

HEARTH OF THE ARTS

PCA tour offers opportunity to walk where art is created

By Valerie Takahama
Staff writer

Sculptor John Sanders is giving directions to his studio, and he says it's around the corner from Joe Jost's, adjacent to a dog and cat kennel, smack in the middle of the sprawling NuWay Linen, the business with the cute quotes on its sign.

More than landmarks are needed to find the unmarked entry to his place, so Sanders, a friendly guy, greets a first-time visitor at the curb, and provides an escort around a Cyclone-fenced yard, down an alley and through a corrugated steel door.

Once inside his studio, standing among the wooden skeletons that are works in progress, and wall pieces coated with Jackson Pollock-like splashes, he remarks, "There are a bunch of artists around here, but how are you going to know that? We don't hang out a shingle with 'artist' on it."

No shingles, no neon signs, but these ordinarily well-hidden artists are putting out the welcome mat on Sunday during Long Beach Art Expedition '87, a

tour of studios, art galleries and museums. Public sculptures, murals and architectural sites throughout the city will also be spotlighted in the event sponsored by the Public Corporation for the Arts, which last year drew some 500 people and is expected to attract twice as many viewers in its second year.

The works of some of the artists is no secret. Slater Barron's installations fashioned from household lint have been featured in People and Time magazines and in numerous art publications. Michiel Daniel's realistic watercolors sold briskly during a recent solo exhibition at the Simard & Halm Gallery on La Cienega, and are featured on the cover of the current issue of Visions, a glossy West Coast art journal. It's Daniel's transparent watercolor, "Tezcatlipoca (Smoke in the Mirror)," that adorns the tour's \$15 commemorative poster.

Others are lesser known, but all the 18 artists and their studios had to meet four criteria: membership in the PCA; logistical considerations; direct



Robert Ginn/Press-Telegram

Sunday, artist Robert Sanders, and his dog, will hang out their shingle for Long Beach Art Expedition.

access to the studios; and a broad selection of art. Still, says the PCA's Mary Sullivan, "There were so many more people, if we'd included them all we'd have to make it into a week-long marathon tour."

As it was, expedition planners extended this year's tour to five "satellite stops" in outlying areas to be visited by "the truly adventurous," and organized "Mixmasters '87," an eclectic group exhibition of work by more than 50 Long Beach-based visual

Turn To Page 9

□ **WHAT:** 1987 Long Beach Art Expedition. A city-wide tour of artists' studios, museums, galleries and public artworks. Proceeds go to Public Corporation for the Arts' Visual Arts Registry.

□ **WHEN, WHERE:** 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday. Participants will receive a map and program at the first stop, the University Art Museum, California State University/Long Beach, 1250 Bellflower Blvd., Long Beach. Post-tour celebration 6-8 p.m. at Long Beach Museum of Art.

□ **TICKETS, TOURING:** \$15 general admission, \$5 seniors and students, available at the CSULB University Art Museum until noon on day of the event. Participants are advised to drive their own vehicles, though some vans will be available.

PRESS-TELEGRAM
WEEKEND PLUS

JUNE 26, 1987

WEEKEND

Art Expedition is Sunday

From Page 3
artists at the Long Beach Art Association Gallery.

Daniel, an instructor at Long Beach City College who's lived in Long Beach since 1970, sees the expedition as a sign that the city's arts community is changing.

"Up until the past 5 to 6 years, it's been low-key. There hadn't been a lot of interaction among artists. Long Beach had inexpensive studio space available, and a lot of former graduate students from the university lived here," he says.

"Now, with the PCA and the (Long Beach Art) Museum, things have started to take off. And I think the expedition will do a lot toward educating the public as to how much art there is going on."

And to the artists who make the art, says Sanders.

"You get to know the artist, and the art is going to mean a lot more to you if you know me," he

says.

"You can go through my portfolio, you can see the progression. You can see what my work was like 20 years ago. And if I told you a little bit about it, it could even be more interesting."

Echoing that sentiment, sculptor Christopher Schumaker says, "There is no middle person involved here. You get direct contact, and you get to assess whether the artist is being sincere and able to articulate about his work."

"Hopefully, the art tour will get people excited about looking at work. If someone walks away from here, and next Sunday, instead of going to a ballgame or to the beach, goes to the museum, I think that that's a real bonus."

He cites another, less altruistic, reason for participating: "Certainly the artists are hoping for some financial rewards from this.

That's a reality. We have to eat just like everybody else does.

"One very positive aspect is that some very high quality works can be acquired for a lot less money. There is not a gallery involved. People can purchase works for very reasonable prices," he says, quoting prices ranging from \$50 to \$6,500.

Later, walking between his lead and copper columns described by an Artweek critic as "stoic talismans . . . remnants that have withstood the blast of a nuclear Armageddon," he talks about the relationship between his art and his hometown:

"For me, the major influence has been the urban landscape. A lot of my work in the past has been very architectural . . . Five years ago Long Beach had the largest redevelopment in the United States. Buildings were going up and down like time-lapsed photography, and I was influenced by seeing the skeletal structures of buildings.