

Mark Rogovin:

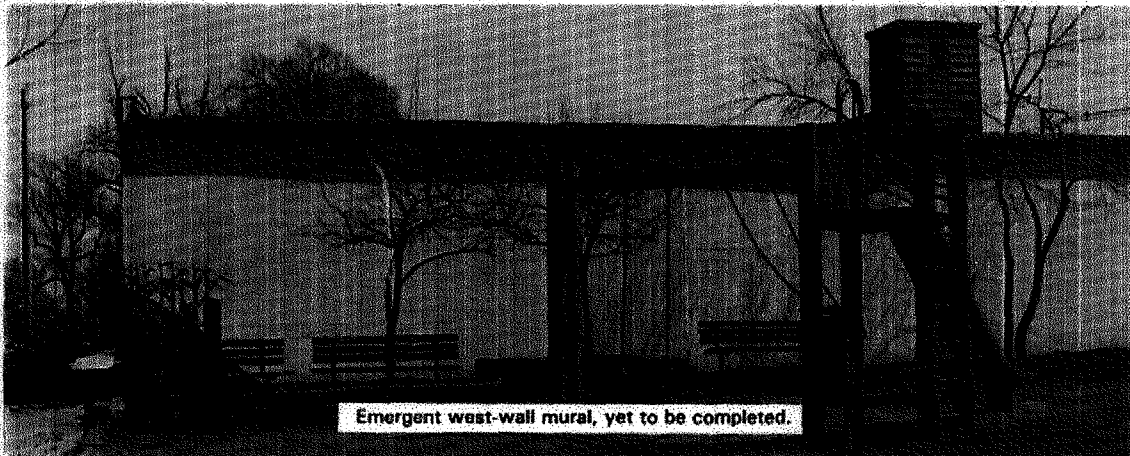
"Mural work is not a new phenomenon, but today it has an especially powerful function -- being both a vehicle for disenfranchised artists of all communities and a voice for the people. For myself, mural painting was a logical direction to take; it gave me a chance to weld together both my ideology and my artistic skills into a single public expression."

In 1967 and 1968, Mark worked for 5 months as an assistant to the great Mexican muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros on his "March of Humanity" mural. In 1968 he received his BFA degree in painting from the Rhode Island School of Design and continued on at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago to get his MFA degree in 1970. During the years 1971-1973, he taught courses at Columbia College, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Elmhurst College, and Rosary College. In 1972 he was one of the founders and is now director of the Public Art Workshop, a mural workshop and nationwide mural resource center on Chicago's West Side.

Mark is one of the leaders in the recent mural upsurge in the U.S. He directed his first mural in 1969 and has since engaged in collective community-based mural projects in over fifteen locations. He has also given numerous slide talks and mural workshops around the U.S.



**Educational Resources in Environmental Science,
Nurturing Neighborhood Awareness,
Mural Project
117 N. Market, Champaign, Illinois
61820 Ph. 217 351-1911**



Emergent west-wall mural, yet to be completed.

In 1977 Educational Resources in Environmental Sciences established a Nurturing Neighborhood Awareness project. The aim of this project was to encourage and stimulate a more harmonious relationship between people and their environment. Using art, photography, and community interaction, NNA has provided opportunities for individuals to take positive and ecologically sound action in determining their own lives and that of their communities.

Recognizing that art is a humanizing force and believing that it should become an integral part of our daily lives, NNA, under the direction of Kathy Cender, began to explore the possibilities of a community mural project: a project to stimulate community awareness and involve people in creating a living work of art.

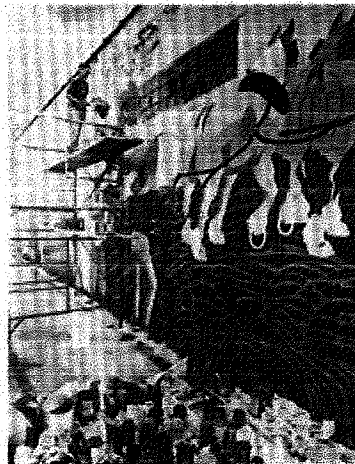
A proposal was presented to the Champaign Park District requesting permission to paint a mural to the east of Mini-Park #1 on Park and Fifth in Champaign, Illinois. NNA organized a mural workshop in which Chicago muralist, Mark Rogovin, participated. The workshop generated interest, explored ideas for a mural theme, and began the process of organizing a mural team within the community. A questionnaire was circulated to encourage community involvement, stimulate ideas and expand active participation. Community support was unanimous with a majority interested in a theme of black history and culture.



The above photograph of Eugene Britt, the project community coordinator, was the outcome of photo silk screen workshops held at the neighboring Douglas Center. It was from such workshops that the mural project evolved.

Black artists Angela Rivers, Benny Drake, and Eugene Britt, all born and raised in Champaign, led the mural team in coordinating community interest and involvement in the drawing of preliminary sketches. The mural design was based on historical information gathered from literary sources and conversations with elderly people of the community, as well as the experiences of the artists and team members.

After Park Board approval of the sketches, the mural team's next task was to find sufficient funding. The Women's Employment Counseling Center was interested in the mural project as a worksite for its CETA Summer Program for Economically Disadvantaged Youth (SPEDY). NNA agreed to conduct the mural project as a work experience program for SPEDY and then interviewed and selected 16 youths between the ages of 14 and 21 who were employed through WECC's CETA grant.



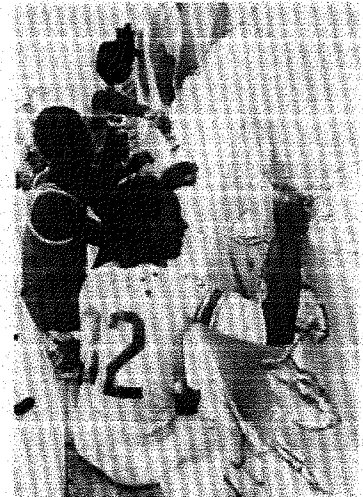
Many community people contributed materials and equipment to the project. Sandblasting equipment, scaffolding and other necessary supplies were provided by interested local businesses, agencies and individuals of the community. People came to rest or play in the park and watched the mural in process or helped paint a section. The mural provided an educational function by offering people an opportunity to study the history of a people, to learn skills in art and painting, in leadership and responsibility, and in developing and finishing a project. The mural generated curiosity, criticism, creative discussion and neighborhood awareness. Culturally, it provided the experience of working together to explore and celebrate the community heritage and to further contribute to its development.

The location of this historical mural is significant. It is found in one of the older communities in Champaign. The area is well-kept and is receiving attention for its historic value. The Salem Baptist Church on Park and Fifth, across the corner from the mini-park, is listed in the booklet "Historical Sites in Champaign County." The mural enhances the neighborhood and emphasizes the unique role that black people have in contributing to the development of the community.

The completed portion of the mural is 16 feet by 54 feet and is composed of a series of images portraying the history of black people in Champaign. Using vivid colors and strong characterization, the mural begins with scenes of Egypt and Africa, depicts the trauma of the slave ships, shows early farming activity in the U.S. South and progresses on to Champaign, Illinois, reflecting this city's importance as an early railroad center.

Lack of time and finances prevented the mural team from finishing the wall adjacent to the mini-park, an area of 15 feet by 93 feet. Community commitment urges that this project be completed.

The newly organized, Ceta funded, Champaign County Consortium for the Arts has shown an interest in the mural hiring a part-time employee to work on the project. Women's Employment Counseling Center has renewed its pledge in providing SPEDY workers.



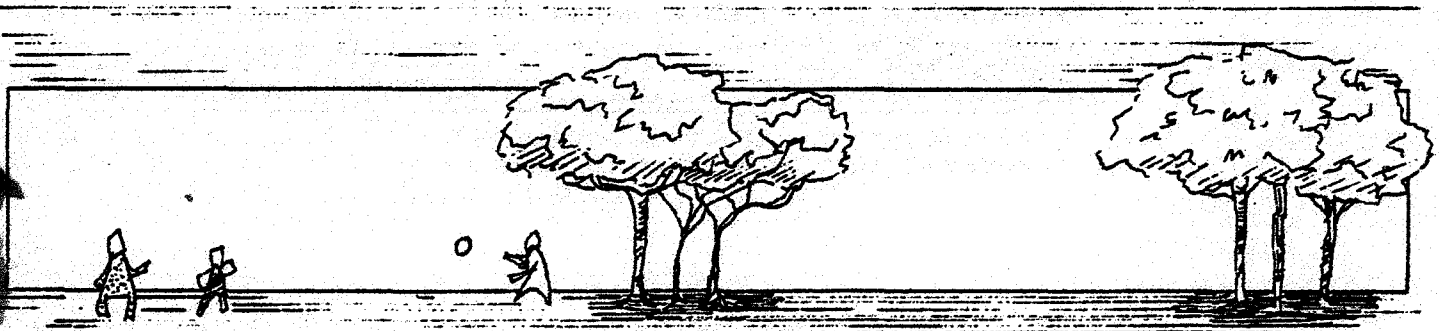
The mural is a model of wholistic social action: people taking an active part in creating their own environment, developing practical skills in artistic crafts, and acquiring attitudes of self worth and leadership. NNA feels strongly that the mural project is a worthy community endeavor and is an important step in the direction of a more balanced and less alienated society.

Mini-Park # 1 Mural Project
East Park Street, Champaign

Nurturing Neighborhood Awareness is assisting in the development of a community mural project with the cooperation of the Champaign Park District, the building owners, and interested people in the neighborhood.

Since the summer of 1967, there has been a rapidly growing movement involved in the production of large outdoor murals. This renaissance began in Chicago. It received its major impetus from the painting of the "Wall of Respect," a huge and magnificent outdoor mural done under the leadership of William Walker on Chicago's South Side. Having its beginning there, in the black community and under the leadership of black artists, this rebirth in mural painting has grown into a new direction for disenfranchised artists of all communities and a new form to give voice to all people.¹

There will be a community mural workshop on April 10 where examples of other mural projects will be shown. A mural painter from the Chicago Public Arts Workshop will be available as a resource. The participation of neighborhood people is essential because the mural is directly a community endeavor.



(Please sketch in your ideas for the mural)

¹Rogovin, et. al., Mural Manual, 1973, Public Art Workshop. Chicago, Illinois.



Educational Resources in Environmental Science

March 28, 1978

**George A. Miller Committee
912 West Illinois Street
Urbana, Illinois 61801**

Dear Chairperson:

The Nurturing Neighborhood Awareness Project of Educational Resources in Environmental Science is organizing a lecture presentation on the history and technique of mural art and the work of the great mural artists. This application is a request for funding of this presentation. We are interested in investigating several aspects of mural art including its importance as a form of communication and artistic technique, its role as a cultural element and its function in generating community participation. We will consider the historical significance and content of mural art including ancient cave paintings, the religious murals of the European Middle Ages, and murals depicting contemporary issues.

The lecture will be presented by Mark Rogovin of Chicago, Illinois. In 1967 and 1968 Mr. Rogovin worked for 5 months as an assistant to the great Mexican muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros on his "March of Humanity" mural. In 1968 he received his BFA degree in painting from the Rhode Island School of Design and continued on at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago to get his MFA degree in 1970. During the years 1971-1973, he taught courses at Columbia College, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Elmhurst College, and Rosary College. In 1972 he was one of the founders and is now director of the Public Art Workshop, a mural workshop and nationwide mural resource center in Chicago.

Mr. Rogovin is one of the leaders in the recent mural upsurge in the U.S. He directed his first mural in 1969 and has since engaged in mural projects in over fifteen locations. He has also given numerous slide presentations and mural workshops around the U.S.

The social and artistic context of mural art should be of interest to several academic areas. We anticipate that persons from sociology, political science, art, and anthropology will attend the presentation. People in these academic disciplines may anticipate future involvement in mural projects if they become associated with community programs, social work, or public art. The presentation may lead to a future artist-in-residence program. It could stimulate research interest in the field of mural art and will provide an opportunity to become acquainted with techniques and organizational factors in developing a mural project.

This event has the support of Unit One, the Department of Political Science, the Department of Anthropology, the Afro-American Cultural Center and the Latino Cultural Center. The Department of Art has expressed an interest in the event. We have arranged specific meetings with some of these groups. There will be no financial contributions from these units, however.

A mural site has been established with the cooperation of the Champaign Park District. We expect community support of this project and an interest in the lecture presentation of mural art. We anticipate attendance in the evening presentation to be composed of approximately 150 university and community people.

The tentative schedule for this event is as follows:

April 10, 1978

9 a. m. - 12 noon

Meetings with Unit One, Afro-American Cultural Center, Latino Cultural Center, the Departments of Political Science, Anthropology, and Art.

1 p. m. - 5 p. m.

Workshop on mural techniques and a survey of potential mural sites. This workshop will focus on a specific mural site in Champaign and will involve community and university people.

7:30
8 p. m.

Public presentation at a ~~University~~ *Champaign Library Aud.* location. Slides and discussion on the history of mural art, the great muralists and techniques and organizational considerations.

We are requesting funding in the amount of \$150.00 to cover honorarium for Mr. Rogovin. Lodging facilities and publicity can be arranged by the Nurturing Neighborhood Awareness Project staff.

Enclosed are four letters of support from interested University departments.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Cender
Project Coordinator
Nurturing Neighborhood Awareness

Eugene Britt
Community Coordinator
Nurturing Neighborhood Awareness

Glen Martin
Environmental Educator
Landscape Architect

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

AFRO-AMERICAN CULTURAL PROGRAM · 708 SOUTH MATHEWS AVENUE · URBANA, ILLINOIS 61801 · (217) 333-2092/2201

March 27, 1978

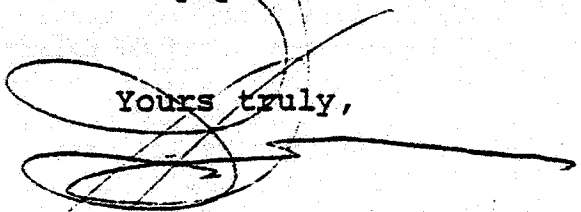
Dear Miller Committee:

The Afro-American Cultural Program is impressed with and in support of those efforts being made by the NNA (Nurturing Neighborhood Awareness) Program in their attempt to identify and develop creative skills within our community for a better environment. We endorse their proposal before you and encourage your active participation and acceptance.

Your acknowledgement of such a proposal would not only serve to extend the opportunity for continuing education but also fosters harmonious inter-action between the campus and community resident, via the arts. Also, it suggests a focus on the "immediate" community and as a result may be a catalyst for future environmental and beautification projects and concerns. It would be a visible and permanent investment by your committee for the community at large to see for a lasting period of time. This project being different from the temporary impact of visiting lectures and artists you normally employ.

Given those considerations we view it beneficial to all for you to engage the services offered by Mr. Mark Rogovin. Our staff will strongly urge the participation of our student population in such a meaningful endeavor.

Yours truly,


Bruce Nesbitt, Director
Afro-American Cultural Program

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Department of Political Science
361 Lincoln Hall

March 29, 1978

George A. Miller Committee
912 W. Illinois

Dear Miller Committee:

The Department of Political Science is very pleased to learn of plans by the Educational Resources in Environmental Science to bring Mr. Mark Rogovin to Champaign-Urbana to participate in its Nurturing Neighborhood Awareness Project. Mr. Rogovin is an artist with a social and political conscience. He is the co-author of Mural Manual: How to Paint Murals for the Classroom, Community Center, and Street Corner (Beacon Press, 1973).

One area in which most departments of political science are weak or have no commitment at all is that of the relationship between art and aesthetics and politics. While painting, graphics, fiction, and the cinema often have great political relevance, this is largely ignored by such departments and there is little in the way of interdisciplinary effort to close the gap. Mural art is particularly interesting because it is accessible to communities in the way that cinema and fiction often are not. It is easier for people in a community to come together as creators of a social message through the medium of murals than to become cinematographers or creative writers. Both the accessibility and the inherently cohesive nature of the creative act are what account for the proliferation of mural art in major cities around the world.

Thus far there has been very little community expression through mural art in Champaign-Urbana. Mr. Rogovin is a person who has practiced it, written about it, and is willing to go to places where it has not been introduced. He is willing to offer his services both to the people who live around Mini Park #1 and to university people who would like to learn more about this mode of political-aesthetic-community expression. We would indeed be fortunate to attract him. The Department of Political Science gives its enthusiastic endorsement to the request for support being made of the Miller Lecture Committee.

Sincerely,



Marvin G. Weinbaum
Acting Head

MGW:jg

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

UNIT ONE
70 Allen Hall
March 28, 1978

To
Ms. Peggy Harris
and the George A. Miller Lecture Committee:

Many students at Unit One would be extremely interested in participating in a workshop given by Mark Rogovin if he is brought to the Champaign-Urbana community. At the time of his proposed visit, we have an architect, David Abramson, as artist in residence at Unit One. I would enjoy organizing a workshop in which both Rogovin and Abramson would participate.

There is a second reason why a visit from Mark Rogovin particularly appeals to us at Unit One, at this time: There has been much talk about painting a mural in the area in front of the cafeteria. It would greatly benefit the group wanting to undertake this project to be able to discuss it with Mark Rogovin. I very much hope that you will give his visit your support.

Sincerely,

Marianne Brün

Marianne Brün

Coordinator:
Artist-in-Residence Program

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

La Casa Cultural Latina
510 E. Chalmers
Champaign, Illinois 61820

Phillip A. Llamas, Director
(217) 333-4950

March 28, 1978

George A. Miller Lecture Committee
912 W. Illinois
Urbana, Illinois 61801

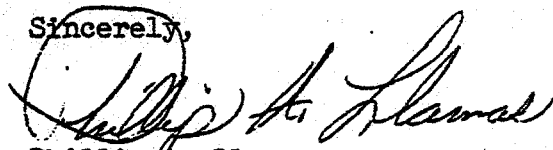
To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express our support for the efforts of the Nurturing Neighborhood Awareness Program in bringing Mr. Mark Rogovin to the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign campus.

I wholeheartedly support Nurturing Neighborhood Awareness Program goals of identifying and developing creative skills within communities for a better environment. Also, the importance of mural art to Latinos cannot be fully expressed in a short letter. However, let us say that mural art has become an expressive outlet for our people and the encouragement and development of this art form plays a vital role in transmitting and preserving our respective cultures.

We sincerely hope that you will grant the necessary financial support and urge that programs of this nature continue to be presented and supported.

Sincerely,



Phillip A. Llamas
Director

PAL:vl