



# Eighty-Foot-Long Fine Art Mural Depicting Electrical Industry History Installed at the ETI

Artist's Vibrant Paintings Portray the Rich History of the Southern California Electrical Industry, From the Invention of the Light Bulb to the Environmental Advent of Photovoltaics

**An 80-foot-long Fine Art Mural depicting the 100-year history of the electrical industry in Southern California was recently unveiled at the Electrical Training Institute of Southern California (ETI). The impressive Mural comprises 10 individual paintings portraying historical milestones, technological advancements, and famous California scenes and landmarks over the past 10 decades – from the invention of the light bulb and Tesla Coil to the coming-of-age of photovoltaic technology.**

The Mural features heroic depictions of the electrical contractors and electricians who built Southern California, and pays homage to Thomas Edison and Nikola Tesla. Commissioned by the Southern California IBEW-NECA Labor-Management Cooperation Committee, the Mural was created and painted by renowned fine artist Kenneth A. Colorado, a native of Southern California and an internationally-known environmental painter and sculptor.

“We wanted a truly artistic piece that would capture the rich history of Southern California and the vibrancy of our electrical industry,” said Marvin

Kropke, Business Manager of IBEW Local Union 11. “We’re enormously happy and absolutely enthralled with the beauty and dynamic visual qualities of this Mural. These paintings are an historical contribution to our state, our country, and our industry, and will be seen by generations to come.”

Incorporating such significant historical scenes as the early days of the Hollywood Bowl and Griffith Park Observatory, and the heyday of the Angels Flight in downtown LA, the Mural also brings to life the construction of Dodger Stadium, the World War II efforts of local manufacturing plants, the flight of the Spruce Goose, and the splashy shapes and colors of the Santa Monica Pier. It also portrays the two Olympics events held at the Memorial Coliseum, the completion of the Disney Concert Hall, and the opening of the ETI, as well as the installation of the ground-breaking ETI photovoltaic system. Installed as a series of ten horizontal 6-foot by 4-foot canvases that feature myriad vibrant images and colors, the Mural reads like a fascinating book written in painted pictures.

“We have had so many visitors and our own members stop in their tracks and become completely immersed in the paintings whenever they walk by the Mural,” said Jim Willson, Executive Manager of the Los Angeles County Chapter of NECA. “The Mural does an outstanding job of relaying the history of Southern California and documenting the progress, partnership, and contributions of the IBEW and NECA to this great and diverse community.”

Running the entire length of the 80-foot-long, architecturally angled wall that ties the high-bay area to the classroom area of the ETI, the Mural installation adds to the aesthetic quality of the ETI building. The horizontal arrangement of the ten canvases allows each painting to be viewed individually as well as seen as part of the whole. Much like a



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museum display, the paintings can be appreciated one at a time or as an ensemble.

In its entirety, the Mural portrays over 50 historic events and Southern California scenes that span a 120-year timeline from the late 1800s to the early 21st century, with each painting documenting the successes, technological breakthroughs, and contributions of that specific era. The Mural required many hours of intensive research, and is believed to be the first high caliber, large scale, fine art Mural of this type depicting the electrical industry's history. Its combination of imagery, color, and texture creates an almost three-dimensional quality.

"The Mural positively makes our building glow," said Don Davis, Executive Director of the ETI. "It's an extremely important addition to our facility. We couldn't have asked for a more artistic, captivating, and encompassing fine art installation for our esteemed institution of higher education. We welcome visitors to come see this Mural."

The artist K.A. Colorado, who has installed environmental art pieces throughout the world including Europe, Russia, Antarctica, and the U.S., and whose paintings depict the combination of nature, art, and science, strove to make the Mural an integral part of the ETI building as well as an educational and inspirational source.

"My experience with environmental art and my ongoing efforts to depict



nature and people with science and technology led me to create this combined portrayal of technological development, geographic location, and environmental sensibilities that tells the story of the Southern California electrical industry," said K.A. Colorado. "It is my hope that this Mural will add to the legacy of IBEW and NECA and their great accomplishments."

**National Electrical Contractors Association, Los Angeles County Chapter  
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local Union 11**



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