

## 01SJ art festival zeroes in on downtown San Jose

**BY CATHY WESELBY**

San Jose will once again be in the international spotlight as it hosts the second biennial 01SJ Global Festival of Art on the Edge June 4-8.

The five-day festival will feature multimedia exhibitions, films, concerts and performances by 100 artists throughout sites in downtown San Jose.

01SJ founder and Chairwoman Andrea Cunningham said the festival was designed to bring together artists and technology.

"It's the magical interaction of art and technology, and there's nothing like this in the U.S.," Cunningham said. "We think Silicon Valley is the best place for the epicenter of art and technology."

Team San Jose Chief Executive Officer Dan Fenton said that 01SJ has the potential for branding San Jose as a tourist destination.

"We believe 01SJ will create a 'there there' as far as the intersection of art and technology," Fenton said. "The challenge is describing what it is to the layperson, because not everyone immediately understands what the intersection of art and technology means."

The city of San Jose estimated that the 2006 01SJ event had an economic impact of \$9 million, compared with \$23 million for the Grand Prix. The number of visitors was between 20,000 and 25,000, and Fenton said that figure should climb to 30,000 in 2008.

Fenton said that because the event is still in its infancy, it's difficult to predict how it will affect hotel occupancy.

"We think it will drive hotel room nights," Fenton said. "We're hoping to appeal to international art enthusiasts."

When the festival premiered in 2006, it was criticized as being scattered and difficult to navigate from one event to another.

01SJ creative director Steve Dietz said that he's making adjustments based on lessons learned.

"We did a lot of debriefing, and the criticisms were consistent," Dietz said. "Information was one of the issues."

Dietz said he plans to have better signage and clearer marketing so participants will have a better idea what's happening where at what time.



DENNIS G. HENDRICKS

**Elizabeth Lewis emerges from the Ice Queen, which served as the entrance to the preview gala and artist reception at Orchard Commercial on North First Street in San Jose for the 01SJ Global Festival of Art on the Edge.**

He'll also be focusing on fewer projects that are bigger in scale, he said.

"This has been my mantra: If we're going to do something, we're going to be really clear and make everything large," Dietz said.

The City Hall rotunda will again be a popular gathering place for nighttime viewing with Australian artist Craig Walsh projecting images onto the dome in a trompe l'oeil.

At Discovery Meadow, spectators can observe "Homourboros," a 24-foot tall spinning zoetrope with an ape climbing a tree and transforming into a human.

In front of the San Jose Museum of Art, French architect Michael Herrman will create an illuminated work of architecture within the circle of palms.

Cunningham said that funding for the \$2 million event comes from sponsors, individual donors and foundation grants. The largest spon-

sors are the city of San Jose, Adobe Systems Inc. and Cisco Systems Inc.

Cisco Community Relations Officer Sandra Wheatly said the company will also provide digital signage at multiple locations throughout the festival that help direct participants to events. Artworks created by homeless youth at the Bill Wilson Center will be displayed on the signs.

Adobe Director of Corporate Social Responsibility Michelle Mann said sponsorship is a natural affiliation for the software company.

"We're very excited because it's where Adobe lives, the intersection of art and technology, and it's an exciting event for the community," Mann said.

**CATHY WESELBY** can be reached at (408) 299-1821 or [cweselby@bizjournals.com](mailto:cweselby@bizjournals.com).