

ceta journal

May 1977
Volume 2, Issue 4

City of New Haven
Frank Logue, Mayor

Manpower Administration
Employment & Training
Thomas S. Corso
Manpower Administrator

'Let The Walls Have Tongues'

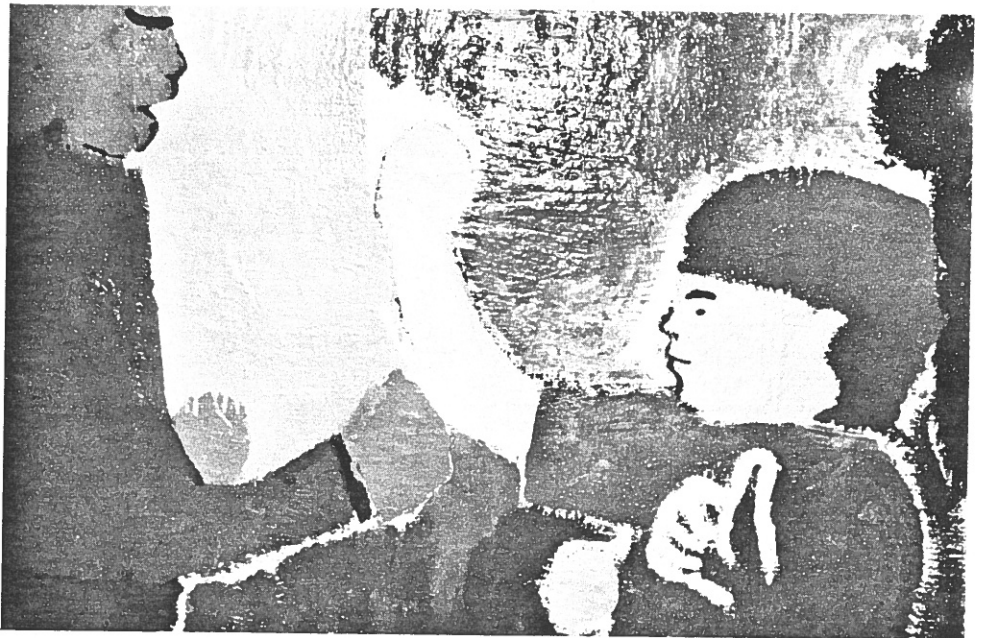
In the last year several neighborhoods around the City have come alive with murals. Though many people have participated in painting these murals, the main impetus behind their creation has been Ruth Resnick, a Public Service employee, who was hired with CETA funds by the Arts Council of Greater New Haven. The work begun by Ruth in March 1976 was expanded by others as part of the CETA Summer Youth Program and the after-school program funded by the City's Human Resources Administration.

To many a mural is simply a large scale painting which brightens the walls inside a building or adds color to a neighborhood. To Ruth a mural is much more than that. Ruth explains that "mural painting is really a whole process which involves more than one artist and her brush. It is *work* which is done by a team who must learn how to share their ideas and work well together. It not only brightens a neighborhood, but also reflects the fact that people are conscious of their environment and of their power to change and improve that environment."

Art is work . . . not merely a frill.

At Farnam Neighborhood House a group of young children made a mural called "Of Ourselves" which was a composite of traced silhouettes of each child who worked on the project. At Martin Luther King School, each class submitted drawings for a raised mural in the all-purpose room.

At Lee High School Ruth teamed up with Terry Lennox, a muralist employed by the after-school program, to cover a large wall in the cafeteria and one in the library



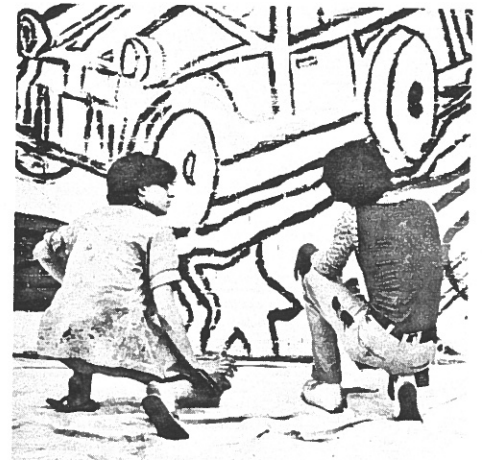
Jehanne Arslan

Farnam Neighborhood House mural, "Of Ourselves", painted by young children.

with scenes depicting two of Stevie Wonders's songs — "I Wish" and "Living for the City". A classroom pulsates with vibrant signs of the Zodiac.

At the New Haven Senior Center, Ruth tried out a different medium which was more familiar to the group there — cloth. The women portrayed their bus trips in a stitched mural.

Probably one of the most exciting projects was one at the Jewish Home for the Aged. Men and women in their 70's and 80's, some of them in wheel chairs and one who is legally blind, painted scenes from their memories of Channukah, a flower vendor in New York, and a triptych about immigrants working in the garment industry at the turn of the century.



Ruth Resnick and an artist from Puerto Rican Youth Services in the Hill work on the outline of "Spirit of '76" on Frank's Paint and Wallpaper Store. The Washington Avenue store owner donated the paint as well as the wall.

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Reflections From City Hall

The nation's larger cities have felt the effects of the recession more acutely than the less densely populated areas of the country. The overall national unemployment picture is showing signs of improvement, but the large urban centers continue to experience excessively high rates of unemployment. Recognizing this, the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) has established an Employment and Training Advisory Council composed of CETA administrators from large urban areas around the country. I am proud to say that New Haven will be taking the lead on the new Council through the appointment of our Manpower Administrator, Thomas Corso, who will serve as one of two representatives from the New England region.

The formation of the Council comes at a critical time. With CETA legislation coming up for reenactment this year, it is essential that the needs of the large urban areas be presented to Congress, the Executive branch and federal agencies which distribute employment and training funds. The Council will hold meetings around the country to research the needs and analyze the problems of employment and training programs. The results of these meetings will serve as the basis for policy formulation at the national level. The Council will help to foster an effective working relationship between the U.S. Department of Labor and the nation's mayors.



In the near future, the Council plans to take a look at those programs which can have the most immediate and effective impact on the urban employment situation — namely Public Service Employment, the formation of a Youth Task Force, and ways of increasing the involvement of the private sector in employment and training programs.

The USCM has taken a significant step forward in forming this Council and recognizing the particular expertise of CETA administrators. The work of this Council should have a positive impact on the employment situation which is one of the most pressing concerns of our large urban centers.

Frank Logue

Frank Logue, Mayor

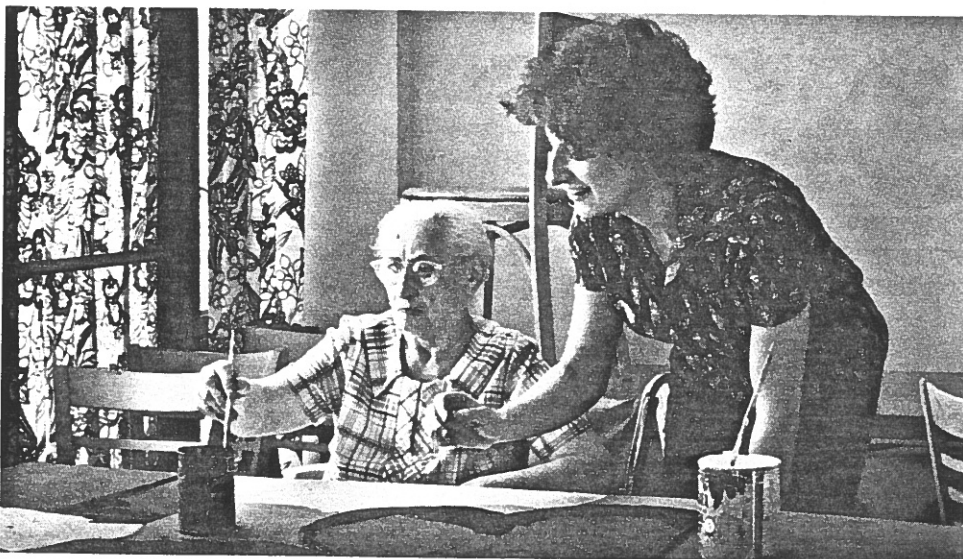
Murals, continued from page 1

Ruth describes herself as a community or public artist. As Ruth says, "The public artist is the match that lights the fire — the catalyst who helps people translate their ideas into living art. Without the public artist the walls would stay bare. But the public artist must be aware of her audience and of the group with which she's working before the brushes are dipped into paint."

The murals around New Haven began as an idea of Ruth's. But many more people were involved in order for them to become realities — parents who wanted their children involved in art projects, neighborhood agencies who found groups of potential artists, stores and schools who took the risk of having walls covered with designs and scenes, the Board of Education who lent an opaque projector which enlarged the sketches on the walls so they could be traced, the principal and custodians at Lee who kept the building open after school and were patient with the cans of paint, drop cloths and mini scaffolding necessary for the projects, teachers who lent supplies and helped with discipline, the senior citizens who brought their bits of cloth to share with others, and people who donated money for paint. Ruth says, "The CETA salary enabled me to become the facilitator and advisor, but I couldn't be a public muralist without these other people. In addition the enthusiasm and cooperation of the teams which worked together was essential".

Murals reflect that people are conscious of their environment and of their power to change it.

The murals say a lot about this city and the people who live here. They speak about feelings of joy, anger and unity. They show that many people can be artists who have never painted before. They show what can be done when people work and think together. They tell the whole community that art is work — a profession like any other. Art is not merely a frill that decorates. It communicates and gives people work — work in which they can take pride and find meaning, and the fruits of that labor are shared by many. The murals show that people want their surroundings to be visually alive and colorful. With the direction of Ruth Resnick the walls of New Haven are beginning to speak out. ■



Ruth Resnick (r), CETA muralist, assists a resident at the Jewish Home for the Aged with her part in a mural project.