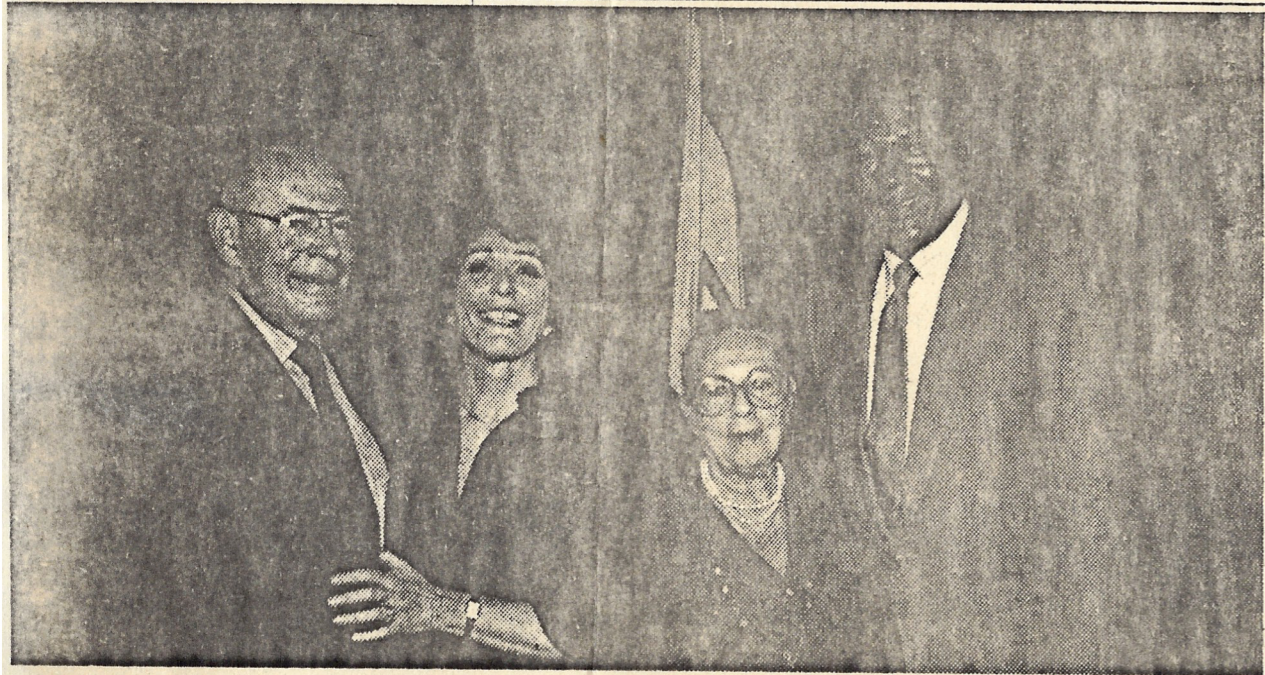


Federation Sponsors Multi-Cultural Exhibit



A CELEBRATION OF SORTS — Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley (right) joined Jewish Federation Council President Bruce I. Hochman (left) and its Art Committee leaders Beverly Schreiber (second, left) and Geraldine Schlein at the opening of "Fusion '85" exhibit of the works of 30 contemporary Los Angeles artists representing the Asian, Black, Jewish and Latino communities. Exhibit at the Jewish Community Building (6505 Wilshire Blvd.) continues through December 2. For gallery hours, call (213) 852-1234.

Local Black, Asian, Latino, Jewish Artists Featured

NAOMI PFEFFERMAN
Israel Today City Editor

Artist Julia Nee Chu was admiring Linda Vallejo's sculptures — mythical, dreaming figures that conjure up images of ancient Indian civilizations. "Why don't you come down to my studio and see some more of my work," Vallejo suggested. "It's in Little Tokyo."

"So is mine," Chu said, as the two artists exchanged cards and shook hands.

At the other end of the gallery, painter Noa Bornstein spotted her old friend, Anthony Cox, whose day-glo, graffiti-style works virtually jump at the viewer. "Hey," she said, "I really like the way you're painting!"

The artists — and patrons — of this Fusion '85 exhibit reflect the cultural mix of Los Angeles itself — Asians, blacks, Latinos, Jews. But what is even more unusual about this show is that it's being sponsored by the Jewish Federation, located at 6505 Wilshire Blvd. in Los Angeles.

Thirty-two artists and an estimated 900 viewers merged for Fusion's opening last Sunday. "What this exhibit will do, ultimately, is to provide another bridge for communities to interact with each other," said JFC spokesman Lauren Deutch. "We're making a focused attempt to establish a coalition based on culture, so we can better understand each other."

Mayor Tom Bradley and Los Angeles City Councilman Michael Woo were on hand for Fusion's Sunday festivities. "This city used to be called a cultural wasteland," Bradley told the capacity crowd. "It can no longer be described in those terms."

Federation officials say nurturing L.A.'s community art scene is a primary goal of the exhibit. "We're honored to host the Asian, black and Latino communities in this proud, vibrant demonstration of creativity," said JFC President Bruce Hochman. "The exhibit will graphically demonstrate the richness and diversity of tradition and give us a unique opportunity to share these gifts with each other."

"The idea was to get as broad a spectrum as we could," Fusion Curator Geraldine Schlein added. Schlein and other members of the JFC Art Committee have been working on the exhibit for more than six months, searching for prominent local artists through community groups such as the California Afro-American Museum, the Plaza de la Raza and the Korean Cultural Service. Fusion '85 is the first multi-cultural exhibit to be sponsored by the Federation.

Sculptor Herb Elsky says he thinks it's important for Jewish groups to show interest in other cultures. "It's a political statement," he said. "It says we're not just arrogant and isolated. This exhibit is important because it helps people become less ethnocentric and to appreciate that other people have something valid to say."

(Continued on page 8)

Federation Sponsors Multi-Cultural Exhibit

(Continued from page 1)

Koren artist Bong Tae Kim says this is the first time he's been involved in such an extensive, multi-cultural event. "It's interesting to see how different groups express contemporary thought through their work," he said.

Alonzo Davis, a muralist and community activist, agreed. "It brings people together from all

walks of life," he said. "It's a shame we don't have more of them," painter Anthony Cox added.

Like the other Jewish artists exhibiting at Fusion '85, Noa Bornstein is new to the Federation Gallery. "Every culture tries to pinpoint certain truths," she said, looking at the eclectic exhibit around her. "That's why this kind of show is wonderful,

because it gives us that opportunity for dialogue."

Bornstein is standing in front of one of her works, "Billy, Second Week Out of Hospital." It's a poignant portrait of a dying young man, a dancer with haunting blue eyes. This painting, like the body of Bornstein's work, is based on a secular theme. But Bornstein says Judaism influences her art — indirectly.

"Visual things are not tradi-

tionally part of Judaism," she says. "We don't have synagogues with lots of outside illustrations. But that can work to the artist's advantage, to realize that the essence is not in the image but what's on the inside."

Slight, birdlike Caryn Roseman is another Jewish artist exhibiting at Fusion '85. "My works aren't about Judaism," she says, pointing to drawings from her "Nest Series — swirling, electric colors on jet-black backgrounds. "But my culture is important to me," she adds. "And the struggle of that culture comes out in my work."

Linda Vallejo has participated in a number of multi-ethnic art exhibits. "I'm happiest in this kind of environment," she says. Vallejo, whose sculptures are steeped in Native American culture, says she practices an

ancient Indian religion. "Our oldest prayer is called 'All My Relations,'" she explained. "It teaches respect for all creatures, all races, all ages. That's why this kind of exhibit is important to me. It speaks to the very core of my belief."

Like Vallejo's sculptures, some of the Fusion art bears clear cultural ties. But other works are more difficult to trace. A painting entitled "Survivors of Wounded Knee," for example, is the work of Jewish artist Herschel Schusteff.

Identification is made trickier because nametags are left off art

works, so the exhibit blends together as a whole. "This fusing is a true celebration," Lauren Deutch said. "We don't have any common community holiday, so perhaps this will create one."