

# COMMUNITY MURALS

SPRING 1984

VOLUME 1, NO. 2



# EDITORIAL

## Artists and No Nukes

The community of people fighting against the growing threat of nuclear annihilation embodies several basic principles of activist community artists. The issues of concern to us are on the one hand that nuclear power/armaments threaten each of us and our communities, and on the other that this particular issue raises special questions for us as artists.

Nuclear weapons pose an immediate threat to all of us, and domestic nuclear power generating power plants do too. If a major nuclear war occurs, muralists and other community artists will incinerate just as quickly as everyone else—or dies just as agonizingly from radiation. The most tangible effect of nuclear forces so far, however, is through massive “defense” budgets directing our society’s financial resources toward arms and away from socially constructive uses. Taking taxes from communities to pay the Pentagon of course hurts poor and Third World communities most, and all of us a lot.

Obviously, people closest to the missiles which will deliver the death have good reasons for concern. This includes

people living in London and all of western Europe, which functions as a nuclear “buffer zone” for the U.S. The murals on our cover and on pp. 9-11 try to warn residents of several London neighborhoods of these dangers.

But before the missiles are launched, nuclear power/weapons already affect many communities such as the Native Americans of the western U.S. on whose land over half of the country’s uranium resources lie and from whose lands nearly all of the uranium mined since 1977 has been taken. When each ton of uranium is milled, two-and-a-half pounds of “yellowcake” is removed, and the remaining radioactive waste is dumped, polluting lands and water supplies. For the Laguna Pueblo, birth defects rose from c. five per year to over 100 per year after uranium mining began. The struggle against uranium exploitation is shared by many people.

Seen more generally, anti-nuclear activities are similar to other fights by communities to gain control over their own lives. Some groups within the anti-nuclear movement view the issue idealistically and do not make connections between economic interests and weapons/power development. Other segments of the movement do see the close connections between nuclear power/weapons and capitalist priorities. In Europe, the anti-nuclear forces deliberately try to identify themselves

as independent of both western and eastern power blocs.

In Los Angeles, *Survivalfest* will consist of two solid weeks of cultural events dedicated to the twin themes of peace and justice. Its activities will lead to the 39th Survival Day on August 5, the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. It will have a march, rally, exhibits, a peace museum, portable murals on themes of “No More Hiroshimas,” “No More Bombs,” “Stop Intervention in Central America,” and “Stop Euromissiles.”

For concerned visual artists, the nuclear dilemma presents a special problem: “image inoculation.” It is a double question. How do we image the un-image-able (the unimaginable)? and do such images sharpen opposition or insulate and inoculate? Images of such horrors as Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Nazi concentration camps, Vietnam atrocities, etc. horrified and sickened active response, thus promoting paralysis instead of action. The Editorial Group of *CMM* does not pretend to have an answer, but we call attention to the symbolic statements of the English murals in this issue and suggest that they may be an effective stylistic direction (as opposed to representational depiction of nuclear devastation).

Whichever means we select, we must add anti-nuclear work to causes worth our support as community visual artists.

## CONTENTS

<b>RESOURCES</b>	3
<b>INTERNATIONAL</b>	
Nicaraguan Children’s Mural	5
Guatemalan Children’s Drawings	6
Community Arts and Third World Solidarity	7
Northern Ireland Murals	8
London Anti-Nuclear Murals	9
Siqueiros’ Tenth Anniversary	12
<b>NATIONAL</b>	
Dine History Mural	13
El Corrido de Boyle Heights	14
Hopi Indian Mural	15
Fernando Valenzuela Mural/Poster	16
Olympic Mural Project	16
Great Wall of Los Angeles Additions	17
Leo Tanguma Mural in Denver	18
Chicana Artists Speak Out	20
<b>OFF THE WALL</b>	
Chicago Peace Museum	21
Segal Statues Defaced	22

Cover: *War 1983*. Pauline Harding and Dale McCrae, Brixton, South London. Photo: Lawrence Gresswell. See article on p. 9, this issue.

### Our Error

In the last issue we mistakenly included Eva Cockcroft’s name as a member of Grupo Awuyaka in Colombia.

## Deadline for Next Issue

Any material for our next issue, *Summer 1984*, must be in our hot little hands before Wednesday, July 25, 1984. Please send us information about projects in your part of the world. *Summer 1984* will feature murals and visuals about music. The issue following that, *Fall 1984*, will focus on murals and visuals about labor. Especially effective are good black and white glossy photos showing the artwork, with extensive captions. Tell us about your experiences as a community visual artist. Talk to us.

### Editorial Group

Miranda Bergman	Emmanuel Montoya
Kathie Cinnater	Mike Mosher
Lincoln Cushing	Jane Norling
Jim Dong	Ray Patlan
Tim Drescher	Odilia Rodriguez
Nancy Hom	Arch Williams



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Special thanks to Jane Norling for the design, layout and pasteup of *Community Murals* for the past several years.

Special thanks to:  
Osha Neumann, Carol Ono, Inter-Tribal Treaty Council.



# RESOURCES

## Artmakers Inc.

ARTMAKERS, Inc. is a new collaborative artists' group dedicated to the creation of high quality public art relevant to the lives and work of people in their communities. The group was formed in June 1983. It currently consists of seven artists from varied artistic and ethnic backgrounds who are experienced community muralists. We will work both individually and collectively on projects. ARTMAKERS, Inc. will also provide information about public art to artists and communities through workshops, slide shows, lectures, and consultations.

In addition to painted murals we would like to do block renovation projects that would include painters, sculptors, architects and designers working together to totally transform an urban environment. Our past projects as individuals have been in and on housing projects, senior citizen centers, schools, underpasses, community centers, and buildings in the Lower East Side and Upper West Side of Manhattan, the Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, New Jersey, Upstate New York, Connecticut, California, Nicaragua, etc. Themes range from nature scenes for community gardens to local history to statements on war, racism, and ecology. We would like to do more murals dealing with themes like the anti-nuclear issue and labor history.

We are interested in networking with other public art groups and artists to share information and experiences. Current members are: Leslie Bender, Willie Birch, Eva Cockcroft, Maria Dominguez, Sheila Hamanaka, Camille Perrottet, and A.G. Joe Stephenson.

ARTMAKERS, Inc., 280 Lafayette St., No. 3A, New York, NY 10012  
212-966-0007

### Cultural Worker

478 West MacArthur Blvd.  
Oakland, CA 94609  
Quarterly; \$15 donation  
(\$5 unemployed/low income)

Cultural Work, Inc. is a non-profit organization founded by Holly Near and her co-workers to promote progressive culture. Their quarterly newsletter is evenly divided between updates of CWI's projects and general event/resource listings, including publications and organizations. -L.C.

## Keim Paints

The Keim Paint System made by Keimfarben of Augsburg, West Germany, has been in use in Germany for a century. Desmond Rochfort and David Binnington were the first to use the paint system in Great Britain with their huge Westway murals in London in 1977. [In the United States, few if any community muralists have used the system. It is perhaps best known as the paint used by Richard Haas.] Since 1977, other muralists have followed suit.

Keimfarben claim extraordinary longevity for their paint. A brochure shows a painted facade 70 years old in near-perfect condition, and this lasting quality is its chief attraction. It particularly enables mural groups to satisfy local peoples' desire to prolong the life of murals they like.

The longevity of the Keim System is based upon the chemical and physical compatibility of the paint and the surface on which the paint is to be applied. In the case of Keim a paint medium largely made up of the element silicate is applied to a surface, itself largely silicate-based, i.e., concrete or stone.

The use of Keim Paint is not overly complicated in its application. Simply put, a concrete render is first applied to the wall surface to be painted. This is usually composed of two renders in practice, one of ordinary sand, cement and lime, the other (the top render) of white lime, white cement, and calcine flint (calcinated chalk flints). This final render must always be wood floated rather than steel floated in order to retain a necessary porosity in the surface.

Once the render is dry the surface is "washed" with a special Keim etching fluid to rid the surface of mineral salts in the concrete. These might otherwise rise to the surface of the paint and cause a white deposit. The surface is then primed with Keim primer and washed in etching fluid as well again. Finally, the wall must be thoroughly hosed down with fresh water.

The application of the paint is also fairly simple. The pigments are all pure minerals, and must first be diluted down to a milky consistency before application to the wall. Ideally, Keim paints should be applied to the surface in glazes, building up the color intensity in stages exploiting where possible its translucent properties which are very similar to fresco. However, the paint can also be applied opaquely, but never in

thick layers. Throughout the painting process the painted surface must be sprayed with the Keim fixative liquid.

This necessary process chemically fuses and anchors the paint to the surface, transforming the paint into solid silicate. This fixing of the paint is one of the keys to the Keim System for aside from fixing the paint to the surface, the act of spraying the fixative onto the surfaces enormously increases the alkalinity of the wall for the fixative is a form of potassium silicate, which has a very high alkalinity scale (Ph 10-12). This increased alkalinity naturally acts as a very strong protection to the paint from attack by airborne acids, so prevalent in large urban and industrial areas. Secondly, the Keim fixative while fixing paint to wall surface allows the original porosity of the surface to be retained. This is a most important advantage for it allows the differential watervapor pressures that exist between the exterior and the interior of wall surfaces to breathe naturally, which avoids paint flaking or lifting off the wall surface.

The fixing of the paint surface must continue after the final layers have been applied until the surface can no longer absorb "fix". This can be seen when the fix remains on the surface after spraying, at which point one must make sure this "residue" is removed before it dries, since it leaves an unattractive "glint" on the surface.

The Keim Paint System is not cheap, which means that the system is best employed if the mural is going to take a long time to execute and when the mural is expected to be wanted and retained by a community as a longterm work. Current rendering costs run at approximately £ 10 per square yard (c.\$15), and it is estimated that \$1,500 would be needed to import sufficient materials to carry out a 1,300 ft.<sup>2</sup> mural. Although this sounds like a lot, it is an attractive proposition to a [funding] council, planning authority, or architect conscious of maintenance costs. If you are in the United States and are interested in Keim Paints we suggest you contact Keim directly, although we hear that they may now have agents in New York. Keim's address is:

Keimfarben G.M.B.M.  
George Odemer St. 2-4  
D89 Augsburg 31  
West Germany

Desmond Rochfort  
Steve Lobb

## MURAL PAINTING - BIBLIOGRAPHY

We offer this list as a helpful resource for community muralists. Additions/corrections/discussions are welcome.

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*Siqueiros*  
Mexico; Sep/Setentas, 1974.

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*Street Murals*  
New York; Alfred A. Knopf, 1982.  
120 pgs.

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Frankfurt, W. Germany; Verlag Dieter Fricke GmbH, 1980.  
72 pgs.  
Photographic record of murals in W. Germany. Text in German. Well presented.

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*Dossiers De L'Art Public Mars 1983*  
France; Association pour La Promotion de L'Art Public, 1983.  
46 pgs.

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Stockholm; Spangbergs Tryckerier AB/Heahs Repro AB, 1981.  
106 pgs.  
Mainly an account of mural projects with children in Sweden, includes two projects in London, England. Text in Swedish. Interesting photographs of process and product.

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287 pgs.

CARRILLO, Rafael  
*Mural Painting in Mexico*  
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*The Mexican Mural Renaissance*  
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CIVIL RIGHTS DEPT. OF THE  
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57 pgs.  
Extremely limited selection, presentation favors tiny details without whole shots.  
Weak text.

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*Towards A People's Art*  
New York; E.P. Dutton & Co. Inc., 1977.  
184 pgs.  
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COOPER, Graham & SARGENT, Doug  
*Painting The Town*  
London; Phaidon Press, 1979.  
79 pgs.  
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DAMASE, Jacques & CHATEL, Francoise  
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*Han and T'ang Murals*  
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Reflections on the History of Fresco  
Painting  
London; Thames & Hudson, 1976.  
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Continued on page 23 . . .

## DONATIONS

We hope readers will be able to donate at least \$10 and institutions (libraries, museums, arts councils, etc.) at least \$20-\$30 to help support continued publication of Community Muralists' Magazine. Checks are made out to "Community Muralists' Magazine," and mailed to P.O. Box 40383, San Francisco, CA 94140.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Amount \_\_\_\_\_

# INTERVATIONAL

## “Los Ninos Son El Jardin de la Revolucion” (The Children are the Garden of the Revolution)

This is a new mural on the front of the Biblioteca Infantil Luis Alfonso Velasquez in Managua, Nicaragua. The mural was originally designed by Miranda Bergman and Jane Norling in response to an invitation from the Organicion de Ninos Sandinistas (Organization of Sandinista Children) to the artists to paint a mural on the front of their beautiful new children's library. Some redesigning was done as a result of meetings with the Ministry of Culture, the staff of the library, the Children's Organization, the art school, and conversations with people around the site. The painting was done by Marilyn Lindstrom and Miranda Bergman, with help from Odilia Rodriguez (all from the U.S.) and a crew of Nicaraguan painters.

The process of redesigning and painting the mural was stimulating and educational, and the mural grew from the criticisms and changes and the interflow with the Nicaragua artists.

Besides painting the mural, we participated in events going on in the country at the time, learning as much as we could about the history and current situation in Nicaragua, so that upon our return we could continue to build a network of truth and solidarity for the country. We learned close-up about the war of intervention on the borders, the preparations for defense, and the building of so many positive programs for people in health, education and culture. A literacy campaign was one of the first programs of the government of National Reconstruction after the triumph of the revolution.

It was a crusade in which many students volunteered to go all over the country to teach everyone how to read and write. This campaign was one of the themes incorporated into the library mural. The other main theme was the solidarity and friendship of children all over the world.

The library and the lovely, spacious and well-used park in which it is located were both named after Luis Alfonso Velasquez, a young boy who joined the Sandinistas when he was seven and was very active in the Nicaraguan libera-

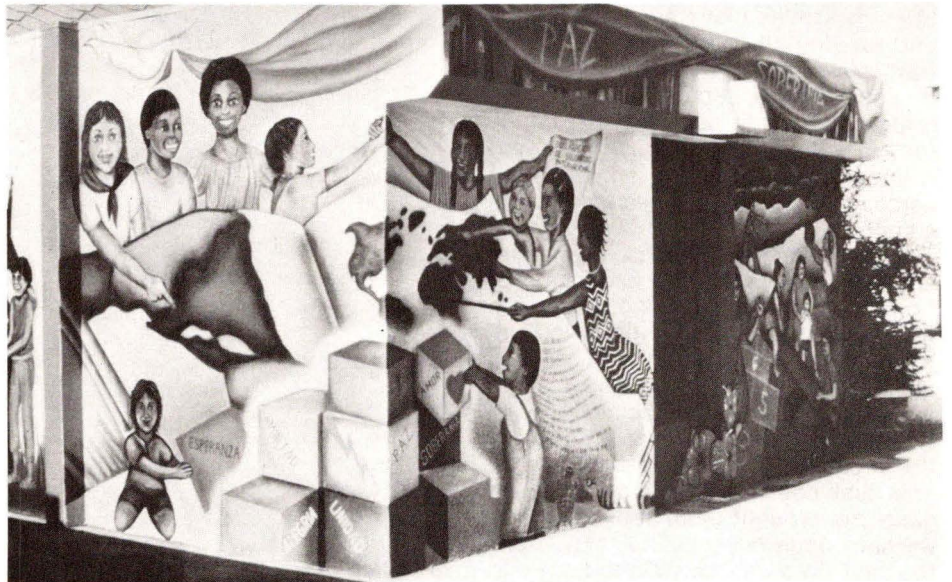
tion struggle until he was killed at the age of ten by Somoza's National Guard. Today he is an example to Nicaraguan children and the beautiful park and free public library, with dozens of smiling children constantly going in and out, is a fine and fitting tribute to his memory.

We were honored to have this opportunity to contribute in a small way to the reconstruction of Nicaragua with color and form, and to learn from the vision, energy, dedication and immense love of the Nicaraguan people.

Miranda Bergman



Photos by Miranda Bergman



# Guatemalan Children's Drawings

Art, besides entertaining the viewer by evoking pleasant emotions, also has the capacity to arouse feelings of compassion or anger and raise the question, "What can we do?" This was my experience after viewing recent drawings made by Guatemala children living in refugee camps along the Mexican-Guatemalan border.

I had hoped to speak with the children and their parents, but visits to the camps were not permitted. Therefore, I was grateful that Kiki Suarez became my intermediary. I interviewed her July 1983, in San Cristobal, Mexico, at La Galeria, a popular restaurant that she and her husband Gabriel own. Besides featuring cafe cappuccino and jazz recordings, they also sponsor monthly art exhibits of national and international artists. It was there that I first saw the Guatemalan children's drawings and learned how Kiki and Gabriel had initiated the children's art project that would bring the world's consciousness a vision of the children's current experiences and reality.

Kiki is a professional therapist originally from Germany. She had visited Mexico in 1978 and met Gabriel Suarez from San Cristobal. A year later they were married. Shortly after, they established La Galeria.

In 1983 the United Nations Commission on Refugees estimated that 25,000 Guatemalan refugees were living in 50 makeshift camps inside the Mexican border with many more coming in daily as over 100,000 Indians had been forced to leave their villages under the Guatemalan government's massive "scorched earth" policy. Kiki admits, "We always had a bad conscience about making a good life in a poor country. We listened to many stories that were told to us by anthropologists, archeologists, and travelers working in or passing through this border zone, about the Guatemalan refugees living in such horrible conditions. Then one day we bought food, put it into our (Volkswagon) van, and went across the border to the nearest refugee camp, La Hamaca. That was in July 1982, and many refugees had been there since February. No one had come to bring them food or anything. They were living in devastating conditions and suffering from malnutrition, hunger and sickness. Many refugees had malaria and they didn't have medicine."

After this initial step of witnessing the situation for themselves, Kiki says, "We just couldn't say, 'Now we have gone and brought them some help and we have done our duty.'" A new focus for their lives and La Galeria began to

evolve as their office became converted to an information center. The walls are covered with current articles and news clippings concerning the policies of Guatemalan government, and extensive information-filled folders in Spanish, French, German and English are made available to all interested tourists and visitors.

Kiki enjoys drawing, has illustrated children's books and has three children. Her next step seemed natural. "I thought it very good to have the Guatemalan children make drawings in order to reach people. It is very strong proof of their experiences, even stronger than photography." Kiki continued, "In October 1982, besides the usual food and medicine, we brought paper, colored pencils and crayons to the teachers in the improvised schools in the camps of La Hamaca and La Sombra. We only asked that the children be allowed to draw what they remembered of their life in Guatemala. We came back two weeks later for the drawings. Not all the children drew massacres, but most of the children from Hamaca had created such scenes because they were originally from the villages of San Mateo and Istantan where most of the people were killed."

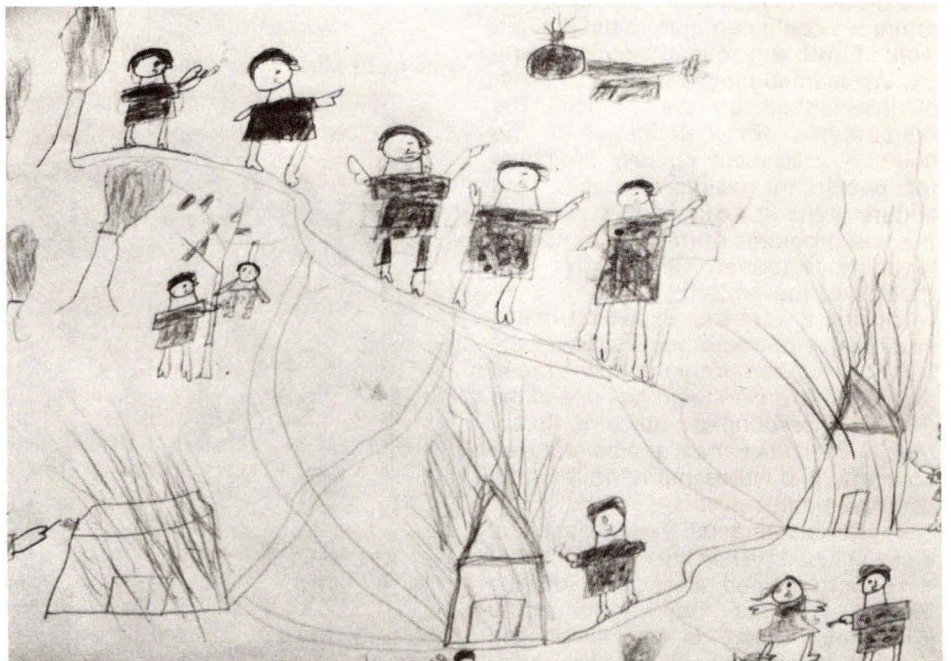
During December 1982, these drawings were displayed in La Galeria. At this time all but four of the drawings are on exhibit in New York City. The exhibit will then travel to Latin America solidarity centers throughout the United States.

All four of the remaining drawings are stylistically similar to any normal ele-

mentary school age child's work. They lack perspective or accurate figure proportions, but they are shockingly expressive in content, clearly revealing the essence of the events which forced survivors to leave their land and homes.

In all four of the drawings the soldiers are outlined with pencil or blue ballpoint pen, and their figures are filled in with a dark green crayon. Rifles held horizontally in their arms almost make the figures seem like a cross, but it is a cross of destruction as bullets are sprayed at village men shown with their arms tied in front of them. Helicopters, with their pilots carefully drawn, are present in each scene. In Julio's drawing, a rainfall of bullets falls upon the peasants or refugees who wear large sombreros and have fled into the tree-covered hills. In two of the drawings wild lines are scrawled across the peasants' huts, depicting flames. In another drawing three soldiers stand by each of the huts with matches while others stand beside a woman lying on the ground and a man hanging from a tree.

Soon after their first visit to the refugee camp, Kiki and Gabriel, together with a Canadian church and a American Indian organization, AKWASAME, initiated an outreach program, CARGUA or Relief Committed for Guatemala Refugees, with the goals that: "provide emergency aid to the refugee families, such as food and medicine; help coordinate our activities with other solidarity groups; undertake various kinds of projects for the benefit



Photos by Betty LaDuke

of the refugees and the Mexican farmers who have sheltered them; and inform the world about the situation by presenting children's drawings and the refugees' testimonies."

With funds contributed from many solidarity groups throughout the United States and Europe, trucks have been purchased and three Mexican drivers now disperse an average of 20 tons of food per week to 30 camps containing an approximate population of 14,000 people. Two doctors also work with CARGUA, and more recently, I am told, they have been combatting a severe measles epidemic.

Kiki tells me that approximately four months ago, some materials for loom construction, fiber and embroidery supplies were also delivered to three of the camps, and once again some of the women have begun to weave their huipiles or blouses and other traditional fabrics. However, production is slow as it takes at least three months to create a good quality garment. Smaller items such as embroidered draw-string bags are now available for sale in some of the San Cristobal stores. Recently some of the finished products were collected by CARGUA and sent to the solidarity groups. Hopefully, the women will be able to continue their traditional weaving, and only in time can we judge how their work reflects their new environment, that is, those who survive their ordeal and are allowed to settle in Mexico. As yet, the future of most of the refugees is undetermined.

As Kiki looks ahead to the future, she states that even more important than raising funds is La Galeria's function of providing information. She says that, "many people are far removed from understanding the political realities of the world. People don't start a revolution because somebody puts ideas in their head. People start an uprising when they are hungry and don't have anything more to lose. As long as governments don't function so that people can live in dignity, there will be revolutions."

Before leaving, I took note of the anonymous conflicting views of La Galeria restroom graffiti. The first statement says, "I am not responsible for the errors performed by governments," while the second parallels Kiki's philosophy: "I think not understanding is equivalent to murder. Not everybody is a murderer, but everybody has a responsibility to understand."

Betty LaDuke

Travel and Research sponsored by a  
Carpenter Grant  
Southern Oregon State College

## Community Arts & Third World Solidarity Struggles

What attracts many people to international solidarity work is the cultural (folkloric) tradition as much as the politics. A lot of energy goes into bringing the products of these traditions into London, using them to raise funds, or morale, to make a point, or even to indulge a taste for something new and different.

While this may be a good thing, it's a pity that such activity often develops in opposition to our own traditions. This is partly because of the cultural and political absorption of people in solidarity campaigns

But I would like to argue that community artists need to look closely at the issues involved and move beyond simple servicing of campaigns to a real involvement with them.

The issues are difficult. What, after all, do the struggles of a people in El Salvador have to do with the struggles most commonly associated with our notions of community? And why, when we have so far to go in creating our own art, do we have to take on someone else's?

The issues came to a head for those of us in the El Salvador Solidarity Campaign who decided, about six months ago, to paint a mural.

We knew already that a mural is qualitatively and politically different from sticking up posters or distributing badges, t-shirts and post-cards. To begin with, a mural has to go somewhere, and once there it has a life for which its creators are responsible. It lives publicly in somebody's neighbourhood.

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.... working with their  
community of interest  
as well as with specific  
geographical  
communities...

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It was obvious very quickly that the last thing we could do was to take a 'slice of life' from the struggles in El Salvador and thrust it under the noses of a people with their own problems and local fights.

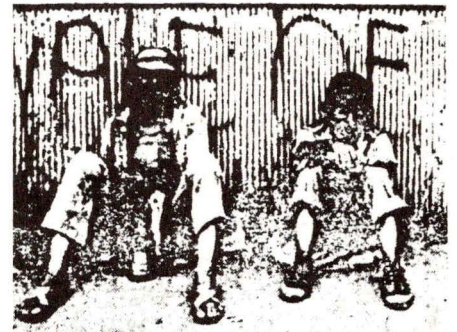
To go ahead with the mural and not do this became, therefore, the first major challenge.

The group which began the discussion of the mural was very mixed. It included a few enthusiastic English campaign members, some Latin American members, a number of people not closely associated with the campaign who were interested in political murals and a group of Chilean muralists who had already developed their working methods along lines established in the revolutionary traditions of their own culture.

It was here that conflict raised the project into a protracted discussion of methodology and approach. We found ourselves polarising the different working methods of Latin American collectivists and English 'humanist' socialists.

The Latin American group rightly challenged our 'bourgeois' notion, as they saw it, of narrative and visual unity, preferring to put together a series of images which were not necessarily coherent and then judge the best in terms of skill and power.

We, on the other hand, would not admit that we wanted something that was good by the standards of Western fine art, and argued that a mural in Deptford (where there was a possible wall) had to be coherent for the people living there.



For us, that meant the narrative tradition. The mural had to tell a story using powerful images which would attract, disturb and inform.

The group is still sorting out many of the issues. Hopefully, a yoking without compromise will be possible. Such projects are needed, at the very least, because each method, each tradition can inform and affect the other to produce something with a different aesthetic to reflect its politics.

It would be useful if members of solidarity campaigns made working with their community of interest, as well as with specific geographical communities, a central part of their work.

The mural for El Salvador is one way of doing this, involving strong artistic commitment from different people and positions. But there are other ways of going about it.

One project which is still in the planning stages involves locating the various parts of London where Latin American expatriates and exiles live, and working with them on small, but continuing schemes which involve bi-lingual and multi-cultural work - for example, translating poetry and short fiction, or creating it in two languages.

This can be done not only with poetry but with music and song as well, and can involve not only Latin Americans but Londoners. It can operate on a one-to-one basis, and/or workshops that develop as suspicion and resistance break down.

Such projects have the virtue of pushing the central political goals that I associate with community arts, and of bringing gradually into play an internationalism which displaces the parochialism that sometimes encloses a community inside itself.

*This article was written by Peter Bradbury, who is the Community Arts Assistant at GLAA. It was written in a personal capacity*

*Another Standard* (London, Spring 1983)

## Style Teaches a Lesson in Politics



These two murals were both painted recently in Northern Ireland. The differences in style say a great deal about the economic and political stance of each wall.

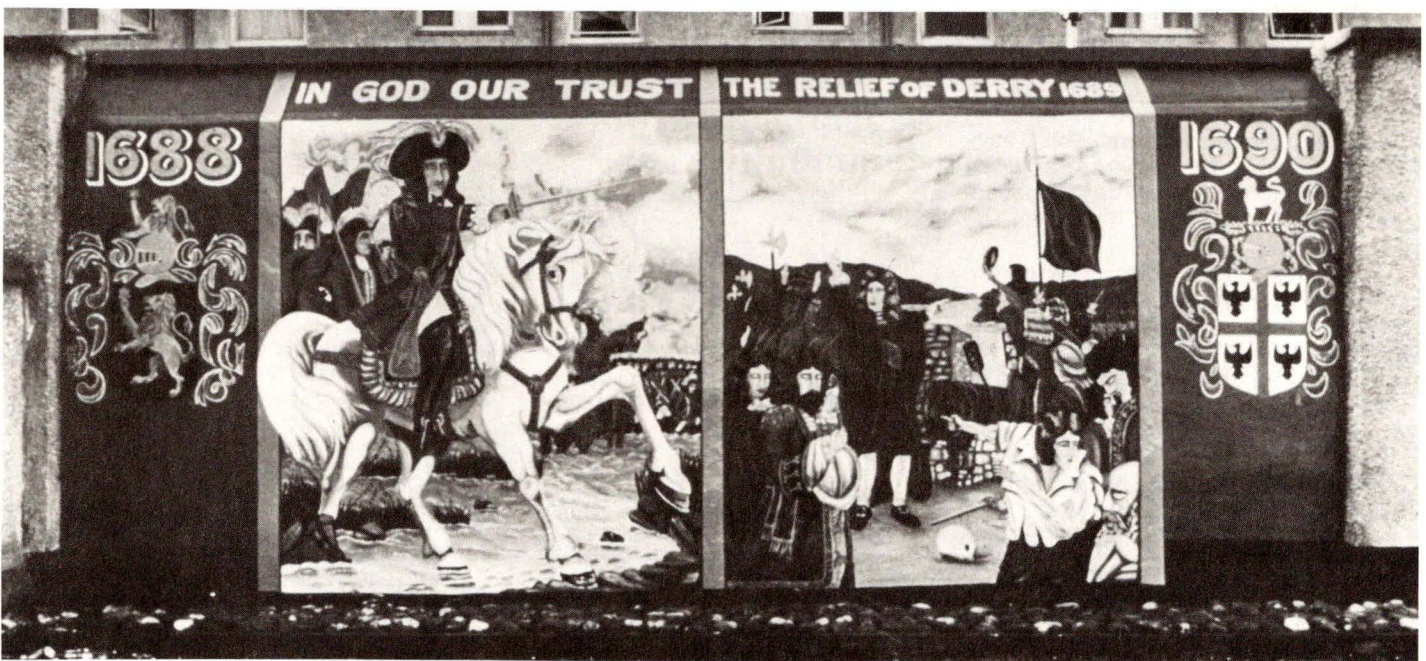
Below is a wall painted by someone with extensive formal training (evident in the brushwork, control of space, attention to detail and subject matter, etc.). The image is taken from an earlier 17th century painting celebrating an English conqueror. This wall took train-

ing, time, and financial resources to produce. It is painted in the relatively well-to-do district of the city, predominantly Protestant.

The mural above just as clearly comes from a working class district, in Belfast. It was painted quickly because it is dangerous to remain in any place for several hours lest the English army or the police arrest, harrass, or shoot you. Working class (mostly Catholic) residents are constantly in such danger

in the streets of their own neighborhoods. The style is appropriate to the conditions of the mural's production and its priorities: to declare the commonality of Irish republican struggles for self-determination in 1916 and today and to declare opposition to the occupiers, both Irish and English, publicly and proudly. The phrase at the top means Ireland, and *Saoirse* means freedom.

Photos by Blaine Dixon





## London Creates Six Anti-Nuclear Murals

In the summer of 1983 six major murals were begun in London at strategic sites around the inner city. This was a unique event in that all the paintings are on the theme of 'Peace through nuclear disarmament'.

Since 1980 G. Britain has witnessed a growing opposition to the threat posed by nuclear arms, focused on the deployment of cruise missiles at American bases. Mass demonstrations have been held in cities all over the country, also non-violent direct action including stopping city traffic and blockading Parliament and the setting up of permanent peace camps at nuclear bases.

The most noteworthy peace camp is that outside Greenham Common Air Base, which has been exclusively occupied by women for over 2 years. Hundreds of women live in makeshift tents around the main gates on a permanent vigil, and mass demonstrations, of women only, have on two occasions encircled the 9 mile perimeter fence. Various evictions by the authorities, mass arrests by the police, even imprisonment have failed to destroy this camp.

This is the context in which the Greater London Council (GLC) named 1983 'Peace Year' and declared London a 'Nuclear Free Zone', endorsing the National Labour Party's policy to renounce nuclear weapons unilaterally. £250,000 (\$375,000) was voted for arts events during the year.

To us who are horrified at the escalation of nuclear weaponry, and our staggering expenditure on American systems and bases, this was a sensible and courageous decision.

An exhibition of collages depicting, with Heartfield-like irony and vigour, resistance to missiles was mounted by the artist Peter Kennard, and one of his images showing hands breaking a cruise missile in half was adopted as a dramatic logo for Peace year; a year in which hundreds of events in music, cabaret, poetry, carnivals, festivals and plays were dedicated to the theme of peace.

We muralists were invited to a meeting in November 1982 by London Region of the Campaign For Nuclear Disarmament, at which we prepared applications to the GLC for the funding of six anti-nuclear murals around the capital. By January we were a formally constituted collective: London Muralists for Peace, using a logo based on a theme used by Brian Barnes in a mural of 1980. Persuaded that the murals would achieve the 'Prestigious and profes-

sional appearance' of 'Nuclear Dawn' (*Community Murals*, Spring 1981), the Arts Committee granted £40,000 (\$60,000) shared between five groups, coming from the localities of Wandsworth (Brian Barnes) Greenwich (Carol Kenna, Chris Cardale, Steve Lobb, Viv Howard) Tower Hamlets (Ray Walker) Lambeth (Dale McCrae, Pauline Harding) and Hammersmith (Paul Butler, Des Rochefort).

Looking back, Brian Barnes recalls that the inspiration for 'Nuclear Dawn' came from an idea of Bill Walker of

Though funds came through in June 1983, only the Lambeth group made an early start and completed their 'War' mural by the time Barnes and the Greenwich group had started their projects in August and September.

Using conventional household oil colours on rendered surfaces, McCrae and Harding directed a large local team. Their 'Peace' mural facing 'War' across a tiny urban park was completed at the end of the year and both were dedicated in February 1984. Here is how McCrae describes them:



Photos by L. Gresswell

Chicago. He suggested that all concerned artists join together to paint on one common theme, in order to make our common purpose visible to all; the theme to be 'opposition to war preparations'. In a joint statement of October 1983 London Muralists for Peace declared: 'Through our art we bring to Londoners our view that nuclear confrontation is an abhorrent and unnecessary threat to existence and show that we believe that mass opposition to this policy, and support of unilateral nuclear disarmament is the sensible and only course.'

'War' is designed by Pauline Harding and shows the great history of hardware controlled by men that has led to a situation where violence is the way in which we are encouraged to solve international disputes. The focus of the wall is a pilot, too remote from those on the ground who he is trained to destroy, too isolated by high technology to be considered human.

'Peace' was designed by discussion as the cruise missiles were placed on English soil. There are no people about, merely the hint of a vanished race, with the Cerne Abbas giant on a far hillside.

A solitary tree reminds us of the wealth of nature, but the fence prevents people from achieving peace. Above, the dove of peace is exposed and torn by barbed wire, while below, the only survivors are the diatoms, unicellular plankton from which humans will have to evolve again.

The other muralists chose to use the Keim system of paint which demands extensive wall preparation. Both Barnes and his assistants and the Greenwich team, after working through some bitter weather, completed their respective walls on December 16th 1983, dedicating them jointly in ceremonies the following day.

The artists explain the symbolism of their works as follows:  
Barnes: The mural is 35' wide and 32'

high and is called 'The Riders of the Apocalypse'. It shows the Earth as it appears in satellite photographs, with Great Britain prominent at the centre of the wall. Encircling the globe are three cruise missiles and one SS20 missile with life size figures astride each, from left to right, Reagan with a scythe, Thatcher, Heseltine (Minister for War), and Andropov.

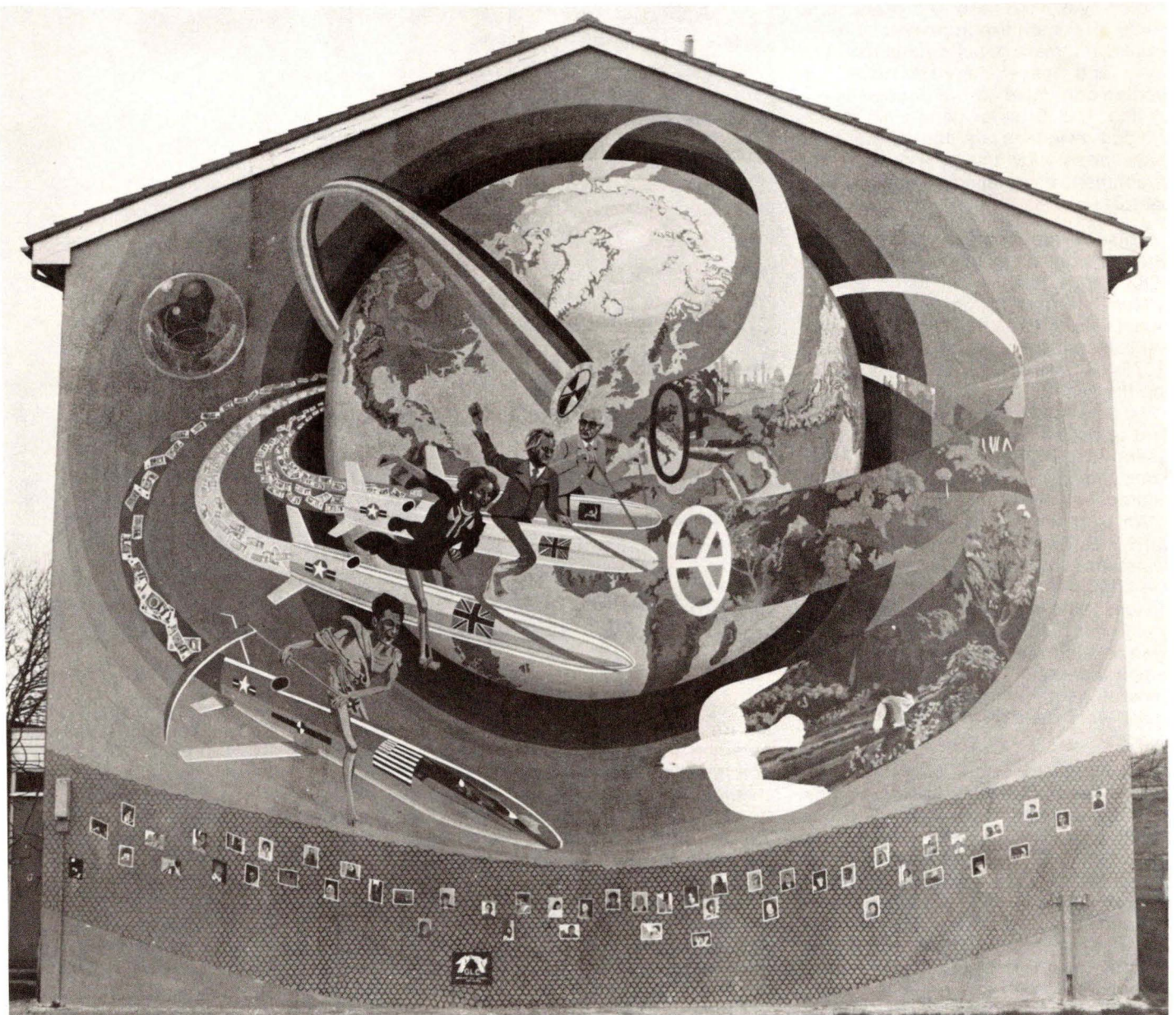
Flying to the rescue are comets incorporating symbols of peace; a dove, CND emblem, women's symbol and Nuclear Free Zone logo. The missiles scribe an unswerving line in space indicating the rigid dogma of the advocates of 'Peace through strength'. The opposing peace comets represent the millions of people prepared to campaign for unilateral disarmament in many different ways all

over the world. Contained in the arcing trails of the peace comets we see through to a typical English landscape where cruise will be 'hidden'. Low down on the mural, also swinging round to encircle the globe, is the chain link fence surrounding the American missile base at Greenham Common decorated with photos and tokens left there after the demonstration last year.

This design was arrived at after discussion with the members of the Stanford Housing Co-op, an estate of houses and flats accommodating 150 single people.

**Greenwich Mural Workshop:**

The Mural is about 35' square and is called 'Wind of Peace'. The mural workshop artists discussed several designs for the peace mural with people



living on Meridian Estate, all of whom during the past few months have been invited by leaflets, meetings and doorstep discussions to take part in the process of design.

The mural is a statement against Britain's continued use of nuclear weapons as a deterrent. It depicts local people rising up to defend Greenwich against rockets, and by destroying them creating peace. The people are shown as a circle of all races, holding hands and turning energetically to smash the rockets. In this way we represent the unity of all people in antagonism to nuclear arms, and the energy with which people say NO! to nuclear arms, and we emphasize the action of demonstrators this year who encircled Greenham airbase to show their living unity against the missiles of death, which are now be-

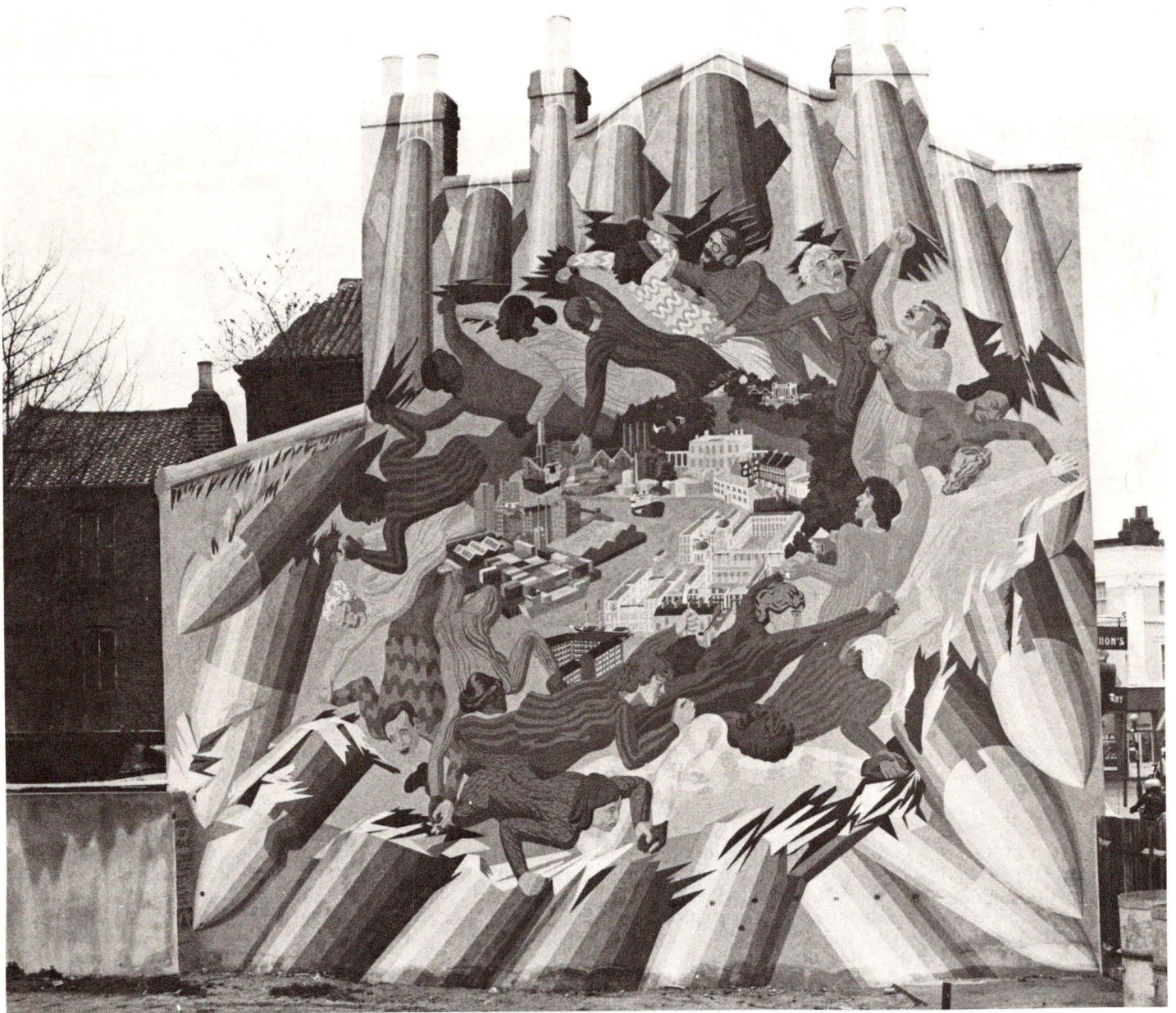
ing imported and which create such a terrible threat to Londoners' existence.

The Tower Hamlets mural ran into difficulties over permissions and escalating costs of wall preparation; this has now been resolved, the wall is rendered and Walker's mural will be completed by Spring 1985. He describes the theme in the following way:

I gave a slide show of murals painted by London muralists, including myself, to Hackney CND who expressed their support. Later a public meeting of a similar nature took place in June at Hackney Trades and Labour hall where I exhibited early working drawings. A discussion took place to construct a broad consensus of opinion of what the mural ought to express. Everyone agreed that

the major problem to resolve is that of producing a peace mural which is unmistakably of a peaceful nature as distinct from one which is of an anti-war/anti-nuclear character only, i.e., of a celebratory and peaceful nature, although anti-nuclear/anti-imperialist elements are evident in the later sketch. I then developed new ideas motivated by local festivals, particularly by a peace carnival organized by Freeform and local peace activists. The finished sketch is largely a reflection of this event and other local elements have been developed to express something of a positive celebratory character.

The mural designed by Paul Butler is now being painted by him and Rochefort in Hammersmith. Because both teach part-time the work is taking longer to complete. The wall, prepared in No-



ember, will be dedicated in June 1984, and is described by Butler as follows:

The mural is 162' long and 12' high. The left hand part of the mural is intended to be celebratory and to symbolize life and it is opposed to the right hand part which is concerned with war, and the forces which are outside the control of ordinary humanity. The central section, which is symmetrical, uses the image of a tree which spreads its branches across the upper part of the design, and a telecommunications satellite whose mirrored arms span the whole design. Superimposed on these images is a moebius ( $\infty$ ) strip, which is the symbol for infinity. On the left marching figures and a line of receding soldiers on the right, form two inverted arcs; in the lower part a baby baptized in the centre, and the ancient stone circle of Stonehenge and Japanese dancing children counterpose the ruins of

Hiroshima and NASA controller tracking missiles on a screen showing a map of the world.

In its totality the mural is intended to be positive and affirmative. It is an attempt to communicate a sense of unity and oneness of humanity.

The setting up of the muralists' collective to work together and to work on a single theme was a good experience. We met to discuss designs, control finance, order and share materials and equipment, and put on an exhibition to demonstrate our activities. Previously we had only met socially, not in a formally structured situation with products to achieve. We all benefitted from the support and excitement of being part of the group, whose members are not just fine artists, but political people committed to a cause. The example set by the London Muralists for Peace has led to Sheffield City Council in the north of

England to plan a series of peace murals. The GLC are also funding a further peace mural, now being painted by 'London Wall', a women's collective in the Islington district of London.

We are encouraged by the polls that show over 60% of the British people oppose the siting of American controlled cruise missiles, and that Holland and Greece have refused to allow nuclear weapons to be based on their soil. But we are disgusted that our government has welcomed these missiles, and has extended an invitation to Reagan to visit Great Britain this year, the unprecedented introduction of machine gun weapons for the police guard of the President is indication enough of the opposition to cruise and American foreign policy that threatens the Government's existence.

B. Barnes and S. Lobb



Print by Aldofo Quinteros

## MEXICO

### Siqueiros

David Alfaro Siqueiros, one of the *Los Tres Grandes* (Rivera, Orozco, Siqueiros), was honored on the tenth anniversary of his death with a ceremony in the Retunda De Los Hombres Ilustres, Mexico City, on January 6. Angelica Arenal, widow of Siqueiros, spoke about his life and work and his influence on the artistic

and political movements in Mexico and the world. Artists Adolfo Quinteros and Sara Jimenez V. created portraits of Siqueiros and Angelica for the occasion. According to Ms. C. Rodrigues of the Siqueiros Archives, Sala De Arte Publico, the event was well attended and the texts of the commemoration will be published soon.

At the Polyforum Cultural Siqueiros work is just completing on the restoration of the original model of Siqueiros first conception of the Polyforum. Also around the City in many bookstores was a poster featuring a portrait of Karl Marx by Siqueiros in honor of the centennial of Marx's death in 1883.

# UNITED STATES

## Dine History Mural

Consuming an entire wall in a quiet, open courtyard at Monument Valley High School is the life story of the Dine.

And stepping into that courtyard, their story consumes the viewer like a giant vision before a penitent seeker.

For the vision is a 53-foot long, 27-foot 10-inch high mural painted by the school's advanced art students last summer.

Art Teacher Joe Guthrie, who researched and directed the project, said its creation was itself a massive task.

The mural contains the history of the Navajos from the Dark World to the present Glittering, or White World.

Within it are carefully selected scenes which best depict how the Navajos evolved to the present day.

Guthrie said the project began on 18-by-24 inch sketches which were laid out in the courtyard. Over a period of weeks, order was made of a variety of possibilities.

But before the project was completed, Guthrie said, many scenes were painted over, some up to seven times because of disagreement about authenticity and accuracy of the Navajo legends.

The story begins in the upper left corner with a monster peering out of the Dark World. The world was then overrun by monsters and uninhabitable by people.

But then came the Hero Twins, back from visiting their father, the Sun. They came to Earth on the Rainbow and slew the monsters, making the earth safe for the People.

This became the Blue World, when the animal kingdom was dominated by the Bluebird. On the mural is a picture of an old mud hogan, the first used by the Navajo.

It also appears to be a forked, male hogan used for ceremonial purposes.

In another scene are Navajo hunters wearing buckskins, the historical clothing of the early people.

In the sky of the Blue World is the Eagle, who with the bear is a symbol of power to the Navajos.

The Blue World was an early time for the People. One scene shows the Great Northwest from where legends say the

Navajo migrated. Fishing Eskimos and snow-capped mountains can be seen.

Below this scene is another famous migration of the Navajos—the Long Walk to Fort Sumner at Bosque Redondo in 1863.

To the far right, in the White World, is the symbol of the Navajo Tribe, which symbolizes sovereign self-government.

Near this is an Indian cowboy on a bronc to show the Navajo native sport of rodeo.

In this scene is the only white man found on the mural. He is Kit Carson.

The Long Walk leads to Fort Sumner, over which is the Treaty of 1868. Here, Navajos are seen both entering and leaving the fort gates.

This is when the Yellow World begins. Representing this is a map of the reservation covering four states.

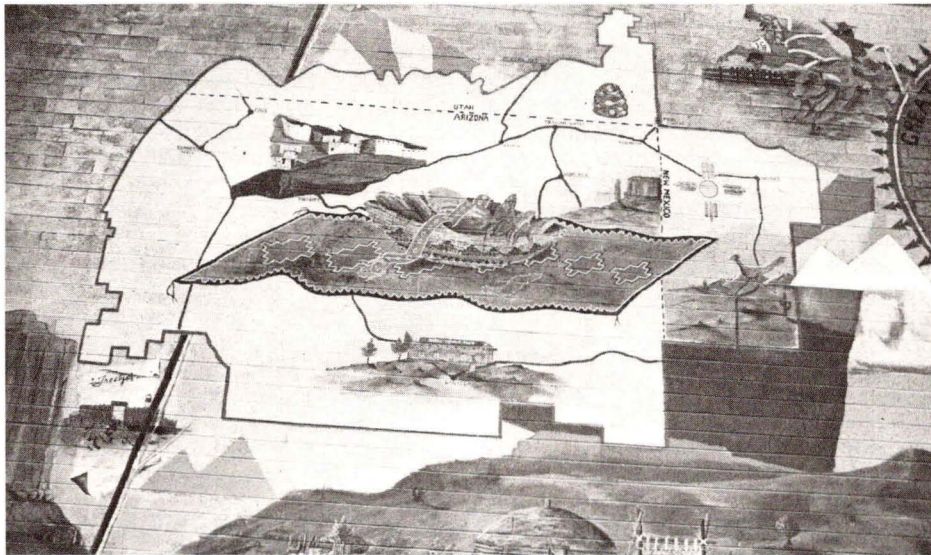
In all four directions around the map are the four sacred mountains of the Navajos.

At the bottom of the mural is a Navajo woman at work at her loom. She is wearing the colorful, flowing skirt and velvet blouse the Navajos adopted following the Long Walk and which now is considered the traditional dress.

Beyond her more modern log hogan are her sheep grazing contentedly.

Farther right is a Navajo man on horseback gazing into the distance, while presumably tending his flock.

Behind him is Shiprock, another symbol of power. The legends hold that when the Navajos were losing strength they would climb atop Shiprock and it would fly away to a place where the people could raise the food and flock until they were strong again.



To the north is a beehive, representing the beehive state of Utah.

In the northwest corner is Betatakin, representing the Ancient Ones.

About southcentral is Hubbell's Trading Post, representing the first trading post on the reservation.

To the northeast is the Zuni Sun and to the southeast is the New Mexican Roadrunner.

In the center of the map is a blanket with the Ganado design. Upon this is a basket with traditional foods of melons, squash and corn.

Peering out from behind the map is the state flag of Arizona, within which most of the reservation is located.

Upon gaining strength, they would climb back on Shiprock and it would return them to the original homes.

So is told the history of The People to this day, a history of continual and abrupt change. Their life continues to see changes with each succeeding generation, historians say.

But never forgotten are the legends and tales that tell where they came from and where they belong.

And in the heart of their homeland here can be seen their journey in a single glimpse.

George Hardeen  
*Navajo-Hopi Observer*  
Thursday, February 10, 1983



Photo © 1984 by David Botello

## El Corrido de Boyle Heights

The corner of Brooklyn Ave. and Soto St. in Boyle Heights (probably the oldest barrio in East Los Angeles) is a very busy intersection where pedestrian and vehicular traffic create a passing panorama that exudes a distinctively Chicano ambiente. Smokey city busses, blaring wedding processions and ubiquitous police cruisers compete for attention on the streets while paleteros, tamaleros and boleadores assail pedestrian shoppers already heavily laden with mandado y malcriados. These noises, smells and colors are now complimented by two representative Chicano murals at the same intersection. The first was painted by Willie Herron and crew in the mid 1970s, on the farmacia at the northeast corner. On the southwest corner, the latest mural was just completed by East Los Streetscapers; adding to their roster of murals that permeate the barrio while attracting international attention. In fact, El Corrido de Boyle Heights is the 3rd mural to grace the east-facing wall of the building currently occupied by the Payless Shoe Source.

The mural history of this particular wall goes back about 10 years when Frank Romero first covered a 200 sq. ft. area with one of his whimsical "corazones sentidos", painted in the soft lines and colors contained in his magic bag of spray cans. This colorful splash of Chicano iconography was soon covered over by a 556 sq. ft. mural painted under the auspices of the Citywide Mural Project.

Among the many artists that collaborated on that piece are designer John Valadez, who today is in the forefront of Chicano photorealism; Barbara Carrasco, a feisty lady who doesn't mind taking on City Hall to defend her art; Glenna Boltuch, currently hard at work on her Olympics freeway mural; Carlos Callejo, who interpreted George Yepes' design of two young vatos from the neighborhood; not to mention the fine talents of Leo Limon and Rod Sakai among many others.

Their mural (dated 1978) carried the bilingual message "La hermosura de nuestra raza se refleja en nuestra cultura. La fuerza de nuestra cultura esta sostenido en nuestra lucha. / The beauty of our people is our culture. The strength within our culture lies within our struggle." It was a well loved montage of local personalities that was immediately embraced by the home folks. It was therefore with much shock and consternation that the public saw the wrecking ball come in and destroy the muralled wall without so much as a mother may I - yes you may!

Los Angeles' stringent earthquake codes have condemned all unreinforced masonry buildings; and so a shortlived community landmark had to give way to steel H-beams, channels, angles and rebar.

After the (de/con)struction was completed, Bruce Jesse, the Payless Shoe Source corporate vice president of advertising came out from Kansas to assess the situation. Ross Valencia, field deputy to city councilman Art Snyder, made the recommendation to Jesse that East Los Streetscapers be commissioned to create a mural to replace the one previously destroyed. During the preliminary negotiations the artists were asked if they would be con-

ducting research into the neighborhood. The wry smiles which showed on their faces in response to the questions were enough to say, "Orale ese, we are Boyle Heights!"

And so David Botello, Wayne Healy and George Yepes began a collaboration that was to regain the community's approval. Together with Paul Botello, David Morin and a very independent Ismael Cazarea ELS painted the entire 1400 sq. ft. wall with a sweeping composition celebrating the Chicano version of the American Dream. East Los' answer to La Cienega Blvd's Restaurant Row is Brooklyn Ave; best mariscos in town! The street musicians shown performing in the mural add sabor to the already delicious table top offerings.

Local resident Margarito Gutierrez (descendant of Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan) is shown playing his virtuoso fiddle while El Piporro squashes his accordion. Healy's trio and art influence; Joe Alaniz (Boyle Heights 1933-1967) looks up from his cammarones al mojo ajo to enjoy the vocalist, tan chula que es. Other imagery includes a wedding couple swinging through a dollar dance, while their honking honeymoon ranfla drags zapatos through the barrio.

The Streetscapers received warm responses for their work from the street critics that passed by. After a few comments about Botello's penchant for green, David became defensive about his "gaudy green whale".

Pero no le hace; suffice it to say that the intersection of Brooklyn and Soto demands art work and when Herron's and East Los Streetscapers' murals decay, other artists will be there to recreate the magic. Que viva El Arte Publico!

Pablo Xap/ELS

Mural © 1984 by ELS

# Coexistence portrayed in mural

By George Hardeen

Hundreds see his paintings every day. But few may know whose hand created them.

Through bright pigments in the many long halls of Tuba City High School the many faces, symbols and scenes tell tales of Indian life through time and of different places.

To Bert Preston, a lifelong Hopi artist and art teacher at TCHS, the fifteen murals he's conceived and executed since 1979 represent important themes such as harmony, co-existence, equality, religion and spirituality, peace and beauty; values which add to a student's education.

Until last week, Preston never received any formal recognition for his murals. That changed with the unveiling of his latest work before a gathering of about 35 people.

Preston was introduced by TCHS Principal Bill Lehman who

said he watched this year's 20-foot-long mural develop over the summer, and in the painting of it came to realize the importance of them all.

Preston said the mural corresponds to the district's 1983 theme of "Pride Inside," or self-esteem a student needs to be successful.

"My intent is aesthetic appreciation of Indian and non-Indian values," Preston said.

On several occasions, Preston was assisted by Navajo and Hopi student artists through the Summer Youth Programs of each tribe.

In the present work he portrayed the coexistence of traditional Native American values with those of the modern world in the larger, dominant society.

Many things appear in the painting. The heart is two hands - red and white - shaking. To the right are the representative ele-

ments of academia; to the left the distinct symbols held sacred by Indian peoples.

Symbols of the spirit are shown, embodied by the white steeple of a church, a ladder descending into a Hopi kiva and a just-started Navajo sandpainting.

Other sacred symbols appear as well. The traditional wedding basket contains corn meal used in blessings. Below the basket are depicted the pipes of the Plains Indian tribes and the Hopi tribe, which is used for spiritual purposes.

Other murals show many other kinds of expression: the kiva, the sacred ceremonial chamber of the Pueblo; the rainbow which symbolizes moisture and aesthetic qualities; a cycle of prayer for moisture and fertility symbolized by the kiva, the rainbow, the turtle, the frog; and a prayer feather clutched in the hand of a priest.

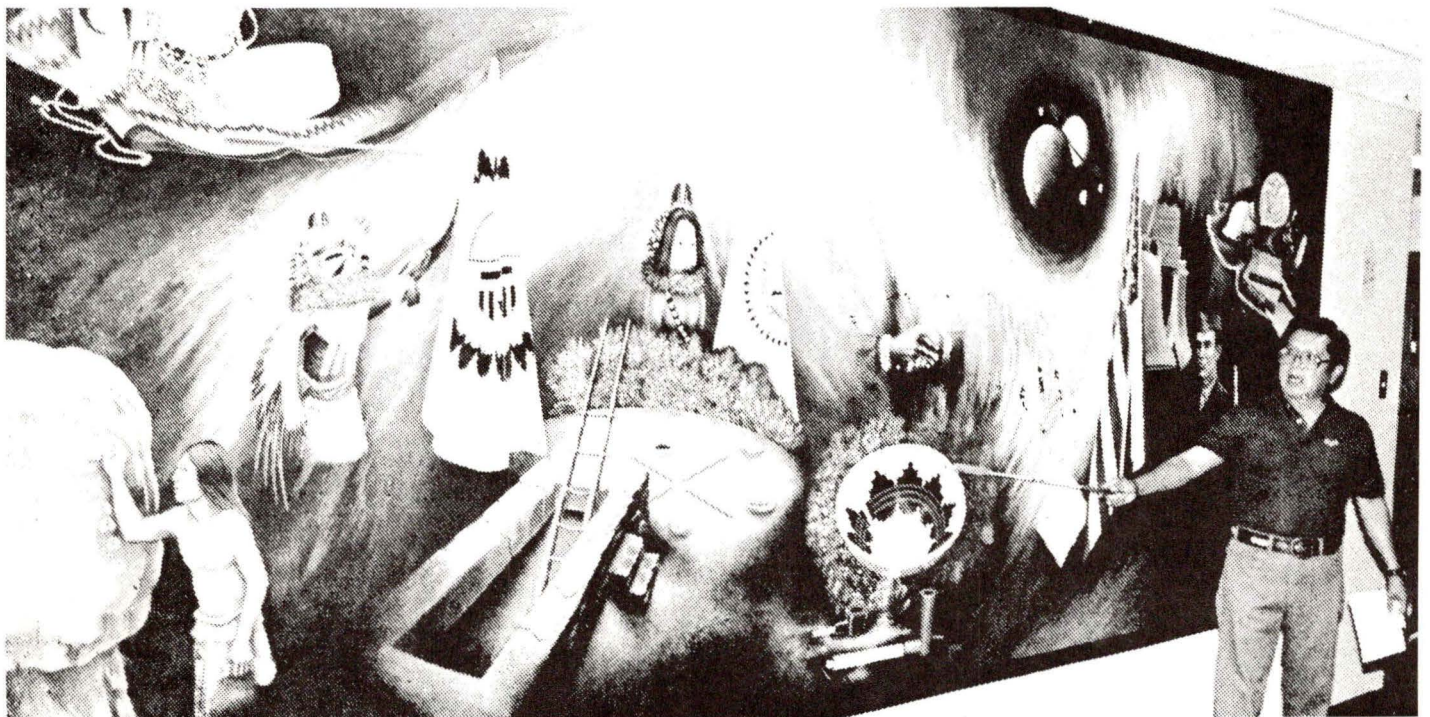


Photo by George Hardeen *Navajo-Hopi Observer*

# East Los Streetscapers

## Fernando Valenzuela Poster Produced From Chicano Mural

On Tuesday, April 3rd, opening day at Dodger Stadium, a 26" x 28" full color poster depicting two young baseball fans admiring an 8' x 10' canvas mural of Fernando Valenzuela went on sale. As part of the sales agreement, the Dodgers have slated a portion of the proceeds to go for the benefit of the Hollenbeck Youth Center in Boyle Heights.

The original "Fernando" mural was painted during the 4th Annual Los Angeles Streetscene on October 10, 1981. While the artists painted next to City Hall, their transistor radio beamed the news that Fernando had beaten the Houston Astros to keep alive the Dodgers' post season play.

Valenzuela and the Big Blue Wrecking Crew went on the win the World Series and "Fernandomania" swept the city.

The idea to create a poster from the mural came from Armando Molina, president of AM Enterprises. His idea became reality only after such preproduction chores as marketing, printing, and distribution had thoroughly been researched. Representatives of the Dodgers and Fernando both gave enthusiastic approval to the poster project.

The "Fernando" mural was created by David Botello, Wayne Healy, and George Yepes of East Los Streetscapers, an internationally-known Chicano mural team born out of the East Los Angeles mural explosion of the early 1970's. In addition to their many street murals, ELS have painted before the public at art workshops, gallery shows, concerts, and folklife festivals. Their work is currently on exhibit in Bucharest, Rumania and will travel throughout the Eastern Bloc nations under the auspices of the U.S. State Department.

### For Further Information Call:

Armando Molina  
AM Enterprises,  
(213) 616-4550  
(213) 424-3115

Wayne Healy  
East Los Streetscapers  
(213) 223-2634



Photo by Worth Booth

## Olympic Mural Project

Using freeway walls as "canvasses," 10 Los Angeles artists commissioned by the Olympic Arts Festival are creating new mural landmarks, several located in the corridor between City Hall and the Coliseum, all permanent additions to the cityscape. Representing a variety of styles and diverse subject matter, the freeway murals illustrate graphically the rich multi-cultural tradition of Los Angeles. Four muralists' work appears on portions of the Santa Ana Freeway; Willie Heron, north side, east of Alameda; Frank Romero, north side, Alameda to Los Angeles; Glenna Boltuch, south side, Los Angeles to Main; and John Wehrle, north side,

Spring to Broadway. Harbor Freeway walls and abutments serve as "canvas" for artists Judith Baca, 4th Street exit off the freeway; Alonzo Davis, east side bridge abutments where 5th and 6th streets cross the freeway; Terry Schoonhoven, west side, south of 6th Street; Roderick Sykes, retaining wall and abandoned ramp, Flower to north-bound Harbor, south of 23rd Street; and Richard Wyatt, wing walls facing north-bound freeway, east side at Adams overcross and at Flower Street overcross. Brockman Productions served as co-producer on the mural project and sites were provided by Caltrans. The mural projects are part of the 1984 Olympic Arts Festival that will run for 10 weeks, from June 1 through Aug. 12. It will include major presentations in dance, music, theater and a variety of the visual arts.

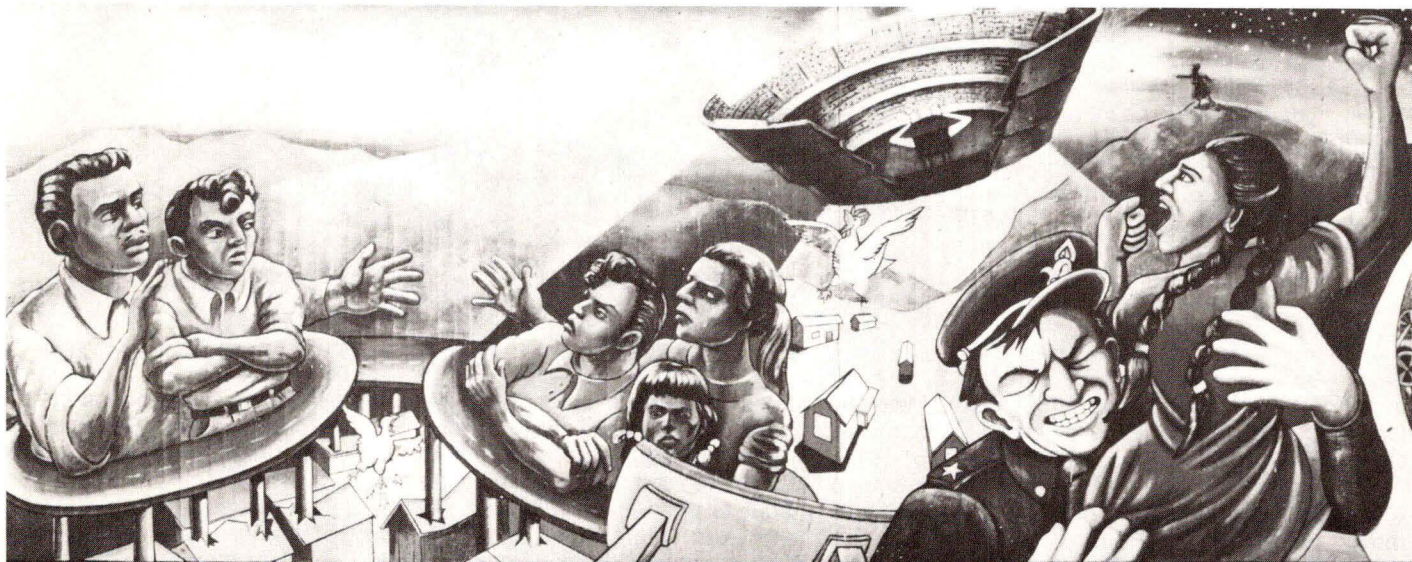


## The Great Wall of Los Angeles 1983 Summer Project

Now more than 2,000 feet long and over 13 feet high, The Great Wall of Los Angeles will stretch for more than a mile when it is completed. The most recently done segments offer a look into the 1950's and were painted by a crew of 30 local youth, seven artist super-

visors and muralist-director Judith Baca. This 350-foot wallwork attained sponsorship from such groups as the National Endowment of the Arts, the California Council for the Humanities, the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee and numerous other groups

and individuals. With the aid of over a dozen humanist scholars and historians, workshops and programs were held for the muralists in selecting, designing and enlivening the images.



**DIVISION OF THE BARRIOS & CHAVEZ RAVINE**

(A) *Chavez Ravine and the Division of the Chicano Community*—Freeways encircle and dislocate various areas in L.A., effectively dividing minority communities. In this panel, a Chicano family is separated by the serpentine thoroughfares as the pillared highway breaks through the roofs of houses. Resembling a UFO, massive Dodger Stadium descends from the twilight sky into Chavez Ravine. A bulldozer and policemen forcibly uproot the Chicano community so that Dodger Stadium can be built on land designated at one time for public housing. Many individuals resisted this forced eviction from their neighborhoods, but to no avail.



(B) *Olympic Champions 1948 - 1964: Breaking Barriers*—In this final panel, a woman runner carries the Olympic torch, its flame and smoke swirling into scenes of athletes who overcome tremendous obstacles in order to win Olympic events. Billy Mills, a Dakota-Ogala marathon runner, overcame his repression in boarding schools to become an important symbol for Native American pride. Black runner Wilma Rudolf overcame her childhood infirmities (being unable to walk until her eighth birthday) and won three gold medals. Sammy Lee, a Korean American diver, and Vicky Manalo Draves, a Filipino diver, each won gold metals. The symbolic final runner carries the torch of the 1950's into the civil rights movement of the 1960's.

## Caminemos Juntos

*My greatest teacher of all has been the community. The values and subject matter for my murals have come directly from the people and it is for the community that I paint. If I have a particular talent, and in my case it is muralism, I have an obligation to the community to depict the struggle for dignity and life. I have to look down on my oppressor and say, 'this oppressive system has got to go.' I will do everything I can through my muralism to awaken consciousness and to show the dignity of people despite the oppressiveness of their lives. We have a moral imperative and that's what I am working on.*

Leo Tanguma

A monumental, sculptural mural on the theme of gang violence is currently in progress at the parish hall of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Denver, Colorado. The moving force behind this project is Leo Tanguma, a Mexican American artist-activist who recently moved to Denver from Houston, Texas.

Tanguma, the son of a migrant farmworker, grew up in Beeville, Texas. He began drawing and painting at an early age and is primarily a self-taught muralist. He has painted 17 murals; his first major project, while in the service, was done in the early 60s. In 1968 he joined the militant, statewide Mexican-American Youth Organization, a group of community activists in search of their own roots. It was a time in which years of anger and frustration were made vocal under the auspices of grass roots organizations such as the La Raza Unida Party. For Tanguma, it proved to be the stimulus that led him to paint in monumental form what he saw, heard and felt around him.

In 1970 Leo began his first Houston mural while working as a Vista supervisor, which took him into all parts of the city. This gave him further insights into the poverty, police brutality, and discrimination that is woven into the fabric of Black and Chicano communities. Using this first-hand information, Leo designed a mural titled *We Must Overcome This Oppression* for the conference room of the Casa de Amigos Community Center, part of an effort to involve dispossessed and alienated youth in meaningful activity.

Tanguma's concern for "indicting the system that has condemned us," as he told a reporter in 1980, was further strengthened when he visited Mexico in 1972 and met Siqueiros who was to have an important influence on his work. The



Photos by Leo Tanguma

Mexican muralist impressed upon Tanguma (along with other Chicano activists of Houston) that "human history is a monumental experience." He told the American muralists that they should not make the mistake of painting merely folkloric material but to express themes from their own lives and history. Meeting Mexican intellectuals and artists gave the American muralists a lot more faith in themselves. They also came away with the realization that as cultural workers they had the possibility of becoming direct voices of the community and representatives of oppressed people.

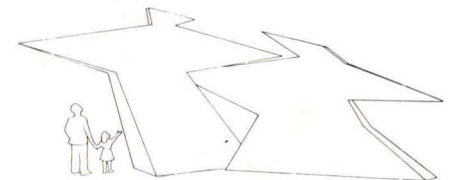
Tanguma enrolled at Texas Southern University in 1973 where he met Dr. John Biggers, Chairman of the Art Department, the second artist who was to have an impact on his development as an artist. He notes, "I have a tremendous respect for him. He taught me about the Black experience which motivated me to look at my own culture in depth, and it helped reaffirm my commitment to the Mexican-American experience."

Tanguma's best known work is the 240' wide x 18' high mural, *Rebirth of our Nationality*, painted in 1973 on the wall of the Continental Can Company of Houston. Leo notes that this mural "portrays the awakening of the self, the awareness of La Raza. As our people become more aware of our history, we see we are unique in the kind of problems we have, because they stem from our cultural alienation from the greater society."

Among Tanguma's other works are *The People's Judgment Against Institutionalized Brutality and Racism* (1978-79), a large structural mural, which deals with the subject of police brutality. It in-

cludes the faces of youths allegedly killed by the Houston Police Department. Another mural titled *Dos Caminantes en un Amanecer de Invierno* (Travelers on a Winter Dawn) was painted in 1977 for the City of La Porte Senior Citizen's Center. Leo's last mural before coming to Denver was *Humanity in Harmony with Nature*, a three part structural mural.

In February of this year Tanguma began his first mural project in Denver titled *Caminemos Juntos* (Let Us Walk Together). Two abstract, sculptural forms representing the human body are



designed to complement each other either in a harmonious embrace, or from the opposite perspective, in a gesture of struggle and confrontation. One mural portrays the false values, conflicts and pains arising from gang violence, counterposed against a second mural in which young people bury false values and work together for a brighter, more hopeful future.

The theme of gang violence was prompted by the shootings, beatings and knifings which are an everyday occurrence in minority communities. There are over 30 youth gangs in Denver. Young people in poor communities feel quite powerless to deal with the problems they are confronted with—a sense of belonging, identity, self-worth and acceptance by their peers. The formation

of gangs is a sad and tragic answer to these needs. These sculptural murals are designed to be rotated to different strategic locations in the city where people congregate. It is hoped that the mural's visibility will provoke viewers to explore the values that prompt young people to inflict violence upon each other and to arrive at alternative solutions to their problems.

Leo Tanguma discussed his current mural and artistic philosophy in a recent interview:

"The shorter panel, on the right side measures 9½' in height x 22' in width. At its widest point, in the center of the mural, a violent struggle between two young people is depicted. It is ironic that they come from the same body as they move in a circular motion. Each holds a knife in his bloody hands and views the other with a face distorted by anger. Coming between them is a terrified old woman dressed in black who could be the mother of one of the boys. In her hands she holds a real mirror where people can see themselves and be a part of the mural for a moment. We are going to have the mirror shattered and held together with glue so a deformed image is reflected.

"There are other figures surrounding the two fighters. To the right, towering over them, is a skeletal figure that holds the scales of justice in one hand. I hope to show her face as being cynical and evil. In her right hand she holds an ancient and deformed scale of justice which are unbalanced—possibly it doesn't work anymore. In her other hand she holds a cocktail glass. She has a flowing dress and part of her skirt extends downward and transforms itself into a monster-like figure. He is a pusher attempting to force his drugs onto a young girl who is trying to escape him.

"The other part of the skirt flows to the right and through an opening, we see a false sense of culture amongst Chicanos. I have shown a *cholo*, a *pachuco*, a low-rider, call it what you want, all dressed-up. At his feet is a woman, a voluptuous woman, but nevertheless a puppet with a doll-like face. Behind the *cholo* will be a car, a low-rider of some kind or simply an expensive car—something that enhances the ego, lets say, in the sense of manhood.

"Below the two central struggling figures is a woman in mourning. Almost touching her shoulder is a branch from an old, withered tree trunk. Another branch extends to the hands of an old, wrinkled-faced man. He has white emaciated hands and a diamond on his tie. He has a sheepish grin on his face, almost as if he is a little embarrassed about himself. By this figure I symbolize

obsolete and unworkable attempts to solve the problems of gang violence. They cannot be solved without the elimination of poverty, cultural alienation, racism and sexism.

"The city at the top of the mural towers over the entire scene. I have one of the buildings as a cash register



(modeled after the United Bank Building in downtown Denver.) It is collecting money from the people, in essence sucking their life blood.

"From behind the skeletal woman, the corrupt justice of our society, emerges an androgynous, red struggling figure. It looks upwards as it works to free its left hand from the corrupt and vulgar elements in our society. The right arm is already free. I mean to suggest a personification of our conscience that is still muffled and blindfolded in regard to the violence that exists.

"Finally, in the midst of all, on the bottom center, I have placed a little girl holding a book in her hands. I haven't painted in the lettering yet. If I had left the girl off the mural, the composition would have been just as good and just as organized. I am suggesting that society is ignoring one of the basic ideals of humanity—'Love thy neighbor as thy self,' the words I will paint on the pages of the book."

"I know some people may feel an image of a small girl with a book reading 'Love thy neighbor as thy self' is a somewhat sentimental visual statement. However, I am not going to stop myself from saying things that appear simple, but are meaningful to me. This is part of my style which I feel goes back to the first days when I painted signs and posters for our meetings in the early Chicano movement. The initial, as well as my present motives, are based on moral precepts.

"I like this composition very much. I seem to have a greater facility to paint pain rather than pleasure. I had more problems with the second panel of the ideal future.

"The taller panel, on the left-hand side, measures 12' in height x 20' in width. It is leaning to the left to suggest motion in that direction. It is as if the arm reaches over to uplift the one that I have just described to you. It seems to say, 'Get up from that condition! Get up from there and let's walk towards the light!'"

"We begin at the bottom where we see a black underground area. There's a cut-off view where we can see what has been buried—a skeletal figure of injustice, the white hat of the old man (the old ways), the knives and brass knuckles, and the old stereotypical racist and sexist masks.

"On top of the discarded false values is an earth mound from which merges a newly planted, seedling tree—perhaps symbolic of new beginnings. A young man with a shovel is doing the planting. I'm trying to show him as a being very muscular and strong, with a determined and self-satisfied smile at what he is doing. A young girl standing next to the *cholo* seems proud and pleased by his efforts. She points to the left in the direction that all the activity on this panel is moving. From his hand emerge flowery glyphs that are meant to represent literature, poetry and culture. (This is based on representations of pre-Columbian people, in relief sculptures and hieroglyphics, shown as having glyphs coming out of their mouths as they are speaking.) Her other hand is connected with the tree of new beginnings.

"Lower to the right are shown three women—an Anglo, a Black and a Chicana, and their hands are almost connected as they reach upwards. From the young tree a rainbow has formed,



and it travels through the midst of all that is depicted. It goes behind a community or barrio which is the north side of Denver, or it could be any barrio. This rainbow goes through our lives and on into infinity to a better, more beautiful future. I like to think about it in this way—so magical, like some mystical ribbon of culture, color, harmony and justice.

"As the rainbow moves upward it seems to embrace a group of people that now hold collectively in their hands the scales of justice. They are seeing to it that it is delicately balanced. Therefore, I worked hard to create hands that are expressive of character and at the same time are gentle. Again, I painted a multi-racial group of people.

"Almost in the center top, I've shown a group of young people with smiling faces. They extend their hands to the panel on the right as if hoping to invite their fellow-beings to join them on the road that goes through the rainbow to a brighter future. Coming towards them, from the right, is an older woman dressed in brilliant colors. She is holding a mirror that reflects her smiling face in contrast to the mirror, on the other panel, that can only reveal the distorted, concerned faces of people afflicted by the problems of gang violence.

"The little girl with the book, who was ignored previously, is now in the van-

guard. The Biblical scripture of "Love thy neighbor as thy self" is no longer forgotten or ignored. Once the values that oppress us are buried we can begin to appreciate each other.

"If someone likes my drawings or the formal qualities only, and does not respond to the thematic content, I would not be satisfied. I think it is about time Chicanos took style seriously and begin to see by what visual language we can most directly appeal to the conscience of the community. I want to provoke a discussion when people look at my murals, and I want them to begin to ask questions about the society they live in. I want the greater society to respect what we do in the barrio. I am going to try to give my murals the greatest eloquence that I can in the name of the community. As I have in the past, my work will continue to challenge the viewer both ideologically and aesthetically."

Mary Meadows  
with Jim Prigoff



## CHICANAS SPEAK OUT

Venice / **Betty Ann Brown**

Consciousness is perforce selective. When we shop for a new car, that becomes the only kind that we notice on the freeway, and when we become pregnant, images of fertility and childbirth seem to dominate our experience. This is one reason why *Chicana Voices & Visions*, at the Social and Public Arts Resource Center (SPARC), appealed so strongly to me. Several of the exhibiting artists deal with the fantasy and vulnerability of impending motherhood.

Liz Lerma Bowerman created four "body masks" of her pregnant torso as it expanded through term. Each plaster cast has cotton lacings "to allow people to tie them on and experience the volume of a pregnant body." Barbara Carrasco's lithograph *Pregnant Woman in a Ball of Yarn* is a moving depiction of a woman bound in the very material from which she is knitting a bootie. The image was, she tells us, "inspired by the effect my brother's chauvinism had on his wife." Graciela Carrillo's *Madre Maguey* is an elaborate tempera portrait of a pregnant woman with a male child in the brilliant mandala of her belly, surrounded by verdant cactus spines. The woman's dreamy, Pre-Raphaelite face is ringed by a head-dress of flowers. A rich tapestry of Indian patterns behind her includes the feathered

serpent, the fertile lizard and the conch shell that was used by pre-Columbian priests to call the masses to worship.

New life is not the only recurring theme in the diverse exhibition at SPARC, however. There is also a fatalistic examination of death and of the social ills that all too often hasten it. Sandra Maria Rodriguez's *La Edad* (The Age) is a dark death mask of Mexico's patron saint, the Virgin of Guadalupe. The face is wreathed by blood red roses and intertwining lizards that "refer to her pre-Hispanic antecedents when, as a goddess, she wore a skirt of snakes." As curator Shifra Goldman notes in the catalog essay, the pre-Columbian symbolic system has inspired much Chicana art. Another influence, seen in the dense, folk-art-like composition and expressive intensity of *La Edad*, is the work of Frida Kahlo.

Equally powerful, but with more overt political content, are the works of Esther Hernandez and Carmen Rodriguez. Hernandez's *Sun Mad* is a striking reworking of the Sun Maid Raisins box. The vapid woman of the logo has become a *calavera* (skeleton), and below the yellow solar disc is written, "Unnaturally Grown with Insecticides, Miticides, Herbicides, Fungicides." Rodriguez's *The Lost Ones* is a mixed-media work involving the multiple printing

of *DESPARACIDO* in red on a black grid behind an Orozco-like screaming mouth. *The Lost Ones* represents a last, anguished cry from the thousands who have been caused to disappear throughout Central America.

But the exhibit is not just an external mirror for this or any other viewer's internal consciousness. It is, above all, a profound record of Chicana images in Chicana terms. Perhaps the most compelling works are self-portraits. Yreina Cervantez gives us a double self-portrait in *Un Secreto*. The second self refers to the duality inherent in the Mexican experience and recalls Kahlo's monumental *Dos Fridas* of 1939. The green serpent that coils around Cervantez's neck alludes to the pre-Columbian concept of *nahual* or magical animal counterpart.

*Chicana Voices & Visions* includes the work of twenty-seven artists from six states. One of the many self-portraits in the exhibit, Santa Barraza's etched *Autorretrato* is inscribed, "Shifra, no te olvidas de nosotros, las chicanas de Tejas" (Shifra, don't forget us, the Chicanas of Texas). No viewer who experiences the variety and vitality of this exhibit can ever forget the art of these Chicanas. □

Betty Ann Brown, *Artweek*, January 14, 1984

## Giving peace a chance

Judith Neisser

It's certainly not your typical Establishment museum ensconced in neoclassical trappings. Its home is a lavender and peach storefront at 364 West Erie Street. Its expanding permanent collection includes a four-leaf clover picked more than 35 years ago by a Hiroshima survivor, an abundance of antiwar buttons, and a Fritz Eichenberg lithograph of a dove swooping down on a hawk. But as the world's first and only peace museum, its *raison d'être* is as unique as its exhibits.

"What we're trying to do here is to explore issues of war and peace through the visual, literary, and performing arts," says the museum's co-founder and director, Mark Rogovin. "Our purpose is to grab people on an emotional level, to raise their consciousness to the urgency of the nuclear question and the many other issues involved in building peace." And it appears that Rogovin, his staff of seven, and a veritable "peace army" of 40 volunteers are doing just that. In the 19 months since the museum opened, nearly 75,000 people have viewed eight art exhibitions and attended a variety of films, lectures, concerts, and festivals, all intended, according to Rogovin, "to communicate the horrors of war and/or express the visions and dreams of peace."

The idea for a peace museum first came to Rogovin, a 36-year-old muralist, almost a decade ago. While cleaning out a garage behind the Public Art Workshop, he and some other artists uncovered several props that they had created for a 1972 anti-Vietnam War demonstration. Rogovin recalls: "One of the guys said, 'These things are taking up too much space. Let's



THE DOVE AND THE HAWK by Fritz Eichenberg

throw them out.' And I said, 'Hell, no! These are some of the elements that led to the signing of the Vietnam peace treaty. Plus they're good works of art. They belong in a peace museum.'"

So what started out as a casual remark turned into an obsession. In the next several months Rogovin devoted countless hours to exploring his idea with more than 150 artists, businessmen, filmmakers, and peace activists. His original plan for a gallery dedicated to the preservation of buttons, banners, picket signs, and other antiwar memorabilia eventually grew into a more sophisticated concept—a multipurpose center that would display peace-related art works and sponsor performances and educational events addressing issues of war and peace.

Fund raising was difficult, and for a long time Rogovin made little progress. Then, in 1979, he came across a newspaper photo of Marjorie Benton, a community leader, peace activist, and former U.S. am-

bassador to UNICEF, brandishing one of his picket signs at a demonstration protesting an arms exhibition in Rosemont. Rogovin contacted Benton and laid out his dreams for a peace museum. "It clicked right from the beginning," Benton remembers. "Mark's artistic commitment and social conscience, combined with my experience with the movement and organizational and fund-raising capabilities, came together in the most incredible way."

Within a year and a half, Rogovin's dream became a reality. The Peace Museum opened to considerable fanfare, with Mayor Byrne and Governor Thompson proclaiming November 15, 1981, Peace Museum Day in Chicago and Illinois.

The curator, Marianne Philbin, explains that the museum consciously varies the emotional tenor of its shows. "We don't want to bombard people constantly with gory images of war," she says. "For instance, Daumier to Doones-

bury: Cartoons and Caricatures on War and Peace, a fun show with serious undertones, preceded our most gripping exhibition to date, The Unforgettable Fire." The latter, which included 70 drawings and paintings by the survivors of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, gave the museum much-needed recognition. More than 30,000 people attended, including 12,500 schoolchildren.

In addition to its focus on nuclear disaster, the museum is also concerned with the plight of political prisoners, human-rights struggles, and the threat of totalitarianism.

This September, it will produce its most ambitious show to date. Through visuals, concerts, and films, the exhibition, Give Peace a Chance: Music and the Struggle for Peace, will celebrate the contributions of Pete Seeger, Joan Baez, James Taylor, and other musicians who have inspired peace efforts. The highlight of the show will be material from Yoko Ono's personal archives—six gold records, original art works, sheet music, signed posters, and other memorabilia from the John Lennon/Yoko Ono peace campaigns. Rogovin expects that 150,000 people will attend.

And that's just the beginning. Benton looks forward, she says, "to the day when the Peace Museum is right downtown with other museums . . . when it is considered mainstream and Establishment. We'd like to see it expand in the educational area, especially for young people. We'd like it to be a model for a peace museum in every city. But most of all, we look forward to the day when peace is no longer controversial." ■

# Vandalism outrages Stanford gay group

**San Francisco Examiner**  
Wed., Mar. 7, 1984

STANFORD — Gay students at Stanford University are planning a demonstration Monday to protest last night's vandalism on campus of a \$150,000 bronze statue that depicts gay relationships.

The statue, created by sculptor George Segal, was severely damaged by a hammer-wielding vandal, according to Geerard Koskovich, a member of the steering committee of the Stanford Gay and Lesbian Alliance.

Koskovich, a doctoral candidate in art history, estimated it will cost more than \$40,000 to repair the statue.

The statue depicts two gay men standing near two lesbian women who are sitting on a bench. The figures are bronze-coated with a white finish.

The vandal struck the figures at least 40 times with a hammer, gouging the statue's finish and exposing the bronze underneath, Koskovich said. The nose of one of the women figures was nearly flattened, he said.

"It appears that whoever did it used a ballpeen hammer," Koskovich said. "All the dents in the figures are rounded."

The statue is on loan to the university until a permanent home can be found. The sculpture originally was destined to be displayed in Los Angeles, but the City Council there rejected it after it caused a controversy within the gay community there.

The sculpture has been informally offered to San Francisco, but no decision has been made to accept it, according to Koskovich.

The vandalism occurred last night shortly before 8 p.m., according to

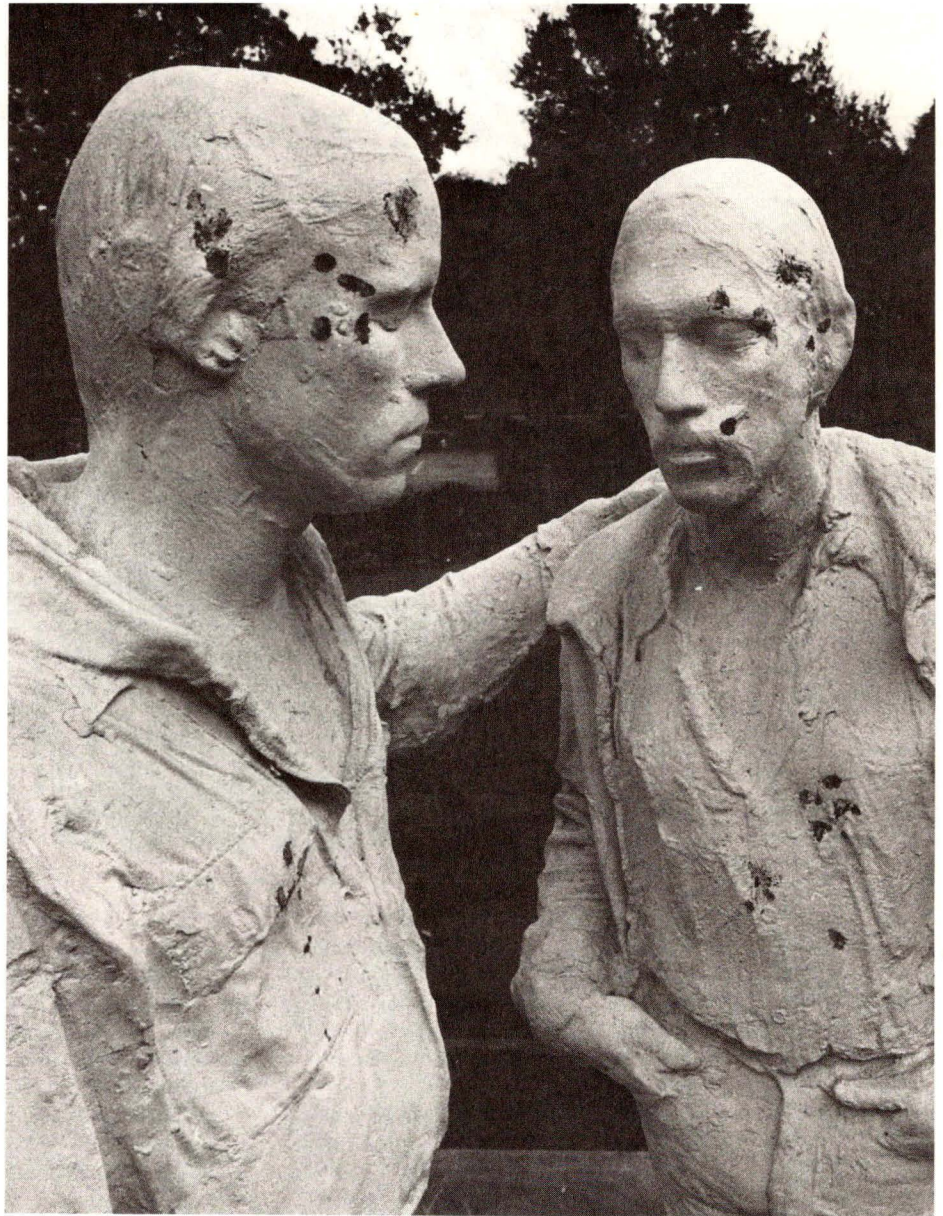


Photo by Katy Raddatz

campus police. A student who was riding his bike near Lomita Mall, where the statue is located, told police he heard a hammering sound and stopped to investigate.

The witness, Gilbert Ureno, said he saw a man carrying a hammer walking away from the statue.

"I threw my bike in the bushes. I didn't run after him, but followed quietly behind him, hoping he would get in a car so I could get a license plate number," Ureno said.

Ureno lost sight of the man near Jordan Hall.

The hammer-carrying man was described as white, about 6 feet tall, 23 to

25 years old, with dark hair and a beard.

Jeff Williams, a press spokesman for the Gay and Lesbian Alliance, said some gay students planned to wear black arm bands on campus today to protest the vandalism. Other students planned to leave flowers near the defaced statue.

A rally also is being planned for Monday on campus, he said.

"The fact that these statues were so violently defaced is a symptom of homophobia that is prevalent in our society," he said. "The sculpture is no longer a monument to gay liberation. It is now tangible evidence of violence against the gay community."

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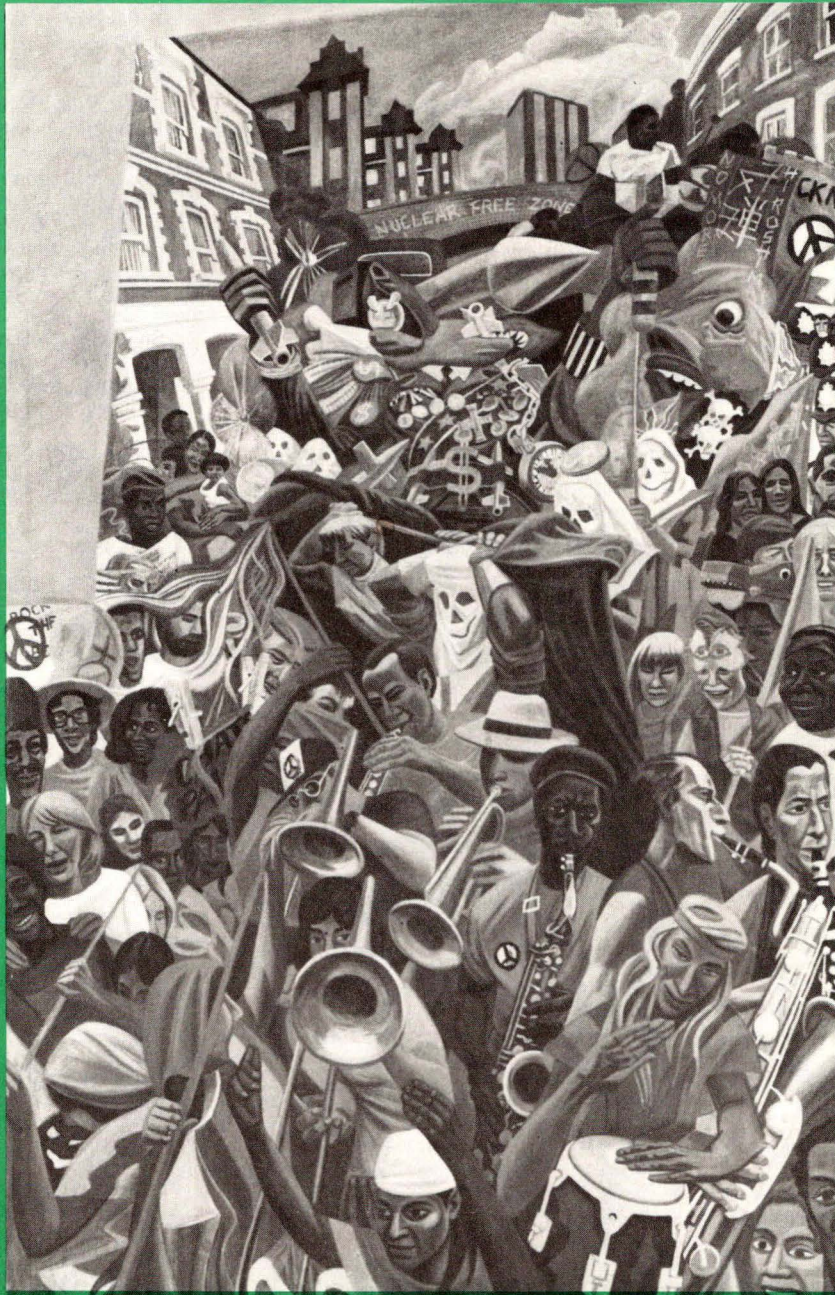
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Carol Kenna  
(with additional comments  
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