**RETIREMENT SPEECH**

**FOR**

**MATT BROWAR**

Well, well, well....Hello everyone!! This year, 2020, has proven to be quite unique.... and while we may not know exactly what the future might bring or how the message and meaning will arrive, one thing is for sure.... it’s been colorful!! 2020 has taught us to look more deeply, to live and learn, and to appreciate beauty in life.... whether it’s to honor those people or things closest to us or to feel the energy, in the moment, from the simplest of sources found in our daily lives, I believe we have all learned to hone our awareness and “acknowledgement skills....” which is a really good thing. Let’s face it... and truth be told, we who have been integral to the blossoming and enjoyment of, Murals of La Jolla, know that already!!! We just know it **MORE** now!!

2020 also marks a milestone... it’s the tenth anniversary of Murals of La Jolla. This year also marks the point at which I have chosen to step down as Chairman of the Art Advisory Board, and to congratulate and acknowledge Patsy Marino, our new Chairperson and truly the heart and soul.... or at least the **left ventricle**... (**Wait for the laugh)** of this amazing project.

While “those in the know” have said, since time immemorial, that true, great art is never completed,” some of us, at the inception of this project, never thought it would be possible to be started!!! Ten years ago, Murals of La Jolla was a dream. It was an idea to honor the century old heritage of La Jolla as a nascent art colony.... It then became a plan... then a cause... and then an opportunity... to see what might be possible and to find the tools, the gumption, the artists, experts, and supporters that would converge and make it all happen. There were obstacles... at times it felt like we were just **up against brick walls**, and then we thought “**AHA**!!!! That’s **EXACTLY** where we should be!!!” And that’s what psychology professionals would call, “reframing.” (**Wait for the laugh**). We didn’t let those sixteen walls stop us... we let them guide us, and ten years and over **THIRTY** wonderful, colorful works of art have enhanced and inspired us. They’ve brought awareness and enjoyment. They’ve encouraged community and curiosity, they’ve connected us to our history, and they’ve brought all of us together, in conversation, over art, life, and the importance of self expression.... every phase of this project has been an expression of our creativity, resourcefulness, and faith in color, form, and art.

I realize that I too, am a work in progress. I’ve grown tremendously as a result of my participation with this project. A long time ago, I heard the expression, “I am part of all that I have met.” That applies significantly to my participation in this project. To all of the wonderful people I’ve met and worked with... from our core group... Lynda Forsha and Patsy Marino, to our art committee, and our donors, all I can say is **WOW**. Thank you! You’ve transformed an “impossible dream” into one of the highlights of my life. You’ve worked with me to turn challenge into “chiaroscuro.” Murals of La Jolla gave us all a blank canvas upon which to make our beautiful La Jolla even more visually stunning. For that, we should all be very proud.

While I may be stepping down as Chair, I am not stepping away. Remember when I said that great art is never truly complete? We can say the same of Murals of La Jolla and of this city. The first ten years was a good start. We’ve honored the greats and we’ve promoted fresh young talent. Our art committee has done an amazing job of providing a provocative and visually stunning mix of work that reminds us of the importance of feeding our souls with color and beauty. The coffee table book we published to honor the first ten years is a beautiful reminder of just how much can be achieved and enjoyed when we come together, pool our assets, and work to make this community even more beautiful than it already is.

A lot has been accomplished in the past ten years and it’s time to see what comes next. Patsy, I am thankful to have worked with you and Lynda on building the foundations that will continue to grow and enhance our way of life. I want to congratulate you as Murals of La Jolla’s Chairperson and I cannot wait to enjoy the continued conversation that is inspired by this project.

Once again, I want to express my gratitude and remind you **keep looking up**!!! ... Thank you!!