

COMMUNITY MURALS

FALL
1983



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Editorial Group

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Labor donated

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Cover: *Fire Hose/Fight Back*, Richard V. Correll © 1971

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Deadline

Any material for our next issue, Winter 1984, must be in our hot little hands before Monday, January 23, 1984. Especially effective are good black and white glossy photos showing the artwork (not hero/heroine shots), with extended captions. Most important, send us what you have. Tell us about your experiences as a community visual artist, how your images have changed over the past several years. Write to us.

Corrections

We inadvertently reprinted an article in the last issue, Spring 1983, where the author was incorrectly identified. The article titled "A Billboard Without Graffiti is Something Quite Outrageous," was written by B.U.G.A.U.P.

COMMUNITY MURALS

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EDITORIAL

Making Connections

Murals make connections. They build visual bridges in communities and so do other community visual arts. With this issue *CMM* includes more material on non-mural progressive visual arts, "off the wall." Many of the practical, theoretical and aesthetic concerns which affect muralists are also of importance to other producers of socially-directed public art. Muralists are not the only ones who have to deal with community organizing, fundraising and aesthetic-political balance. Many artists work within disciplines with as rich a history and exciting a present as murals, and we hope to share this with those who have chosen walls as their vehicle instead of paper or cloth. We welcome and encourage comments, articles and graphics from these visual artists.

In fact, this expansion of non-mural community visual arts in *CMM* might serve as a sort of model for all of us in connecting with others in our work. Certainly the list of right-wing regimes is a long one, and has been building for a number of years. When we look to countries such as South Africa, the Phillipines, Chile and El Salvador, we see that public-minded artists are often arrested, jailed, tortured. These dictatorships understand the potential power of art, and repress it viciously, as inscribed in *Hispanic Art from Outrage*, Spring 1983 *CMM*. More "democratic" countries also oppress artists and ideas, but often more subtly, as in the United States, West Germany, Great Britain. Recently in San Francisco *contras* (lawless counterrevolutionaries from Central America) have begun vandalising homes and newspaper offices of progressive workers. This might remind all of us of the need to keep our art on target, to distinguish the real enemies to attack and like-minded to work with. We focus on these countries because it is here that our efforts can have their greatest effect, but to do so we must build more bridges between different sectors of the many-sided community arts and political movements.

As one example, actor-director R.G. Davis, founder of the S.F. Mime Troupe recently wrote in a letter "To the Artistic Community" in *City Arts Magazine* (Sept. 1983, p. 7):

The freeze movement in this country would look less like an ice cream movement (all vanilla) if it joined with the non-intervention movement, and the Central American non-interventionists would be less parochial if they viewed the anti-nuke movement as part of an anti-imperialist strategy. This suggestion is not unique to me; a number of others in these two movements see the problem as two-sided. Artists, one hopes, might see the whole more readily. . . .

Single-issue movements are ineffective against . . . massive double dealing. This time we must be more imaginative and thoughtful. Both "No nukes" and "No intervention" are broader confrontations against the barbarians. . . . Let's make sure we are walking (running, jumping) and kicking with both legs. . . .

There is common ground among many of the single-issue movements because the enemy is ultimately the same. And while making bonds with other progressive groups we do not forget the history of strong, committed arts and artists in the U.S. Our cover is both 1971 and (unfortunately) 1983, and we hope it signals a rise in multi-generational unity as well as in a stronger welding of different forms of community visual arts throughout our common movement.

BRIEFS

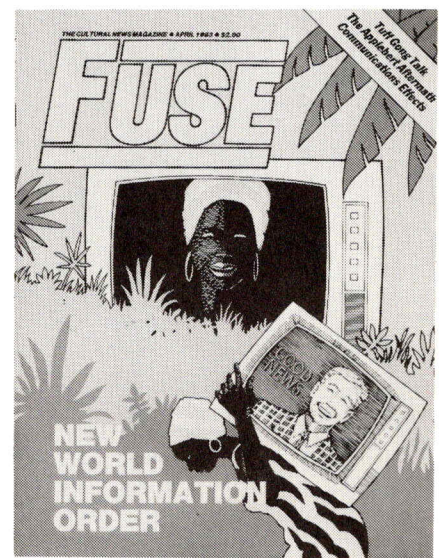


Art & Artists (280 Broadway, New York, NY 10007). A & A is published by the Foundation for the Community of Artists, a New York-based support service. Each issue of the tabloid-format newsletter magazine contains articles of immediate, practical use (such as health hazards of art supplies) as well as on broader subjects such as arts-related legislation and strategies for integrating artwork with political change. Recent issues have included articles on the Chicago Artists Coalition and the *Heresies* collective, the problematic aesthetics of anti-nuclear art, and the recent New York "Artists Authorship Rights Act" which can give an artist a continuing interest in his/her artwork *after* it has been sold. Monthly, \$12/year, and well worth it.

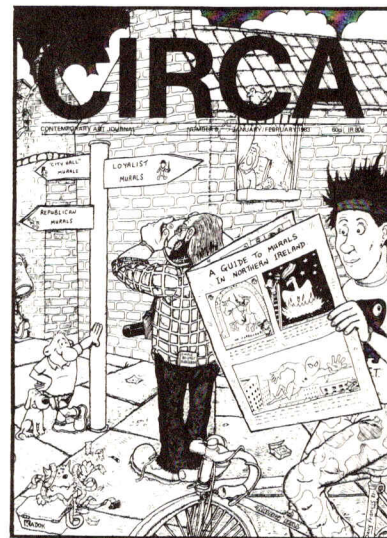
Art Network (P.O. Box 439, Broadway, Sydney 2007, Australia). A fascinating view of current Australian culture. There is simply no U.S. counterpart; it's far more left than any slick arts magazine, and it's much better produced than most progressive culture magazines. Its emphasis is on visual arts, with full-color reproductions and eye-catching design. Articles include exhibit reviews, analyses of arts policies, conference reports, and debates within the arts community. I strongly recommend back issue #5, which includes two excellent articles on the Australian mural and poster movements, a history of community arts programs, a report on a conference on art and trade unions, and several works in progress. Quarterly, \$20/year, \$5 back issues.

FUSE (Arton's Publishing, Inc., Suite 202, 379 Adelaide St. West, Toronto, Ontario M5V 1S5, Canada). This is perhaps the best single English-language progressive cultural news magazine available. There are other publications which are better at covering specific forms (*Community Murals*, *Jump Cut*) or constituencies (*Heresies*), but none provide the breadth of information on a consistent basis that *FUSE* does.

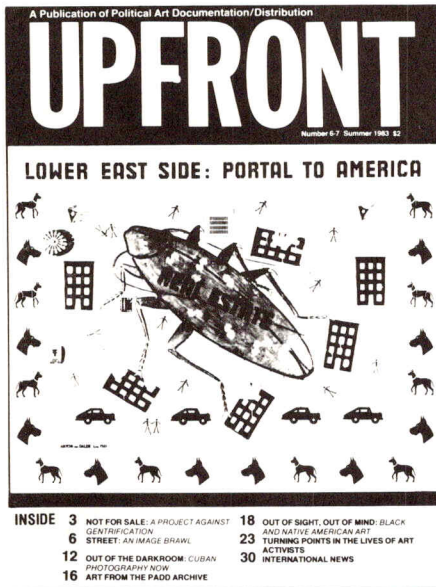
Although its primary focus is Canadian culture, it regularly carries articles about groups, performances and exhibits in the U.S. It is, in fact, its non-U.S. orientation which accounts for much of its impact. Not only does it deal with developments in English-speaking Canada, England and Australia, it also



carefully includes French-Canadian, Australian aboriginal and international cultural news. Recent issues have included articles on the status of women in Canadian theater, a panel discussion on Judy Chicago's "Dinner Party", Australian artists and the Left, and music in Cameroun. Each issue is jammed with book and exhibit reviews, surveys of video offerings, critical perspectives, poetry, and interviews. Six issues/year, \$15 individuals, \$21 for institutions.



Circa is a Contemporary Art Journal from Northern Ireland, published by the Artists Collective of Northern Ireland, 22 Lombard Street, Belfast BT1 1RD, Northern Ireland. Its No. 8 issue, January/February 1983, was devoted almost entirely to articles discussing the murals in Northern Ireland, some twenty-one pages worth, with black and white photos. We hope to publish some of this material in future issues.



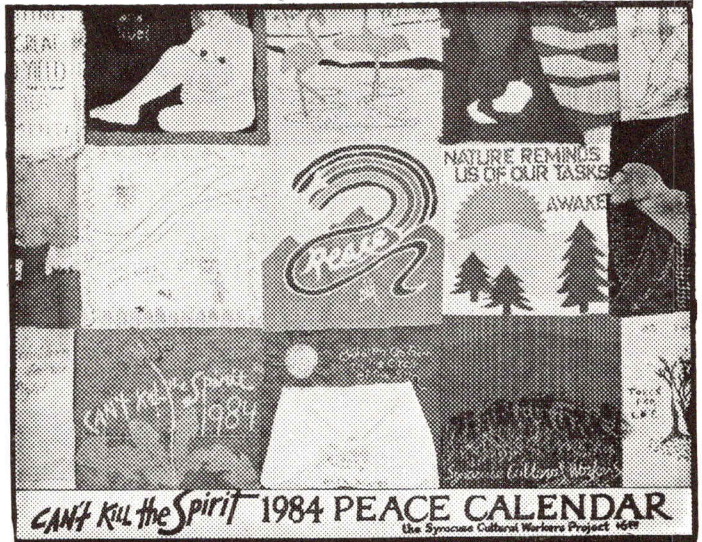
UPFRONT (339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012). This is the primary publication of New York's Political Art Documentation and Distribution group (PADD). It is an excellent source of information about progressive artists and groups in the U.S., and routinely carries news from activist artists around the world. It's lively, with numerous graphics and photos complementing many brief articles. Almost all issues include exhibit and conference reviews, interviews with artists, and reproductions of current art works. Some recent topics covered include urban redevelopment (and artists' roles in gentrification), artmaking by people of color, and art teaching. Published several times yearly; get 4 issues for \$8 made out to PADD.

Lincoln Cushing

On September 10, artist Terry Brackenbury was seriously injured in a scaffolding accident while mounting mural panels in Chicago. Terry will face a lengthy hospital stay and lengthy recuperation. Although he has some health insurance, he is without workman's compensation. Terry has worked on projects for Jeff Greene and is a friend of Ray Patlan. Terry has generously volunteered his time over the years to help on various Chicago murals. We hope to raise money to cover his expenses.

Artists in Chicago are organizing a benefit for Terry in Chicago on December 2, 1983 at Ruiz Belvis Cultural Center, 1632 N. Milwaukee at 7:00. Anyone wishing to help can send contributions to:

Friends of Terry Brackenbury
 c/o: M. Hogan
 7419 N. Damen
 Chicago, IL 60645



CALENDAR FOR 1984

The Syracuse Cultural Workers Project 1984 Peace Calendar, *Can't Kill the Spirit*, is now available for \$6.50. It is a wonderful collection of images in many media celebrating the persistence of positive, creative growth under often difficult circumstances. It may be ordered from the Syracuse Cultural Workers Project, P.O. Box 6367K, Syracuse, NY 13217. \$7.75 by mail each, 3/\$20, 5/\$31. Wholesale prices available, and gift cards.

Coit Tower San Francisco: Its History and Art

This is a new guide book to San Francisco's famous Coit Tower, written by Masha Zakheim Jewett and with photographs by Don Beatty, published on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the monument in October 1983. Its 136 pages are full of accurate, fascinating, reliable information about Coit Tower and its extensive murals. The layout is excellent, as is the organization and "feel" of the book. It is obviously a work of great affection while also being a significant documentation of public visual arts.

The book does not purport to offer critical examinations of the complex political forces which swirled around the painting of the murals, but it presents in a straightforward, objective fashion the information needed to understand the interior frescoes and paintings. The book's information must be a part of our perspective on New Deal murals from now on.

My single complaint with the book is the lack of photos showing the murals from a distance so we can gain a sense of how they relate to the architecture and their specific locations within the circular building. The excellent color photographs taken by Beatty, however, capture the spirit of the rich historical/social detail the artists put into their works.

The book may be ordered for \$11.25 (add 50¢ handling for each additional copy) from Volcano Press, 330 Ellis Street, San Francisco, CA 94102.

Tim Drescher

Documentation Guidelines

A number of people either new to community murals or new to documentation have wondered exactly what a documentation contains. Is there a particular film to use? Are there certain facts to list? Over the past dozen years a list of information about each mural has emerged which will not, of course, take the place of an extended on-site visit, but which nevertheless does gather essential material in a clear fashion. The basic items to be collected on each community mural include:

- title
- location/address (cross-streets are most helpful)
- date
- size
- muralist(s) (remember, different people may have been involved with conception, design and execution.)
- funding (source and amount)
- wall (type, preparation, paint used. This will be especially important several years from now for artists wondering which methods have withstood weather and time best.)
- content/theme (a brief statement, but one which also identifies figures, symbols which an outsider might not grasp.)
- comments (the place for mention of awards, news coverage, problems, defacements, supports, etc. This is the section which makes the mural come alive to someone unable to visit it in person by connecting it with its surrounding social contexts.)

One further point might be the direction the wall faces, so that a photographer can plan when the sun will be on the painting.

As for film, there is no universally agreed upon type to use, but some things are clear. Black and white glossy prints are by far the best for printed reproductions such as for newspapers and magazines. Color, on the other hand, obviously captures the colors better. Color prints are not very useful, and are very expensive. The standard films used for mural documentation are Kodachrome 64 and Kodachrome 25 slide films, and Ektachrome 400 slide film for interior shots. When necessary, special films may be used in conjunction with special lighting. The 64 speed slide film is a bit faster, and thus "more forgiving," but the color seems a bit richer in the 25, and the image a touch sharper, which is especially important if you plan to enlarge the image.

The best photo documentation of a mural includes a long shot which places the mural in its context architecturally, and geographically in relation to streets, its neighborhood, school, etc. Also, a full shot of just the mural. Taken alone, this looks just like an easel painting, which is why the longer shot is necessary if the uniqueness of a mural is to be captured. Then,

however many details might be useful to show particular sections or details of the wall. Sometimes, wide angle lenses are useful, and even though they may distort the images a bit, they make up for that by showing an entire mural. The most used wide angle lenses are 35° and 28°.

CMM invites further contributions to, comments on this subject.

Tim Drescher

CHICAGO MURAL GROUP

Artist Mitchell Caton has recently completed an indoor mural, *Journey Into Indigo*, at Pride Community Center, 1255 W. 63rd.

CMG has offered a series of programs funded by the Chicago Council on Fine Arts. A training workshop for 160 teachers called "Out of the Classroom, Up on the Walls", focused on helping to foster mural programs in the schools. Workshops for the teachers included sessions in painting, grid systems, mosaic murals, ceramic murals and using movement and "scribble" techniques in mural design. Participating artists were Olivia Gude, Kathy Kozan, Jon Pounds, Lynn Takata and John P. Weber. Ways of integrating murals into the curriculum were stressed. A program for artists with the Chicago Artists Coalition, a workshop for union leaders with the Chicago Labor Education Program, and several forums for visiting artists are included in our years programs.

Ten CMG artists will also be working to create ceramic panels as visiting artists at Whitehead Studio. An exhibit of work will be shown. Jose Berrios, Catherine Cajandig, Mitchell Caton, Carlos Cortez, Jose Guerrero, Kathy Kozan, Celia Radek, Lynn Takata, John P. Weber, and Esther Charbit will be part of the project.

Jon Pounds with Lynn Takata are coordinating a billboard project designed to offer artists temporary spaces for works on paper or canvas. Three outdoor boards are being mounted. (More in next issue.)

Referral Service for Artists

Are you an artist with a health problem related to art materials? A directory of physicians in the United States and Ontario, Canada who are knowledgeable in this area of occupational health has been compiled by the Center for Occupa-

tional Hazards in New York. Artists wishing to be referred to specialists in their region can send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Center for Occupational Hazards, 5 Beekman Place, New York, NY 10038. ■

Network News
March/April 1983

South Africa Reggae Singers Get Jail for 'Seditious' Song

Johannesburg

Two singers from a pop-and-reggae band were sentenced yesterday to four years in prison for singing songs that the South African government said advocated black revolution.

Jose Charles, the 24-year-old lead singer of the group Splash, and singer Rufus Radebe, 18, were given six-year terms, but Regional Court Magistrate W. Aucamp suspended two years of the sentences.

No other members of the group were charged. In presenting

San Francisco Chronicle

☆☆☆☆ Fri., June 3, 1983

their case, prosecutors said Charles and Radebe appeared to be leading the songs that were deemed seditious by indirectly promoting the cause of South Africa's largest guerrilla group the African National Congress.

According to Aucamp, the singers sang "Power Belongs to Us" and "Freedom to Mandela," a reference to Nelson Mandela, the ANC leader imprisoned for life for plotting sabotage.

Associated Press

UNITED STATES

Coit Tower Muralists Honored

A dedication of an art exhibit October 4–20, in City Hall marked the 50th anniversary of the completion of Coit Tower and honored the eight living artists who were among the group of young artists who painted the wonderful murals inside the tower. Edith Hamlin, speaking on behalf of the artist told how instrumental that project had been to her and others in shaping their lives and work.

The artists were also highlighted during the week with celebrations at the tower atop Telegraph Hill. A festive reception in front of their murals with the artists joined by their friends and well-wishers capped these important cultural events.

Susan Swope, curator of the exhibit, furnished us with the following statement.

THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE COIT TOWER MURALS

Recent Work by the Eight Living Coit Tower Artists displays paintings, prints, sculpture, and photographs of architecture by Ralph Chesse, Edith Hamlin, George Harris, William Hesthal, John Langley Howard, Suzanne Scheuer, Edward Takeo Terada, and Bernard Zakheim. The photographs by Don Beatty of the murals provide a way for the audience to see the 50-year span of each artists' work. Early in their career they were muralists, then they all went very different ways. Information about each artist's career provides an insight into the diverse talents of this group.

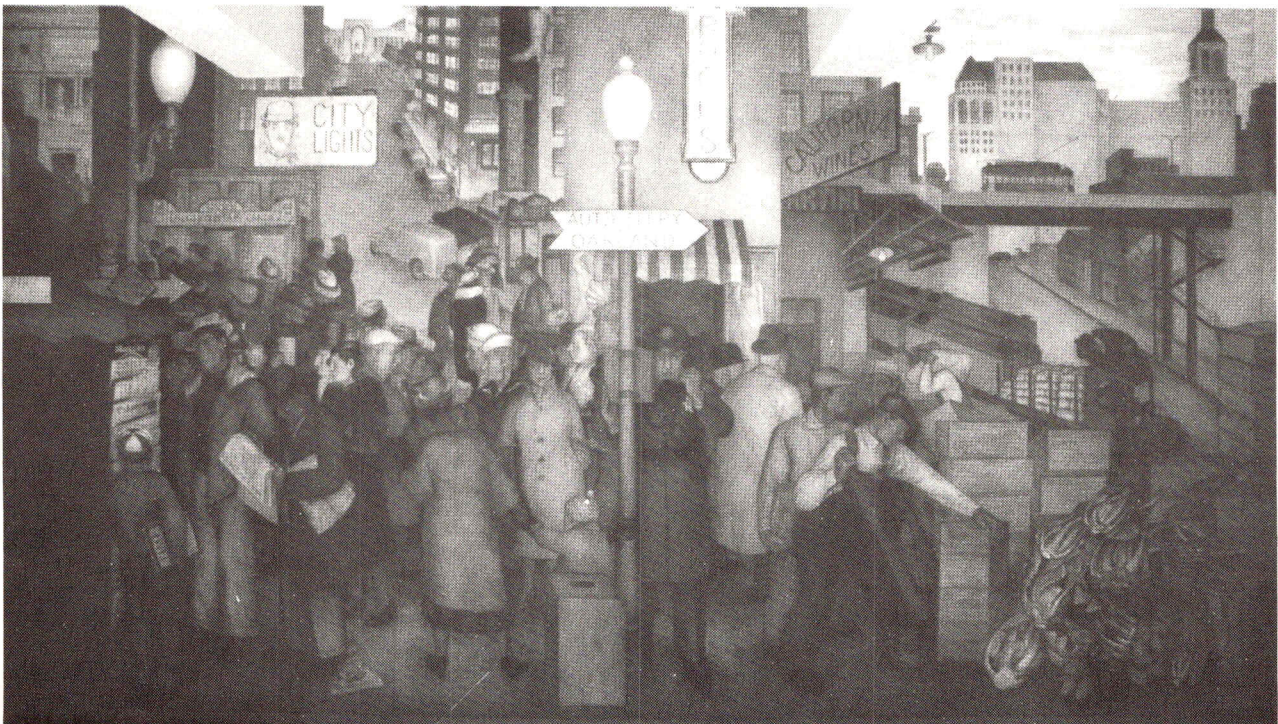
The cultural history aspect of this exhibit documents the political and social context of the 1930s, a turbulent era when

mores changed dramatically. The twenty-seven murals at Coit Tower became a pilot project of the Public Works Art Program (PWAP), and because of their success, the Roosevelt administration financed over hundreds of later murals throughout California. It all began with Lillie Hitchcock Coit's generosity. She bequeathed \$125,000 for the beautification of San Francisco. Four years after her death, Arthur Brown, Jr. won a City commission to design a lasting memorial. His elegant, simple, fluted tower combined neo-classical and art deco architectural styles. Because all funds were used for the construction costs of Coit Tower, Brown received no commission.

Prior to this commission, Brown had designed the San Francisco City Hall, the San Francisco Art Institute, the San Francisco Opera House, and the Veterans Building that today houses the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. For seven years, Brown had studied at L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts and later was a member of L'Institute de France. One of his most notable architectural designs is the enormous Auditorium Group in the Federal Triangle in Washington, D.C.

For three months after its completion, Coit Memorial Tower stood empty with plans to build either a restaurant or a pioneer museum. Bernard Zakheim, an outspoken expressionist artist represented many painters' interests when he telegraphed Washington with plans to paint the inner walls of the Tower with frescos.

In the fall of 1933, Dr. Walter Heil, then the director of the de Young and the Legion of Honor Museums, voiced a similar



Metropolitan Life, 1934; Victor Arnautoff, San Francisco. Photo: © Don Beatty, 1981

idea. From the fifty artists who applied, Dr. Heil and Ralph Stackpole, a prominent sculptor, instructor at the San Francisco Art Institute, and a Coit Tower muralist himself, chose the artists and assigned the subjects. The artists, in turn, chose their own assistants. When funds for this project were depleted, Dr. Heil, in February of 1934, went to Washington, D.C. to meet with New Deal administrators. Eventually, all muralists were paid.

Two very different types of fresco paintings that depict the California scene appeared on the Tower's plaster walls. The Social Realism murals generated tremendous publicity, but only five artists depicted the harsh realities of unemployment, the Maritime Strike in the Spring of 1934 that paralyzed the City's port, and the loss of hope as bankruptcy and hunger became commonplace.

The other twenty artists supported the New Deal and fantasized in their murals when again there would be prosperity and security. The Social Idealism style is best displayed by Jane Berlandia's family scenes painted in egg tempera, Edward Takeo Terada's men playing polo outdoors, Lucien Labaudt's high-society night life on Powell Street before the St. Francis Hotel, and Suzanne Scheuer's newspaper room where everyone is well-fed, well-dressed, and preoccupied with their work.

The Social Idealism murals never received as much publicity as the Social Realism murals painted by Bernard Zakheim, Victor Arnautoff, Clifford Wight, John Langley Howard, and William Hesthal. Wight's mural, the most controversial, showed alternatives to capitalism, which did not seem to be working at the time; Zakheim painted a library scene where readers had freedom of choice; Arnautoff showed the poor robbing the rich; Hesthal painted an idle dock worker symbolic of the 1934 Maritime Strike; and Howard's mural showed the solidarity of organized workers.

While the forty-four Coit Tower artists worked together at Telegraph Hill overlooking the docks, the Maritime workers of the ILA (International Longshoremen Association) were striking for control of hiring practices and increased pay. From Seattle to San Diego, the ports closed on May 9th, while many artists still worked into June.

The controversy began when PWAP project coordinator, Victor Arnautoff, approved a cartoon sketch of a mural study by Clifford Wight that included a hammer and sickle representing Communism, one of the options to Capitalism. Dr. Heil never saw this plan until it was completed.

Arnautoff, Bernard Zakheim, Ralph Stackpole, Maxine Albro, Clifford Wight, and many more Bay Area artists had studied with Diego Rivera (1886-1957), the famous Marxist muralist, in Mexico City. His influence was enormous on both east and west coast artists.

After staying with Rivera, Arnautoff, who fought in the Russian Revolution, arrived in San Francisco just in time for the Coit Tower project. As the project coordinator, his warm support of the artists is remembered by all who worked with him.

In late June, a report from the *Examiner* slipped into the Tower and made a photo of Wight's hammer and sickle and then superimposed it over Zakheim's mural showing a man reaching for *Das Kapital* by Karl Marx. This nationally-syndicated photograph raised eyebrows in Washington and a public outcry jeopardized the entire project. Dr. Heil immediately wired Washington asking for advice and was told to remove the controversial material immediately.

The inaccurate photo appeared in the *Examiner* on July 5, 1934, known as "Bloody Thursday," which Anton Refregier immortalized in the expressive "History of San Francisco" murals at the Rincon Annex Post Office, the last WPA murals, finished in 1948.

On this infamous day, two labor men were shot dead, and the City rallied to the support of the union workers. Forty



Library, 1934; Bernard Zakheim, San Francisco. Photo: © Don Beatty, 1981

thousand people marched down Market Street, led by Veterans of the War in sympathy.

The violence escalated and a General Strike followed from July 16th to 19th. Only twice in American history—in Philadelphia and Seattle—have cities called a general strike. Virtually every business in the City closed and no one entered or left. Vigilante groups raided suspected meeting places of pro-union organizers, while the state militia guarded the waterfront.

The political and social turmoil caused millions of dollars of damage to public and private property. Many lives were lost over the disputed rights of workers. By late July, the Port of San Francisco opened with the Maritime Union in control of employment policies and increased salaries for the longshoremen. Not until 3 months later, on October 22, 1934, did the Coit Tower murals open to the public.

The rich mural tradition in the Bay Area in 1932, two years before the Coit Tower murals, includes the San Francisco Public Library's fourteen oil-on-canvas murals by Gottardo Piazzoni (1872-1945), an Italian-Swiss who arrived in Carmel Valley in 1886. Like Zakheim, Piazzoni brought the European mural tradition to the Bay Area.

In San Francisco, his murals at the Public Library depict rolling hills with a few people peering over cliffs by the ocean. Piazzoni was clearly more interested in the expansive shapes of the lyrical landscape than the ambiguous figures shown in the murals.

Many of the eight living Coit Tower artists were accomplished muralists. Zakheim, who learned the fresco technique while visiting Hungary during 1931, received a mural commission from the Jewish Community Services. Edith Hamlin, before returning home to the Bay Area from New York, painted several residential murals.

Ray Boynton, an important early modern painter in the Bay Area, painted the magical, haunting eyes over the doorway

leading to the elevator at Coit Tower. He taught mural painting at the San Francisco Art Institute, where Coit Tower muralists George Harris and Suzanne Scheuer credit his teaching as important to their work.

Suzanne Scheuer painted her first mural in Oakland on an outdoor church wall in 1919, and later she studied mural painting at the San Francisco Art Institute after graduating from California College of Arts and Crafts. Diego Rivera highly praised her mural at the San Francisco Art Institute, which is now destroyed.

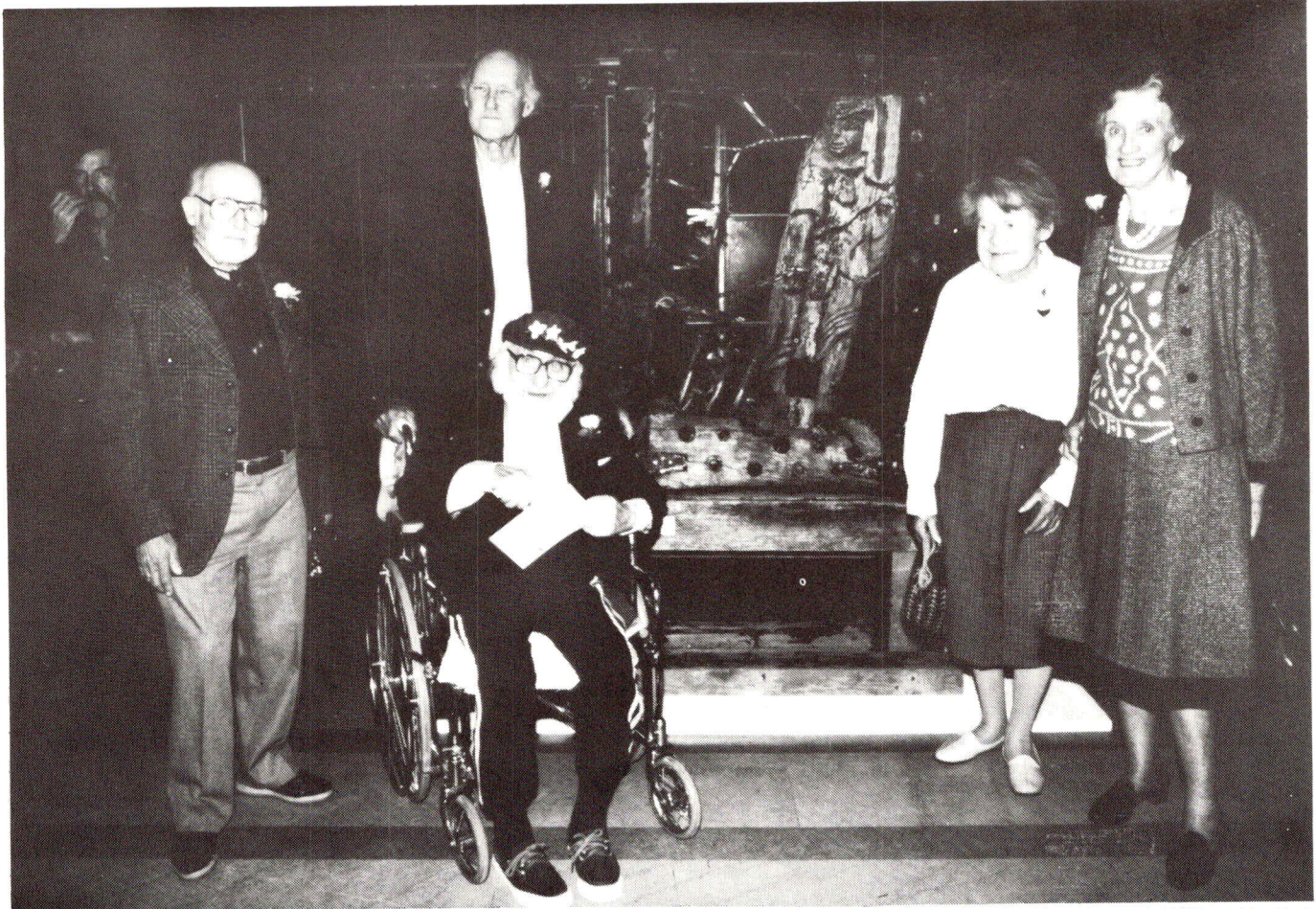
In 1931, Rivera made an enormous fresco of himself painting a mural at the San Francisco Art Institute. Perhaps the greatest irony of mural painting in San Francisco is the Stock Exchange murals painted in 1931 by this avid Marxist. At Coit Tower, the overlapping, rounded figures used to create depth and made in a similar scale with a uniform palette of earth-tones are similar to Rivera's style.

When completed, Coit Tower represented three-fourths of all murals in California. Two years later, seven of the Coit Tower artists were commissioned by the San Francisco Art Institute to paint eleven frescoes for the Institute's library. Six of the eight living Coit Tower artists completed other murals in Texas, Arizona, Utah, California, Wyoming, Japan, and Poland.

For 17 years the murals were closed to the public due to vandalism and their controversial nature. Dorothy Puccinelli Cravath and Emmy Lou Packard restored the murals in 1960 and 1975. Today the murals are open daily. As a national landmark, Coit Tower will be protected and its murals will remain among the City's best public art. For more information about the Coit Tower murals, read Masha Zakheim Jewett's *Coit Tower, San Francisco: Its History and Art*.

Many of San Francisco's best architects and artists worked on the building of Coit Tower and its murals. The prolific 50-year careers of the eight living Coit Tower artists, most of whom still work in the Bay Area, and the strength of their varied work, is a testament to the vitality of the contemporary Bay Area art scene.

Sally Swope
Curator



Left to right: Ralph Chesse, John Langley Howard, Bernard Zakheim (seated), Suzanne Scheuer, Edith Hamlin. Not pictured: William Hesthal



Bernal Heights Mural, San Francisco

The mural project was originated by former Bernal librarian Ruth McGuinness, community activist Kate Esposito, and a volunteer neighborhood group. The group selected Arch Williams to do the mural.

Arch put up a large display of mural art at the library, held public meetings, did outreach to youth, seniors, and various organizations, and designed three mural sections.

The design was then approved by the Art Commission and the Library Commission and the first team of summer youth workers and volunteers began to prepare the walls and paint in July of 1980.

After three months of painting, the project had to stop due to a moratorium on mural work in the city. The Art Commission was trying to take copyright ownership away from mural artists. The artists organized and fought back, eventually winning back their copyrights.

In Summer 1981, more work was done by youth workers and, in November, Carlos Alcalá, who had worked on themes at community meetings, began painting as well.

Work continued slowly until Summer 1982 when, with a burst of energy from summer youth workers, much of the work for the mural's front and back was completed.

Though the mural was not complete, the dedication took place in October 1982 to coincide with the Third Bernal Folks' Festival.

Since the mural is the result of the ideas and talents of so many people, it displays many styles and themes. In order to describe the mural, it is necessary to divide it into sections.

The back of the building, the south side, represents Bernal Heights. The west end depicts Bernal past, the east side is Bernal present. Starting in the past, we see goats and windmills, things which were part of the hill. Also we have an old wagon, an old building (taken from an old photo of Arrow Pharmacy) with some folks in front. Next to the building we have the streetcar which used to run on Cortland.

Here old Cortland starts blending into modern Cortland. The modern scene features current modes of transportation and modern styles of dress. It also features the new neighborhood center.

Finally, there is a representation of Bernal's Farmer's Market. Above the whole side is the hill itself, with some of its original residents, Native American Indians and a Tule elk.

The east side of the library, facing Moultrie Street, features a few different themes. On the left, we see a group of people pulling down a monument representing the forces of oppression. This represents the people, including those in Bernal Heights, who are working together to change the social conditions which divide and oppress us.

Following that, we see portraits of four working women; women doing cultural, educational, political and medical work.

On the right is a 1937 Plymouth "bomb", included because of suggestions by neighborhood youths. Above the working women, we see symbols of unity and cooperation, as well as a portrait of Arturo Duran, a neighborhood youth who was tragically killed.



The front of the library is divided into two major parts. To the left, as you look at the building, is a section which is a statement on the power of culture. The words, by Holly Near and Victor Jara, and images indicate that song (and any cultural endeavor) can create life and social change.

"If you can die . . . sing . . . live for freedom, I can too."

—Holly Near

"Your song is the river, the sun and wind, a bird announcing peace."

—Victor Jara

The last section of the mural is, in a sense, about time. The three pyramids—Mexican, Egyptian, and San Franciscan—represent continuity through time. The rest, moving from the right and curving down to the images of children and of the U.N. emblem, represent the earth's evolution and change through time. Putting the children at the end of this series of images is a way of indicating that children represent a hope for the future, if we keep working for change.

Painters: Jo Tucker, Detra Bell, Jaina Brown, Rodney Carter, Frank Cortez, Anna Flores, Anthony Greene, Ray Hurd, Laura

Jacquez, Thomas Jones, Keith Martin, Ted Martinez, Craig Maxwell, Raymond McCowan, Lolita Mendez, Lamar Merritt, Corrine Ratti, Canty Soto, Wendell Henry, Nora Roman, Sharon Hager, Leticia Guevara, Nancy Young, Walter Alvarez.

Other Important People: Wilbert Mack, Ruth McGuinness, Kate Esposito, Karey Wehner, Jerry Smith, Joan Jackson, Bernal Library Staff 1980–1982, Kathy Cinnater—Mural Resource Center, Library Commission, Bernal Heights Community Foundation, Youth Council, Friends of SFPD, Daniel Reidy, Ron Wheeler, Holly Near-Redwood Records, Roberta DeBono.

Technical Notes: This mural was painted with Politec Mural Colors using transparent glazes of only one color on top of another color. This was done because of the advice by Gutierrez, inventor of Politec acrylics, that for maximum permanency in mural paintings, especially outdoors, it is best not to mix separate colors together, but to use transparencies for depth and color variation. (Gutierrez, Jose and Roukes, Nicholas, *Painting with Acrylics*, New York, Watson Guptill Publication.)

Wet Paint in New Jersey

Phillip Danzig is an architect interested in advocacy planning and community art, and, since 1972, has produced youth's, children's and senior's murals in a variety of settings. He was a project artist with Cityarts Workshop, in 1972; a participating artist on the General Grant Memorial Bench in New York City in 1973; an Artist-in-Residence at Irvington High School, New Jersey, 1977; director of a CETA project in Paterson, summer of 1977; director of a 20-panel mosaic tile mural project for the Newark Redevelopment and Housing Authority, 1977–1979; and was Artist-in-Residence at Elizabeth High School, New Jersey, 1981. For the past four summers, he has organized and directed the "WET PAINT" community mural project, in Essex County, New Jersey.

"Murals are this planet's oldest existing art form. They date back 50,000 years, when there were no pencils, no books and no television—only caves." This is the kind of statement I like to make to a new group embarking on a community mural project. It helps to focus their attention on the simplicity for the project they are about to undertake.

The "WET PAINT" community mural project, now in its fifth year in Essex County, New Jersey has produced 24 murals since 1979. Our approach is simple, borrowing familiar elements from other mural projects, but based on our particular point of view, encompassing several innovations arranged to fit the realities of our suburban situation.

Point of View

Our approach stresses the *participation* aspect of community mural making. The emphasis is on "group involvement," as defined by Robert Sommer in the Fall, 1982, issue of *Community Murals*. Our goals are to develop the esthetic talent of children and youths, to assist in the development of their social and cooperative skills and to leave a permanent positive improvement in the local environment. Secondary aims are to encourage youngsters to project constructive messages through art and to permit adults to enjoy and appreciate worthwhile efforts of youngsters.

We believe it is uniquely meaningful to give the means of artistic production (paint and brushes) to the ultimate users/workers/inhabitants of neighborhood public spaces. What child will ever forget a project which begins with the announcement, "We will paint a mural, and you will be able to paint your own designs on the walls of this school/community center/bank"?

In the words of Susan Shapiro-Kiok, of Cityarts Workshop, we strive to "take art out of the galleries and into the streets." Last summer we completed 13 projects and involved 240 participants.

Innovations

The organization of "WET PAINT" is skeletal and nomadic. Like a roving band of players, or migrant workers, we rent no space, have no trustees or permanent telephone: we exist between the cracks of corporate America. During the winter and early spring, we approach all youth-serving agencies in the county and invite them to participate in the coming summer. They must provide three contributions:

- 1) They must locate a suitable wall
- 2) They must "loan" to us an art leader interested in the project
- 3) They must recruit neighborhood youth.

In return, "WET PAINT" provides a Mural Art Training Workshop, a week-long seminar in which participating art leaders will learn all they need to know about mural-making. We also supply sealer, paint, brushes, et cetera, and a copy of the *Mural Manual* published by the Public Art Workshop, of Chicago. We offer periodic technical assistance during the summer, on a demand basis.

This offer of seminar, supplies and assistance is one many local agencies cannot refuse—we have worked with municipal Departments of Recreation, Psychiatric Youth Centers, schools, Y's, cultural centers and (formerly) CETA projects. These participating agencies agree to include the name, "WET PAINT" in their design.

Decentralization characterizes more than just the organization of the project: it pervades the artistic process as well, encouraging motivation and a diversity of images. We proceed in three stages: theme selection, design creation and execution. This enables the art leader to secure approval early on from his/her participating agency, and once the theme is approved, tends to reduce disputes over the design. Frequently, the art leader will request suggestions or a "vote of confidence" from the "WET PAINT" director. These usually are concerned with means of incorporating architectural details, or how to adapt a composition to a particular age level or degree of skill mastery.

Much of our technical assistance focuses on problems of scale, how to make images more readable at a distance, simplification of subject/background relationships or lettering. We



Photo: Phillip I. Danzig

stress the responsibility of the final conception to its various viewing publics and the need to go beyond simplistic esthetics. And we offer advice on safety, storage of materials, development of group cohesion and dealing with passers-by.

Pragmatic Patterns

Dramatically different execution methods do *not* characterize "WET PAINT". Familiar, time-tested, state-of-the-art techniques prevail: grid enlargement, photographic projection, silhouette cut-outs. By employing such basic techniques we enable a small central staff to facilitate, or "animate," many projects in a given period, using previously inexperienced art leaders.

Our sponsorship is also pragmatic. We are the only mural project in the area but do not compete with other art organizations. Our prime sponsor is the Turrell Fund, a foundation devoted to "the support of organizations that serve children and youth." Turrell is not concerned with art projects as such. Funding flows to us through the Montclair-North Essex YWCA. This non-sexist, local agency, devoted to the elimination of racism, is a compatible "home" for us, and does not exercise design influence.

We receive secondary funding from an Essex County Block Grant from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. They are interested in our county-wide approach. This liaison also gives us entry to and credibility with municipal agencies and businesses. The county provides us with a highly visible

mural site for use by our art leaders during the "hands-on" mural creation portion of the Mural Art Training Workshop each spring.

Possibilities

Unlike many arts groups today, we have not experienced funding problems. Our needs are modest: \$4,000 in each of our first two years, \$6,000 in our third year and \$8,000 last summer. (This does *not* include salaries paid for the donated time of the participating art leaders.) Of course, this could not cover permanent employees or a permanent studio, but we have no need of these. Our work "dehydrates" during the winter and the participating art leaders do not look to us for employment. We have not built up false economic expectations.

Another feature of our operation is the publicity value inherent in youth summer projects, showing "little children making pictures in the sunshine." Last summer, we were the subject of nine newspaper articles and two television broadcasts. These presented our concern about publically-produced art to a wide audience. We make sure that the YWCA, the County and the Turrell Fund get their share of publicity and have developed a relationship with the well-equipped Public Relations office of the County to assist in common goals. This increases our chances for continued funding.

"WET PAINT" is intentionally kept at a personal size. It is organized as a "household" with art leaders and young recruits encouraged to help define their own participation. Individual art leaders are responsible for theme development, design and execution on their projects, and consult the director as much or as little as they decide. This "quality control" process has been surprisingly free of bureaucracy and ego hassles. Our structure permits a great deal of freedom within a network of colleagues.

Problems

Our largest problem is familiar to other mural-producing groups: how to assure improvement above the level of acceptable "first-time" murals. We are following the usual methods: a talented group member became an art leader the following summer; we are supplementing the funding of certain inner-city agencies, so they may hire better-trained local art leaders. We seek out Black and Hispanic cultural centers and encourage them to become involved with the dramatic world of public murals.

By remaining small, we encounter certain obviously negative trade-offs. Almost the total organizational effort is borne by the Director, and we are training no assistant and no successor. We have perhaps avoided the question of trying to improve the economic conditions of artists in a large-scale way. We could possibly do more to stimulate and challenge political apathy.

Still, we have met the need for public art in an area where none existed before, and we are working, with indigenous agencies, to satisfy that need, based on locally available resources. We have developed an efficient, participatory, highly visible approach, one which helps train art leaders who had no previous experience with mural-making. Hopefully, certain of our methods will be useful to others, just as we have borrowed traditional methods.

Conclusion

The recent growth of mural projects in Essex County, New Jersey, and in the United States generally, must have much to do with the inherent need of peoples to express their deepest beliefs, aspirations, fears and joys. We who participate in the public art movement enjoy a truly deep and human satisfaction by continuing a tradition which has persisted since long before recorded history.

Phillip I. Danzig

Determination rises as mural crumbles

East Austin neighborhood groups will continue efforts to preserve their community although a focal point of the struggle — a colorful mural on the Juarez Lincoln Building — was demolished by a wrecking ball Wednesday.

Marcos de Leon, co-chairman of the Concilio de East Town Lake Citizens, said a committee planned to meet today with the property's new owner, Terry Sasser, to discuss development of the land at Interstate 35 and East First Street.

He was one of a handful of spectators from the Mexican American community who watched as the mural, which has graced the front wall of the building since 1977, came down.

NEIGHBORHOOD activists failed in numerous efforts to save the building and its mural, including a request to have the structure designated a historic landmark. The building formerly housed the Antioch Juarez Lincoln University, the first Chicano college in Texas.

Its mural, depicting a Chicana farmworker grasping a fiery bolt of sunlight, was painted by artist Raul Valdez to commemorate the college's opening in 1977. Valdez was present Wednesday when the wall was demolished.

"We couldn't stop it. You need bucks to stop this stuff," said Valdez, who was restoring a mural at the Pan American Recreation Center at 2100 E. Third St. Wednesday and hurried to the demolition site with paint-stained hands. "That kind of money isn't available to poor folks like us."

Phil Hogan, partner in the Franks-Hogan Demolition Co., seemed reluctant to start the demolition and at one point stopped the wrecking ball to allow the spectators to take bricks from the rubble.

Another spectator, Juan Pablo Gutierrez, an East Austin artist who once taught at the Chicano college, was sobbing as the mural fell.

EAST AUSTIN community leader Paul Hernandez said the demolition showed that officials "just don't care."

"They were the ones who could do something about this," Hernandez said. "The mural is the least of the problem. The destruction of the barrio and the displacement of the people — that's the real issue."

"That's the way they treat Mexican people, the way they treated the mural," he said. "You're in the way — move."

The mural was once described by Austin artist Amado Pena as "more important than office space."

"It is like the Statue of Liberty, the Stars and Stripes or George Washington," Pena said. "It's important to have a brown image."

By **TONY TUCCI**
American-Statesman Staff



Austin American-Statesman, May 26, 1983. Photo: Zach Ryall

"That destruction was done as easily as when the Austin police beat up Raul Hernandez and his girlfriend during the Ku Klux Klan march in Austin earlier this year."

Santa Barraza

INTERNATIONAL

England: Two Anti-Fascist Murals

The political context in which murals are created is quite as significant as their physical or community location. It is perhaps unnecessary to point out this obvious fact, yet experience gained from two recently completed murals in London serves to shed light on the relationship between what a mural is saying to its audience in terms of theme, and the immediate political context or climate in which the mural is created, and the way both these affect and are affected by the working methods and other related factors of the mural artists involved.

The two murals in question share a number of points in common, which serve as useful means of comparison. The first is that both murals allude to the evil pretense of racial discrimination. The second is that both celebrate the forces that resolved to defeat such evil. The third is that the two murals were both painted in the political context of sharpening tensions between left and right, increasing racism, and general economic decline. Fourthly, both were painted in working class districts and lastly, both murals suffered at the hands of racist vandals during the course of their creation.

The first of these murals to be completed, *From Protest to Progress, a Portrait for a Generation*, was finished in May 1981. It took a little over nine months to create and cost a total of c. \$3,000 U.S. It was commissioned by the Greater London Arts Association and painted inside a brand new youth center. From the outset, I, as the artist commissioned to create the mural, was faced with a number of interesting problems. The first was that the committee that ran the youth center (a collection of local small businessmen) wanted a mural that would be uncontroversial, i.e., free of any meaningful content. Secondly, the young people who belonged to the youth center were almost exclusively white, and some expressed often quite openly and unashamedly, blatantly racist feelings. Conversations as to the course the mural should take often ended in suggestions to paint a racist mural. Since I would not agree to such proposals, I decided the only course was to propose the subject matter myself. This task was not difficult. The often-articulated racial prejudices of some of my immediate audience, their terribly high levels of unemployment, and rapid decline of Britain's crisis-ridden capitalist economy immediately suggested a confrontational approach in which the multiple deprivations of unemployment, money, bad education, housing, culture and hope were depicted as the soil in which racial



From Protest to Progress, a Portrait for a Generation; Desmond Rochfort, London 1981. Photo: Desmond Rochfort

prejudice flourishes. The expression of solidarity amongst races was therefore forcefully depicted as a prerequisite for the struggle to put right these social ills.

Throughout the creation of this mural I employed a policy of discussing at great length with my immediate audience every stage in the development of the mural's content, from the drawing board to the wall itself. On the other hand, the physical execution of the work I kept exclusively to myself and my assistant, Anthony Ward. This policy of constant collective discussion over subject matter, but exclusive technical execution, worked very satisfactorily. The young people of this youth center never indicated any resentment at not being involved in the actual execution of the work. Indeed, they seemed to appreciate greatly the technical meticulousness with which I attempted to carry out the job.

As I indicated at the beginning, the immediate political context in which a mural is created is often highly significant for the way in which a mural is received, especially by its immediate audience. In the case of this mural, the rioting that swept through large areas of some of Britain's largest cities during the months of 1984 (which I was painting the mural) provoked, sharpened and deepened discussion of the mural's content among my immediate audience. It also, I believe, provoked the only physical attack on the mural. Fortunately the outcome of this attack was both interesting and happy. The attack occurred some hours after a rather sharp discussion I had had over the overtly anti-racist content of the mural, with a number of the members of the youth center. After I had completed my work for the day and gone home, these same people proceeded to scrawl racist slogans on the virtually completed mural. Later that evening, however, these same people were found, by the director of the center, cleaning all that they had previously written off the surface of the mural. The next day I was greeted by those responsible for the attack

with profuse apologies and promises that such a thing would never happen again. To this day the mural remains in perfect condition despite considerable vandalism to the rest of the building.

The other mural in question, *The Battle of Cable Street*, was conceived as a vastly more grandiose project than the youth center mural. It was begun in 1978, took five years to complete, cost over \$45,000 U.S., and covered an area of 3,500 feet. The project, initiated by the Progressive Arts Committee of Tower Hamlets Council in the East End of London, envisaged a major work to celebrate and depict the famous "Battle of Cable Street" which took place on October 4, 1936 when a quarter of a million people gathered in the east of London to stop Oswald Mosely and the British Union of Fascists from marching through the area to campaign against the Jews. For this major project the artist, David Binnigton, was commissioned to carry out the work.

Unfortunately for the commissioning council and the artist, the project fell deeper and deeper into difficulties. This was partly due to administrative problems, but also because the project proved too much for the "lone star" approach of Binnigton. Much work had been put into the project by him in the way of preparatory drawings, etc., but by the end of 1981 the work on the mural came to a standstill. With a great deal of the mural still uncompleted, it was obvious to many that Binnigton was facing major design problems with the mural. With these mounting difficulties, the final blow was struck in May of 1982 when the mural was severely vandalized by fascist vandals. This attack proved the last straw for Binnigton, who promptly resigned from the project.

This attack against the mural followed a pattern of increasing fascist vandalism and violence, particularly against immigrants. Whether or not this mural would have been attacked had it developed a deeper community acceptance, its costs





The Battle of Cable Street; David Binnington, Paul Butler, Ray Walker, Desmond Rochfort, London 1983

not risen so dramatically, and the period over which it was being carried out not so extended, is something that is open to conjecture. However, what is not open to question was the determination of the local council, whose arts committee initiated the project, to see that the mural was completed. In July of 1982 the council invited three artists to come and take over the project. The three artists, Paul Butler, Ray Walker, and myself, faced an enormous task, not only of repairing the considerable damage caused by the vandalism, but also of finishing a far from completed mural whose design was unresolved and needed drastic alteration.

To complete the project the work was divided into three stages. First the graffiti were removed by sandblasting and the wall surface rerendered where necessary. Second, the undamaged area above where the graffiti had been written was finished off, largely along Binnington's original design, although some changes were made and many new faces were added.

The last and most difficult stage was to redesign the remaining 70% of the wall surface. For this task the wall was divided into three equal sections. Ray Walker took the left hand section, Paul Butler the middle, and I took the right hand area. Working in close collaboration with each other we each developed designs for our own individual area which was then integrated into a coherent overall design applied to the wall surface and completed. This part of the work took from September 1982 to the end of March 1983.

Local community reaction to our presence at the beginning was often hostile. Over the years, antagonism had obviously grown against the mural. Its high cost and inordinate delay in execution were cited as points for criticism. Also interesting was the fact that many seemed not to know what the mural was about. However, it also must be said that as our work progressed and the images and subject matter became clearer, with, I might say, an infusion of a more overt political character to the content, the attitude of the local community changed. From antagonism and hostility at the beginning it had been transformed by the end to general and widespread support. "Something we can at last be proud of," one local resident said to me.

The Battle of Cable Street mural situated as it is in Cable Street itself on the side of St. George's Oldtown Hall, was dedicated finally on May 7, 1983. The mural was completed as British political life was taking another sharp turn to the right. The mural's presence therefore stands as a powerful celebration of those who struggled against an attempt to usurp the people's democratic rights before the war. Hopefully, it will inspire people to making sure any future attempts will end in abject failure.

Desmond Rochfort
September 1983

Art is Not a Luxury: Community Art in Scotland, 1982

It was quite strange to be asked in the eighties about what's going on in community art in Scotland. My first response, I have to admit, was nostalgic—idyllic memories of clowns, painted walls, flags, huge street parades and pantomimes, banners, music and dancing, all created with great energy generated by people working together—came pouring in. Back then, community art was obviously an idealistic enterprise. But for the present, I had to pause and ask myself if community art still exists in Scotland, and if so where, how and with whom.

I have been involved, directly and indirectly, in the community arts since leaving Art College in 1977. My first job was as a muralist with the Craigmillar Festival Society as part of their enormous self-help programme of physical and social improvements in the area. I joined the community arts movement at a time when many things were happening. Craigmillar was setting a new precedent in Europe for ways of dealing with urban development and all its emergent problems: bad housing, lack of amenities, no provision for the teaching or practise of the arts at a local level, poor facilities in general and, above all, the sheer means of making their voices heard. In the words of Helen Crummy, Organising Secretary and Founder Member of the Festival Society, art was used right at the beginning "as a tool for change" and artists like myself used the description, "community artists" as we were actively at work in these communities—something Art College had never prepared us for or even talked about.

It was really exciting. It seemed that art and life were linked at last and, even better, we were part of a determined wish to improve areas like Craigmillar with a long history of deprivation and struggle. We did many things: painted murals, made plays, musicals, street parades, the annual local Festival (which gives the Society its name) held arts, music and drama workshops, as far as possible creating local employment through the arts. Artists like myself were in Craigmillar at the invitation of the community, or more specifically, at the invitation of the Festival Society and if there were an economic recession we didn't notice it, out on the streets, busily making double decker buses into elephants to cruise along Princes Street for the Edinburgh Festival Parade. That there was an enormous amount of talent, energy and potential in these neglected places, was proved daily and more and more, art in these areas became known as "community art". As Bill Marshall of Easterhouse Summer Festivals puts it—"The life in middle and working class communities is very different. Therefore, when art publicly moved into working class communities it had to have a different name to distinguish these activities from something that could take place in Newton Mearns for example. It was not bourgeois or elitist, it was community art." And like most umbrella terms it remains an unsatisfactory, endlessly definable description of the huge range of activities, areas, places and people involved in the movement. But it's the one that's stuck and for the purposes of this article I have not attempted to define it further.

It would seem that in many ways community art has gone "underground" in Scotland these days. The extravaganzas of recent years masterminded by Ken Wolverton, Neil Cameron, Reg Bolton and their like have played their part and illuminated ways for the rest of us. Experience brings its own skill and the practice of art in community settings is still too experimental to be teachable, even if it is too well established to be considered by the press as newsworthy any longer. But the low publicity profile has not meant that there is any serious

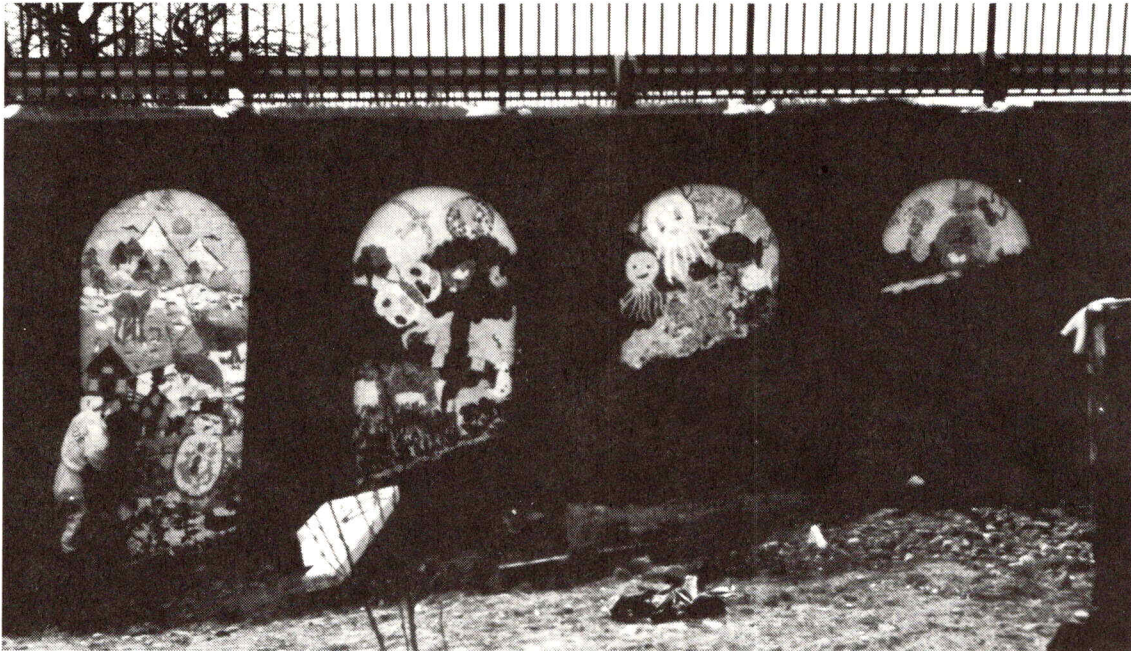
diminution of activity; rather, community art has become integrated with the communities it serves, and takes a strong, persistent part in the life there. Individuals at work as artists or arts workers have acquired the necessary specific skills which they use with accuracy and understanding; it just doesn't seem to be necessary any longer to make a song and dance about being artists without a studio or gallery.

Art is in one of the areas it belongs, a familiar part of the local scene. But with one major flaw. There is still not enough of it here and more people, resources, ideas and energy are always needed. (Addresses included for anyone interested.) A central point, from which information can be had and the various communities apprised of one another's activities, is a felt want still, although Theatre Workshop, 34 Hamilton Place, Edinburgh has centralised its considerable activities to a large extent and is able to give a lot of advice, information and help to anyone interested in setting up or finding out about the arts.

A former placement from Theatre Workshop gave Barbara Orton, Arts Worker in Pilton her introduction there. Now employed by Pilton Central Association with a combined grant from Lothian Region Leisure Services and the Scottish Arts Council, she has been there two years. She believes that "The arts in Pilton are totally related to social and educational developments", and she works with several local groups on various schemes and projects. She feels she has had to bring a community-work perspective to the job of Arts Worker as she can't do everything herself and naturally looks for co-workers—or they for her, whichever comes first. "Art can be a wonderful force for change but it has to take place in the right political context. Art has to happen with groups already working for development—tenants' groups, community action and campaign groups and material for plays, posters, murals and events has to have its starting point in people's own experience to be a true reflection of that community. The arts in Pilton have a much deeper meaning that just fun and entertainment but through working in a cheerful, supportive way with each other, it becomes possible to put difficult things across to other members of the community, other communities and to the policy-makers in a humorous, accessible way."

The Razzle Dazzle Theatre Group of young wives proved this approach well with their first performance of a play about pregnancy. It was written by themselves and produced with the help of a drama worker invited for the occasion. Producing the play led to the group's discussing aspects of health and the lack of facilities for their area, sharing experiences with each other first of all and then with other people as the play toured the local neighbourhood and the city. Barbara feels that there is a real political consciousness in Pilton and she offers her resources as a service for those who wish to take things further, encouraging confidence in people that what they say about their own lives is important and helping them to make their voices more effective. "Community art is not about trying to see the relevance of arts of communications skills but about learning being a lifelong experience."

Artists' Collective, Edinburgh is a group of self-employed artists whose main work is ideally within community contexts: "We involve the residential or user community as much as possible in all stages of a project. What the people want is what counts and ideally the impetus for the project comes from the people." This doesn't always happen and in such cases the Collective first ensures that there is strong community support for a project, after which continual liaison is maintained if a scheme goes ahead. Meetings with the community, slide shows, design and drawing workshops and lots of consultation at all times is how the Collective involves people: "The community doesn't care what kind of artists we are. Making our art accessible and serving the expressed needs of a group is the intention. It can be very specific but still satisfying our



Collydean Mosaic Mural, Glenrothes

personal motivations as artists. If it works ideally an arts project is a very positive way of distributing power in decision-making among everyone concerned."

A similar challenge to the power of bureaucracies has been strongly and persistently made through the work of Community Festival groups like the Craigmillar Festival Society or the Easterhouse Summer Festival who have provided the lead for other communities to follow. In all of them it is from the heart of the community that the commitment to change things comes, usually based on an idea of "shared government"—a term which the CFS used to describe the working together of communities and those who control resources. The partnership would allow the rights of local people to be recognised in decision-making processes at all levels and art in this context is inextricably linked to politics as one way of uniting a community with a common purpose. Art gives a chance for people to express ideas about their lives in strong, self-confident ways and community art takes this essential human desire to create, one step further, in developing peoples' awareness of themselves, their environment and their rights, showing that change is possible if enough people want it and are willing to work for it. In a musical, "Castle, Council and Curse", Craigmillar Festival Society borrowed these words from the Easterhouse Summer Festival Report, "Five Years On": "The powerful in the land can't bring a change of heart / But the story will be made when the people play their part."

In Priesthill and Nitshill, Glasgow, people play their part and more. Working with Hugh Graham, who is employed by Strathclyde Region as a Further Education Lecturer and who has worked in the area as a community artist for the last four years, people play music, make puppets, murals, photographs, plays, musicals and literally anything that the community wants. A whole neighbourhood programme of arts is available for the people, by the people and is totally related to the community and its way of life. Hugh doesn't really like the distinction between the arts and community arts and feels that all the activities of his programme should just be described as the arts at work in the community, where they can, and do, take any shape or form. "Art is not a luxury but an essential part of community life." He is concerned with professionalism and uses the arts to introduce young people to a particular concept of working life which benefits the community at the same time.

"At the end of the day this is a practical working business to get things going and make them work. Development plans are concerned with using existing facilities and changing them to suit. All the money should go to wages and public events—not swallowed up in big, new buildings."

A last project for discussion—a kind of microcosm of the larger schemes—is the Craigmillar Day Centre (not part of the CFS) which is run by Michael Greenlaw with a grant from Lothian Region Social Work Department. It is a place for the community to use to develop any interests or talents they have. Living and working in the neighbourhood, Mike feels well enough in touch with people to know who is able and wanting to do what and in a quiet but consistent way he concerns himself with the question of working to make a situation where it is possible to challenge the system which creates areas like Craigmillar. But he wants many more people to share responsibility for groups like these—not least the vast parts of our society whose comfortable way of living accepts, by implication, Craigmillar and its many cousins. The



Kissing Monsters

interdependence of success and failure, wealth and poverty is at the heart of all cases of cultural, social and political neglect and Mike would be pleased to have any visitors to the Centre who are interested in finding out about what he feels could be a prototype for other groups with similar ideas. Address: 65 Niddrie Mains Terrace, Craigmillar, Tel: 031 669 4756.

There are, of course, many other organisations, groups and individuals involved in the community arts who are not mentioned by name here. But it is likely that the same generalisations hold true for them as these ones I've described.

It is clear that the community arts are here to stay and although the high energy events of its history have not resulted in a community arts boom in Scotland, neither has the impetus been lost. Instead it seems to be exactly where it should be, quietly and efficiently at work in a growing number of communities, large and small, residential or otherwise. Artists involved at the beginning of the movement are still involved in very specific, skilled and experienced ways and already several resources of help and advice are available, compiled from the results of just getting on with things and learning from the outcome.

The movement in Scotland is still small in comparison to that in England, but many feel that we have the balance of growth right for our communities in particular and for the country in general. Certainly I found no shortage of individuals and communities alike. So the flags and banners are flying still, quite a lot more of them, and no doubt, more to come.

Elizabeth Kemp
February 1983

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Elizabeth Kemp
Central Museum & Art Gallery
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Venezuelan President Luis Herrera Campins, dedicated a new mural in honor of Simon Bolívar on the 200th anniversary of the birth of "El Libertador." The mural, *Bolívar and Education*, was painted by Gabriel Bracho and is located at the entrance to the Ipasme administration building in Caracas. It is 600 square meters and took 6 months to paint. Behind Bolívar are other major figures in Venezuelan history and education.

Mural Project in Auckland, New Zealand

Auckland is one of several New Zealand cities where street murals are beginning to appear. Most of our murals have been painted since 1979, and are the work of professional artists who have been stimulated by murals painted overseas. The involvement of people without formal art training has been less prominent.

Artists are the motivating force behind the mural movement in New Zealand rather than community groups or social activists. The Government has funded most mural programmes, which has meant that most artists have found it necessary to soften the political impact of their work. Social and political content is a definite and significant part of these murals, but it doesn't often take on an overt form. Its impact is contained in imagery which refers to politically sensitive subjects and issues.

Auckland has the largest population of Polynesians in the world. Maoris and Pacific Islanders form a very large percentage of the population of the inner city areas where most murals are painted. Their presence in the city has had a definite influence on these murals, whether in the simplified forms and bright colours of Claudia Eyley's day care centre mural, or the patterns and images of Murray Grimsdale's Ponsonby Library Murals.

Polynesian images feature too in Maureen Thompson's Archangels Architects Collective mural, where images of local women are largely Polynesian. Incidentally most of these women are also lesbians, but in typically restrained fashion this is not stated overtly, simply being apparent to those 'in the know'. Maureen Thompson also painted local children along the fence adjoining Archangels, and most of these are Polynesian. The personal involvement of these children in the



Daycare Center, Claudia Eyley, Bellwood St., Mt. Eden, Auckland

painting of the wall has meant that their pride in their environment has been stimulated, with the result that no damage has occurred to these murals since they were painted.

The mural on the wall of the Hydra Bacon factory was painted by three young Polynesians, Doug Vakatini, Charlie Guttenbeil and Gerhardt Guttenbeil. Painted in the aftermath of considerable racial tension induced by the conflicts generated nationally by the South African Springbok Rugby Tour of 1981, this mural is completely devoid of social or political content. Apart from the fact that a large number of Polynesians are employed in the bacon factory, there is little attempt to relate the work to any relevant social concern. Instead, a witty, light-hearted piece has been produced. This mural has also covered one of the more choice pieces of graffiti produced during the Springbok Tour: "PIGS DISOWN MULDOON", a



Archangels Architects Collective; Maureen Thompson, Ponsonby Mural Project, Auckland

reference to "Piggy", the nickname of the New Zealand Prime Minister. However, despite the low political consciousness of this work it remains the world's only street mural painted by Polynesians.

The Snakes and Ladders Mural painted by art students on the wall of the Youth Resource Centre also contains Polynesian imagery, which is relevant as the centre is used by many young Polynesians who are working on Government-funded job creation and work skills development schemes. The inclusion of this imagery represents a genuine desire by the artists to communicate Polynesian ideals and include Polynesians in their vocabulary of images, but it was done without enough consultation on the part of the artists with the result that many young people employed at the Youth Resource Centre dislike the mural, seeing it as patronising and childish.

Similar reactions have been aroused by the Jungle mural on a Ponsonby wall, painted by another group of students. Accusations of racism have been levelled at this mural, which has been defaced by graffiti (which refer to a local landlord). The stereotypes perpetuated by this mural have decorative appeal which must have been attractive to the (white) students who painted it, but which could be offensive to Polynesian aspirations.

Other political issues reflected in these murals are the struggle of the women's movement, in Delyn Cornwell's highly individualistic mural on the wall of a hamburger bar. As a solo mother Delyn had strong feelings about men to express.

Environmental issues are also close to the heart of mural artists in New Zealand. Project Jonah, along with a local paint company, assisted a group of students working on a government-funded holiday relief work scheme to paint this huge mural of whales, representing one of the most internationally contentious environmental issues of the time. Good publicity was generated for Project Jonah's attempts to raise funds for their conservation project.

Vince Wicken's mural on the wall of a wooden furniture workshop specialising in handcrafted furniture made from native New Zealand timbers, shows the Kauri forest which once covered this part of New Zealand. Rather than nostalgia from the pre-colonial past, this mural refers to pressing environmental

issues, as these forests are still being destroyed by commercial exploitation of their timber on a large scale.

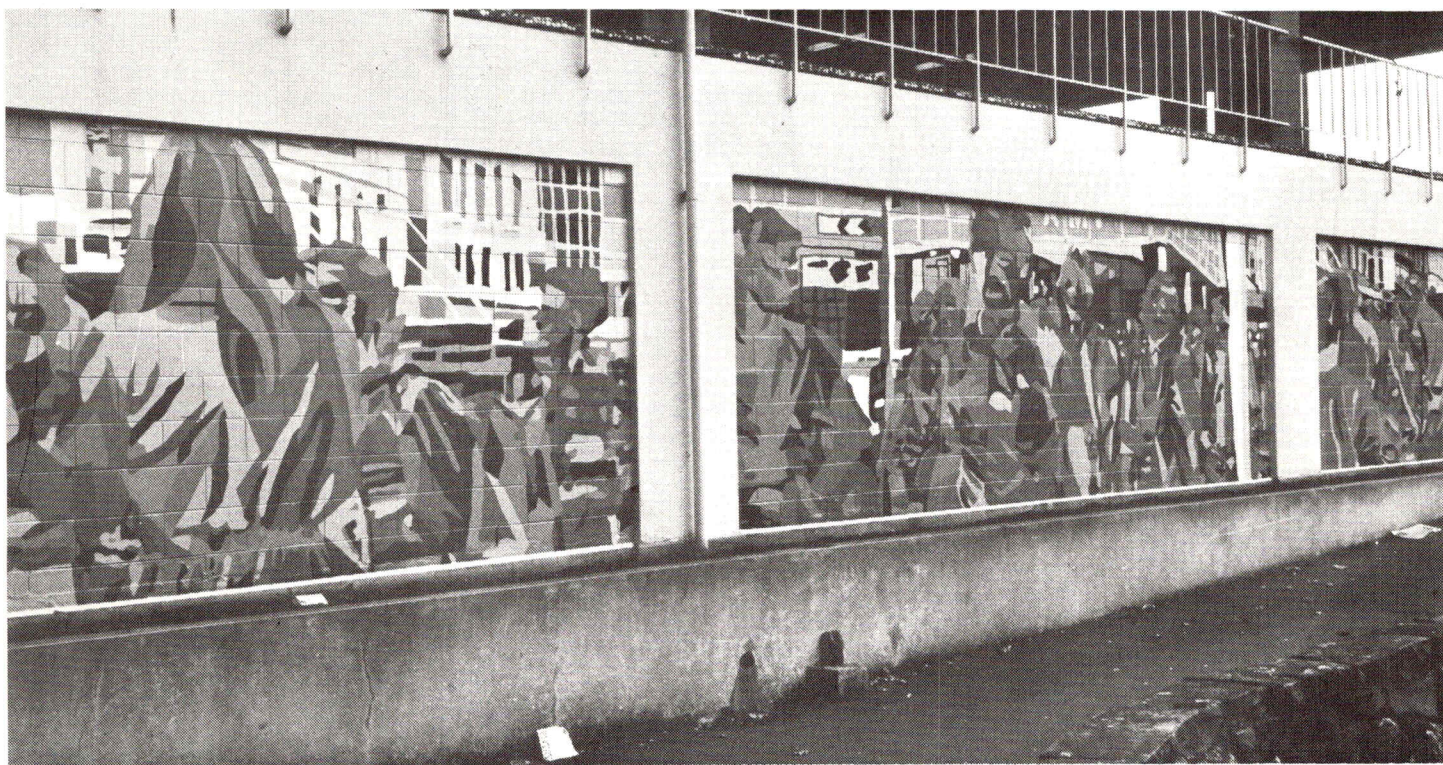
Mural painting in Auckland began with the efforts of active artists and their students. The two murals at Auckland University were painted by students working under the Student Community Service Project, a summer holiday work scheme since discontinued by the Government on cost-cutting grounds. The effect of these murals is largely to enhance the environment rather than to make a statement on any major issue. The S.C.S.P. resulted in many fine murals in central Auckland, but channelling unemployment funds into this controversial area (is mural painting really *work* for student artists?) proved impossible to continue on a long-term basis.

Unemployment-related money, funds for temporary job creation made available by the Labour Department have been used by artists working under the ARTWORK project, a joint project of the Auckland City Council Employment Department, and the Northern Regional Arts Council. All financial input comes from the Labour Department. Artists receive a salary and a materials allowance, and are employed on projects which range from 3 months to one year.

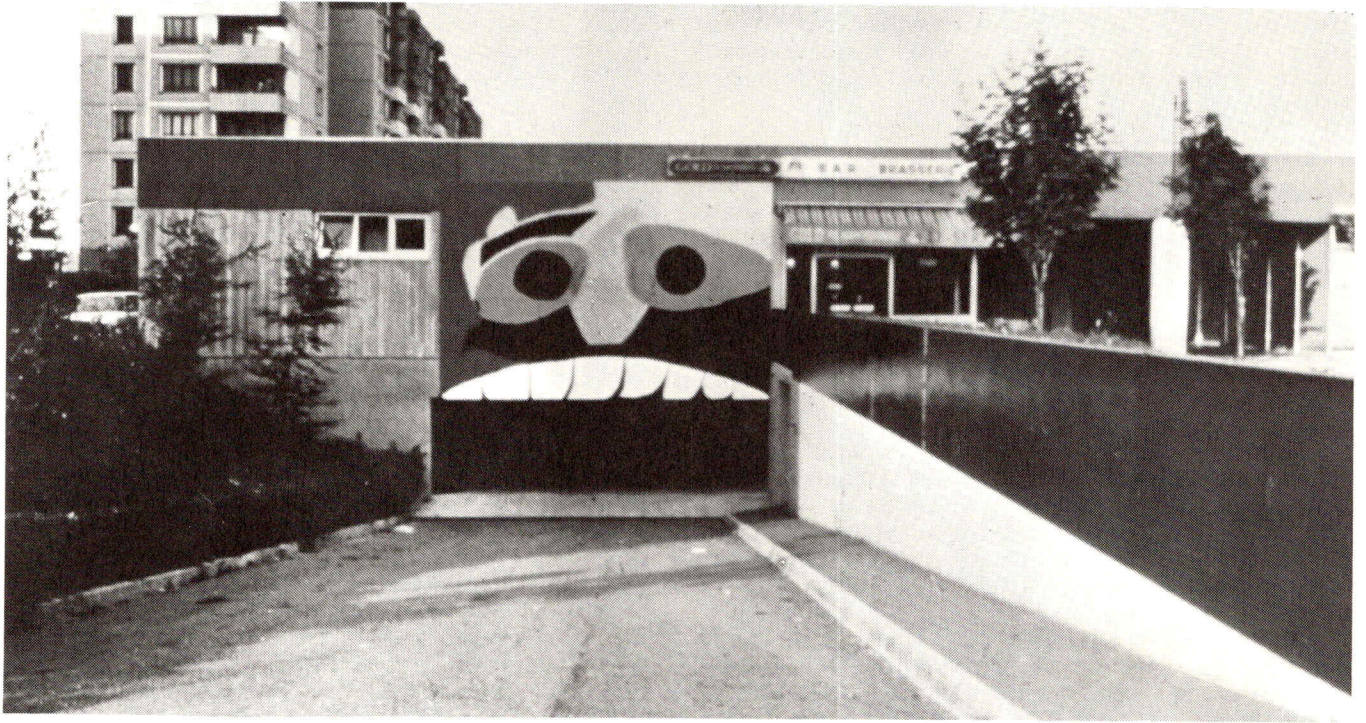
ARTWORK employs all categories of artists, musicians, and performers; visual arts projects have included street murals, school murals, and painters in mental and general medical hospitals. To qualify for these projects, artists must register as unemployed, which represents a considerable advance in Labour Department thinking, as it is recognition that art is work, and that an artist is a worker with as valid an occupation as any other member of society.

The future of street murals looks better than before. More work is being undertaken by independent artists, working without Government assistance, which is a healthy sign. More projects under the ARTWORK scheme are continuing to develop. With luck, we will continue to be able to continue to work on projects which are increasingly direct, vocal and political in their aims and intentions.

Ian McMillan (Supervisor)
Artwork



Auckland University, Student Community Service Project, 1981



Phillipe Mouillon in collaboration with Christiane Groend and 15 children, who developed masks after hearing a story about an ogre from whose mouth children escaped by making him sneeze. The mask making helped the children to focus close up and led to the design ultimately painted at the exit to a parking garage—from which people escape daily, only to be trapped again.

France: The Process of Phillipe Mouillon

Few muralists anywhere have so conscientiously applied themselves to respectfully working with so many different groups as French artist Phillipe Mouillon. In the last few years he has worked with young children, mentally disturbed children and adults, recently released offenders in their early twenties, senior citizens, and women. In each type of situation he develops whatever working style and painting process seems most appropriate. For this reason, the end results of his projects each have a distinctive look. They all share a remarkable success not only in the image, but in the strengthening of the participants too. What follows is a brief summary of some of Phillipe's projects.

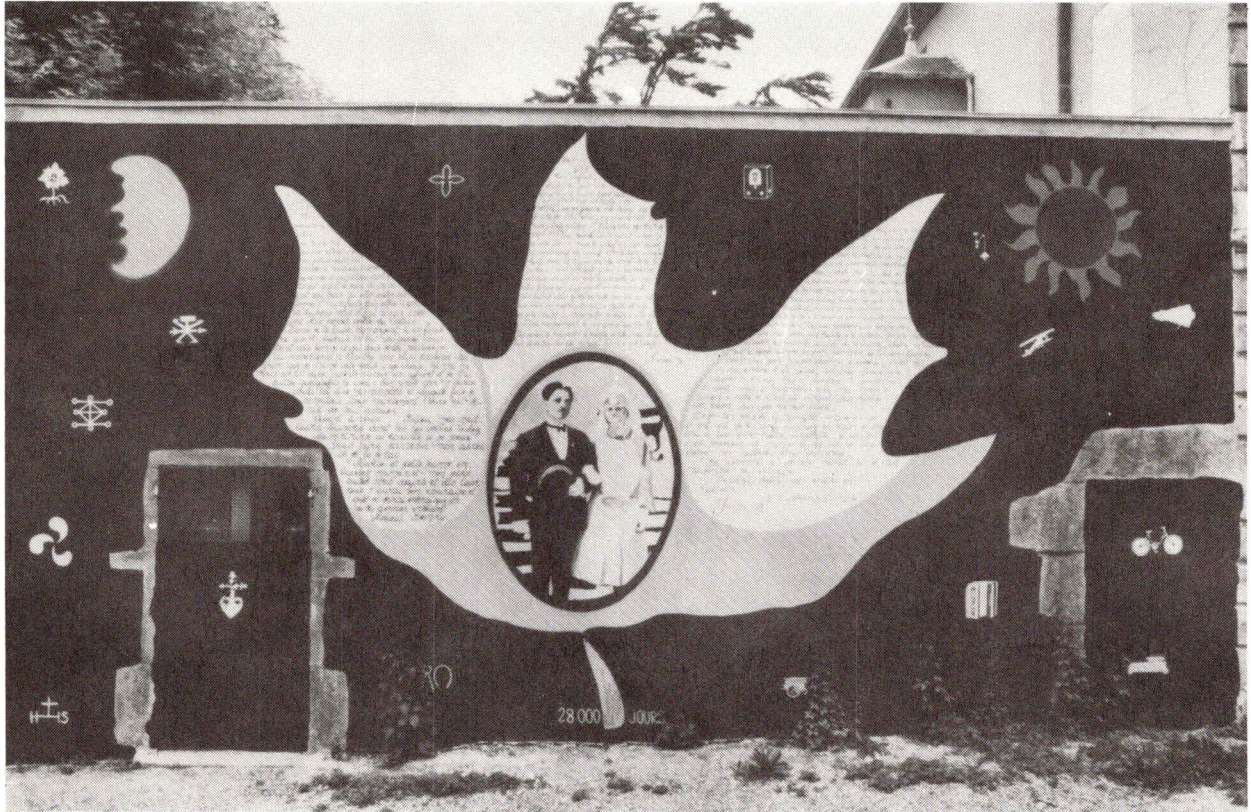
With each group, he spends two months in the studio, then goes to the wall. The actual painting of each mural takes one week. Phillipe acts as a technician for the mural painting, accepting whatever specific role is most appropriate to that particular group. With teens, he designs and they execute. With children, it is easy to have them design because they are unselfconscious about their drawing, but with older adults, inhibitions interfere with the drawing. The two months is designed to give confidence to the group, not to teach them how to draw, because in a short time they would only learn to copy his work. The most personal drawings are the ones invariably selected for use in the mural designs.

At St. Egreve, a town of about 30,000 people, the seniors Phillipe worked with talked about the changes in their lives, from gas lamps to electric, indoor plumbing, hot water on tap, etc. The question was, "what is important?" It led Phillipe to thinking that the muralist's job is not to take a survey alone, but to develop the most submerged, the deepest analytical ideas/desires of the group.

He also believes that a muralist should never do something that he/she has not done him/herself, so he works for weeks, alone, actually doing what he asked his "artists" to do. With the seniors, he wondered why they kept mentioning obsolete things. Maybe, he decided, because they were feeling obsolete themselves in a society which emphasizes youth, and were apprehensive of talking about it openly. So Phillipe suggested using an old family photo in the mural. Some weeks before, he had not understood why they showed him these photos, but now he understood that the photos were of a good life when they were young. Now they are old, sick, alone, etc., with partners and children often dead. Phillipe did the design himself derived from his work and being with the group, and taking on the spirit of the group.

In the photograph, the letter on the left is a love letter written in WWI, the middle a letter sent by a man to his son about WWI, near the end. Both letters are anti-war, and it is interesting that seniors would select this theme today. To the right is a letter written in 1924 by a man to a cousin about electric power coming to his village.

Another recent project, after St. Egreve, was done with mental patients, which was more difficult, and very intense. The theme used was "humanity" because the patients needed something extremely general. There were, for this project, twelve patients who did their mural alone, and twelve attendants/medical assistants with them. The mural is the first time they had been asked to do something that would be public and permanent. The lower left of the wall was painted by a man who was told to do something about humanity. The rest of the mural was executed similarly.





In 1983 Phillippe began a large project in Chambéry-Savoie, near Switzerland, where the government was leftist. They asked Phillippe to do a mural in an old part of the city where 20,000 blue collar workers live in condominiums. The atmosphere was "like a ghetto in the United States." He worked with different people for six months, and began three designs on immigration because the city is near Italy and nearly 30% of the population is older immigrants. In France, immigrants have traditionally become assimilated within one or two generations, but perhaps with Asian and North African immigrants that will change. The first mural was about the beginnings of immigration, and the second and third walls were cancelled after there was a change in city government to a more right-wing group.

Shown in the photograph is a long shot and a detail of the Chambéry-Savoie mural.

Muralist Pablo O'Higgins Dies

Mexican muralist Pablo O'Higgins died Saturday morning at his home in Coyoacan, at the age of 79, after struggling with a kidney ailment for many years.

O'Higgins' works were outstanding for their delicate finish and style and close attention to color.

Born in 1904, in Salt Lake City, Utah, Higgins came to Mexico in 1924 as a young artist at the invitation of muralist Diego Rivera, with whom he worked on various murals especially in the chapel at the Chapingo Autonomous University in the State of Mexico, about 20 miles east of Mexico City, and the Public Education Ministry in the capital.

He was the founder and inspiration behind the LEAR (League of Revolutionary Writ-

ers and Artists) and, in 1937, along with Leopoldo Méndez, Arenal and Zalce, he founded the Popular Graphics Workshop, which was one of the most important institutions in the development of Mexican graphics and printing.

Higgins said that his first contacts with Mexicans was with emigrants from the Mexican Revolution in San Francisco and San Diego.

He was considered, along with David Alfaro Siqueiros as "el más izquierdista" of the generation of muralists that included Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, Juan O'Gorman and Rufino Tamayo.

In his aim to bring art to the common man, he painted a mural at the Aberlardo Rodríguez Market, which has since been declared a national monument.

In 1946, he was presented with a special presidential honor for his work in lithography.

Other awards, include: The first prize in the Annual Print and Lithography Salon, organized by the National Institute of Fine Arts, in 1959; in the same year he won the honor of painting a mural on the exterior walls of the city hall in Poza Rica, executed in 1960; and, in 1971, he received the distinguished Elias Souraski art award.

His principle murals in Mexico, are conserved in the Talleres Gráficos de la Nación, in the School of Santa María Atarascuilli and in the cities of Calitzintzin, Michoacán, and Poza Rica, Veracruz.

He participated in numerous collective and one-man exhibitions. In 1955 he painted murals for the stevedore unions in Seattle, Washington, and in Honolulu, Hawaii.

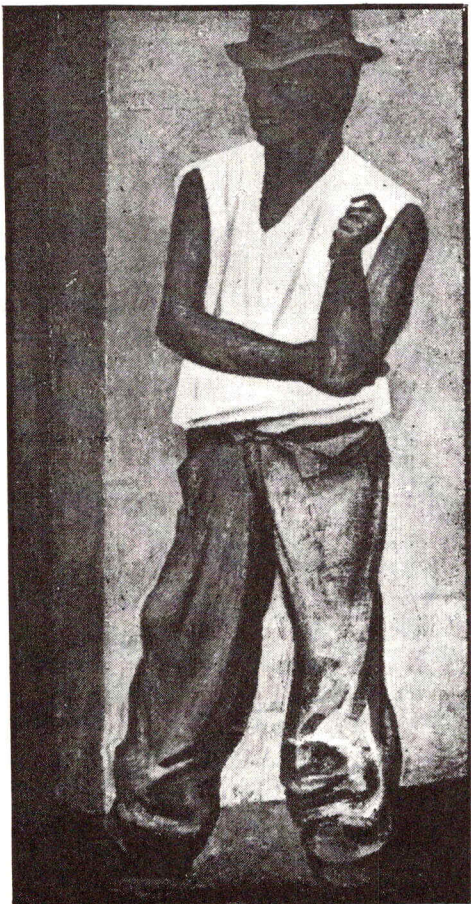
He is survived by his wife, María de Jesús de la Fuente de O'Higgins. They had no children.

His body lay in state with an honor guard at the Palacio de Bellas Artes on Saturday from 6-8 p.m.

The coffin and guard was later moved to the salón de la Plástica Mexicana in honor of his contribution to the gallery, surrounded by his paintings.

The body was flown yesterday to Monterrey, Nuevo León, for burial.

The Mexico City News, July 18, 1983
Photos: *El Día*, July 17, 1983



O'HIGGINS y su esposa María de Jesús.

OFF THE WALL

Billboard Alterations, San Francisco Style

San Franciscans have expressed their indignation with Madison Avenue idiocy numerous times over the past several years by the clever alterations of offensive billboards.

The intended soft-sell of sexiness is often shattered by surreal artistic additions, as when a menacing Telly Savalas selling whiskey with "Feel the Velvet, baby" suddenly wears an oversized toothy grin and a messaged changed to "Feel the PAIN, baby". Or when a stupid campaign featuring a male model in a giant hotdog bun finds itself titled PIG IN A BLANKET, painted with a mass of yellow paint actually containing mustard! Often the blatant manner in which sex is used to sell commodities is exposed with an added bawdy message — if "Two Fingers (of tequila) is All It Takes" the painter urges you to BEND OVER, and another moist-lipped model in a tequila billboard is revealed as a WET DREAM.

Sometimes the humor is bitter: on a sensationalistic campaign for Cambodian refugees captioned "Save Five Lives with a Dollar", vandals-of-conscience spraypainted LIFE IS CHEAP.

In a dubious campaign by Mayor Dianne Feinstein to shift the blame for fare increases of the Municipal Railway System (streetcars and buses) to nonpaying riders, several billboards had their message turned against themselves to become FARE IS NO FARE. The cartoon fareshirker being intimidated by fellow riders now sports Mayor Feinstein's face and bow tie.



There are three types of issues with regards to which San Franciscan billboard-changers have especially distinguished themselves: energy, militarism and, in one especially exciting way, housing.



Resentment towards Pacific Gas and Electric Company grows against high rates and massive anti-municipalization campaigns. In a 1982 electoral effort calling for a study of the feasibility of the city acquiring the utilities, the company outspent to defeat it what the study itself would have cost.

Variations on PG&E's billboard campaign urging conservation in order to "Turn Back the Tankers" (foreign oil reliance, by developing domestic energy sources, i.e. nuclear) soon read "Turn Off the Juice and Turn back the METERS" and "Turn UP the RATES and Turn a FAT PROFIT".

With the occupation of the American Embassy in Iran in 1979, a series of billboards appeared nationwide featuring Ayatollah Khomeini's picture and the advice for revenge: "Fight Back—Drive 55". This play at jingoism provoked a variety of additions, from the alteration "Fight Back—Drive FAST", to a row of Farrah Fawcett-like cheerleaders wearing A-Bomb haltertops. The most elaborate transformation was into a gallery of opponents to U.S. policies, adding portraits (approx. 8' each) of Geronimo and Ho Chi Minh.

Further anti-war havoc (recently reproduced as a poster) was wrought upon the Army's "We'll Pay You \$288 a Month to Learn a Skill", some black paint changing the recruitment message to "We'll Pay You \$288 a Month to . . . KILL". And a billboard in San Francisco for Harold's Club casino in Reno playing on the myth of cowboy glory by emphasizing their gun collection, saw the more historically-accurate inclusion of the 12' figure of a murdered Native American.

A cigarette billboard became, with the change of a single letter, a "Triumph for WAR Watchers", while another cigarette company's message "Tar is Lowest" became the more apt "MORALE is Lowest" as the economy stagnates and the mood of prewar gloom thickens.

Billboards with the dangerous slogan "Follow the Leader" soon saw the addition of sieg-heiling Nazi arms and an 8' cut-out figure of Hitler himself. Several metal placards in front of Navy recruiting offices were purloined and replaced the next morning, but featuring nuzzling pigs, skulls, sea serpents and swarming helicopters, while the Navy that urges "Take a World



Cruise" is more likely to "MAKE a World BRUISE". Most recently, a large board on Market Street showing benign Uncle Sam in TWA's "America's Going to Europe" came to warn "America's Going TOWARDS FASCISM".

Altered billboards were integral to a more complex site of resistance art on housing issues. Late spring a desolate empty pit in the North Mission district became an evolving monument to the struggle against speculation and its grim consequences. The gaping hole at the corner of Sixteenth and Valencia Streets has been empty for eight years since the Gartland residential hotel burned down. The neighborhood Association had long fought to keep that site from being sold and developed for anything but affordable housing. This site, where twelve died and the bodies of thirteen missing were never found (despite persistent citations by fire inspectors for violations and previous fires, the Gartland's fire exits were wired shut) underwent a transformation sometime before dawn one Sunday morning. The adjacent wall announced "12 DEAD/LANDLORD ARSON! GARTLAND APTS. 1975". Painted flames surrounded the words, as did stencilled "RATS FOR PROFIT" silhouettes, for the pit is a breeding ground for rats. The sidewalk reads STOP—THINK—EMPTY PIT EQUALS SPECULATION. Signs from realtors Skyline Realty Co. were borrowed and altered to read SLUMLORD REALTY. Looming overhead, a large billboard for a chain of liquor stores with "Get Everything You Want for Less" saw added the too-familiar method: EXPLOIT TENANTS. That week statements in Spanish and English "This in not vandalism—This is a Public Service" explaining the Gartland pit's history were on most lampposts and telephone poles. The corner is considered the geographical heart of the North Mission and the Gartland tragedy is a natural focus of outrage over real estate speculation in the area and its step-child, arson. Judging by the reactions of passers-by, overheard conversations and the *North Mission News*, the ethnically diverse neighborhood was pleased with the art-troublemaker's clear and well-orchestrated attack.

A couple months later white wooden crosses and cardboard gravestones appeared with the names of deaths in the historic 1975 fire. Yet a day after an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* by art critic Thomas Albright the stencilled and wheat-pasted messages were blackened out—not in a full repainting of the wall, but individually made illegible. The three young printers "hired by the city" were surprised to face an angry group of residents that Sunday afternoon. The following Saturday evening other artists in the neighborhood discovered slides could be projected from across the street upon the large wall over the pit and slides of the now-destroyed stencils and messages loomed over the pit for the duration of a candlelight vigil for the arson dead. Also featured was a slide of an

anonymous poster that had appeared depicting another notorious landlord WANTED FOR CHRONIC SLUMLORDING.

All eyes in the neighborhood were now on the pit. When another banner "ARSON (ar'sen): when a financially troubled businessman sets fire to his building" was accompanied by charred papier-mache bodies, some neighbors who had witnessed the fire and its horrors were offended and removed them. Tempers were high, but by this time the North Mission Association had obtained participation from members of the S.F. Board of Supervisors and the Mission Station Police Captain in the process of trying to have the Gartland's lost units replaced by non-condominium housing stock to prove that the torching of buildings won't be allowed as a way to make money off land speculation. The introduction of altered billboards and artworks into that fight can be credited with bringing energy and attention to the issues, and what appeared at the Gartland Pit—like the best community murals everywhere—operated in the context of neighborhood politics and local forces.

The improved billboards and alterations in San Francisco, like others around the world, demonstrate that with an economy of means—a little paint, wheat paste and righteous indignation—people can change the insulting intrusions corporate propaganda (or strategic silences) make upon their neighborhoods and daily lives.

Mike Mosher
Craig Baldwin



Photo: Madeline Finch

PROTEST ARTISTS

Icons And Images For Peace



The spectacle of colorful banners, posters, drawings and stencils at the June 12 mass rally in New York last year seems to have attracted many artists from across the country to the antinuclear movement, in some cases before their politics were clearly formed. Many wondered how they could adapt their work to the issue. How, for example, can landscape artists execute an anti-war theme? And what are other powerful images besides the mushroom cloud?

There seems to be no single influence or school of antinuclear art. It has a wide variety of media, from simple charred clay pottery to 1960s-style agitprop. One could, like New York artist Eva Cockcroft, furtively, but with subsequent wide press coverage, stencil city walls and subways with Reagan caricatures, "life forms" (fish, birds), and madonnas, believing, like conceptual artist Christo, that the process of putting art on display is part of the art. Or one could engage in the type of performance art demonstrated by New York Denture's Art Club artists Stan Kaplan and John Gianacinni when, at the beginning of the June 12 rally, they released 3000 balloons stencil-

that will help make the movement more visible and popular.

For a week in late May the Massachusetts chapter of AFS ran an antinuclear art exhibit in the Cannon House Office Building on Capitol Hill. The exhibit, which opened with a speech by its leading congressional proponent, Representative Edward Markey, took place under certain stipulations (no nudity, no Reagan caricatures). But for AFS the exhibit served its primary mandate—to use art to increase the degree of participation in the movement.

Toward this end AFS also designed its "Save Life on Earth" poster. Believing that a person carrying a placard feels more involved if he or she made it, AFS distributed green two-by-three foot cards bearing a white center for people to fill with a sketch of their favorite life form. The poster project dispels the notion that political art is stylized, repetitious, unable to adapt itself to the concerns of everyday life. "Save Life on Earth" tempts people, even challenges them, to take part.

DISARMING IMAGES

Galleries, libraries, and schools are be-

ginning to host antinuclear art shows, at least in the larger cities. In some cases artists are being commissioned to create works with antinuclear themes. The National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, which claims a membership of mostly black and Hispanic women, has a Bread and Roses Cultural Project which is commissioning pieces for its major exhibit, "Disarming Images: Art for Nuclear Disarmament." The exhibit is scheduled to open in April of 1984 in New York and then travel the country, starting in Los Angeles during the Summer Olympic Games in July 1984.

The advisory board of "Disarming Images" is made up of 44 celebrities from labor, art, entertainment and the peace movement. The exhibit has attracted commitments from such artists as Laurie Anderson, Keith Haring, Robert Longo and Claes Oldenburg.

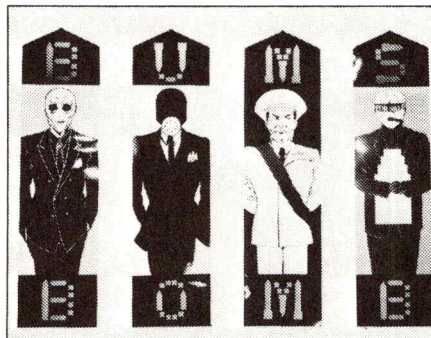
Not all the pieces for the exhibit have to be commissioned. "What became apparent very quickly," says curator Nina Selshin, "was that major artists had already done things. So why execute new works when perfectly good ones already existed?" The exhibit will feature paintings, drawings, photographs, and sculptures in a variety of styles, but excludes abstract. Abstract work, Selshin explains, is "not read that easily by lots of people. We felt it would turn people off." Abstract artists committed to the issue will no doubt object to this decision, and



Stencils designed by Eva Cockcroft

led with the words "Good-bye to Nuclear Weapons."

The balloon cloud has since become part of the iconography of the event, and has also been appropriated by WNBC television in New York as an advertising image. Not long ago similar use of political art might have been widely regarded as co-optation. Today, however, groups such as Artists for Survival (AFS), which has chapters in Waltham, Massachusetts, and Los Angeles, encourage using art in a variety of ways



Do-it-yourself AFS placard



Ilona Granet's "Bums Bomb" (top); Eugene Narrett's "The President's Funeral"

may even be confused about where the line between abstract and non-abstract art has been drawn.

MEASURING EFFECT

Many antinuclear groups are searching for the ideal symbiosis between painting and photography through the inclusion of photographs in shows, and using the largely unexplored audio-visual medium. Slides of paintings accompanied by narration often reach organizations with neither space for hanging artwork nor funds

Artists Talk Slideshow: Cultural Resistance in the Bay Area

By Lincoln Cushing

How often do progressive visual artists get a chance to present their artwork and discuss it? With other artists rarely; with the general public, almost never. While this may not be an impediment to some artists, those of us who produce socially and politically relevant work need direct contact with a wide range of communities. "Artists Talk" was a recent program in the San Francisco bay area which featured an artist's slide presentation as a tool for organizing political artists and sharing their work with the public.

Focusing on Slides

One very valuable function of an artist's slide show is to expose an audience to a large body of material in a short time. This has been used quite effectively during conferences (such as SPARC's 1982 "Artist's Advance") where it helps to provide a basis for discussion and networking. However, such showings usually occur among a small group of peers, and are only one aspect of their potential uses.

Recently, during the opening of an exhibit by another artist and myself in a community art gallery, we presented a continuous automatic slide show in an adjacent room. We included the show in order to deliberately draw attention to the cultural context which shapes our work and break down the myth of the "independent" artist. We showed five slides each from over 20 local political artist's work. The slides were identified by artist's names, and a handout included further information. Audience response was overwhelmingly positive, and the viewing room was jammed the entire evening.

The excitement generated by the slide show was not lost. Soon afterwards, I got together with one of the artists featured to plan a more ambitious program. Our objectives were:

1. To present the work of a cross-section of politically and socially relevant artists;
2. To allow artists to speak during the presentation of their individual work as well as participate in a broader audience discussion at the end;
3. To exhibit full-size work as well as slide reproductions; and
4. To produce a quality program that

could be organized by two people in their "spare time" with limited resources.

Organizing the Event

"Cultural Resistance in the Bay Area: Artists Talk About Their Work" emerged after four months of organizing. After the initial decision to limit the program to two-dimensional media, we drew up a list of potential artists who represented a balanced diversity of age, sex, race and artistic style. After several stages of sifting, the final program included muralists Miranda Bergman and Dewey Crumpler; printmakers Dick Correll, Lincoln Cushing, Juan Fuentes, Nancy Hom, Jean Lamarr, Doug Minkler and Malaquias Montoya; painters Yolanda Lopez and Mike Mosher; photographer Richard Bermack; and batik artist Lisa Kokin.

The final show included a month-long exhibit of 30 works by almost all of the participating artists as well as a two-hour slide presentation one evening in the middle of the month.

Although Lisa and I acted as the primary organizers, most of the artists helped with publicity and other preparations. We secured the use of the community hall at La Peña, a well-known cultural center in Berkeley, and agreed to produce the event as a fundraiser in exchange for hall rental, equipment use, and leaflet printing. We also arranged to use the hall for the group show during the month the program was scheduled. For publicity, we relied on leaflet distribution and free newspaper calendar listings as well as inclusion as a feature event in La Peña's monthly calendar.

The event, itself, was designed to streamline choreography in a situation where actual rehearsal was not possible. The only time we all got together before the actual program was a two-minute huddle moments before showtime. However, we had requested the slides well ahead of time and they were already loaded in the carousels. In addition, we notified the artists which order they would be speaking in and we set a time limit for each presentation with a timekeeper to help enforce it. Artists selected their own slides and were encouraged to answer questions from the audience.

The Results

By all accounts, the program was a success. La Peña raised money, other artists expressed renewed enthusiasm about their work, and non-artists were stimulated by the richness of the body of culture presented. The range of communities and styles was eye-opening, from Dick Correll's 1940's woodcuts to Jean Lamarr's lithographs of cultural pride in the Native American community to Dewey Crumpler's high school murals honoring Black history.

Predictably, we experienced some small technical problems. Our only significant error was the program's length. Despite our best efforts at pacing the event, unforeseen delays and the inclusion of too many artists prevented any discussion from taking place at the end as we had hoped.

Plans for the Future

Based on this experience, we now feel the need for two different types of programs. One would be intended to reduce the relative invisibility of progressive visual artists and present their work to a broad community, as "Artists Talk" did. The other would be oriented more toward increasing the level of dialogue within the political arts community itself. In this vein, we are now planning a series of programs involving a more intimate setting and fewer presentors at each session. Publicity would be aimed at those who are already involved in some form of cultural work, and each event would be structured to maximize discussion about the issues, both political and aesthetic, which confront us.

We are very much interested in communicating with any group or individual who is interested in this sort of organizing. Please contact the author at 5703 Oakgrove Ave., Oakland, CA 94618.

Lincoln Cushing is a printmaker and graphic artist who also works in the progressive union-printshop, Inkworks, in Oakland, CA.

Art & Artists, September 1983

A Community Sculpture Garden, Chicago

In one year's time, over 150 local people from 5 to 65 participated in the construction of 5 concrete sculptures, and in landscaping what was once a vacant lot. Greenfield Page Community Park is on the Near West Side of Chicago, on land owned by a social service agency. The area is both dense and scarred by vacant lots left by urban renewal; 12,000 people live within a few square blocks. Unemployment is high, estimated at 50%. There were no parks in the neighborhood.

The project was co-sponsored by the Chicago Mural Group and the Marcy-Newberry Association. Artist Lynn Takata worked with two different processes in involving the community in the creation of the park. During the summer of 1982, two concrete sculptural benches were designed by Takata. She worked with community leaders Michael Cooke and Gregory C. Lloyd. Each man represented a different faction of the neighborhood who did not get along, the housing projects and newer subsidized housing. A crew of young people were chosen from each area; we took care to divide the number of jobs generated between each area. The sculptures built were named *Loving is Caring* by a nine-year-old boy, based on his reaction to them and the message he wanted to give the community. Teenagers participating in their construction were basically apprentices working on an artist-designated project. One of the adults, Greg Lloyd, suggested the theme of the second sculpture and assisted in designing it. This process is one similar to a method some muralists work.

For the second stage of the park, children's classes were held over four months time to allow them to design sculptures. Walter Netsch, consulting architect, suggested turning the sculptures into a spraypool; the center raised funds to hire a plumber to help the dream materialize. Our collaboration was not what we had hoped; due to a lack of money and time, insufficient meetings were held. The spraypool works but the spray is lighter than what we had hoped.

I had been inspired by the work of Lillian Killen Rosenberg. Children worked on designs of their choice. Cartoon characters, African masks, landscapes, portraits and animals were all part of their progression in exploring images. I did not censor their work. The children ranged in age from 7-13. Generally,

I find this is the age-group most likely to participate in community projects. They are less afraid of failing than other age groups, and in this sense are easy for an artist/leader to involve. What truly captured their imagination was combinations of animals, who through their design, could fly, swim, and express a variety of emotions. They explored evil, playful and compassionate creatures. The class voted on their favorite designs. A local welding school donated steel and fabricated the structures for the molds. Casting was done by adults who had worked on the other sculptures. Children named their sculptures "Seamaster, Nightgale, and Fire Bird". Fire Bird has water spraying from his broken heart; some children found this image disturbing and so on the other side his heart was healed. Also involved in the project was the Sunbow Foundation, a construction training program for low income women. Sunbow built a small amphitheatre, collaborating with Lynn Takata on its design. Initially, Sunbow inadequately braced the circular forms for seating; an undulating design was the result. A cedar platform was built for the base of the amphitheatre for a better surface on which to perform. Women from Sunbow also did grading, paving and sod work.

Although these women did not live in the neighborhood, their presence was accepted. Initially, there was some negative reaction to women doing such hard physical work. As a woman, I had some difficulty myself. My crew for one sculpture, three 20-26-year-old men, greeted me one morning with the news that they had a meeting among themselves and decided that they wanted me to direct them; that I should not do any hard physical work (pushing a wheelbarrow, or using a pick). Reluctantly, as they were quite firm, I agreed to try that arrangement. But the momentum and sense of teamwork was damaged. We went back to working together.

There were special moments. Teenagers and children brought stuffed animals to put inside the sculptural benches (which were hollow). Adults brought jewelry and trophies.

Funding came from The Marcy-Newberry Assoc., The National Endowment for the Arts, the Illinois Arts Council, the Chicago Council on Fine Arts, Material Service Corp., Ryerson Inland Steel, the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training, AIRCO Technical Institute, the Sunbow Foundation, the Chicago Mural Group, and Daryl F. Grisham.

Lynn Takata



Unemployment Line Forms

Each of these 111 silhouetted figures represents 1,546 unemployed Chicago workers. According to the United States Department of Labor, the unemployment rate for Chicago's adult civilian labor force of 1,442,400 is 11.9% or 171,645. The statements were selected from interviews of people standing in lines at Chicago unemployment offices during March and April, 1983. The silhouetted high-contrast figures are done with ink sprayed through stencils; the text was done with Charkole and spray-fixed for additional permanence. The piece was done in conjunction with a show at N.A.B. Gallery entitled "Products of Society, Artists Respond to the Great Depression of the Eighties", which included street performances on May 1.

GudePounds
11221 Champlain
Chicago, IL 60628

I think it will all boil down to an uproar. You can't be going off sending aid elsewhere when you got people here starving. It just seems like they just take from us with taxes and give it all to other people, while the costs of everything in the stores is going sky high.

Carol, unemployed 10 months

Either it's gonna get better or it's gonna get worse. That's all I got to say. Only now it looks worse instead of better. I don't think about what's gonna happen, because I think whatever's gonna happen is gonna happen anyway.

James, unemployed 12 months

You work at a place for five or six years and then turn around and get laid off and then you have to turn around and wait here all day. And some of the people here act like they're giving you money, like it's their money.

Tony, unemployed 8 months

Before I used to think that probably half of those people didn't really need unemployment, or that they just didn't want to work. But now I see that they want to and that there are no jobs. Now I keep a constant headache. It's just strain, pressure.

Fran, unemployed 2 months

A lot of times you wake up saying,

"What am I going to do?"

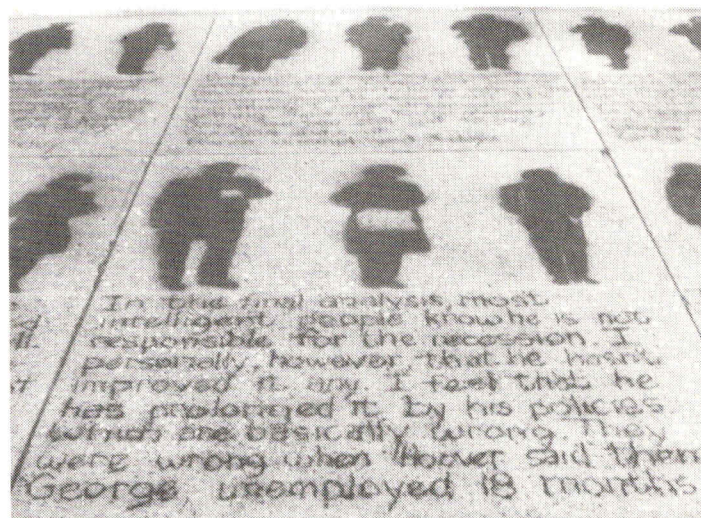
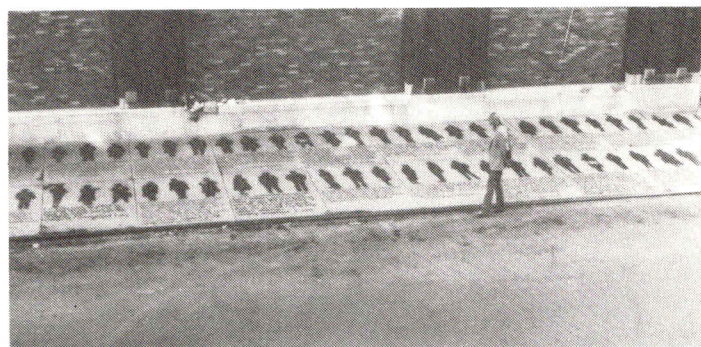
"What's gonna happen next?"

"What's the next step?"

"What happens when your money runs out?"

It's like a life thing—this is where you are, but what will be the afterlife?

Terry, unemployed 11 months



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