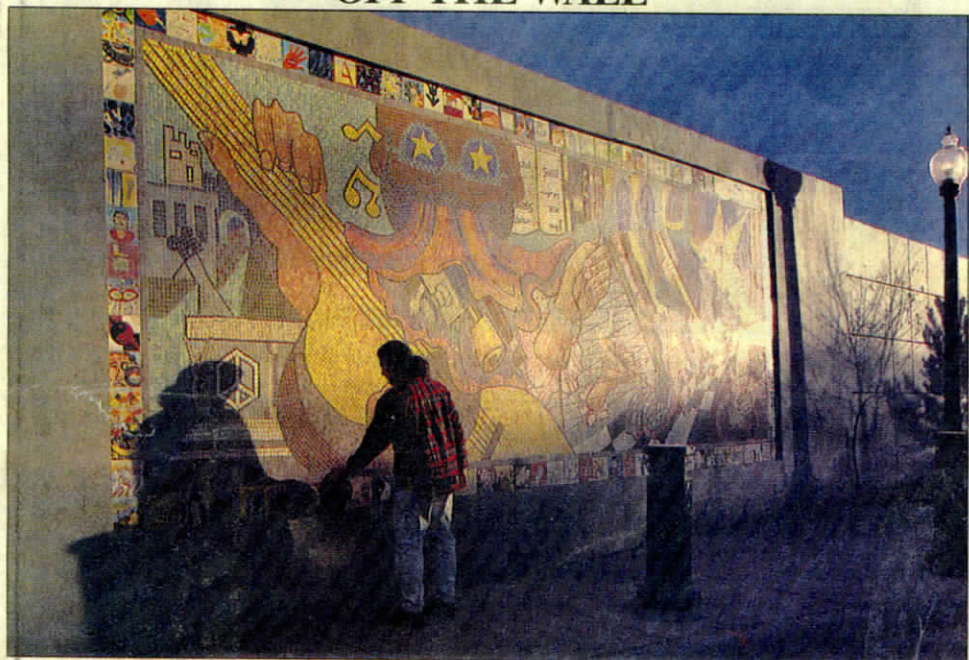


# SUNDAY DENVER POST

Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire

Early Edition  
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## OFF THE WALL



Vincent Martinez inspects 'Dedication to the Arts,' one of the 10 large mosaics that make up a public-art project called 'Neighborhood Epic' in north Denver's Highland area. Vincent worked as an assistant to the project's creators, Bob Luna

and Martha Keating. The art project is contained within a sound-reduction wall on the west side of Interstate 25, between 38th Avenue and the new (and still unopened) 20th Street Viaduct. **STORY, 1E**

The Denver Post / Jerry Cleveland

THE DENVER POST

## Politicos say No! but it's that or taxes

By R.A. Zaldivar  
Knight-Ridder News Service

WASHINGTON — With Social Security turning into a hot issue in the home stretch of the congressional elections, candidates of every political stripe are signing pledges and swearing oaths not to cut retirement benefits.

But experts familiar with the retirement program say it's a virtual certainty that benefits will have to

### ANALYSIS

be cut or taxes raised in the next few years to ensure Social Security's long-term financial stability.

"The trustees of Social Security have clearly indicated that all the various parts of the system are out of balance, and action must be taken to restore that balance," said economist Eugene Steuerle of the Urban Institute think tank. "Most of the people on the campaign trail are well aware of this."

The latest projections show that Social Security faces a cash shortfall in 2013, when payroll tax collections will not be enough to cover monthly checks for retirees.

At that point, the retirement system should be able to draw on its sizable surplus, which is invested in Treasury IOUs. But because the federal government keeps running a deficit, that money is being spent to cover ordinary expenses. The conse-

## Murals capture diverse neighborhood

MURALS from Page 1E

in that medium. They won, receiving the go-ahead in December 1992.

A painstakingly difficult but durable medium, mosaic-tile art has been around since Roman times. The term "mosaic" refers to the design created by adhering small pieces of a hard substance to a base.

"I see mosaic as a viable art form," Luna said. "We wanted to put up representational images of the history of the neighborhood — our neighborhood. And we wanted to get people involved."

The heart of "Neighborhood Epic" is the images contained in the 10 large mosaic murals. Sometimes presenting their colorful images in a straightforward, narrative way, other times offering multiple perspectives that shift as if seen through a shaken kaleidoscope, the two artists depict everything that could possibly be associated with the area.

The 10 murals are "Dinosaurs," "Two Tribes," "Winter Nature," "Summer Nature," "Trolleys," "Neighborhood Celebrations," "The 1960s," "Dedication to the Arts," "Foods of the Neighborhood" and "Future Skyline."

### Signs of the times

There are prehistoric dinosaurs as well as wine-sipping patrons of Italian restaurants; Platte River Valley farmers and fishermen as well as religious celebrations by the Irish-, Italian- and Mexican-American Catholics who have called this area home; artisans creating delicate pottery as well as born-to-be-wild, "Easy Rider"-style motorcyclists of the 1960s.

The largest mural is 352 square feet; the smallest is 200. As many as 400 "border tiles" surround an individual mural. On some, Luna and Keating collaborated; others they designed individually.

What makes the artwork fascinating is its

'Whoever thought of this, it's a beautiful idea. That's something that will last for eternity.'

Frank Busnardo

sense of fantasy and goodwill — it isn't just dry history. It rewards the attentive viewer with small, delightful visual tricks. The "Future Skyline" mural imagines Denver as a 2-mile-high city raised up above the ground. Business professionals and cyclists get around through pneumatic tubelike slides. A Jurassic Park-style theme park is nearby.

But there is another element to "Neighborhood Epic." As part of the commission, Luna and an educational assistant encouraged residents and others to participate in the creation of the artwork. He went to schools, senior centers and churches to seek contributors.

The participants designed ceramic border tiles with simple but touching images that often commented on the subject of the larger murals. Or they made self-portraits. Luna and Keating fired and glazed each one at their studio. "We must have moved over a ton of porcelain tile," Keating said.

This aspect of the project has excited everyone. "I think it's a wonderful story of the history of Denver that takes place in that area," said Joyce Oberfeld, director of the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film. "But the fact they worked with (so many) people makes it exceptional."

Frank Busnardo, 74, and his wife Laura, 62, created border tiles. He did a gondola and Christopher Columbus, she the "boot" of Italy. Although they live in Wheat Ridge, they are

members of the neighborhood's Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. He's also active in Sons of Italy. "Whoever thought of this, it's a beautiful idea," Busnardo said. "That's something that will last for eternity."

Vincent Martinez, 27 and a Park Hill resident, was hired by Keating and Luna to assist with their mosaic-related work. He also contributed his own border tile, the Chicano three-headed *mestizo* figure. "I felt that's what I was — I'm from a long line of Spanish blood. I always wanted that as a tattoo and now I don't have to get one," Martinez said.

### No pot of gold

Marlea Taylor, who teaches art at Holy Family and St. Catherine schools, said her students already feel a part of history because they made border tiles. "They know in 80 years those will still be there. And their grandchildren will see them."

Luna and Keating are proud of their work. That's despite the fact it didn't make them rich — they figure that, after expenses, they earned minimum wage for their two year's of work. But they know it's likely to outlast them. "I think there are some damn good images," Luna said. "It's a sweet example of mosaic images with history content."

And Keating added, "And it's an accessible piece for everyone."

They also made sure their own self-portraits are part of the project. But not just as ancillary border tiles. In "Foods of the Neighborhood," for instance, a satisfied and life-enjoying couple sips wine at Pagliacci's Italian restaurant, while a server approaches with salad.

It's them.

There will be an official dedication of "Neighborhood Epic" at noon on Dec. 3. For more information about the city's public-art program, call 640-2696.



# Arts & Entertainment

Mike Pearson, Entertainment Editor — 892-2592



ARTS  
WATCH

## Elevator installed

Temple Events Center, 1595 Pearl St., hopes to have its disabled access elevator up and running by 7 p.m. March 24, when a revue called *Politics Unusual* takes the stage. The city's political leaders, Denver City Council members, media types and more are expected to participate in the opening celebration. Food and drink will be available beginning at 5:30 p.m. The tab is \$20. Proceeds benefit the center, which is installing the elevator to attract a larger audience and more programs. Information: 860-9400, or TicketMaster at 290-8497.

## Musical revue

Songs and scenes from *Barnum*, *Carousel*, *The Sound of Music*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Bye Bye Birdie* and more will highlight *Sentimental Journey*, a musical revue by the Younger Generation Players, Friday through Sunday at Sinclair Middle School Auditorium, 300 W. Chenango Ave. in Englewood. The revue, a celebration of the group's 15th anniversary, includes material from the more than 50 shows the Younger Generation Players have performed over those years. Tickets are \$7 and may be purchased by calling 730-6610.

## MOVIE NOTES

**Jim Carrey**, star of the box office hit *Ace Ventura: Pet Detective*, has closed a deal to star in New Line Cinema's *Dumb and Dumber* for what sources tell *The Hollywood Reporter* is between \$4.5 million and \$7 million. Carrey had been hotly pursued for several projects since the success of the Morgan Creek comedy, which grossed \$37.6 million in its first two weeks of release. Set for a May start, *Dumb and Dumber* is a buddy picture about two dim-witted guys pursuing the same girl.

## TODAY'S BEST BETS

### Television

Director John Ford's 1952 tribute to his family's homeland, *The Quiet Man*, is regarded as one of the filmmaker's greatest achievements. John Wayne stars as a former boxer hiding a terrible secret, and Maureen O'Hara as the fiery Irish colleen who captures his heart. TBS, 6 p.m. and Channel 20, 7 p.m.

# WALL of AGES

Giant mosaic mural project is a neighborhood affair

By Mary Voelz Chandler

Rocky Mountain News Staff Writer

Anyone who has painted or papered a wall knows that at the beginning of the project, the space at hand seems as big as the sky.

So consider the task of making 10 mosaic tile murals — about 1,700 square feet in all — to cover a concrete wall about 20 feet high and 1/4 mile long. And the job of recruiting students and neighborhood residents to create another 2,000-or-so ceramic tiles to serve as the murals' borders.

Artists Bob Luna and Martha Keating are doing just that for a public art project for the retaining wall on the west side of Interstate 25, built for the new 20th Street viaduct.

To fill the wall, which runs between Navajo and Jason streets, the \$120,000 commission eventually will involve hundreds of people, from students at North High School and Bryant Webster Elementary School to members of neighborhood lodges, social groups and churches.

At heart, though, it's Luna and Keating.

Luna organizes students and neighbors, lugging glaze and tiles a couple of times a week to North and other schools; he also runs weekend sessions for residents of the northwest Denver neighborhood that sits so close to the wall.

"They get to be artists with this project, which will last a couple of centuries," Luna said.

Keating plays what she calls "foreman of the factory" at their studio on West 36th Avenue, tracing designs onto paper, then gluing down 1-inch squares that create broad areas of color and cut tiles



Steve Groer/Rocky Mountain News

that make lines and movement. The fixative at this stage is a boiled flour-and-water paste.

After the murals take shape on paper, they will be attached, tile-side down, onto thin cement on the viaduct wall. Pull off the paper, and there's the mural, ready to grout and cover with a finish to fight the elements (and graffiti). At 144 tiles per square foot, the murals will contain about 240,000 mosaic tiles.

The couple's success with a smaller-scale public art project in Athmar Park inspired them to propose a community-supported plan to the city. Athmar Park "really got us inspired," Keating said. "The project was so successful and everyone loved it so much. Some of the mural designs are Bob's, and some are mine. We each get to have individual expression."

Tubs of the porcelain mosaic tiles — with colors such as "daffodil" and "innocent blush" — sit in a corner of the studio, where Keating was working on a section of

Clockwise from above: A collection of ceramic tiles made by North High School students; artist Bob Luna advises Merrie Camarena; while Amy Gutierrez works on her contribution to the mural.

the "Dedication to the Arts" mural. One full mural has been completed, about half of another; the artists estimate they will finish by fall. So far about 700 of the personal tiles have been made, with 1,400 to go.

Each mural has a theme, and anyone making a personal tile chooses one of those subjects to follow. Maybe a self-portrait, to fit the mosaic "Future View of the Denver Skyline," maybe a nature scene to work with "Summer on the Platte." Fantastic lizard creatures have been popular, to border the "Dinosaurs" mural, as have been peace signs and flowers for "The Sixties in the Neighbor-

## TO GET INVOLVED

Sessions to create tiles for the 20th Street Viaduct project are set for 1-3 p.m. March 26; April 2, 9, 23 and 30; May 14 and 21, at Our Lady of Guadalupe Hall, 3610 Lipan St. Tiles made by students and neighborhood residents will be on view at Pirate gallery May 6. Information: 477-7909.

hood."

At North, art teacher Kathy Knoblock asked students to pick a theme, do research on the topic, then put together a report, before beginning the job of glazing the tile. "The wall is in this neighborhood, and this seemed such a neat idea," said Knoblock, who has been at North five years and who established the fine arts department at Colorado Mountain College. "I tried to make it an inter-

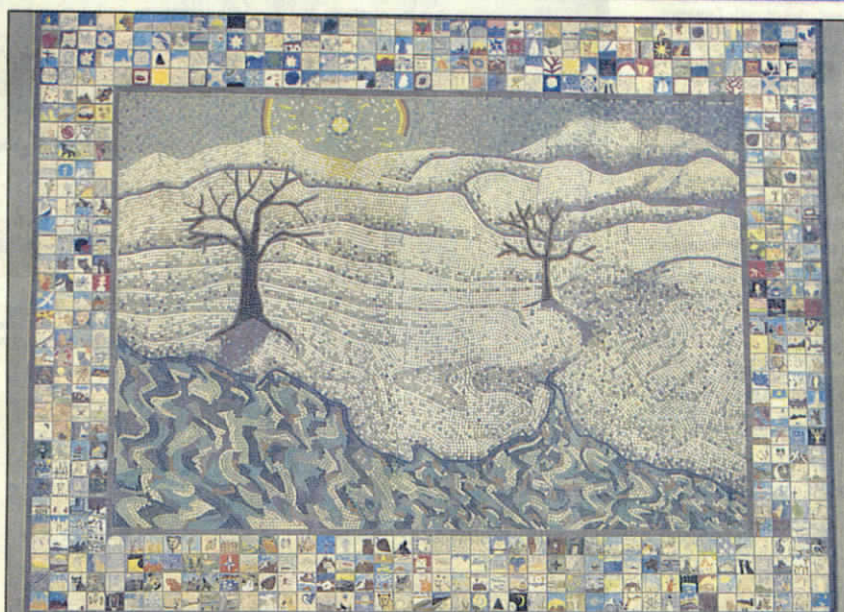


# LIVELY ARTS

Sunday, November 6, 1994

SECTION E

THE DENVER POST



## NORTH DENVER'S

# artists'

## COLONY

### Mosaic murals: wall-to-wall life

By Steven Rosen

Denver Post Art Critic

If a community's art reflects its values, then the Highland area should be the envy of all Denver neighborhoods.

For right now, it's a place where public art matters. That's because the just-completed "Neighborhood Epic" is so appealing.

The series of 10 large mosaic-tile murals has been installed on a new concrete sound-reduction wall separating the area from Interstate 25. The murals face the neighborhood rather than the highway, along a frontage road between Inca Street and the new 20th Street Viaduct over I-25. Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, at West 36th Avenue and Lipan Street, is the nearest landmark.

Rich in detail and color, the murals cover neighborhood history both imagined and historically correct. There are elements of humor and nostalgia. "Neighborhood Epic" is far more than just architectural decoration, as public art too often can be. It effectively speaks to — and for — the spirit, soul and good intentions of the people who have lived here.

#### A product of teamwork

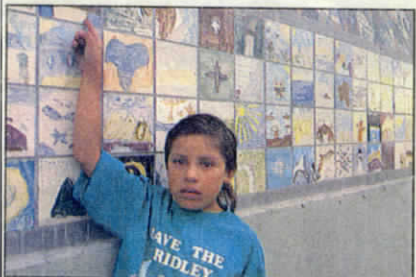
"It's a symbol that art is part of a community, too," said Bob Luna, who created the piece with his wife, Martha Keating. They had help — three full-time assistants worked with them to assemble and install the murals. They also solicited approximately 1,250 neighborhood residents and friends to make the larger ceramic tiles that border each mosaic-tile mural. There are 2,500 such "border tiles."

Luna, 38, and Keating, 35, are professional artists who have lived in Highland — a traditionally ethnic, blue-collar neighborhood that is a developing artists' enclave — for 15 years. They refer to the area as Lower Highlands; others call it North Denver or, to reflect its artistic element, NoDo. It is heavily Mexican-American.

#### Mosaic proposal prevails

Luna and Keating also are familiar with the city's public-art program, having been finalists for several specific sites. (The city mandates that 1 percent of the construction budget on most capital-improvement projects go to art.)

When the city announced that a \$120,000 commission was available for art in connection with construction of the new 20th Street Viaduct, they applied. The city didn't want painted murals because of maintenance concerns. So Luna and Keating proposed mosaic-tile murals, even though they had never worked



'EPIC': Creators, from left, top: Bob Luna, Martha Keating, Kelly Belleful, Rose Sanchez, Vince Martinez.

Clockwise from above left, artists Frank Busnardo, Laura Busnardo, Pearl Manzanaras and Omar Martinez, 9.

The Denver Post / Jerry Cleveland

Please see MURALS on 5E



# El Semanario

News of Colorado's Hispanic community / 20 de enero de 1994

## Infundiendo orgullo a lo largo del viaducto

**E**l Municipio encargó al equipo compuesto por los esposos Bob Luna y Martha Keating, la tarea de crear diez murales de azulejos para el proyecto del nuevo viaducto de la calle 20, y este equipo ya tiene el trabajo preparado para el mismo. Combinando el talento y la inspiración de los niños, los ancianos y otros miembros de la comunidad, este mosaico de un cuarto de milla de longitud describirá la historia subyacente de un vecindario cuyo pasado es culturalmente diverso.

La idea para este proyecto de tamaño proporción surgió en el año 1992, cuando Luna y Keating presentaron la exhibición final a la Comisión del Alcalde para el Arte, la Cultura y el Cine, que finalmente encomendaría el proyecto por un valor de 120.000 dólares. Según Luna y Keating, uno de los requisitos para la concesión fue que el artista debía residir en el vecindario de Lower Highlands.

La participación del público en el proyecto está dirigida hacia los niños del vecindario de Lower Highlands y se invita a los estudiantes, los jubilados, los residentes de la comunidad y los artistas a diseñar un azulejo en sincronización con los temas del mosaico. Los temas incluyen las imágenes íntimas del artista, tales como la visión futurística del perfil de Denver, las comidas del vecindario, los años 60, las conmemoraciones de la comunidad, los tranvías de comienzos del siglo XX, las reuniones de las tribus indígenas y los dinosaurios. Los temas presentados por los estudiantes varían de acuerdo con la edad y se dividen en las siguientes categorías: autorretratos, escenas de la naturaleza,

comidas y modas preferidas, manías y escenas de la vida diaria.

Keating dice que grupos étnicos numerosos han inundado la zona de Lower Highlands durante diferentes períodos, tales como irlandeses, suecos, alemanes, escoceses, galeses, italianos y actualmente enclaves hispanos.

"Estamos tratando de conocer el vecindario y al mismo tiempo es una mezcla de nosotros, como artistas, exhibiendo nuestras imágenes", sostuvo Keating.

Y en el verano de 1994, diez grandes murales de azulejos que describen la historia

Vea VIADUCTO, página 15

### A neighborhood epic:

Commissioned by the city to create ten tile murals, Bob Luna and Martha Keating spearhead a project that will enhance the 20th Street Viaduct.



Photo by Emilio Perez

## Instilling pride along 20th St. Viaduct

By Betsy Rothstein  
Staff Writer

**C**ommissioned by the City of Denver to create ten tile murals for the new 20th St. Viaduct project, the husband and wife team of Bob Luna and Martha Keating have their work cut out for them. Combining the talents and inspiration of children, seniors and other members of the community, this quarter of a mile long mosaic will exude the underlying history of a neighborhood filled with a culturally diverse past.

The idea for such a large tile project stems back to 1992 when Luna and Keating submitted their final presentation to the Mayors Commission on Art, Culture and Film, which would ultimately commission a \$120,000 project. According to Luna and Keating, one of the requirements for the grant indicated the artist must reside in the neighborhood,

the Lower Highlands.

Public involvement for the project is geared toward children of the Lower Highlands neighborhood and students, senior citizens, community residents and artists are invited to design a tile in sync with the themes of the mosaic. Themes include the artists' inner images such as a futuristic view of Denver's skyline, foods of the neighborhood, the sixties, neighborhood celebrations, early 20th Century trolleys, meeting of the tribes, and dinosaurs. The subject of the students' vary in accordance with their ages and fall into such categories as self portraits, nature scenes, favorite foods, and trends, fads and moments from everyday life.

Keating says numerous ethnic groups have flooded the Lower Highlands area for periods of time such as the Irish, Swedish, German, Scottish,



Welsh, Italian, and currently Hispanic enclaves.

"We're trying to learn about the neighborhood and at the same time it is a combination of us as artists getting put up our images," Keating maintained.

And in the summer of 1994, ten large tile

See 20th St., page 10



# 20th St. Viaduct Art Project

## "Neighborhood Epic!"

### WHAT IS Neighborhood Epic?

Ten large tile murals will depict the history of the Lower Highlands neighborhood from prehistoric to future times!!! The murals will be located on the retaining wall on the west side of I-25 now being constructed for the new 20th St. Viaduct [between Navajo and Jason streets along I-25, facing west toward the neighborhood (average size = 350 sq. ft.)]

### WHO will participate?

Bob Luna and Martha Keating, two neighborhood artists, have been commissioned for the project. Public involvement will be primarily oriented toward the children of the neighborhood. **Students, senior citizens, community residents and artists are invited to design a tile.**

### WHEN will Neighborhood Epic take place?

The primary mural designs are complete. Individuals and students from neighborhood schools and community centers will be invited to create individual border tiles. **Installation will occur in the summer of 1994.**

### YOU ARE INVITED to participate by:

- \* **signing up for our mailing list**
- \* **telling your children, friends, and neighbors to sign up to glaze a tile**
- \* **signing up for open community art-making sessions to invent your own designs to glaze on a tile for the borders**
- \* **providing information on the history of the neighborhood** (old photos, articles, etc. -- Who are the heroes? Who were the villains? What are unique and typical vignettes of the Lower Highland neighborhood?)
- \* **helping us to enlist community sponsors**

**FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL BOB OR MARTHA AT 477-7909.**

This project has been commissioned by the Mayor's Office of Art, Culture and Film as part of the City & County of Denver's Public Art Program.



Above: *20th Century Perspectives: Beginning a Century*, 1993, Susan Cooper



Above: *Neighborhood Epic*, 1994  
Martha Keating and Bob Luna



Above: *Dominion*, 1992, Evelyn Rosenberg

Below: *A Life in Harmony With All of Creation*, 1992  
Maria Alquilar, Ken and Judith Williams



# W

# A L K I N



**1 20TH STREET VIADUCT**  
Highlands neighborhood west of Interstate 25  
**Martha Keating and Bob Luna**  
*Neighborhood Epic*, 1994  
Porcelain tile mosaic and hand-fired ceramic tiles

**2 15TH STREET VIADUCT**  
15th Street between Little Raven and Wynkoop  
**Maria Alquilar**  
*A Life in Harmony With All of Creation*, 1991  
Hand-fired ceramic tile mural

**2 15TH STREET VIADUCT**  
15th Street between Little Raven and Wynkoop  
**Ken and Judith Williams**  
*15th Street Viaduct Artwork*, 1991  
Sculpted brick and site design

**3 LOWER DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
14th and Wazee  
**Kevin Oehler**  
*Union Spire*, 1991  
Enamel on metal

**4 LOWER DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
RTD Market Street Station at 17th and Blake  
**Kevin Oehler**  
*Jade Spire*, 1991  
Wood

**5 16TH STREET MALL EXTENSION**  
between Wazee and Blake (east side)  
**William Burgess**  
*Wazee*, 1994  
Metal Sculpture

**6 20TH STREET RECREATION CENTER**  
1011 20th Street  
**Clay Wright**  
*Continuum*, 1994  
Acrylic on canvas

**7 CURTIS STREET**