

Mohamad S. Bazzi

Previous Artist Statement - Journeys Mural

September 2005

(Written for "Journeys" mural; "Journeys & Distances" Exhibit, Padzieski Gallery, Dearborn, MI.)

When the collective was creating a mural for the exhibit, we were faced with the challenge of designing a piece that would lend itself to the overall continuity of themes expressed through the works of the various artists.

Conceptually, we determined that since some of the individual works of art in this exhibit dealt with various states of existence within the overall experience of migration, re-settlement and memory, the mural had to explore the migration itself, as well as a state of being that is neither alien nor native.

In the mural, the immigrants make the trek from an organic habitat to a mechanical one. They participate in the livelihood of the old and new worlds, while contributing to the civilizations of both. They are shaped by the circumstance in which they find themselves, be it the old, the new, or the migratory state of crossing over. They do not come empty handed, though, but bring with them their talents, values and cultures.

At the mid-point of the journey is a female figure, an allegory of the migration, a spiritual guide for travelers. At the far right is a male figure who is also allegorical, representing a sense of rooted-ness that exists in the old world, and which always tugs at the memories of immigrants through the physical and psychological distances that persist. In the new world, their elaborate involvement in the formation of a modern construct itself becomes the allegory for their hopes, their energy and their efforts.