

SusanDaileyAvogadrosNumber2001PressReleaseTextTVS

By Tim Van Schmidt

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The twenty-year saga of Fort Collins' most famous mural art continues: Avogadro's Number celebrates Susan Dailey's new paintings!

It's the dream of every artist- to have your work shown in a place where people see it every day. For Fort Collins artist Susan Dailey, that dream has come true through the murals that she paints in public places throughout the region. That includes a mural in Rockwell Hall at C.S.U., a historical mural in Berthoud, work in Estes Park and for the Fort Collins Museum.

Dailey's most prominent work, however, could be the fanciful universe she has created on the walls at Avogadro's Number, a popular restaurant in Fort Collins. Thanks to Dailey's artistic contributions over a stretch of twenty years, the walls at Avogadro's have become covered with exotic landscapes peopled with unusual characters, all painted with a sense of both mystery and whimsy.

Nobody seems to know when the first mural work appeared on the walls at Avogadro's, although 1976 is the best guess. It started on the north inside wall of the restaurant where the abstract imagery of several area artists mixed together. Dailey was initially hired in 1981 to work on the north outside wall, which had already been painted with a sky blue background and a small, detailed castle in the clouds in a corner. Dailey, took over the fantasy theme of the existing painting and created her own world based on J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" trilogy of books.

As she began work on the inside walls, Dailey worked around the already existing artwork, including the mural paintings and a series of macramé hangings, trying to "build on the history" of the previous work. Expansion of Avogadro's into the next building to create a showroom and a bar provided Dailey with even more areas to decorate. While the mood of Dailey's work at Avogadro's is strange and dreamlike, the characters painted on the walls are often based on real life. They might be friends of the artist, relatives of owner Rob Osborne, longtime employees of Avogadro's or loyal patrons.

The current project was to paint newly remodeled areas in the front dining room of the restaurant. Due to construction deadlines, Dailey did not work alone this time. More than 20 different artists, including dedicated Avogadro's employees, helped her paint the ductwork to look like logs and others helped Dailey blend new images into the existing work.

Avogadro's Number will be celebrating the completion of Susan Dailey's most recent artwork in the dining room area with a public reception on Sunday, February 11. The event is scheduled for 4-7 p.m. and will feature refreshments as well as a performance by the Bluegrass Patriots. For more information call 493-5555. Or just stop on by! Avogadro's is located at 605 S. Mason.

Wanted! Susan Dailey and Avogadro's Number are asking community members for any stories or history about the early mural art at Avogadro's. Photos showing the original artwork are welcome too. To contribute, call 493-5555 or inquire at the restaurant.

Interviews with artist Susan Dailey are now available.
Publicity contact: Tim Van Schmidt 482-9473.