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City of San Diego Seeks to Document Stories of Immigrants and Refugees

PHOTOGRAPHER JOHN RAYMOND MIRELES SELECTED FOR CITY'S FIRST MUNICIPAL PHOTO FELLOWSHIP

SAN DIEGO – As part of an effort to explore civic and societal issues through photography, the City of San Diego has announced the selection of artist John Raymond Mireles for the City's first-ever photo fellowship program, Exposure. Mireles will work alongside the Office of Immigrant Affairs and Arts and Culture staff to develop a project that shares the stories and lives of immigrants and refugees living in San Diego.

Mireles' fellowship, supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, runs through the fall of 2024. It includes implementing a temporary project and creating a body of photographic artwork for the City's Civic Art Collection. His work will also highlight the stories of the programs and policies behind the City's [Welcoming San Diego](#) initiative.

Mireles was selected as the Exposure Photo Fellow based on his artistic excellence, education and training as an artist, past involvement in photography-related projects, and various other factors. Mireles' work has appeared extensively across the U.S., including New York, Oklahoma and Alaska. His most recent solo exhibition, Disestablishment, was shown at the San Diego Museum of Art.

"John Raymond Mireles will bring his artistic practice and his skills in photography, community engagement and visual storytelling to the Exposure Fellowship, said Christine E. Jones, Chief of Civic Art Strategies, Arts and Culture. "In launching this new fellowship, we are excited to welcome Mireles and his numerous artistic talents and commitment to illuminating the Welcoming San Diego initiative and amplifying the stories of San Diego immigrants and refugees through the medium of photography."

[Exposure](#) is a municipal photo fellowship program aimed at showcasing the City's pressing civic and social issues through photography. It's intended to foster inclusive dialogue, community connection and broader access to arts and culture.

During his fellowship, Mireles will immerse himself in research and engage with the Office of Immigrant Affairs. He will learn about the ongoing activities of Welcoming San Diego, which ensures the City of San Diego is addressing the needs of our diverse immigrant and refugee communities, and developing resources and inclusive policies for immigrants in San Diego. Mireles will seek guidance from relevant stakeholders and advisors on effectively engaging and building trust with immigrant and host communities.

"The City is committed to achieving equality for all its residents, and as a part of that mission, it fosters a thriving, inclusive and secure binational region that embraces individuals from around the world, enabling all San Diegans to prosper," said Jonathon Glus, Executive Director of Arts and Culture. "Arts and Culture takes great pride in contributing to these endeavors and collaborating with our exceptional partners at the Office of Immigrant Affairs on a fellowship that can address immigrant-related issues and captures the dynamic cultural and geographical essence of San Diego as a US/Mexico border City, all through the lens of arts and culture."

The City of San Diego advances and drives an equitable and inclusive creative economy and cultural ecosystem by investing in the work of artists and creatives and the institutions and systems that amplify creative work and experiences. To learn more, visit sandiego.gov/arts-culture.

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