CITY OF OAKLAND

CITY HALL · ONE FRANK H. OGAWA PLAZA · OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612

JANE BRUNNER
Councilmember
District 1

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February 2, 2009

Dear Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC),

My office has commissioned an Oakland based artist, Rocky Rische-Baird, to create a mural on the 55th Street freeway underpass between Shattuck Avenue and Telegraph Avenue. I am writing to solicit your support in maintaining the mural once it is complete.

Rocky has painted various murals in District 1 and throughout Oakland. Rocky's work has been well received and is a great addition to the community. There has been much enthusiasm and support from the community for this proposal. I intend to commit $10,000.00 from my office's discretionary funds for the cost of the mural and $2,000.00 for PAAC to facilitate the maintenance and upkeep of the mural.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this proposal. We appreciate your support and if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact my office at (510) 238-7001.

Truly Yours,

Jane Brunner
Councilmember, District 1

JB: gsj

55 Street Freeway Underpass Mural Proposal Project

The mural proposal originates from a community process where Councilmember Jane Brunner asked community members via the internet to vote for improvements within District 1. Freeway underpass murals came back as the top selection.

After the overwhelming response, Councilmember Brunner asked community members to choose the location and they selected the 55th Street Underpass near Shattuck Avenue.

Based on the community's feedback, Councilmember Brunner committed to using discretionary funds to hire an Oakland based muralist to create a beautiful and professional image that will enhance the neighborhood. The artist, Rocky Rische-Baird, created an image which was presented to and supported by the residents Oakland City Council District 1.

55th Street Underpass Public Mural

The initial design obstacle I encountered when I visited the project site was the immense size of the space. The idea of painting an isolated composition in a single location would not be successful because it would contrast so greatly with the rest of the undecorated space, causing attention to be dominated by what is blank rather then what has been painted.

To create a work that felt like it belonged and blended well the space needed to determine the design. The idea of a work that appears to be created from the space itself seemed to be the best way to achieve that. By creating a work that appears to be physically carved from the wall, the problem of the mural conflicting with the greater whole is eliminated.

What I had heard from the community in regard to this location was the disappointment felt that it was essentially becoming a dumping ground, that there was no sense of respect for the place, and that it felt dead. The depiction of a meditating Buddha is meant to draw awareness to the fact that although the space is a very urban environment, it is still a living environment that deserves our respect and cooperation.

55th Street Underpass Public Mural

The proposed mural project is an approximately 21′x 16′ mural to be painted on a section of 55th Street underpass wall between Telegraph and Shattuck Ave.

Simply put, the proposed mural is a depiction of a large sculpture of a meditating Buddha painted so as to appear that is has been carved from the underpass wall itself. (*See included image of conceptual sketch.*)

The mural will be painted in a manner as to achieve a photo-realistic and truly illusive effect. I believe this project would succeed in becoming an iconic symbol of East Bay public art.

Surface Preparation
The concrete surface where the mural is to be painted needs to first be cleaned with mild TSP solution. After the initial cleansing, a hydrochloric acid treatment should be applied which will decrease the pH and counteract the concrete's formation of calcium hydroxide beneath the final painted mural.

Primer
Three coats of acrylic primer will be applied to the cleansed and treated surface.
A professional industrial grade product such as the Zinsser 1-2-3 brand primer will be used.

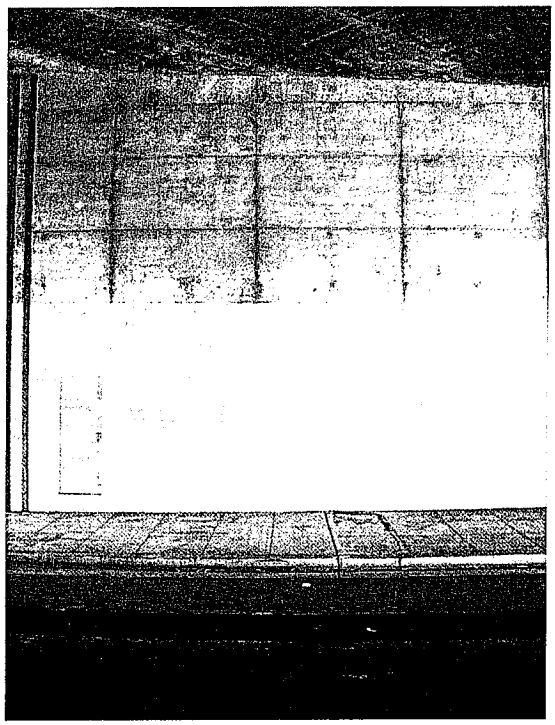
Paint
The mural will be executed using high quality artist's acrylic paints with the optimum light-fastness rating. I use Golden brand acrylic paints because of the high pigment load and the excellent integrity of its polymer binder.

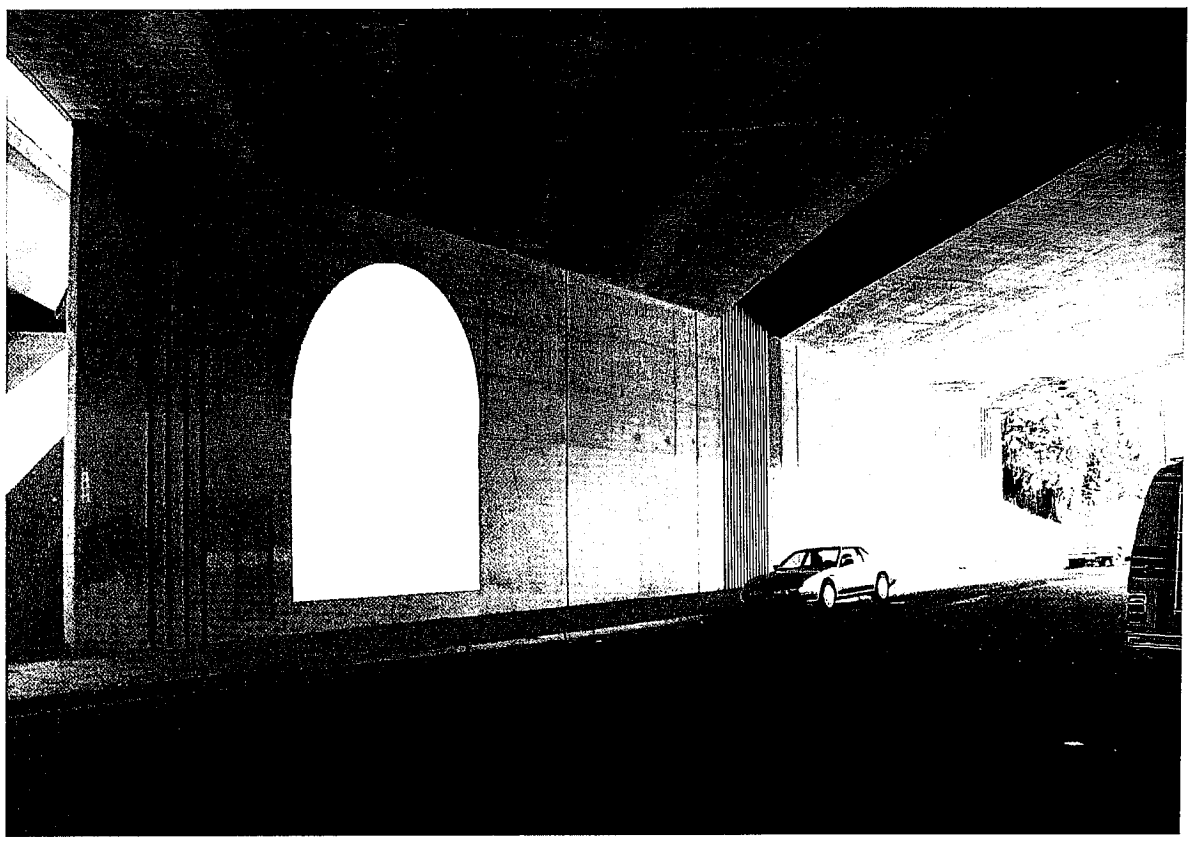
Final Varnish
The finished painting will be treated with three coats of an anti-UV, anti-graffiti varnish. The brand name of the varnish I prefer is Tex-Cote Graffiti Gard. This coating provides an excellent protective shell and reacts remarkably well with common acetone solvent.

Maintenance
In regard to exterior public murals, the most damaging aspect is the sun. However, since this mural is essentially covered, the mural life will be greatly extended by not being exposed to constant, direct UV's.
If graffiti occurs, I would recommend that common acetone solvent be used to remove it.
I believe the primary maintenance concern will be traffic dust and grime. I would recommend a very light cleansing of the mural with a mild detergent solution as needed.

55th Street Underpass Public Mural
Construction Schedule:

The estimated total time for project completion, including research and design and the execution of the painted work, is approximately 3 months.





Rocky Rische-Baird
(510) 652-3001
rocky@rische-baird.com

Best of The Bay winning artist, Rocky Rische-Baird grew up in rural, forested Northern California.

In the 90's, Rische-Baird was employed as a graphic designer, screen printer, and freelance comic book illustrator.

In 2001, Rische-Baird moved to San Francisco and worked as an animator before establishing his own studio through the creation of two highly praised pieces of public art in Oakland, California, where he currently lives and works. Rocky Rische-Baird has established a presence in both the public and private art sectors. As well as consistently creating public artworks he also exhibits regularly in numerous fine art galleries.

Public Artworks

"The Downtown Key System Mural." 2008
Commissioned by SKS Investments in cooperation with The Oakland Heritage Alliance.
Broadway and 11th Street, downtown Oakland CA.

"Julia Morgan, Architect" 2007
Commissioned for The Chapel of The Chimes, Oakland CA

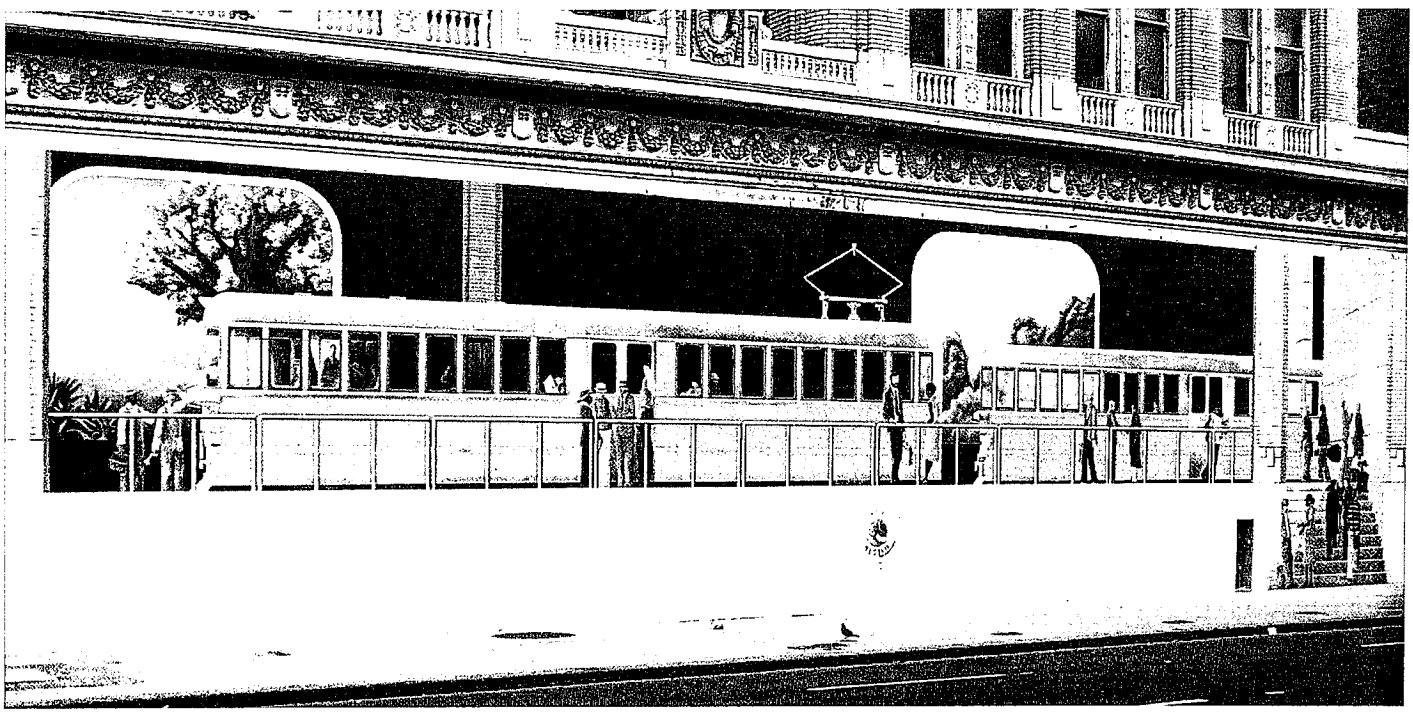
"The Capture of Solid, The Escape of Soul" The Ohlone Mural. 2006
Piedmont Avenue, Oakland CA. Funded in part by a grant from The Oakland Cultural Funding Program.

Alameda Arts Commission. 2006
Three commissioned paintings for The Juvenile Justice Center.

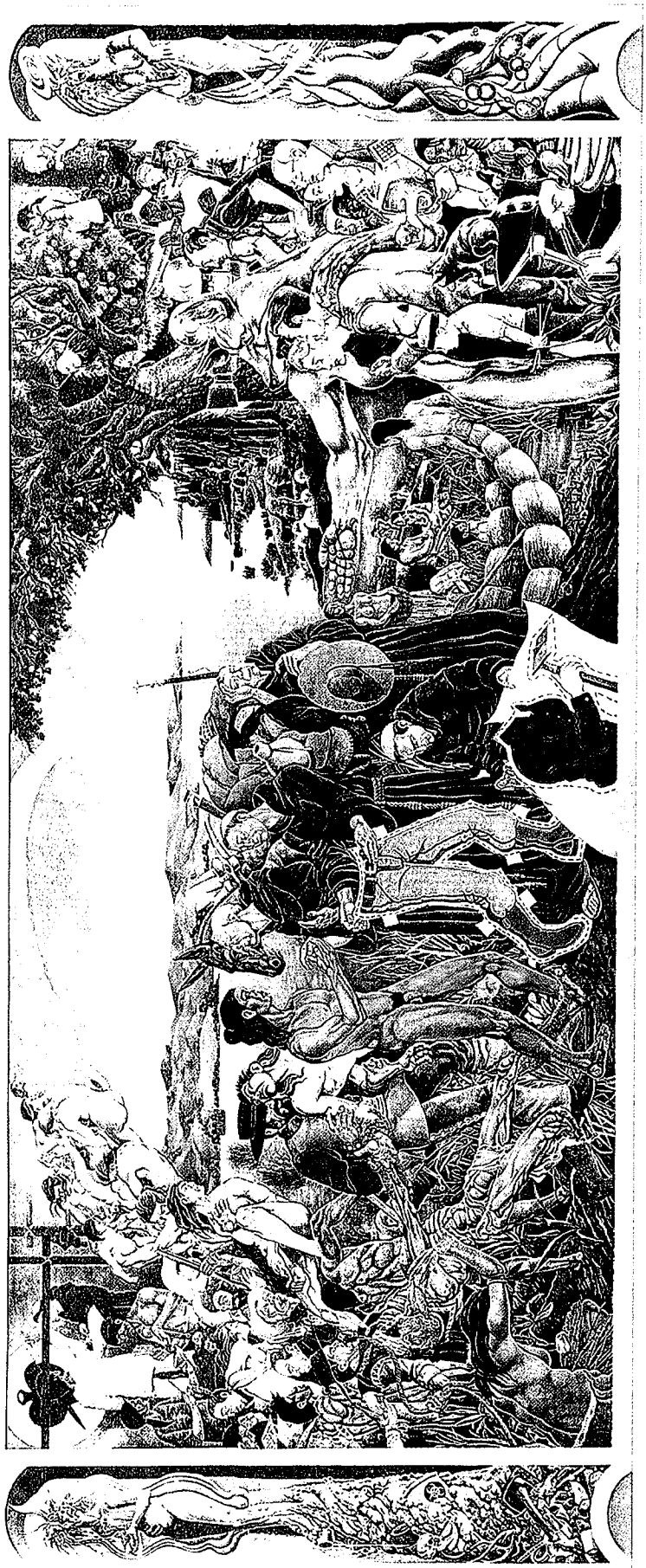
"The Glen Echo Creek Mural" 2006
Commissioned by PANSA for Piedmont Elementary School.

"The Electric Life is Safe Together." The Key Route Mural. 2005
Piedmont Avenue, Oakland CA

"The Electric Life is Safe Together." 2005
12'x22' Acrylic

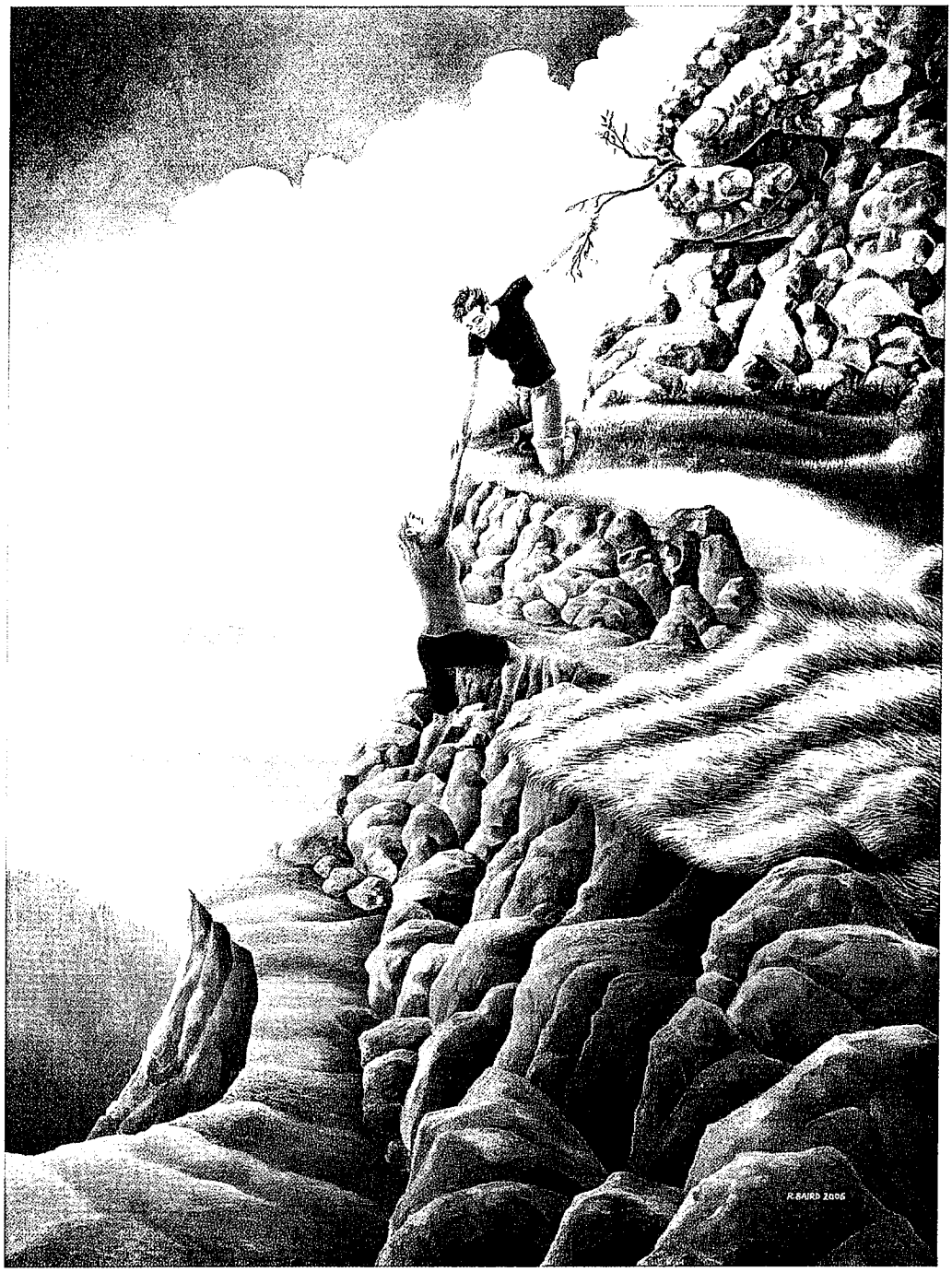


The Downtown Key Route Mural. 2008
20'x80' Acrylic

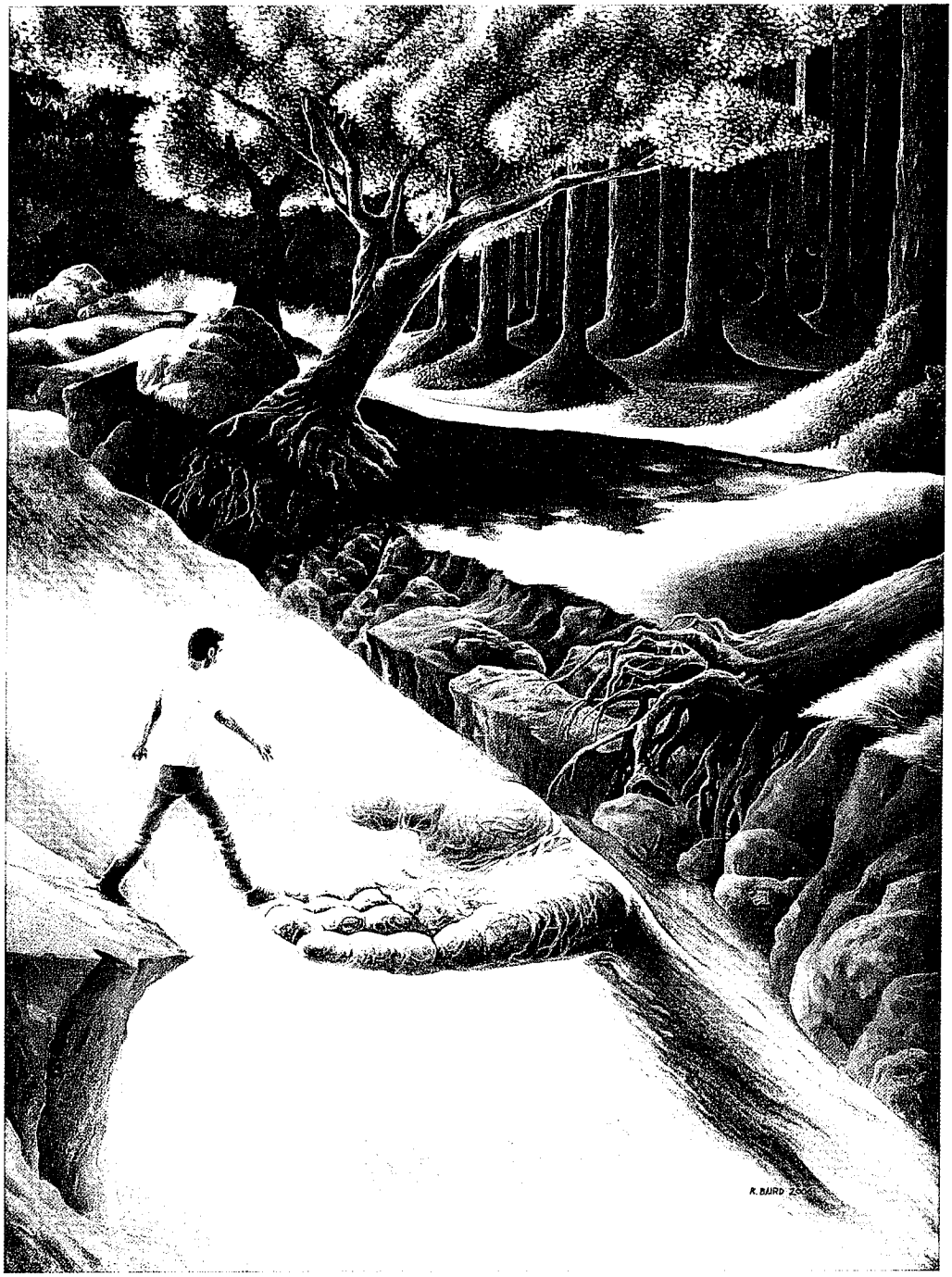


"The Capture of Solid, The Escape of Soul." 2006
12'x25' Acrylic

Comfort
2007, 30"x40" Acrylic on canvas
1 of 3 works commissioned by The Alameda Arts Commission



Assistance *one*
2007, 40"x30" Acrylic on canvas
1 of 3 works commissioned by The Alameda Arts Commission



Assistance *two*
2007, 40"x30" Acrylic on canvas
1 of 3 works commissioned by The Alameda Arts Commission