

mystery revealed

the college, the mural continues to intrigue



TIMOTHY A. BELL / Clackamas Print

which he finished in 1976.

time as an art instructor, saw the blank wall and knew immediately that he wanted that space in which to create his masterpiece. However, it wasn't easy to convince the administration and the school board. Barlow Hall was and still is home to the automotive and engineering departments. The college administration was convinced that the mural would neither be appreciated nor appropriate for that particular building. They tried to convince Adams

that he should paint over in the art department; however, he was enamored with Barlow's wall. Eventually, they granted him the space.

It took two full years to complete the project. Adams was working full time and laboring on the mural early in the morning or late at night. He was also not being paid for his work on the mural. It was his service to the school.

"Most artists work independently. It's lonely work. However, my work

on the mural allowed me to socialize with all sorts of people. Students would come up and talk to me and ask me questions. Faculty members would take me out for coffee. I made many new friends during my two years at Clackamas," Adams said.

After the mural was completed a large and lavish banquet celebrated Adams' achievement. He received several awards from the school and the community. Local news teams covered the event and The Oregonian wrote stories about the mural.

Several years later, Adams' work on another painting won him recognition in the New York National Art Show.

"I won that award alongside two of my idols and great inspirations. It was an incredible experience to think that I had reached such an accomplishment," he added.

The Artist Unmasked

Adams said that his wife, Edith, encouraged him to quit his job and devote all of his attention to art. A short year later she was diagnosed with a brain tumor.

Solemnly, hands slightly shaking, Adams reminisced about that pivotal moment in his life. "That was the end of my art career," he noted with gravity.

All of his artistic endeavors were put on hold so he could dedicate his time and attention to the wife he loved. Occasionally Adams would sit at the kitchen table, while she slept nearby, and he would sculpt or paint. Edith passed away from causes related to her tumor shortly thereafter.

Adams, now 67, is currently painting commercial work, although he finds the jobs tedious and not as rewarding. He still views "Centrigrone" as one of his greatest achievements.

Looking up at the vivid pictures and vibrant colors, Jack Adams pauses for one last observation. "I [feel] that this mural [allows] people to see what they want to see."

And that is what makes it so exceptional.



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This scene portrays the natural world vs. the unnatural world, and the people who are breaking free from the oppression to start over.



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Arising from the pollution of our industry is a Jackal. He is the Beast within everyone that has the ability to destroy the world.



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The policemen represent the tensions felt among college students during the 1970s. Adams constructed his mural as a reflection of that perilous decade.

The mural's message is optimistic as well. Here, mothers release their children into a perfect world, with the hopes of their futures pure and secure.



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