A good-hearted girl gives gifts to Japan
B3

LifeStyles

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St. Germaine grants stir fight against child abuse
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SECTION B

Intrinsic rewards of civic service inspire Cal Mann

Cal Mann was born to a happy family of nine in an idyllic lakeside community near Seattle. He majored in industrial design and marketing, and spent college summers as a commercial salmon fisherman in Alaska.

He moved to the New York City area to join and build a successful design firm, consulting for Tylenol, Jell-O, Frito-Lay and other top consumer product clients. His community service started in Connecticut as a Big Brother to a fatherless 9-year-old boy. His volunteerism continued by tutoring elementary school readers in Carmel Valley and La Jolla.

Cal Mann

When he joined Rotary Club of La Jolla, his activities expanded to working with middle and high school students — especially LJHS Interact Club, a Rotary-sponsored service group that offers volunteer and leadership opportunities to students. Mann organized the program between Interact and Rotary Club of La Jolla to build homes for 23 poor Tijuana families, among other initiatives.
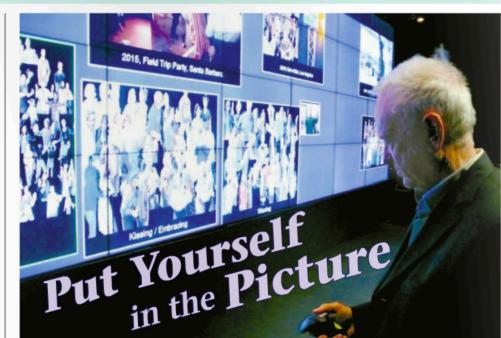
He holds board positions and active leadership roles with Rotary, La Jolla High School PTA, La Jolla High Foundation, La Jolla High Scholarship Foundation and the San Diego District Rotary Youth Leadership Awards Committee.

What brought you to La Jolla?

The great public schools, one of La Jolla's crown jewels! My wife, Natalie, an exhaustive researcher of all things educational, identified La Jolla's schools as being a great resource for the edification of our two boys, Ryan and Charlie. That hard work paid off handsomely as both have now graduated La Jolla High and are in the UC system.

If you could snap your fingers and have it done, what might you add, subtract or improve in the area?

Two things: I'd love to see La Jollans move past some of our minor differences and build

Artist Brian Pepper interacts with his video image during the IDEAS Forum (Initiative for the Digital Exploration of the Arts and Sciences) opening at UC San Diego's Calit2 Qualcomm Institute June 15.

UCSD: IDEAS event links art and technology to present science in exciting new ways

BY WILL BOWEN

Imagine a drawing that includes everyone in the entire world. Advances in technology have brought a drawing like this to the realm of possibility.

To make such a drawing is the dream of Emily Grenader, an art instructor at The Bishop's School, whose specialty is the artistic study of crowds.

Grenader, along with five collaborators, moved a step closer to the realization of that dream as featured artists at the opening of the 2015-16 IDEAS (Initiative for the Digital Exploration of the Arts and Sciences) series at the Calit2 Qualcomm Institute June 15 at UC San Diego.

2015-16 IDEAS featured artists include Danilo Rodriguez, Nadir Weibel, Sylvia Li, Emily Grenader, Jimmy Nyguen and Weder Xaxier. PHOTOS BY WILL BOWEN

Emily Grenader said she began working on crowd art because she believes society has become isolated and alienated due to insulating experiences created by interactions with smart phones, tablets and computers rather than real people. PHOTOS BY WILL BOWEN

Sound design professor Shahrokh Yadegari, of the Theater & Dance Department, heads up the series in its second year. Its mission is to bring together the best of the arts with the latest in science and technology. Yadegari, along with 10 other UCSD professors, selected nine IDEAs events from a field of 28 proposals.

"It was very difficult to narrow it down," Yadegari said. "There was a great deal of good work submitted for consideration. In comparison with last year, this year's projects are characterized by more collaboration between individuals of different disciplines and a heightened awareness of all the advanced technology available here at Calit2."

Grenader and her team of Danilo Gasques Rodrigues, Nadir Weibel, Sylvia Li, Jimmy Nguyen and Weder Xaxier, started their presentation in the Calit2 Vroom (Virtual Room). The Vroom is a place where one wall is covered with a bank of 20 large, high-definition digital TV screens linked together by computer to become one large screen. On the Vroom screen, you can simultaneously watch 10 different videos for an amazing perspective.

Grenader's team formed when she befriended Rodriquez, then an exchange student from Brazil, in computer science class offered by Weibel. Both Rodriguez and Weibel became interested in her crowd art and asked to work with her. Together they came up with the idea of shooting videos of individuals and then linking them all together into one crowd scene video.

The sum ended up greater than the parts. Almost all of the individuals videotaped danced, jumped, waved or acted silly in front of the camera. The combined imagery of all the individuals as a crowd resulted in a beguiling potpourri of movement and gestures. Right now Grenader just has videos of people in America, but she hopes to branch out and videotape people in other cultures, like Mexico or Brazil, to see if they act differently in front of the camera.

Grenader said she began working on crowd art because she believes society has become isolated and alienated due to insulating experiences created by interactions with iPhones, iPads and computers rather than real people. Grenader is hopeful her ➡

IDEAS Director Shahrokh Yadegari, Calit2 director Ramesh Rao, visual arts professor Michael Trigilio and Rebecca Webb, director of ArtPower's Filmatic Festival

crowd work will lead people to become more connected to one another, rather than their electronics. One of her ideas is to shoot video of people boarding a bus or airplane, and then download the images into one viewable crowd shot that would be projected on an overhead screen so people could see themselves incorporated into a group in a meaningful way.

After the Vroom presentations, the audience moved to the room next door that houses the 3D CrowdCAVE. Inside, we put on 3D glasses and walked into a half circle alcove where images of a crowd of people confronted us. We see a man stroking a cat he is holding, a fidgety little boy, and a gloomy professor with glasses, among others.

If you wave to the crowd or say "Hi," sound and motion sensors pick up your gestures. This elicits a response from the crowd. They may wave back or say "Hi," too. This is virtual reality at its spookiest because the life-size people seem quite present and real. When the CrowdCAVE is working properly (it was not at the opening) you can upload video of yourself and see yourself as part of the crowd you are viewing. ◆