... or, as he put it in his inimitable New York style when interviewed several months ago, “I’m **NINETY ONE** and I’m **STILL CRANKING**...” (**Wait for the laugh**). I think you’ll all agree, as you look behind me, the wait for the **MAESTRO** was worth it... The end result is fantastic, it’s a a special tribute to Bill T. Jones, himself an icon in the cultural world as a renowned choreographer and pioneer of modern dance. The piece has rhythm... it captures the kinetic spirit of the subject, and with its proportions and energetic contrasts, conveys an almost cinematic movement that reflects the spirit of both Katz and Jones.  The work encourages questions... it provokes us to want to know more... about both the subject and the artist. I hope everyone here likes it as much as I do.

I want to take a moment to thank Brews and Beers for allowing us to host this year’s “party in the parking lot.” I would also like to extend a special thank you to everyone here for your continued support of **OUR** mural project over the last nine years.... that includes the Mural Makers, Wall Sponsors, Art Committee members, Athenaeum, and the artists.  This mural project is extremely special to La Jolla and San Diego and with your continued support, it will continue for many years to come. While we’ve all chosen to live, work, and play in this beautiful, diverse, and creative city, it is through the curiosity, support, and enthusiasm of its residents and neighbors that we get to participate in this wonderful, enriching, contemporary conversation. I am very proud of that.

I thank you all and now I would like to introduce Lynda Forsha.