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Los Angeles County
Metropolitan
Transportation
Authority

TO: MTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ALTERNATES
FROM: RAE JAMES *Rae James*
SUBJECT: LOS ANGELES TIMES ARTICLE

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The Los Angeles Times is expected to soon run an article on the collage by Patrick Nagatani, entitled "Epoch", which hangs outside the Board room. As you know, the concept behind the collage addresses the idea of transportation from an individual to global perspective. The collage includes work from film pioneer Eadweard Muybridge's revolutionary movement study series, Human Locomotion, which includes photos of the profile and rear of a naked man running.

Some employees have complained about the content of the artwork, specifically the element which contains the photos of the naked man. As a result, this collage has been temporarily covered over by General Services pending USG's review of the matter.

Artist

Patrick Nagatani

Title

“Epoch”

Location

MTA Boardroom entrance area

Nagatani's collage mural addresses the idea of transportation from an individual to global perspective. Over 500 postcards of transit images from 1900-1995 together form a view of the edge of the earth seen from space. Images from NASA, including photos taken from Voyager I, the Hubble Space Telescope, the Magellen Probe, Viking I, Voyager II and the Gallileo Probe are set against a black "deep space" background. Film pioneer Eadweard Muybridge's revolutionary movement study series, *Human Locomotion*, reminds us that transportation begins and ends with each individual.



"The man who invented the moving picture."
"One of the greatest achievements of art and photography."
"A revolution in visual understanding."
"Groundbreaking."

These are just a few of the many tributes made to Eadweard Muybridge and the pioneering movement studies which he did in California in the 1870s and 80s. Thirty years before the development of the first automobile, Muybridge was commissioned by Leland Stanford (founder of Stanford University) to photograph a horse in motion to determine if all four feet were ever off the ground at the same moment. Muybridge met the challenge and produced the first ever serial photographs.

Muybridge's revolutionary study of the human anatomy in motion forever changed the way artists represent human movement and is now recognized as a fundamental tool for artists worldwide. Muybridge's work is particularly relevant to the history of Southern California. The motion series is considered to be the first moving picture and thus was a critical discovery in the development of the area's important movie industry.

The series of Muybridge images employed by artist Patrick Nagatani in his work for the MTA Gateway HQ Building is entitled *Human Locomotion* and is part of Muybridge's eleven volume study of humans, mammals and birds in motion (published in 1887). *Human Locomotion* is directly related to the mural's theme of transportation (Transport: to transfer or move from one place to another). This particular series is widely reproduced throughout the world; the original plates are located in California (at the Huntington Museum and Stanford University) and early prints are appreciated by thousands of daily visitors to the Getty Museum in Malibu.

In order to most accurately display movement of the human body, Muybridge followed a long historical tradition of employing the nude figure. Cultures worldwide have used the nude figure in public settings. Western examples include Michelangelo's *David* and the *Sistine Chapel*, the *Discus Thrower* and Rodin's *Thinker*, which all employ the classical nude figure and are located in public spaces. More contemporary examples include Robert Graham's sculptures at the L.A. Coliseum (created for the 1984 Olympics) and at the top of the library steps at the First Interstate World Center, Tom Otterness' sculptures for the Roybal Federal Building in downtown Los Angeles and the recent installation of several large sculptures by Fernando Botero along Santa Monica Boulevard in Beverly Hills.

Should you have any further questions on the artwork at Gateway Transit Center please contact the Art Program at 922.2720. We will be giving special public art tours for staff and the general public in early 1996--notice will be given through the CEO Report. We hope you enjoy the wide range of artwork in the GTC and welcome comments. We have installed a comment box next to the guard's desk on the 3rd Floor.

