

THE MURAL *PUENTES* PROJECT AND MCCLA PRESENT:
"LA PUERTA EN EL PUENTE DEL TIEMPO"
MISSION CULTURAL CENTER MURAL RESTORATION

A benefit Exhibition with Paintings by Carlos Loarca & Betsie Miller-Kusz / May 13- June 25, 2016/ OPENING RECEPTION Friday, May 20th / 6:30pm-9:30pm / Inty Raymi Gallery

San Francisco is a city of bridges, *puentes*, all connecting the land and water to the world outside its limits. The Mission District lies in the heart of the City, reflecting the diversity, beauty and turbulence present within, particularly in recent years. Focused at the center is the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, MCCLA, where the Mural *Puentes* Project would originate. MCCLA cordially invites the community at large to "La Puerta en el Puente del Tiempo" A benefit Exhibition for *The Puentes Project: MCCLA Mural Restoration* with paintings by Carlos Loarca & Betsie Miller-Kusz, founders of the mural.

The iconic Mission Cultural Center Mural was painted in 1982 by three artists, led by Carlos Loarca, and assisted by Manuel Villamor and Betsie Miller-Kusz. The mural of 3700 square feet, covers the front and side façade of the building at 2868 Mission St, near 24th St. It was one of the first murals to feature the symbolism of the Aztec, Maya and Inca civilizations. The theme also included representations of the many artistic activities inside the center, all visually united within the huge body of an ancestral Indian figure crossing both facades. The mural is still intact, even in a time of great economic change in the Mission District. The creation of the mural was documented in *Anatomy of a Mural*, an award winning documentary film by Rick Goldsmith.

The Puentes Project would focus on the restoration of this mural, now badly deteriorated over 30 year's time. The project is visualized as a means to build contemporary bridges in the midst of great division and displacement in the Mission. The bridges would be built between past and present, between generations young and older, between the changing Mission populations. The mural restoration would be directed by the original muralists, but would include a younger generation of artists as well. The muralists believe this huge painting project would begin to heal some of the Mission District wounds, as the first mural did back in the 1980's. Puentes would seek to accomplish this with mural paint, not politics.