

ECF South LA Art Center Annual Showcase Expands Recognition for Artists With Developmental Disabilities

ECF's annual art showcase and sale reflect a lifespan approach to visibility, economic participation, and opportunity throughout adulthood.

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, September 22, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Artists with developmental disabilities welcomed the public into [ECF's](#) South LA Art Center on Saturday for the organization's annual South LA Art Sale, bringing original work out of the studio and directly into the community.

Hosted by Exceptional Children's Foundation (ECF) at its South Los Angeles studio, the September 19 event featured paintings, ceramics, drawings, prints, digital art, animation, and other original work created by artists participating in ECF's Art Centers program. The sale also reflected a larger priority for ECF: ensuring that opportunity, visibility and community participation continue well into adulthood.

"Too often, the conversation around disability services is concentrated on childhood, while the need for opportunity, purpose and community continues for a lifetime," said Veronica Arteaga, President and CEO of Exceptional Children's Foundation. "Our work does not stop at a certain age or milestone. Whether someone is pursuing employment, developing as an artist, building greater independence or finding new ways to participate in the community, the goal is the same: to create pathways that recognize the whole person and continue throughout their life."

From Studio Practice to Public Recognition

[ECF Art](#) Centers have supported adults with developmental disabilities in developing their artistic



Visitors explore original artwork during ECF Art Centers' annual South LA Art Showcase & Sale on September 19 in Los Angeles.

practice since 1968. Across four Los Angeles County studios, artists work in multiple disciplines with individualized instruction, studio resources, and opportunities to exhibit and sell their work.

The annual South LA Art Sale extends that work into the public sphere.

“The work deserves to be seen beyond these walls,” said Alexandra “Lexi” Orr, Digital Arts Instructor at ECF’s South LA Art Center. “When the community comes in, meets the artists and connects with their work, it changes the conversation. They are not being defined by disability; they are being recognized for what they create.”



Alexandra “Lexi” Orr, Digital Arts Instructor at ECF’s South LA Art Center, during the annual South LA Art Showcase & Sale.

That distinction is central to ECF’s approach. Public exhibition and sales create opportunities for recognition and economic participation, while the community encounters artists through what they contribute rather than through the lens of disability services.

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*Veronica Arteaga, President
and CEO of Exceptional
Children’s Foundation*

The shift is from participation inside a program to recognition in public life. Visitors met artists and explored work across multiple media, with original pieces available for purchase; proceeds support both the participating artists and the Art Centers program.

A Lifespan Approach to Opportunity

Founded in 1946, ECF has expanded far beyond its origins

serving children. Today, the organization provides education, therapeutic services, employment and workforce development, residential services, arts programming, and community-based support across the lifespan.

Developmental disabilities do not end at graduation—and neither should access to opportunity. For many individuals and families, moving beyond school-age systems can mean fewer structured opportunities for employment, continued development, social connection, and meaningful community participation.

ECF’s lifespan model is designed around what comes next.

Across employment, residential, arts, and community-based services, ECF works to expand choices throughout adulthood and create pathways to greater independence, continued growth, and meaningful participation.

The South LA Art Sale offered one visible example of that approach in practice. Artists were not simply provided with a place to create. Their work entered a public marketplace where it could be seen, discussed, purchased, and valued.

For ECF, that is an essential measure of inclusion: not simply access to services, but continued access to opportunity, visibility and a meaningful place in the community.

About ECF

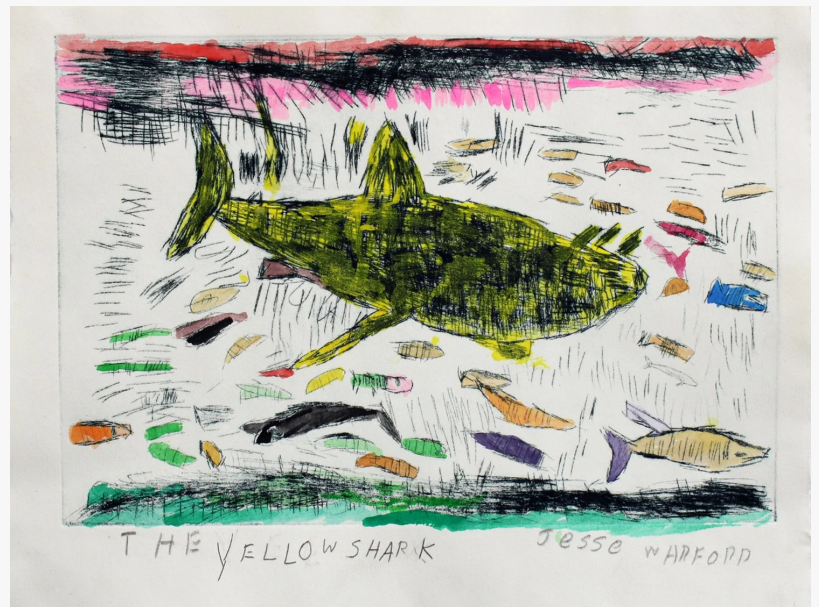
Exceptional Children's Foundation (ECF) provides a lifespan of services for individuals with developmental, learning and other disabilities throughout Los Angeles County. Founded in 1946, ECF supports children, students and adults through education, therapeutic services, employment and workforce development, residential programs, community-based services and professional arts programming.

ECF Art Centers support artists with developmental disabilities through studio practice, professional development, exhibitions and sales opportunities.

Learn more at ECF.net and explore work by ECF Art Centers artists at ArtECF.org.



"Snake" by Juanita Scott, whose artistic practice has been based at ECF Art Centers' South LA studio since 1975.



"The Yellow Shark" by Jesse Warford, who has worked from ECF Art Centers' South LA studio since 1973.

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Untitled (Color Strokes On Purple Background) by Vanessa McConnell. McConnell began her artistic practice at ECF Art Centers' South Los Angeles studio in 1983, developing a distinct abstract language over more than four decades. Her trajectory reflects ho

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