

THE *Hollywood* REPORTER

Hollywood Set to Converge in Venice This Weekend for Annual Art Walk

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With the work of more than 250 contemporary artists — including John Baldessari and Ed Ruscha — up for auction, the annual fundraiser hopes to push past the seven-figure threshold for the first time in its 39-year history.

This weekend marks the 39th edition of the Venice Family Clinic’s Art Walk & Auctions, and the seventh in which artist and Incubus lead singer Brandon Boyd has participated. This year, Boyd, who grew up in Calabasas, California, and until recently was a resident of Venice, will have one of his paintings on display and part of the auction.

“I grew up with the Art Walk and I have always been so proud that it existed,” says Boyd. “I am so flattered and heartened to be a part of it.”

Kicking off at noon on Sunday at Google’s Binocular Building on Main Street, the event is free and provides the

general public with access to the work of more than 250 contemporary artists, including such Los Angeles icons as John Baldessari, Ed Ruscha and Alison Saar, as well as emerging local talent including Jens Lucking, Austyn Weiner and Nick Darmstadter. Last year's Art Walk raised \$800,000, all of which went to supporting the Venice Family Clinic's mission of providing quality health care to those in need. A silent auction takes place throughout the afternoon, and for \$50 attendees can get tours of various artists' studios. There are also several interactive workshops. Past attendees of the event include Claire Danes, Chuck Lorre, Neil Baer, Lisa Edelstein and Jeff Nathanson, among others.

For Boyd, who moved out of Venice two years ago, it is a chance to reflect on the changes that he bore witness to in the beachside community when he lived first by the boardwalk on Navy Street and then later off of Abbot Kinney Boulevard. Venice, long famed as an artists' enclave, is now home to some of the most expensive real estate in the city — and has been, in many ways, ground zero in L.A.'s sticky debate over gentrification.



Sam Durant's *"Everyone Deserves Healthcare"*

"I can relate to both sides of the story, so my opinion is nuanced, because I didn't grow up with money and the neighborhood I grew up in was in the hills, which was more of a horse community. So there weren't a lot of hip coffee shops or art galleries there," says Boyd. "So many of my friends were painters and musicians and I watched them get nudged out. But because of my music career I could afford to stay. So it wasn't affecting me

in the same way. I can't really land on either side of the argument."

Artists and the gallery ecosystem have also become flashpoints in the debate over soaring housing costs. In the working-class neighborhood of Boyle Heights just east of downtown L.A., activists have been engaged in a battle demanding that art galleries move out of their neighborhood. In Venice, much of the local ire has been directed toward tech companies like Snapchat and Google, which moved to the area in 2011.



Artist and musician Brandon Boyd

"There is an upside and a very visible downside. Some elements of what [Google] did, to me, were off-putting, like the rebranding of Venice Beach to Silicon Beach. I remember thinking, 'You are doing this so wrong and there is going to be the craziest pushback,'" says Boyd. "So that side is annoying, but they are doing some of the right things, and somebody at Google had the right idea to partner with the Art Walk." In addition, he notes with a laugh, "I definitely appreciate the caliber of restaurants coming into Venice."