

HOME DINING RECREATION TRAVEL COMMUNITY HEALTH STYLE

805 LIVING

MAY 2012

ARTS &
CULTURE

A woman with blonde hair in a ponytail, wearing a black top, patterned leggings, and black high-heeled boots, is crouching on a light-colored floor in an art gallery. She is looking up at a large, colorful abstract painting on the wall. The gallery has white walls and large windows in the background.

THE ARTISTS

WHILE *THE ARTIST* MAY HAVE WON RAVES—AND AN ACADEMY AWARD—FOR REVIVING THE MEDIUM OF SILENT FILM, WE'VE INVITED SEVERAL NOTABLE LOCAL ARTISTS TO SPEAK UP ABOUT WHO THEY ARE, WHAT THEY DO, AND WHY THEY DO IT. THESE CREATIVE INNOVATORS ARE ALL ACUTELY ACCOMPLISHED. SOME ARE SOULFUL, OTHERS EDGY, AND ALL ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT THEIR PURSUITS. THEY ARE ALSO A BRILLIANT REFLECTION OF **THE IMPORTANCE OF ART AND CULTURE IN THE AREA WE CALL HOME.**

BY MARY ANN NORBOM PHOTOGRAPHS BY GARY MOSS



THE
FILMMAKERS LARRY JANS, DAVID LEE MILLER, AND DANA SPARKS

WRITER/DIRECTOR DAVID LEE MILLER launched Regenerate Films in 2002 following the death of one of his son's 16-year-old friends as the result of a terrible car accident. With a grant of \$10,000 from the city of Thousand Oaks, Regenerate produced a series of anti-drunk-driving public service announcements (PSAs), using teen talent behind the scenes. Since then, the nonprofit company has grown to produce feature films and documentaries, PSAs on numerous subjects, and live shows, with the mission to "amplify voices"—voices for human rights, public health, the environment, and the arts.

"We're a professional media organization that operates a little organically in how we find our projects and the young people to work on them," says Miller (above, right). One recent film, *Archie's Final Project*, tackles suicide. It was released internationally under the title *My Suicide*, and it won the Best Feature Film award at the Berlin International Film Festival. Currently in postproduction is *I Will Find You*, a documentary about human rights violations in Nepal. "We make media that matters," says Miller.

Regenerate's executive director is Dana Sparks (above, left), an actress with numerous TV and film credits, who took on the assignment late in 2011. "I'd known Larry [Janss, above center, producer and Regenerate's chairman of the board] for a long time and knew a lot about the great work done at Regenerate," Sparks says. "When Larry asked me to come on as executive director, it just seemed right. We have a lot of different projects going on, and my goal is to get Regenerate solidified."

Sparks has a full plate of projects. Regenerate is also the title sponsor for Conejo Valley Days, and it puts on an acoustic music series at the Four Friends Gallery (owned by Janss). (regenerate.org)