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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Artists Mark Lere and Raoul de la Sota Create Artworks for new Metro San Gabriel Valley Division

Two important artworks by California artists have been installed in the lobby area of Metro's new San Gabriel Valley sector facility. Commissioned by Metro Creative Services, the artworks include a sweeping epoxy terrazzo artwork by artist Mark Lere and a brightly hued painting by artist Raoul de la Sota.

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The Metro Machine 2007 | **Mark Lere**, artist

Lere's work, entitled *The Metro Machine*, encompasses the entire main entry lobby and reception floor and consists of over 900 square feet of colored terrazzo with aluminum strip inserts that sharply delineate multiple transportation related shapes, texts and symbols.

Thinking metaphorically about the internal workings of the Metro system as a "well-oiled machine," the artist introduces shapes for train, bus and bicycle wheels and power gears all fluidly interconnected with a belt running throughout the floor design. The seriousness of its transit purpose is offset with humor and surprise as evidenced in the "maze" wheel, representing the challenging tasks and complexities inherent in a public transportation system.

Lere was born and raised in North Dakota and now lives and works in the Los Angeles area.



Forward to the Past 2007 | **Raoul de la Sota**, artist

De la Sota's work, entitled *Forward to the Past*, is a 20-foot tall acrylic painting on four honeycomb aluminum panels. The work provides a physical as well as symbolic uplifting quality to the contemporary architecture of the office building. Viewers encounter the citrus fields and the mountain backdrop unified by circular molecular "points of light" that transform into oranges and limes at the bottom of the composition and rise as oxygen specks to cleanse the region's air quality. The points of light disappear into the clear, dark skies and stars at the very top of the mural to form a zoomorphic interpretation of the whale figure, serving as a bond between the heavens and earth as narrated in some of the local original native cultures.

De la Sota is Professor Emeritus in Mexican American History at Los Angeles City College and is the first Chicano artist to be awarded a Fulbright Scholarship.

"Both artists were able to produce artworks that not only improve the qualitative experience of the building but also tie metaphorically and spiritually to Metro's transportation function and the San Gabriel Valley, a wonderful marriage of function and concept," says Jorge Pardo, Director of Art and Design for Metro Creative Services.

Both Lere and de la Sota have previously completed works for Metro. Lere's artwork for Grand Station on the Metro Blue Line was completed in 1994 and de la Sota was commissioned in 2003 to

celebrate Highland Park as part of Metro's popular poster series of neighborhoods seen through the eyes of local artists.

"Through a dynamic range of contemporary art works, Metro's commissions are designed to add life and texture to public space," says Maya Emsden, Deputy Executive Officer of Metro Creative Services.

Metro seeks to change public perception about transit and to transform the customer's experience through excellence in art and design. Central to this objective, Metro Creative Services includes the agency's in-house design studio, which creates Metro's brand communications, and the agency's art and design excellence programs, which commission wide-ranging projects by visual artists and promote overall quality design of customer environments. From intelligently designed, user-friendly customer information, engaging and effective advertising and a newly designed fleet of buses and trains to large scale site-specific artworks by world-class artists and live poetry readings, Metro employs art and design to create a sense of place, engage transit riders, and improve the quality of life throughout Southern California.

For more information about Metro's art programs and its free docent guided tours, visit metro.net/art or call 213/922-4ART.

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