

# SAN Arts Advisory Committee Meeting

March 19, 2026



**Board Members**

James Sly (Vice-Chair)  
Whitney Benzian  
Monica Montgomery Steppe  
Rafael Perez  
Esther C. Sanchez  
Steve Vaus  
Marni von Wilpert

## Airport Arts Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

**Thursday, March 19, 2026**  
**3:00 PM**

**Ex-Officio Board Members**

Ann Fox  
Col. R. Erik Herrmann  
Michele Perrault

San Diego County Regional Airport Authority  
Administration Building  
First Floor – Zenith Room  
2417 McCain Road  
San Diego, CA 92101

**President/CEO**

Atif Saeed

This Agenda contains a brief general description of each Item to be considered. If comments are made to the Committee without prior notice, or are not listed on the Agenda, no specific answers or responses should be expected at this meeting pursuant to State law.

Copies of written documentation relating to each Item of business on the Agenda are on file in the Airport Authority's office and are available for public inspection.

PLEASE COMPLETE A "REQUEST TO SPEAK" FORM PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND SUBMIT IT TO THE LIAISON OF THE COMMITTEE.

*The Authority has identified a local company to provide oral interpreter and translation services for public meetings. If you require oral interpreter or translation services, please telephone the Board Services /Authority Clerk Department with your request at (619) 400-2400 at least three (3) working days prior to the meeting.*

# Airport Arts Advisory Committee

## Meeting Agenda

Thursday, March 19, 2026

### CALL TO ORDER:

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

### ROLL CALL:

Committee Members: Bob Bolton (Ex-Officio), Elsa Cameron, Cat Chiu Phillips, Robert Gleason (Chair), Jon Graves (Ex-Officio), Clare Haggarty, Matt Rich, Adena Varner

### NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT:

Non-Agenda Public Comment is reserved for members of the public wishing to address the Committee on matters for which another opportunity to speak **is not provided on the Agenda**, and which is within the jurisdiction of the Board. Please submit a completed speaker slip to the Committee Liaison.

**Note:** Persons wishing to speak on specific Items should reserve their comments until the specific Item is taken up by the Committee.

### NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**  
RECOMMENDATION: Approve the Minutes of the December 16, 2025, Special Meeting.
- 2. ACTION – ELECT AN AAC CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR TO SERVE FOR THE 2026 CALENDAR YEAR**

### OLD BUSINESS:

- 3. CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE VISION**
- 4. STAFF UPDATES:**
  - Public Art
  - Temporary Exhibitions
  - Performing Arts
  - Community Engagement
  - Social Media and Press

### COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS:

### ADJOURNMENT:

# Airport Arts Advisory Committee

## Meeting Agenda

Thursday, March 19, 2026

**NOTE:** Members of the public wishing to address the Committee on Agenda Items must submit a speaker slip to the Liaison of the Committee. When called to speak, please state your name and city of residence for the record. Each speaker is limited to three (3) minutes per Agenda Item.

This information is available in alternative formats upon request. To request an Agenda in an alternative format, or to request a sign language or oral interpreter, or an Assistive Listening Device (ALD) for the meeting, please telephone the Authority Clerk's Office at (619) 400-2550 at least three (3) working days prior to the meeting to ensure availability.

For your convenience, the Agenda is also available to you on our website at [www.san.org](http://www.san.org).

**For those planning to attend the Board meeting, parking is available in the Airport Administration Building Parking Lot (entrance on the east side of McCain Road). Bring your ticket to the first-floor receptionist for validation.**

**Visitors can park in the lot from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

You may also reach the SDCRAA Building by using public transit via the San Diego MTS System, Route 923. For route and fare information, please call the San Diego MTS at (619) 233-3004 or 511.

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY  
SPECIAL ARTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)  
MINUTES  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025  
ZENITH CONFERENCE ROOM**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Gleason called the Special Arts Advisory Committee Meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority, Administration Building, 2417 McCain Road, San Diego, CA 92101.

**ROLL CALL:**

PRESENT:                      Committee Members:              Cat Chiu Phillips, Robert Gleason (Chair),  
Jon Graves (ex-officio), Matt Rich, Adena  
Varner

Absent:                         Committee Members:              Bob Bolton (ex-officio), Elsa Cameron,  
Clare Haggerty

ALSO PRESENT:              Michelle Brega, External Relations; Lee Kaminetz, General Counsel;  
Arelly Valenzuela, Assistant Authority Clerk II

**NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1.        APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the Minutes of the September 4, 2025, Special Meeting.

**ACTION: Moved by Committee Member Varner and seconded by Committee Member Chiu Phillips to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried unanimously noting Committee Members Cameron and Haggerty as ABSENT.**

**3.        REVIEW AND APPROVE THE 2026 PERFORMING ARTS RESIDENCY SELECTION PANEL AND DESIGNATE AN AAC LIAISON:**

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the 2026 performing arts residency selection panel and designate an AAC liaison.

Committee Member Varner will serve as the designated panel liaison, with Committee Member Rich acting as the alternate.

**ACTION: Moved by Committee Member Rich and seconded by Committee Member Varner to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried unanimously noting Committee Members Cameron and Haggerty as ABSENT.**

**2. REVIEW AND APPROVE ARTIST SELECTIONS FOR THE CONNECTOR PUBLIC ART PROJECT:**

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the artist selections for the Connector Public Art Project to President/CEO for her review and confirmation.

**ACTION: Moved by Committee Member Varner and seconded by Committee Member Chiu Phillips to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried unanimously noting Committee Members Cameron and Haggerty as ABSENT.**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**4. STAFF UPDATES:**

Tiffany Beres, Manager of the Arts; Daniel Dennert, Airport Arts Program Manager and Aleta Lee, Airport Arts Program Manager, provided a presentation on the Arts Master Plan & Goals for 2026, Public Art, Temporary Exhibitions, Performing Arts, Community Engagement, Social Media and Press.

**COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS:**

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE ARTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY THIS 19<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MARCH 2026.

**ATTEST:**

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ARELY VALENZUELA  
ASSISTANT AUTHORITY CLERK II

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

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LEE KAMINETZ  
GENERAL COUNSEL



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## ITEM 2 – ACTION:

Elect an AAC Chair and  
Vice-Chair to Serve for the  
2026 Calendar Year





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## ITEM 3:

# Customer Experience Vision



# Top 5 Airport in North America

Improve Overall Satisfaction with SAN by 10% (from 4.23 to 4.65)



# Overall Performance (T2)



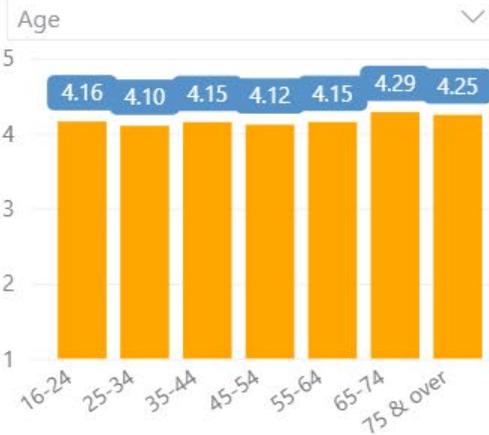
Category	Score	Variation
Arrival at the Airport	4.07	0.02 ↑
Check-in	4.41	0.05 ↑
Security Screening	4.18	0.01 ↑
Border/Passport Control	4.31	-0.04 ↓
Shopping/Dining	3.45	0.02 ↑
Gate Areas	3.86	-0.02 ↓
Throughout the Airport	4.04	0.0 ↑
Airport Atmosphere	4.02	0.0 ↓

## Trend Over Time

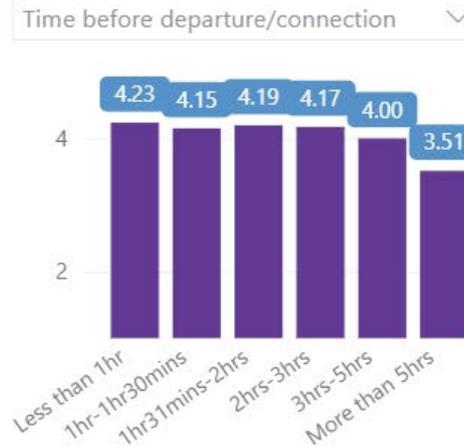


## Analysis by Segment

### Demographics



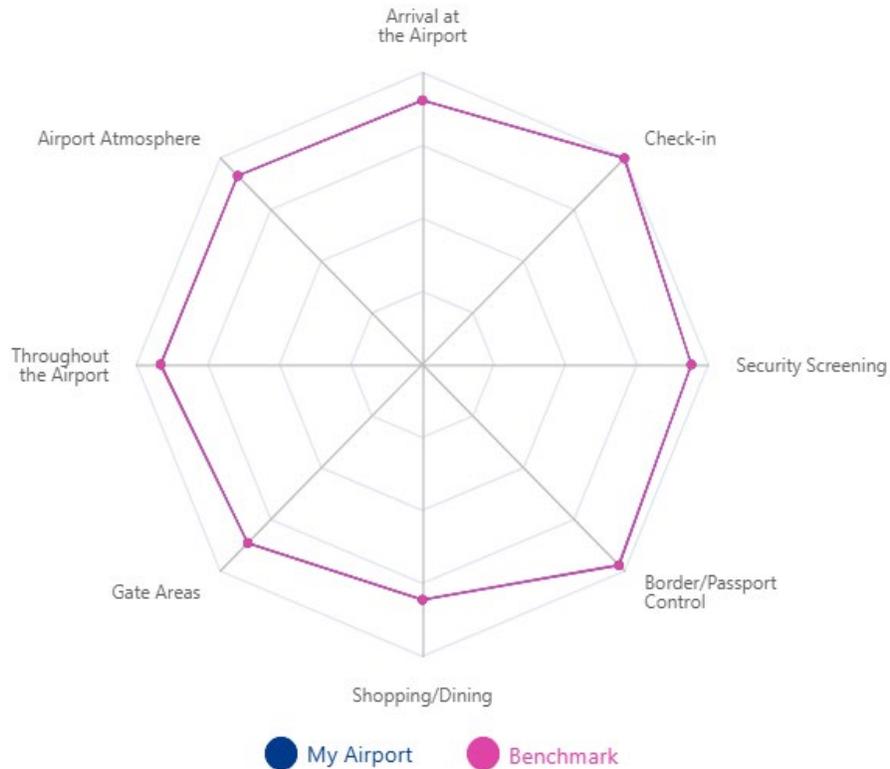
### Travel Behavior



### Travel Profile



# Overall Performance (T2)



# 2025-2030 Roadmap



# Customer Experience at SAN



## Keys to Success

- Alignment with Airports Council International Airport Service Quality (ASQ) benchmarks
- Strong reflection of San Diego
- Experiences designed for emotional differentiation
- Strategic integration of art into the passenger journey
- Local-first programming



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## ITEM 4:

# Staff Updates





# Public Art

# Sea Rhythms is Live!

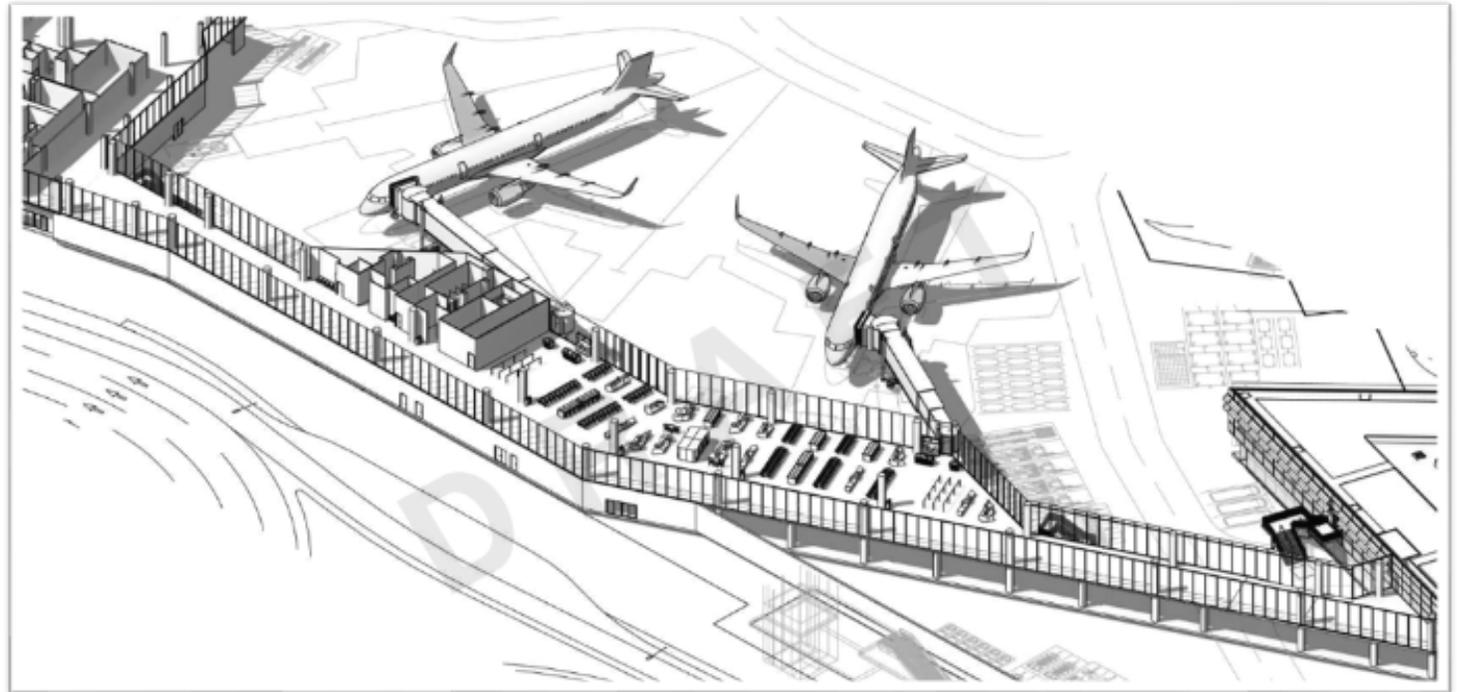


Sea Rhythms (1998) by Terry Thornsley

# T2E Connector Art Opportunities Update



- Procurement Team is currently working on contracts with the selected artists, De La Torres Brothers and Julie Chang.
- Once artists are under contract, they will begin working with the ADC and Architect Team to understand the developing design of the Connector Project.
- Conceptual Proposals are anticipated to be submitted in the spring, with AAC review potentially occurring later this summer.



# Public Art on Terminal Directories



## Directory

SAN3:23 PM Scan for mobile map

Terminal 2 Parking Plaza

YOU

International Arrivals

Art

Terminal: **1** **2** All

Sort By: Nearest

**WATER AND SUN**  
Near Gate 39 | 3 min

This dramatic fountain features two main elements: a gleaming gold sphere suspended above.

**LIGHT WAVES**  
Corridor walls between Terminal 2 East and West | 5 min

Spanning the first and second floor corridors, this luminous installation features panes of multicolored glass.

**SAN DIEGO: GATEWAY OF THE AMERICAS**  
Near Gate 35 | 5 min

These nine vibrant ceremonial yarn paintings reflect the artistic traditions of the indigenous peoples.

**SEA RHYTHMS**  
Terminal 2 West Central Rotunda | 5 min

This fountain celebrates San Diego's rich marine environment and iconic coastal features. A towering bronze.

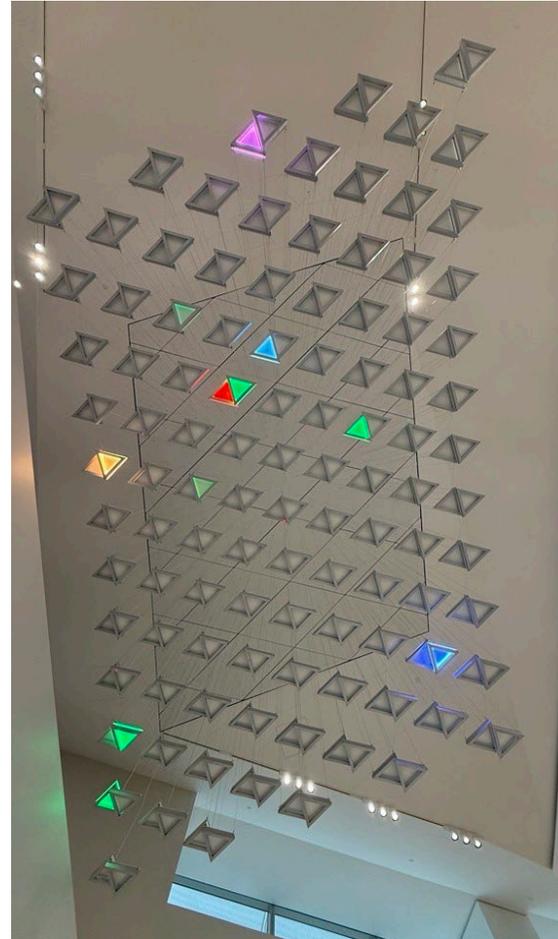
**PAPER VORTEX**  
Terminal 2 West seating area | 4 min

Composed of glass panes in varying translucent colors, this installation depicts a piece of paper dancing on.

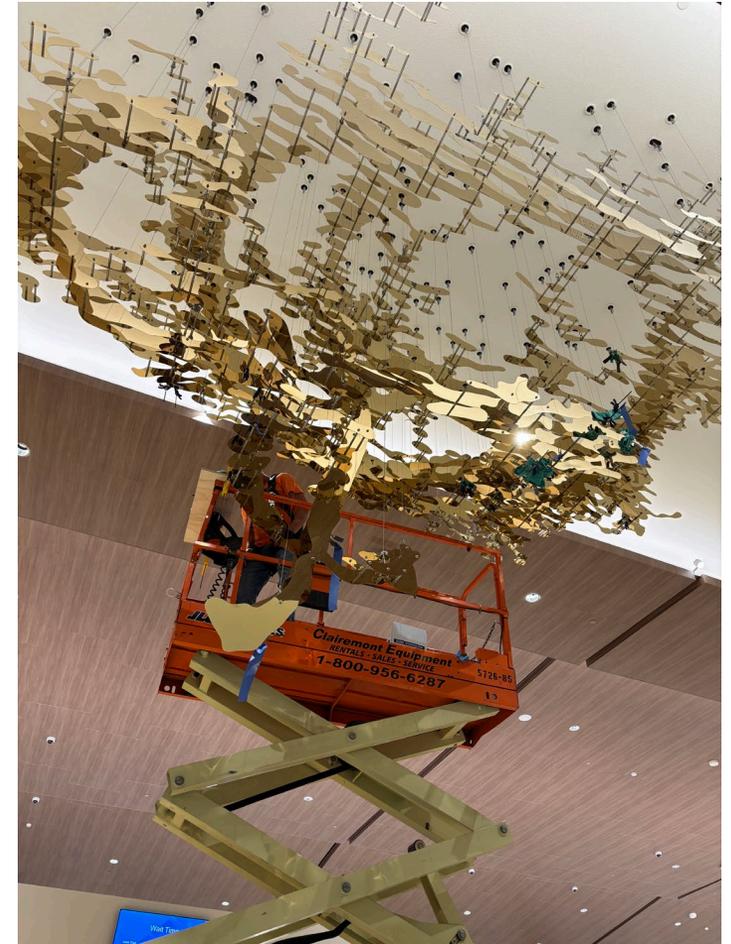
# Update on *RISE*, *Vessel of Light*, *Torrey Pines*



*RISE* by Matthew Mazzotta



*Vessel of Light* by Erwin Redl

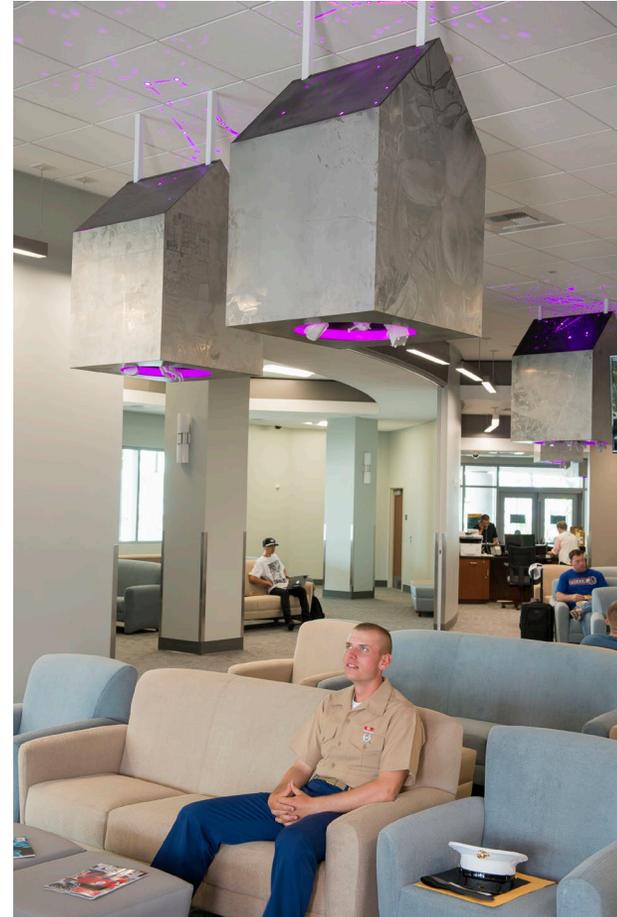


*Torrey Pines* by Nova Jiang

# Conservation initiatives for FY2026



*The Journey* (2013) by Jim Campbell



Final deinstallation of *Connectocracy* (2013) by coLAB Studio

# Temporary Exhibitions



# Snapshot San Diego



- We have been partnering closely with our colleagues in Airport Design and Construction, the City of San Diego, and Safety to outline the next steps toward installation.
- Re-evaluation of sites has identified additional post-security locations that increase visibility, while requiring solutions to technical challenges such as electricity.
- Currently aiming toward a July 2026 installation, exhibitors' exhibition terms will also extend.



# Green Room



- Installed on February 5, 2026, this lounge space has become an instant success.
- Space creates calm environment for passengers and has seen constant traffic and usage.



\*The Green Room will convert to Concessions space in the future.

# NEW PAINT



- **All 6 contemporary artists** have completed site visits of the Airport.
- **Currently conducting studio visits** and testing mock-ups.
- Looking toward installation late June or early July.



# Performing Arts



# Ongoing Concerts Series



Celebrated local performer Máirtín de Cógáin to play Irish music for St. Patrick's Day

- 59 concerts since meeting in December
  - Does not include performing arts residency
- Special programming:
  - Holiday carolers
  - Holiday horns
  - Traditional Irish storytelling for St. Patrick's Day

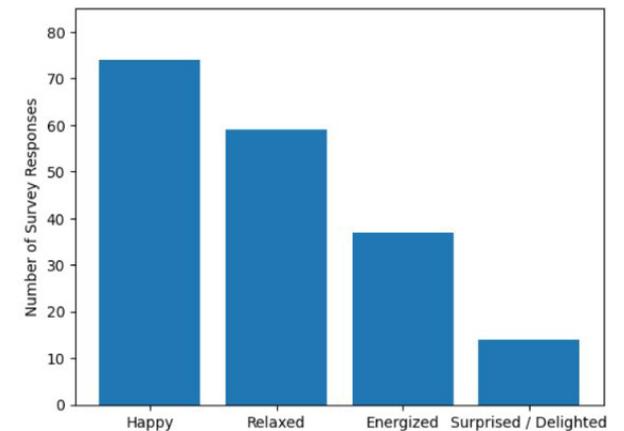
# Performing Arts – Survey



- 126 passenger surveys collected
  - "You definitely made me choose this airport again"
  - "So glad the terminal has added this feature!"
  - "Great addition! its needed in terminal 2 as well"
  - "This is the coolest installation I have seen San Diego Airport do."

## At-a-Glance Metrics

- **Total Survey Responses:** 85
- **Terminal Locations:** Primarily Terminal 1 Heritage Stage
- **Emotional Impact:** ~90%+ of respondents selected at least one positive emotion



## Key Takeaways

- Passenger feedback suggests performances help alleviate the stress of transit, aligning directly with SAN's Customer Experience goals.
- Live music continues to deliver a consistently positive emotional impact for travelers, with "happy" and "relaxed" as the dominant responses.

# Performing Arts – Veteran Fellowship

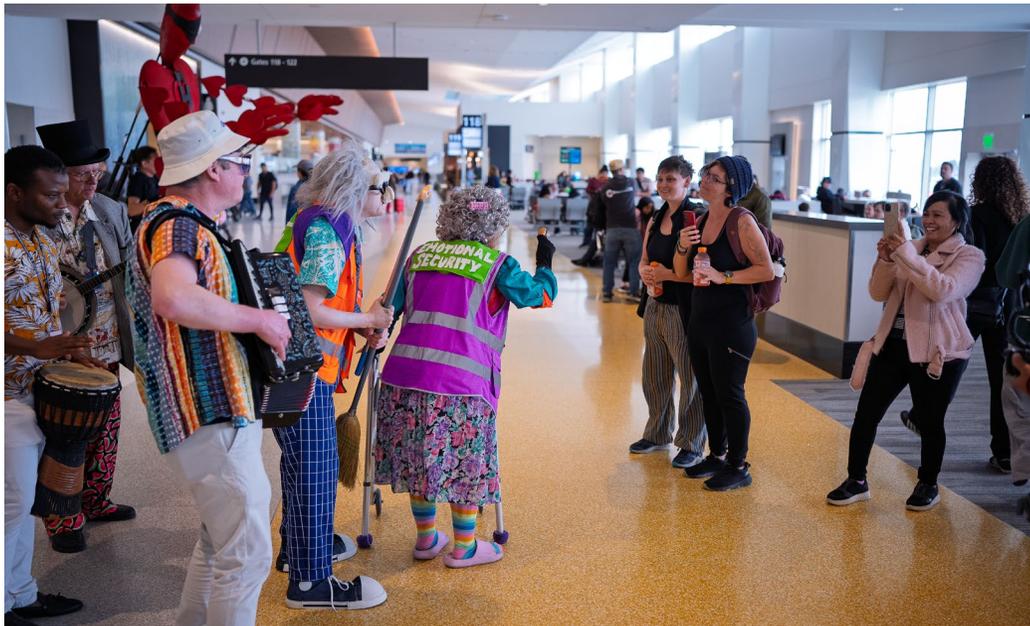
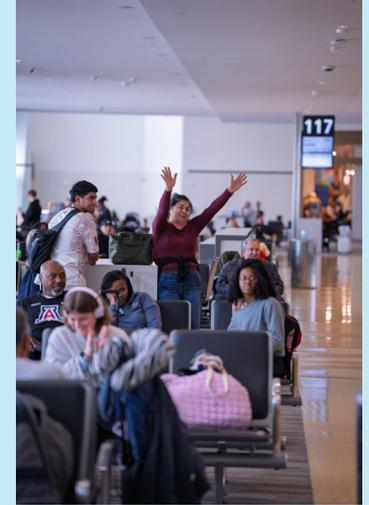


- Launched On Call Musicians pilot program
  - Open call, auditions and contracting
  - 11 contracted artists
  - 141 hours (and counting) of live performance
- Implemented passenger feedback survey
- Player Piano in T2 Sunset Cove
  - 13 days programmed
  - Remote programming

# Performing Arts Residency – Fern Street Circus



- 7 types of bi-weekly activations from October 2025 – January 2026
- Approximately 4,000 direct participants and 15,000 impacted viewers



# Performing Arts Residency – A Step Beyond



- Began their onsite residency on January 29, 2026.
- ASB is collaborating with passengers and their community in Escondido to create 5 dances that reflect the universality of the migration experience.
- Community workshop to gather stories to be integrated in soundtrack on March 6.
- Performances currently planned for April 16 and 23, and May 7 and 14.



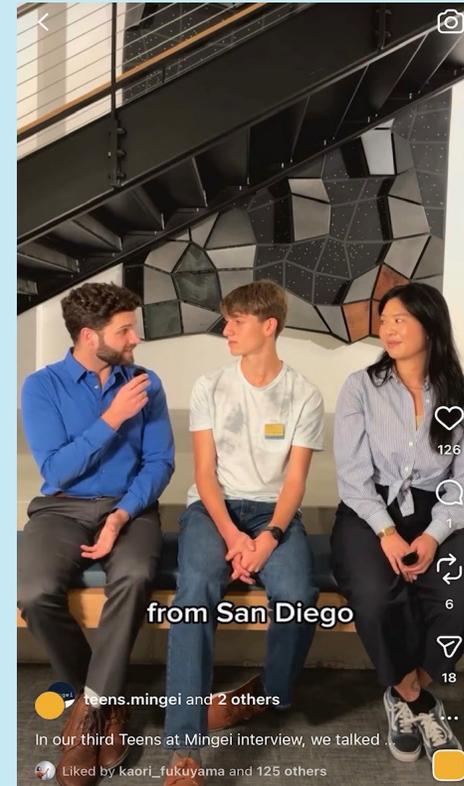
# Community Engagement



# Teens at Mingei Visit SAN



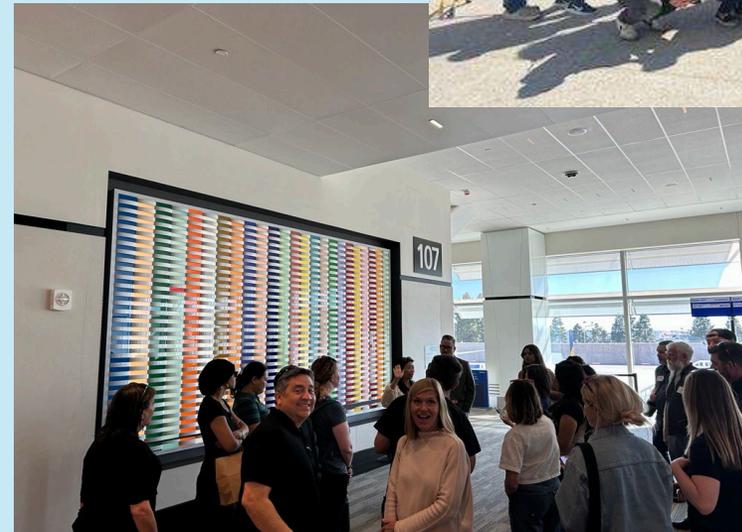
- Hosted 14 students from the Teens at Mingei internship program on January 21, 2026.
- Event included a brief presentation of the Airport Arts Program and our professional journey in art careers, a mini public art tour, and concluded with a recorded interview by the Teens.
- The short interview can be found Instagram with @teens.mingei and @sandiegoairport.



# VAPA Tour



- Organized by Cat Chiu, VAPA Resource Teacher for San Diego Unified, 25 arts teachers visited the new Terminal on Feb 25, 2026.
- Explored ways to connect AI tools, visual literacy, and public art in classroom practice.
- Tiffany led a walking tour, highlighting new artworks and discussing the arts program and exhibition opportunities



# Social Media & Press



  sandiegoairport  
Thu 1/15/2026 1:57 pm PST

Today we said goodbye to “Abuelita” and “Gerold” with @fernstreetcircus. These past months they’ve been hard at work checking...



Views 14,039

...  

**Fern Street Circus Farewell Post**  
**8/8/2025**  
 27,375 views  
 163 likes  
 10 shares

  sandiegoairport  
Thu 2/12/2026 10:14 am PST

SAN welcomes @a.step.beyond, a San Diego-based creative youth development organization, as our newest Performing Arts...



Views 9,482

...  

**A Step Beyond Welcome Post**  
**2/12/2026**  
 9,482 views  
 134 likes  
 12 shares

  San Diego International Ai...  
Fri 2/20/2026 11:53 am PST

Welcome to the new Green Room in Terminal 1 — named after and inspired by the barrel of a breaking wave and the backstage space wher...



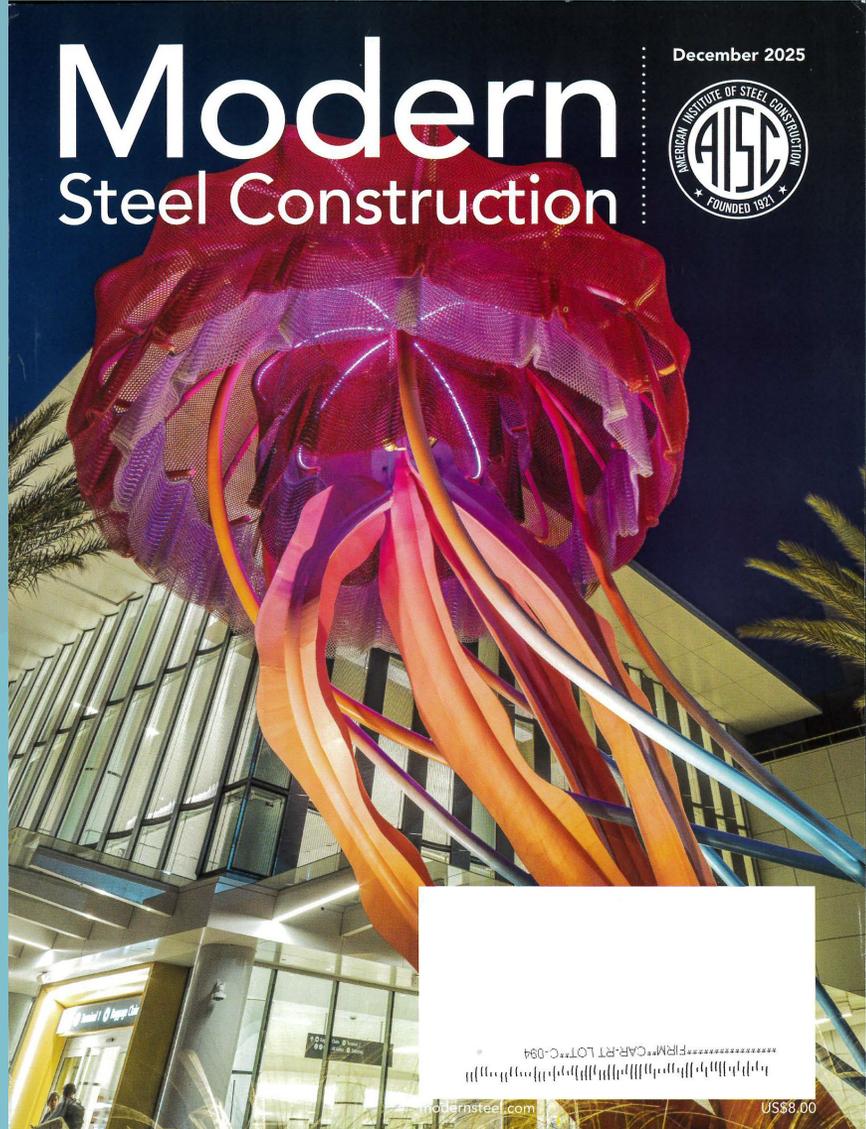
Views 6,395

...  

**New T1 Green Room**  
**2/20/2026**  
 6,395 views  
 51 likes

# Modern Steel Construction

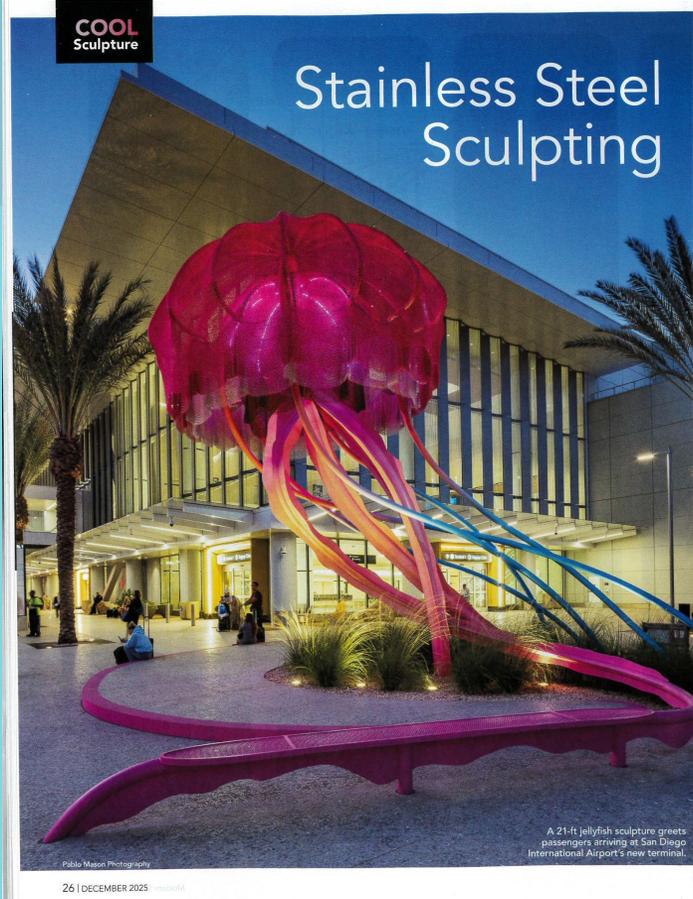
December 2025



modernsteel.com US\$8.00

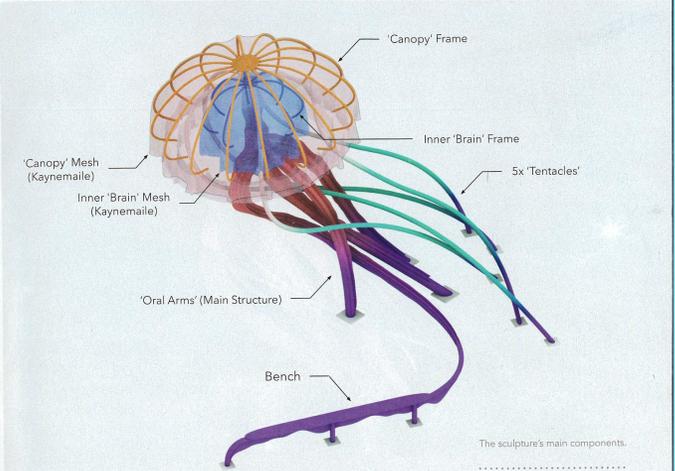
COOL Sculpture

## Stainless Steel Sculpting



A 21-ft jellyfish sculpture greets passengers arriving at San Diego International Airport's new terminal.

26 | DECEMBER 2025



**THE NEW TERMINAL 1** at San Diego International Airport is also an unofficial art museum. The first of its five commissioned art pieces greets travelers before they're even dropped off and uses steel to create an ode to a pair of San Diego nature elements.

RISE, a 21-ft-tall jellyfish sculpture at the new terminal's curbside plaza, is inspired by the purple striped jellyfish (*Chrysaora colorata*) found off San Diego's coast and the city's sunsets. It is artist Matthew Mazzota's second airport sculpture, following his pink flamingo at Tampa International Airport. Mazzota worked with longtime engineering partner Bryan Starr, SE, PE of Esaintino Engineering Consultants (part of TLC Engineering Solutions) to design it with painted stainless steel and polycarbonate chainmail.

Mazzota derived the concept for RISE from a prior project in Boise, Idaho, the first project that Starr engineered for him. That sculpture, GENTLE BREEZE, is a pink tree on a hill with three swinging benches connected to its limbs. The tree canopy has 743 individual "leaves" that sway in the wind. When Mazzota was standing next to the 60-ft crane arm lifting the full canopy into place, he saw a jellyfish head in the canopy for a fleeting moment and jotted it down in his notebook.

Five years later, Mazzota consulted that notebook when he identified the purple striped jellyfish for the San Diego project design. He envisioned a similar concept to GENTLE BREEZE, but leaning. Starr suggested the idea of a leaning tripod representing the jellyfish with multiple tentacles, where the front leg would be in compression and the back two legs would be in tension.

Among the first design tasks was selecting the best three tentacles to act as the primary support legs. It seemed simple to choose the three closest to the front, but the tentacles' curve made the selection less straightforward. It wasn't obvious which tentacles would be most in compression and tension where they crossed. Starr and Mazzota worked through several iterations of curving geometry of the tentacles, working to combine the structural tripod with the artistic aesthetic. They eventually settled on the three primary supports, calling them "oral arms." All others became non-load-bearing "tentacles."

RISE doubles as a performance space and shade structure. One of the non-load-bearing legs curves to support a bench at the end that's in the shade during direct sunlight hours. At the top of the oral arms, the central mast continues up to support two canopies at the top: the inner "brain" canopy and the outer canopy that is most visible. Both canopies are covered in polycarbonate chainmail (Kaynemaile), and the sculpture is supported by deep foundations.

Mazzota has used fiberglass, dichroic glass, painted mild, galvanized and stainless steel, aluminum, and Kaynemaile in prior sculptures. Steel, though, is found in almost all his work. In RISE, steel simultaneously provides the structure and the final form. Material selection was critical for the curving oral arms acting as the primary support tripod. The oral arms needed to be slender, curved to match the artistic shape of the piece, and strong enough to support the weight of the canopy. Starr immediately knew steel was the answer.

# Fern Street Circus on Univision & KUSI



- On December 22, 2025, Univision, the primary Spanish-language television station serving San Diego, invited "Abuelita" Catalina Paz to discuss her clowning experiences at SAN.
- On January 15, 2026, KUSI Fox 5 featured news coverage of Fern Street in the terminals.



**Thank you!**



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