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NEW MURAL GIVES COMPANY'S HISTORY AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
By Sharon Woodson-Bryant

Best known for her large scale public murals, visual artist Judith Baca has captured through vibrant colors and symbols, a visual encyclopedia of The Gas Company's past, present and future.

Commissioned by the company's art committee, Baca's acrylic on canvas illustrates the strong legacy of our company's presence in Southern California.

The first panel depicts the past. It shows turn-of-the-century Main Street buildings with ornate iron work, seen through a birdseye window view. Noticeably present is a replica of the 1880s gas lamp taken from our building in the 50s.

At the same time our mural shows an elliptic reference of how natural gas was formed from Earth, water, wind and fire. Based upon extensive research of our company, Baca's mural portrays the magical significance of these universal elements and their formation of the carbon chain.

The middle panel, depicting the overall shape of Southern California's coastal to mountain regions, also reflects an historical perspective. The landscape illustrates the different crops of the region and celebrates the important ethnic heritage of Southern California.

We are presented a cultural memory of the Latino farm workers in the Central Valley and the Irish immigrants helping to build the early pipeline system. This is interfused with the evolution of pipelines to the present day system branching into the heart of our company. We see a 1942 version of a company service representative proudly emerging from a gas flame and an African American woman portrayed in one of today's non-traditional positions.

Gently blended in this center panel is a reference of a nighttime skyview of Los Angeles, a network of lights representing powerful symbols of hope and pride. Baca's artistic statements capture our own "network of lights," our company's achievements and commitment to service. As one of the few companies reaching directly into the home, the mural shows how service is significant to us -- the lifeblood of our system.

Panel three is a reference to the future and those elements central to our marketing efforts through the 90s. We see images of the natural gas bus, the fuel cell and co-generation linked to a clean tide pool, clean air and a space shuttle.

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Baca, whose visuals capture the contemporary gas company and promote the natural elements of steam, heat and gas with human technology at its best, stated: "The gas company transports a natural resource that has the adaptability to determine our future environment."

Yet, no one builds anything alone. The past is always present and those people from the past are a legacy to the company's future. With a tremendous conceptional approach, Baca's mural of the gas company connects each one of us to an historical picture. Not singly measured by how others know us today, but rather seeing how our traditions and services have touched many lives. This is a story about what our company has accomplished for the good of Southern California.

In creating the mural, Baca and the company's art committee expressed appreciation for the many gas company employees who assisted in her extensive research, arranged tours of underground storage fields, ride-alongs and interviews with customer service representatives.

Baca's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, published in numerous periodicals and documented in several films. In 1988, Mayor Tom Bradley requested her to develop a new City mural program based upon her "Great Wall of Los Angeles," a half mile long mural on the ethnic history of California. She was also commissioned to do a mural for the 1984 Olympics and recently completed 12 new murals (K)
~~in 1988~~

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The Gas Company



June 11, 1992

Ms. Robin Dunitz
10556 Almayo Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90064

RE: Judith Baca Mural at The Gas Company Tower

Dear Ms. Dunitz:

In response to your request for more information about the Judith Baca mural, I have enclosed a copy of a document that gives a pretty complete description of the mural and what Judith was attempting to accomplish. I hope this is of use to you. If you have any more questions, please feel free to call me.

Very truly yours,

Mike Chamberlain
Michael E. Chamberlain

MEC:mlg
Enclosure

cc: Sharon Woodson-Bryant

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