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CRA/LA Art Program

West Valley Public Art Mural Honors Labor, Environment, and Family

Los Angeles – Celebrated artist Sonia Romera unveiled her latest artwork “Tierra Del Sol” on February 18, at the opening of the Dennis P. Zine Community Center. Her artwork marries the labor intensive skills of printmaking with the sophistication of digital technology to create a large scale aluminum mural that graces the entrance to the community center.

“Tierra Del Sol” was commissioned through the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles (CRA/LA) Art Program in association with the developer, New Economics for Women (NEW). It is the latest public art commission to be added to the CRA/LA West Valley Region.

“CRA/LA’s Art Program is integral to our mission to revitalize Los Angeles,” said CRA/LA interim Chief Executive Officer Calvin E. Hollis. “By including public art projects, we ensure that the CRA/LA projects being build not only benefit the tenants and employees of those buildings, but the community at large. Art creates a sense of place, adds beauty to the neighborhood, and represents the partnerships we create between artists, developers and communities.”



representing the arts, and the two youngest children tend the plant directly, representing our future.

The artwork measures 8 by 12 feet and displays four figures, harnessing the power of a smiling sun to work the land and grow the community. The main focus of the piece, however, is the seedling. Even though it is small, all the energy of the sun, and all the actions of the family are directed at making it grow. The seedling represents life, as it has been, as it is, and as it will be. Each member of the family helps with the gardening. The man holds a book, to represent learning. The older woman holds a basket, representing the harvest, while the other holds a guitar,

“With this piece I wanted to honor the earth we live on and inspire a feeling of potential in our community” said Romero.

Public Art Mural 2-2-2

Sonia Romero is an artist who works primarily with lino-cutting, which involves designing the image, drawing directly onto a linoleum sheet, carefully carving out the image and finally applying the ink for printing with the help of a press. In order to create a mural of this size, the print was scanned as a high resolution digital file and sent to a specialty fabricator capable of reproducing the image as a powder coating over an aluminum panel. In this way the artwork will never yellow or fade, and can be easily maintained or permanent public display. The colors featured in the artwork are continued into the facility's paint scheme.

Sonia Romero was selected from a prequalified list of highly talented Los Angeles artists. Exhibition highlights include her solo shows at Avenue 50 Gallery in Highland Park and a printmaking retrospective at Self Help Graphics in East Los Angeles. She received her formal education from the Rhode Island School of Design, with an emphasis in printmaking. The L.A. County Transportation Authority has commissioned Romero to design prints for the Westlake MacArthur Park Metro Station, which will be translated into ceramic tile medallions. *She Rides the Lion* is the studio and print shop of Sonia Romero. To learn more please visit: <http://www.SoniaRomero.com>

The artwork was installed to coincide with the grand opening of the Dennis P. Zine community center. The center provides educational and supportive services that help families build assets and become economically self-sufficient. The developer's on-site art budget was \$25,000.

"Through CRA/LA's Art Policy, the communities we work in continue to be excellent places to experience a range of public art," said Susan Gray, CRA/LA Cultural Arts Planner. "These communities have the opportunity showcase some of the art world's most respected and exciting artists. This particular project demonstrates how a very talented studio artist, with very little public art and construction experience can be involved in a major commission- which is a terrific job opportunity."

Other CRA/LA initiated cultural activities in the project area include ceramic tile murals at Hart Village by artists Juliana Martinez and Terry Braunstein.

About Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles

CRA/LA (www.crala.org) is a public agency regulated by the State of California and operating within the City of Los Angeles. CRA/LA makes strategic investments to create economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for the people who live and work in our neighborhoods. CRA/LA manages 32 redevelopment projects areas and three revitalization areas in seven regions: East Valley, West Valley, Hollywood & Central, Downtown, Eastside, South Los Angeles, and the Harbor.

About the Reseda-Canoga Park Project Area

Located in the West San Fernando Valley, the 2,500-acre Earthquake Disaster Assistance Project for Portions of Council District 3 includes parts of Canoga Park, Reseda and Winnetka. Begun 1994 to repair and restore buildings damaged in the Northridge Earthquake, the project is within the CRA/LA's West Valley region. It focuses on improving the Sherman Way commercial, plus adjacent residential communities with façade and signage improvements and public improvements such as parking and streetscape.