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Gayle Garner Roski Exhibition Celebrates Life in the Wake of Her Battle with ALS



July 12, 2021 (Santa Ana, California) – Opening in just two weeks on July 24, *The Gift of Los Angeles: Memories in Watercolor* by Gayle Garner Roski features over a hundred watercolors by the LA based artist, with a spotlight on the series *Los Angeles Millennium 2000-2020*: a celebration of her experiences growing up and living in the City of Angels and larger SoCal region. This celebration of life was a labor of love for the artist, who completed the project while battling amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), the rare neurodegenerative disease also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease. Her death in October of 2020 was an immeasurable loss to those who knew and loved her but is softened by the wonderful legacy that she leaves behind in her paintings.

In her own words, Gayle explained “I titled this series *The Gift of Los Angeles* because creating these works of everything that the city has to offer has been a gift. It has been a gift to live the life that I have. It has been a gift to create paintings that contribute to the visual history of the city I love. And, most important, it is a gift to share these gifts from my life with you.”

“I am a happy painter. All of my work, from the very beginning, has always been about celebration. Celebration of life. Celebration of a person. Celebration of a moment.” – Gayle Garner Roski

Building a Legacy

Although Gayle attended the University of Southern California as a fine art student early in life (in a program that was later renamed the USC Gayle Garner Roski School of Art and Design), it wasn’t until her

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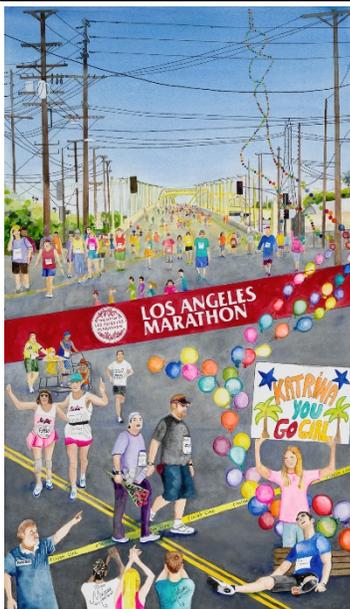
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children had grown and left home in the '90s that she truly began her career as an artist. Gayle went on to experiment in various mediums until she found her true love, watercolors, through which she invites viewers to embrace a shared history of LA in vivid vignettes.

Gayle explained, "Each of my paintings tells a story, creating a narrative that enables me to reach out and connect with others. I firmly believe that through the sharing of stories – whether via visual forms or the written word – we see the parallels in each other's lives and recognize that our similarities outweigh our differences."

While curated by Jean Stern, Director Emeritus of The Irvine Museum and a dear friend of Gayle's, the exhibition is narrated by Gayle Garner Roski, with direct quotes from the artist detailing each memory on display. In the first gallery, visitors are invited by Jean to enter the "peaceful, inviting, and uncomplicated" world she captured in painting the "great places and events that are the social fabric of Los Angeles."

Memories in Watercolors



Completed over the course of 20 years, the series *Los Angeles Millennium 2000-2020* spotlights Gayle's memories from childhood to her passing in 2020 at iconic Los Angeles locales, from Union Station to the Hollywood Bowl, LA Central Library to Olvera Street, and even the LA Marathon.

*"The Los Angeles Marathon is symbolic of Los Angeles in so many ways. First held in 1986 following the success of the 1984 Summer Olympic Games, it celebrates the enduring spirit of Angelenos to dream big, persevere and embrace our multi-cultural heritage. Ed and I have both participated in the marathon. Ed ran the course in 1991, and **I ran one year later ... after I had climbed Mount Kilimanjaro at age 50.**"*

– Gayle Garner Roski

Battling ALS

Gayle was suffering from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) as she finalized the paintings in this exhibition. The Roski family is extremely grateful for the support and advice they received from Augie's Quest to Cure ALS (augiesquest.org) in helping find exceptional doctors for Gayle's care. Together with the Bowers Museum, Gayle's family asks that visitors please consider donating to help Augie's Quest succeed in its ultimate goal of halting, reversing and curing this devastating disease, so others do not have to endure the pain that Gayle did.

Events and Publication

Accompanying this exhibition is Gayle's final publication, *The Gift of Los Angeles*. Hardcover; 96 pages, 11"W x 18"H x 1"D. Shop the book at shop.bowers.org.

A robust schedule of events will be held in conjunction with this exhibition, including an exclusive Members-Only preview, Opening Day Curator's Lecture, and more. [Click here](#) for the full calendar. #roskiatbowers

The Gift of Los Angeles: Memories in Watercolor by Gayle Garner Roski is organized by the Bowers Museum and curated by Jean Stern. Artworks are on loan from the Roski Family.

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