



NEWS

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MTA DISPLAYS ARTISTS' MURALS AT CONSTRUCTION SITE, HOLLYWOOD/WESTERN STATION

For artist Katherine Arion, painting her mural on a construction fence suddenly became an intense personal experience with the community.

"People kept coming by, they would say, 'thank you for beautifying our neighborhood.' They were telling their life story... Teachers brought their classes... One ten year old boy came by three times... I was energized by the people," Arion said.

Arion, who emigrated from Bucharest, Romania, is one of two artists commissioned by the MTA to create murals for the construction fences at the Hollywood/Western Station. Her work, titled 'Hora,' is an abstract vision of trees extending their branches like people in the Romanian folk dance, Hora, who dance with arms wrapped around each other in unity.

Artist Marco Elliott, who teaches commercial art at Venice High School, created a mural on vinyl that can be moved to other sites. The work, which was constructed with the help of some of his current and former students, portrays abstract dinosaur-like extinct figures.

"The whole idea is to snap us out of the monotony of daily existence," Elliott said. On the surface, his imagery is whimsical, "a comic strip kind of reality," he said. The underlying message, according to Elliott, is that like the dinosaurs, "we are driving ourselves to extinction with automobiles."

Elliott has created a number of murals both in Los Angeles and in Europe. He describes himself as "a borderline fanatic on taking art out of the museums and taking it to where people live and where they spend their lives."

More...

MURALS, page two

The work by Arion and Elliott are part of a series of murals created to enhance Metro construction sites in the Hollywood area. The artists are selected by panels of arts professionals and community members.

"What were drab and often vandalized construction fences have now become colorful works of art," said Maya Emsden, Director of Metro Art. "We hope that visitors and residents alike appreciate how the talents of artists can help to alleviate the effects of construction in the Hollywood area."

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