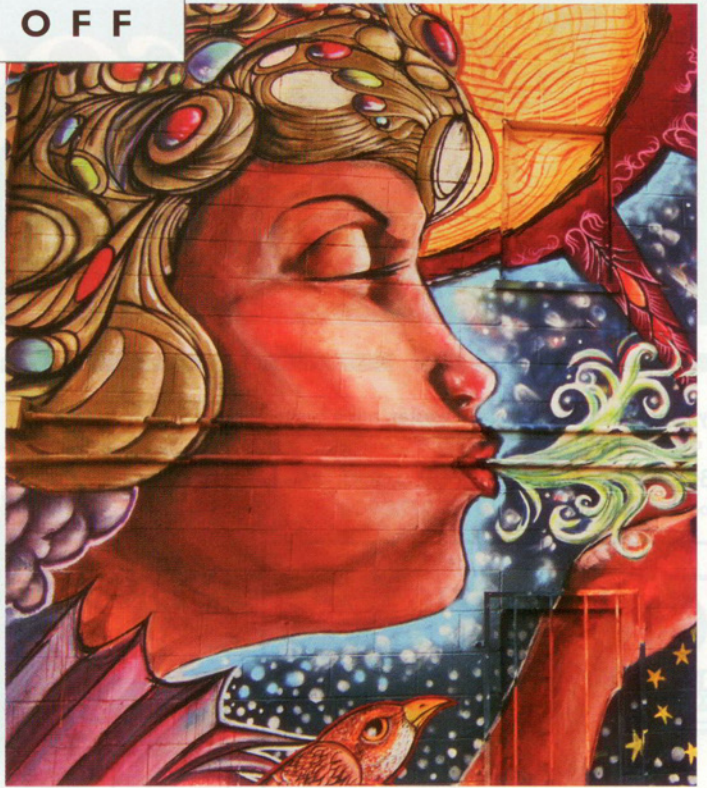




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## mural walk takes its first steps

BY RANDY BAILEY

A year ago it was just a dream. Reza Assemi, owner of the Pearl Building downtown, had a vision. "I wanted to start a 'mural walk' all the way down to the Fulton Mall," Assemi said. Something to help tie together all of the ArtHop venues on the first Thursday night of each month. He had a friend who had created the "Marilyn Monroe" mural downtown a few years ago and thought a continuous flow of outdoor art would be a perfect way to help downtown blossom and grow.

Located on a 20 foot by 100 foot expanse of wall on the backside of the Econo Inn south of Divisadero on Fulton, artists Josh Wigger and Mehran Heard set to work on the new mural after Creative Fresno got involved with the project about three months ago. "We had about \$500 donated and then everyone else donated materials and time," Assemi said.



It took about a month and a half just to prep the wall for the mural. High pressure washers and scrapers flew to get the surface ready to receive paint, then the actual painting took another month and a half.

Although reluctant at first, Assemi said that other business owners in the area have begun to warm up to the idea of beautifying their neighborhood. "It's provoked a lot of interest from other owners," he said.