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BAY AREA ARTIST CREATES MURAL FOR LOCAL NONPROFIT

The Press is Invited to Attend a Mural Reveal Party Hosted by Cat Town

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA – Cat Town, a nonprofit cat rescue located in downtown Oakland, California, is celebrating the completion of a mural created by local artist Michelle Chan, also known as EKKE.

Michelle Chan (EKKE) originates from Los Angeles, California, but has long called the Bay Area her home. Her art captures a mixture of colorful, whimsical characters with heavy influence from both the LA graffiti art scene and Asian-American pop culture. She is passionate about culture, community, and empowering youth through art.

Michelle says, "As an artist, I think it's important to support my community. I'm excited to help Cat Town raise money to save cats because I've seen with my own eyes how much they accomplish. Cat Town is one of many reasons I'm proud to call Oakland my home."

Cat Town was founded by Ann Dunn while she was a volunteer at Oakland Animal Services, Oakland's municipal shelter. Ann saw the challenges faced by the severely under-resourced shelter to adequately care for the number of animals it receives each year, and the specific difficulties cats face in a shelter environment.

After their recent break-in, the colorful mural is lifting spirits and raising funds to help even more cats at high risk of euthanasia.

"We are thrilled to see this mural come to life," said Ann. "This new art will unify our newly expanded adoption center with the aesthetic of our original space. Michelle's next mural will be at Oakland Animal Services, so it is also a visual connection to our partners at the shelter."

Cat Town's mission is to transform the approach to saving shelter cats, reducing euthanasia nationwide, and to find great homes for cats who are considered unadoptable in the traditional animal welfare model. Cat Town focuses on helping elderly, under-socialized, and sick or injured cats get adopted. Their more than 175 volunteers help these vulnerable animals, proving that cats frequently considered "unadoptable" make exceptional companions. In doing so, Cat Town has helped reduce the euthanasia rate at OAS from 42% in 2011 to less than 13% in 2017.

EKKE works a full-time job in tech by day and spends nights and weekends helping to manage a local nonprofit in Oakland called Dragon School 99. EKKE offers her experience as an art mentor, leading youth-centric activities and mural projects, outreach/advocacy, and is also Dragon School 99's resident artist.

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Cat Town will host a private unveiling party, on April 7, from 2-4pm at Cat Town, located at 2863 Broadway in Oakland California. Light food and beverages will be served. Press is invited to attend.

Artist's sketch of the mural at Cat Town.

