

ROADS TO DELIBERATE DREAMS: INDIANA'S GENIUSES, TINKERERS & SPEEDSTERS

by Marcus Akinlana

Indiana has a rich and illustrious history of innovation and invention in transportation and related industries. Akinlana, a mural artist from New Orleans, Louisiana, will create two coordinating murals celebrating this history.

Images in the murals range from early modes of transportation to modern marvels. Included are references to the use of Indiana's waterways, land and air for transportation and the inventiveness and determination of Indiana citizens to master transportation despite all odds. Particular attention is also given to address the role of African Americans and Native Americans in the growth and expansion of Indiana's transportation legacy.

Each mural will be 7ft high and 30ft wide, with additional elements that project out in certain areas of the composition. Sculptures will be approximately life-size and will be cast in long lasting lightweight fiberglass, the sculptures will be bolted into the existing walls support studs. The murals will be located in the Baggage Claim area on either side of the main escalator.

The murals will be painted on Dibond panels or equivalent. Dibond consists of two sheets of .010" aluminum with a polyethylene core intended to be used for projects similar to this mural such as signage and OEM industrial applications. Dibond has an unlimited lifespan, is lightweight and more than sturdy enough for this mural project. The murals will be painted with acrylic paints with a high lightfastness rating. After completion the murals will be sealed with Soluvar (or an equivalent), which is an anti-graffiti sealant with ultraviolet blocker capabilities to resist fading.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Marcus Akinlana began painting murals with *Public Art Works Inc.* as a youth in Washington D.C. He graduated in 1988 from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago with a B.F.A. and has lived in Washington D.C., Chicago and New Orleans. His company WON Mural Society has designed and fabricated numerous public art projects both nationally and internationally including for the Philadelphia and Denver airports, the cities of Aurora, Colorado and Chicago, Illinois, and Philadelphia's famed Mural Arts Program. Positive Creations, his fine art company, retails his original paintings and his limited and open edition prints at his Royal Heritage Gallery in New Orleans. Akinlana's mural "Mile High & Rising" project for the Denver International Airport won a prestigious place in the Public Art Networks "Public Art in Review 2000" survey of new public art commissions. Displaced from New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina in fall 2005, Akinlana spent 18 months in the Washington, D.C. area before returning to New Orleans to rebuild his home and businesses.

- *Far right, top:* The first radar-equipped control tower for civilian flying installed at Weir Cook Airport in Indianapolis (now Indianapolis International Airport).
- *Above, right:* Willa B. Brown, an aviatrix from Gary, Indiana, flying the skies. Ms. Brown founded the aviation school that trained the Tuskegee Airmen.
- *Right of center:* The Duesenberg brothers working on their V-8 supercharged engine; table designed with checkered flag theme reminiscent of Indianapolis Motor Speedway.
- *Center:* Sylvanus Bowser's "modern" gas pump and the Indy 500's Borg Warner Trophy. Bowser was from Fort Wayne, Indiana, and in Australia gas pumps are still called "bowsers."
- *Center, left:* An astronaut's flight suit, representing Indiana's aerospace legacy through Purdue University.
- *Center, above:* Indy's downtown People Mover monorail connecting Methodist Hospital, Indiana University Hospital, Riley Hospital for Children.
- *Sculpture:* Octave Chanute successfully hang gliding, with a backdrop of the Indiana Dunes. Chanute was an early flight experimenter and served as an advisor to the Wright Brothers.
- *Far left, top:* Contemporary Indy 500 racer with a checkered flag.
- *Far left, center:* An abstraction of a roadway representing the National Road (US40, known as Washington Street in Indianapolis)
- *Far left, bottom:* Charlie Wiggins, champion of the Gold and Glory Sweepstakes, in his Wiggins Special automobile.