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Artist Shows a City Culture in Flux in an Exhibit at Supervisor David Campos' Office

Local artist Todd Berman will talk about his crowdsourced approach for revealing the awesome side of the city.

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. (June 24, 2014) – Supervisor David Campos is hosting an exhibit by local artist Todd Berman of paintings that celebrate San Francisco's creativity and community.

The exhibit, titled *City of Awesome*, captures San Francisco's bold civic character and quirky individuals through a unique crowdsourced technique in which Berman collects self-portrait drawings made by people of all ages and uses them as collage material for a series of large collaborative paintings.

The timing of Berman's show is very appropriate, coinciding with community conversations happening throughout the city in which residents seek to come to terms with the ephemeral nature of its cultural identity, while protecting that which makes San Francisco so exceptional. What defines San Francisco's character—and who gets to define it—continues to evolve under substantial, and often divisive, economic and social influences. Berman uses art as a way to help communities share a vision for San Francisco's future. That Berman is optimistic about San Francisco's potential is clear in his vibrant *City of Awesome* work.

"As we fight for the soul of the city in the midst of the affordability crisis affecting so many, Todd's art reminds us of the vibrant people and places we so deeply care about and want to preserve," said Supervisor Campos.

For the *City of Awesome* artwork series, Berman wanted to get people to think creatively about their community and their role in determining the makeup of that community. In his process, Berman interacted with people at an eclectic variety of events, including political rallies, dance flash mobs, music shows, student meetings, and neighborhood celebrations—the kinds of diverse gatherings that imbue San Francisco with its distinctive culture. Berman then asked people to draw a picture of themselves "adding to the awesomeness of San Francisco." After collecting hundreds of these self-portraits, Berman then collaged them into colorful paintings of the city that showcase San Francisco's collective awesomeness.

"Art is a powerful tool for promoting understanding between people, and can inspire individuals to join together and take action to make their community more awesome," said Berman. "My role as an artist is to give people the confidence to embrace their own creativity while transforming their individual ideas into a collaborative vision."

Select works in the *City of Awesome* project have been supported by Galileo Academy of Science & Technology, Green Festival, Mission Pie, the San Francisco Arts Commission, Sunday Streets, and the Soundwave Festival.

Berman will discuss his *City of Awesome* art project and his approach to community informed art at a reception on July 10, 2014, 4:00–7:00 p.m. at Supervisor Campos' office in City Hall. The art is currently on display at Supervisor Campos' office through August 8th, 2014

WHAT: *City of Awesome* at City Hall Art Reception and Artist Talk with Todd Berman

WHEN: Thursday, July 10, 2014, 4:00–7:00 p.m. Talk begins at 6 p.m. Free admission.

WHERE: Supervisor Campos' Office, San Francisco City Hall, Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place, Room 244, San Francisco, CA

INFORMATION: theartdontstop.com/happenings

About Supervisor David Campos

David Campos is a member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors representing San Francisco's District 9 – Bernal Heights, Portola, and the Inner Mission. As Supervisor, he has restored tens of millions dollars for neighborhood services like the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center, helped schools by preventing teacher layoffs, authored the Health Care Security Ordinance that closed a loophole that allows businesses to claw back unused money in their worker's Health Reimbursement Accounts, and led the charge for funding for Free MUNI for low-income youth.

About the artist, Todd Berman

Todd Berman is a San Francisco artist who explores the world and his community, sketchbook in hand. In his expressionistic, brightly colored artwork, Berman captures a chaotic sense of ephemeral city culture, urban landscape, and community. Both artist and educator, he recently completed a significant update to the San Francisco Arts Commission's *Where Art Lives* graffiti abatement program, designed to promote the caring for public spaces in youth through local classroom and afterschool curriculum. Find out more about Todd Berman, his art, and his unique approach to arts integration, creative education, and community engagement at www.theartdontsop.com or follow him on Twitter [@theartdontstop](https://twitter.com/theartdontstop).

