**For Immediate Release Contact:**June 21, 2023 Alexa Gromko

**O:** (719) 389-6038

**C:** (719) 360-8401

[agromko@coloradocollege.edu](mailto:agromko@coloradocollege.edu)

**Fine Arts Center wins 50K award from National Endowment for the Arts**

*Noted artist to restore outdoor “Arte Mestiza” mural*

**COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – June 21, 2023** *–* The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College is pleased to announce the restoration of 37-year-old *Arte Mestiza*, a faded and crumbling mural that spans the concrete wall of the parking lot across from the building, with a $50,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Emanuel Martinez, renowned Colorado muralist and sculptor, plans to begin repainting the 200-foot-long mural in mid-August, following repairs to the concrete wall. Metal flashing will be added for weatherproofing and better drainage.

College officials said the grant is the largest NEA award received in recent years, if not ever.

“The National Endowment for the Arts is pleased to support a wide range of projects, including the Fine Arts Center at Colorado College’s *Arte Mestiza*, demonstrating the many ways the arts enrich our lives and contribute to healthy and thriving communities,” said NEA Chair Maria Rosario Jackson. “These organizations play an important role in advancing the creative vitality of our nation and helping to ensure that all people can benefit from arts, culture, and design.”

In his signature style, Martinez will engage the community in the effort by enlisting the assistance of CC students who will also paint parts of the mural. Colorado College may have up to 20 students helping to paint well into September.

“I’m just ecstatic and thrilled about preserving the mural now,” said Martinez. “It’s still in good-enough shape that it won’t be that difficult. I’m 75 years old and if we’re going to do it, we need to do it while I’m still alive. I’m looking forward to working with the youth again. It’s going to be great.”

Martinez painted the mural in 1986 as a monument to Chicano muralism. The content of the mural tells a story about Chicano contributions to the arts in Colorado. It was donated to the FAC museum collection by the Hispanic Arts Council as a gift from the community. Someone tagged it once but the sun did more damage in bleaching the colors.

“It’s about time,” said Martinez. “For many years I’ve been asking to maintain it but frankly it’s been neglected for decades. I’m really thrilled to see they’re finally coming through with this. With the products they have today, it should last another 100 years. We’ll be spraying a mural shield protective coat on it, which is a graffiti guard and protects from UV radiation.”

Considered the pioneer in contemporary mural movement in Colorado, Martinez started painting murals in 1968 and has been doing it ever since. His style is considered timeless.

**About Colorado College**

*Colorado College is a nationally prominent, four-year liberal arts college that was founded in Colorado Springs in 1874. In 1970 the college created the Block Plan, in which its approximately 2,300 undergraduate students take one class at a time in intensive 3½-week segments. A Master of Arts in teaching degree also is offered. The college’s vision is to ignite students’ passion and potential to create a more just world. For more information, visit www.coloradocollege.edu.*

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