

Teamwork

Artist: Bill Vujevich

Completed June, 2023

Fire Station 14 / 1201 St. Thomas Aquino Road, San José, CA / Council District 1

ABOUT THE PROJECT



Teamwork, artist Bill Vujevich's mural at the entry to the equipment bays at Fire Station 14, is created in the trompe l'oeil (French for "deceives the eye") style of painting that is a type of optical illusion used to trick the eye into thinking that a flat surface, like a wall, is actually three-dimensional. This technique is often achieved through photorealistic painting, and careful use of perspective. The mural is painted on a flat wall, but is carefully created to make it appear that there is a niche in the wall. Standing in the niche are two firefighters, wearing full firefighting gear. Seated along what appears to be the front ledge of the niche are five children with a pet dog. This imagery was developed in conversations Bill Vujevich had with community members and with Fire Station 14 crew members; these conversations included firefighters sharing how they go into the schools to raise awareness about the work of the Fire Department. The artwork is intended to capture a sense of the close affinity between the serious nature of the work of the fire crews and those they protect.

This mural project was initiated by a group of District 1 community members who wanted more public art in their community. They raised funds through a Beautify San José grant, which was matched by the District 1 Council Office. The children (and dog) depicted in the artwork are from the community, and the firefighters in the artwork are two of the crew from Fire Station 14.



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Bill Vujevich is a visual artist who creates work in a broad range of styles and media. He has studied sculpture, furniture and 3D design with, faux finishing work, all with masters of those crafts, and is certified by The School of Italian Plaster. He has experience working in theater, film, and television as a set painter and prop builder. Importantly, he creates interior and exterior murals in a wide range of settings. His style of painting has rich use of colors and skillful presentation of figures and images. At his core, he considers himself a portrait and figure artist. He loves to paint people from life, and figure painting including animals.

Vujevich has many decades of experience, with works in both public and private settings across the region. One of his artworks was included in SJPA's recent "Holding the Moment" project and another in the collection at the Office of Emergency Management/Fire Department Training Center facility. He is very accomplished at the trompe l'oeil (French for "deceives the eye") style of painting that is a type of optical illusion used to trick the eye into thinking that a flat surface, like a wall, is actually three-dimensional. This technique is often achieved through photorealistic painting, and careful use of perspective. For this project, his skill at trompe l'oeil art was of particular interest as was his ability to suggest ideas of narratives in his works.

Although the selection panel did not know this during the selection process, an interesting side note about Bill Vujevich is that his father was a firefighter in SJFD for 33 years and had been stationed at Fire Station 14.

Learn more about Bill Vujevich and see his work at www.melangestudios.com.

ABOUT THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

The City of San José Public Art Program seeks to build community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enhance the civic landscape and experience. Through active community engagement, public art strives to reflect the City's diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future.

The Public Art Program is part of the City's Cultural Affairs, a division of the Office of Economic Development. The Public Art Program was established by a 1984 municipal ordinance that provides public art through funding from City capital improvement projects and eligible private development.

For further information and photos, please contact the San José Public Art Program at publicart@sanjoseca.gov.



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