

Koplin Gallery

1438 Ninth Street • Santa Monica, CA 90401 • 310 / 319-9956 • FAX 310 / 319-9959

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Six Los Angeles Muralists

January 7 - January 30, 1993

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 7, 7-9 p.m.

Gallery Hours: Tuesday - Friday 10 - 5:30 pm, Saturday 11- 5:30 pm

The Koplin Gallery is pleased to announce an upcoming exhibition of work by important Los Angeles muralists Kent Twitchell, Richard Wyatt, Terry Schoonhoven, Judy Baca, East Los Streetscapers, and John Wehrle. These muralists exemplify many of the most important themes and achievements in contemporary mural movements.

After having his mural "Old Lady of the Freeway" painted over to make room for advertisements, **Kent Twitchell** went to court and, in a landmark decision which for the first time recognizes murals as works of fine art, won the battle to have it restored. At the building owner's expense, Twitchell has been in the process of restoring the work himself, and will be including some of the studies in this exhibition along with studies from his Michael Jackson mural, his project at the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and other projects on which he is currently working. The monumentality of Twitchell's intense photorealistic murals of celebrities and biblical figures is astounding: their scale and unusual visual clarity operate to give his figures an overwhelming sense of larger than life presence and an intensity befitting their status as icons.

Richard Wyatt, who will feature studies and maquettes from five different projects including "Hollywood Jazz 1945 - '72" and "Kazuo Funai" at the Southern California Gas Company, paints people important to the local community's sense of itself and to the dignity of its past. He explains his murals as an attempt "to reconstruct and restore the marginalized or excluded histories and contributions by people of color." Although jazz was the theme that first brought him to the public's attention in the Capital Records Mural, he has expanded his subject in some more recent projects to address ethnicity in general, and the many contributions of diverse peoples to the community.

Working on a more macrocosmic scale, **Terry Schoonhoven** is interested in the landscape, particularly the desert-like landscape of Los Angeles, as a metaphor for a certain condition of the human spirit. He has over the years developed a style in which surprise and wit play no small part. His urban landscapes are at a glance illusionistically consistent with their surroundings, but on the merest inspection reveal a radical inversion of those surroundings. Often associated with apocalyptic imagery, he has in recent years embraced the somewhat subtler approach of splicing together into the same landscape different stages of history.

Aiming to fully integrate her murals into the surrounding social, cultural, and political landscape, **Judy Baca** sees her mission as an activist one. She places an emphasis on the collaborative aspect of the undertaking, bringing together sometimes divergent groups within the community to work together to create enormous murals that serve as a testimony to their struggles and achievements and stand as a symbol of their cooperation. She will be featuring studies from the Guadalupe Mural, the Great Wall, and the World Wall.

John Wehrle, whose first experience as a working artist was as an army illustrator in Vietnam, uses landscape to explore contemporary mythologies, and he works for the most part alone. Although in such murals as "The Fall of Icarus" and "Galileo, Jupiter, and Apollo", his chief fascination is in fashioning what he calls "still frames from epic landscape movies", the performance dimension of his work is equally important to him. He writes, "There is a sense of being carried by an ocean as the painting transforms the space, and in the end remains like a shell on the beach, while its inhabitant moves on to a new location."

Coming out of the East Los Angeles Mural Movement, the **East Los Streetscapers**, a dynamic Chicano team headed by David Botello and Wayne Heally, retain the loud and colorful style that characterized much of this movement, but depart from the movement's strong preachy tone and exclusive preoccupation with politics. The exuberance of their colorful and painterly murals invites a lusty engagement from passers by.