Integrated Visionaries
California Polytechnic State University

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University Art Collection Catalogs
https://artcollection.calpoly.edu

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INTEGRATED VISIONARIES

University Art Collection, Cal Poly
Cal Poly’s College of Science and Mathematics unveiled a 22’ by 6’ foot diversity-themed mural on May 26, 2017 in the main lobby of the Warren J. Baker Center for Science and Mathematics (No. 180).

The mural—“Integrated Visionaries”—represents the study and research of science and mathematics while considering themes of inclusivity, diversity and community. It integrates a stylized approach that allows viewers to see themselves in the mural.

Colorado-based artist David Ocelotl Garcia was selected to design the mural following a nationwide search that included local artists and two Cal Poly students among the applicants. Garcia’s work has been commissioned by organizations in Colorado, California and Mexico. His large-scale murals interact with their environment to create a welcoming and vibrant atmosphere for the community.

College of Science and Mathematics Dean Phil Bailey worked with faculty and staff representatives from the campus cultural associations—including the Black Faculty and Staff Association and the Chicanx Latinx Faculty Staff Association—to decide what the mural would represent.
“I’m really proud of the committee that put this together,” said Bailey, who retired at the end of the 2017 academic year after nearly 50 years of service. “It will fit perfectly with all the inspirational art that fills the Baker Center and show students, faculty and staff of diverse backgrounds how important they are to the future of science and mathematics.”

The mural is part of the university’s permanent art collection.
University Art Collection, College of Science and Mathematics

Indoor mural by artist David Ocelotl Garcia set within the Cal Poly Baker Center. 22’ by 6’ (132 sq. ft.)

Garcia’s murals interact with their environment to create a welcoming and vibrant atmosphere for the community, integrating his unique style of art that he refers to as “Abstract Imaginism.”

The artist’s vision was to create a powerful visual representation relating to the study of science and mathematics based on the themes of inclusivity, diversity, and community.

From the artist: “Integrated Visionaries depicts a community working together to explore and create significant advancements in society through science, math, social interaction, and art.”

UNIVERSITY ART COLLECTION

Under the guidance of the University Art Acquisition and Oversight Policy, the Robert E. Kennedy Library works to unify the university’s collecting practices in support of making works of fine art accessible for teaching and research and enriching the artistic cultures of both our campus and local communities.

The collections encompass artwork in all forms, including but not limited to paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, sculptures, architectural elements, and installations. The collection and the online catalog serve as a resource to support teaching and scholarly activities at Cal Poly and to enrich the cultural life and aesthetics of the university. Through acquisition, display, and preservation the collection benefits the Cal Poly community of students, faculty, staff, and alumni as well as the community of the Central Coast.

artcollection.calpoly.edu
Colorado-based artist David Ocelotl Garcia (b. 1977, Denver, CO USA) is accomplished across several mediums including painting, sculpture, and murals. His work can be seen in public art commissions, and both museum and private collections.

David discovered his natural ability and passion for fine art at the age of eleven. His early work consisted of life drawing and water-based sculpture, which he created at the Art Students League of Denver. By the age of eighteen David was assisting professional muralists and monumental bronze sculptors. Now his own work ranges from large-scale interior and exterior murals, painted directly on existing surfaces, panels, cloth and canvas. Through self-meditation and creative exploration David has developed his own technique and philosophy on painting and sculpture coined “Abstract Imaginism.” Abstract Imaginism is a style of art that combines the spontaneity and unpredictability of abstraction with the creativity and perception of his imagination. David is most influenced by the movement of atomic energy and its effect on all living things. It is through art that David hopes to manifest beauty, inspiration, color, and energy.

ocelotlart.com
Themes section written by Eden Knapp (ANT/GEO ‘17) and Dr. Jenell Navarro
The organization for the mural was inspired by an Ollin composition. “Ollin” is a native Aztec word which roughly means “movement.” The type of movement it is often affiliated with is an earthquake or a beating heart, pulsating out from a central point. It represents the balance of energy and is created when two energies intersect like two chain links to create a third, central energy.

By organizing the work around this movement, it creates a flow within the piece that creates multiple points of interest, while still maintaining balance.

The traditional Ollin symbol. Some versions of the symbol use red, yellow, and green instead.
The top central image featured in the mural portrays the inclusion and intersection of a multitude of identities to show diversity as a tool that helps us better understand our world.

This mural celebrates marginalized groups who rarely get to see themselves represented in the fields of science and math.
At the recommendation of student consultants, a series of butterflies are located to the left of the central face in dedication to the immigrants and undocumented students in the community. Butterflies are often meant to symbolize transformation and growth, along with a sense of freedom.

These butterflies represent how we want all undocumented students to feel as they dedicate themselves to furthering their education and building their futures.
The anchoring image to the upper corners of the mural is that of an Ocelotl holding an abstract celestial body that mimics the structure of an atom. “Ocelotl” is the Aztec word for jaguar and was strongly associated to warriors of the tribe. The jaguar was seen as a powerful, commanding force in Mesoamerican cultures and was greatly respected.

The second anchoring image on the mid-right shows a Mazatl Azul, or “blue deer,” holding out a DNA strand. The double helix is found throughout Mesoamerican art, often through the image of serpents. Both characters recur throughout Mesoamerican native art. These figures show the integration and harmony of culture, nature, spirituality, and science.
The Mazatl Azul and DNA strand as depicted in the original marker drawing. This section can be found in the upper-right corner of the mural.
We acknowledge and honor the yak titʸu titʸu yak tiłhini, Northern Chumash Tribe, whose homelands Cal Poly is built upon. The tiłhini peoples have been present in these lands for thousands of years and remain exceptional caretakers across San Luis Obispo County today. We give thanks to them and their ancestors for the unbroken and careful stewardship of these territories.

The lower central portion of the mural celebrates and honors the Northern Chumash Tribe. In the center there is a shell resembling an olivella shell. These shells are used by the Chumash to make beads, and historically were used as currency and carry great cultural value. The acorn also plays a large role in Chumash life—ceremonial and as a staple for meals.

The abstract designs throughout the image were also inspired by Northern Chumash astronomical art and scientific knowledge. The human figures are shown interacting with the four elements, connecting them both to their spirituality and culture as well as to science and the natural world.
To learn more about Northern Chumash scientific knowledge: chumashscience.com

The *Chumash Science Through Time Project*, celebrates Indigenous knowledge as specialized, complex, and necessary for everyone’s survival. The project shares the remarkable work of Chumash Elder Joe Talaugon and his wife Margie—their founding of the Guadalupe Cultural Arts and Education Center, and their work with paleontologist Rex Saint Onge on their research journey investigating the Chumash Arborglyph.

Read their article:

the Baker Center Mural is it gives me a basis to start with.
PROCESS
MURAL UNVEILING
AND PIZZA PARTY!
Preliminary marker drawing to demonstrate proposed mural composition, colors, and themes.
Preliminary marker drawing to demonstrate proposed mural composition, colors, and themes.
The completed mural as installed in the Cal Poly Baker Center. Acrylic on board. Photo by Hannah Travis.
The completed mural as installed in the Cal Poly Baker Center. Acrylic on board. Photo by Hannah Travis.
INSTALLATION
Examples of how I use Abstract Imaginism technique to create my mural compositions.

Step 2
SELF-PORTRAIT WORKSHOP