

WEST COLFAX LATELY

Lakewood's Perspective on Colorado's Most Famous Avenue | Issue 2



8 Artists, makers, outlaws & geeks shaping the district

14 Daycations— a day-trip guide to corridor gems

30 The 7 deadly sins of Colfax— a lighthearted guide



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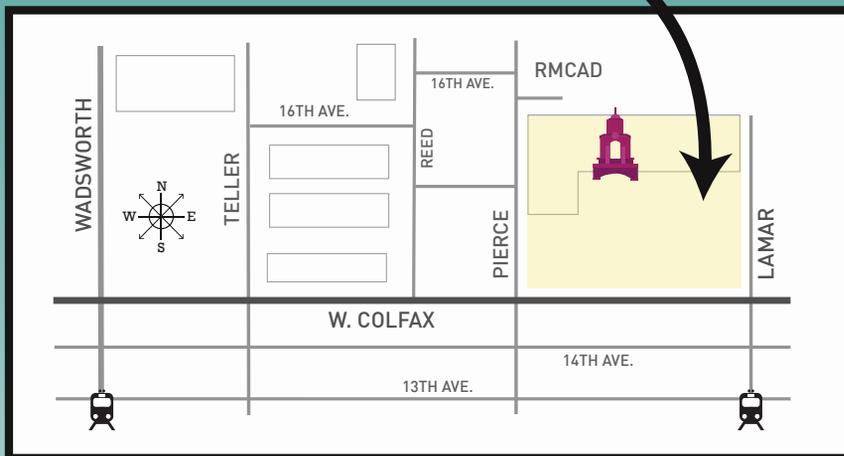


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EDITORS LETTER

Hands down, one of the reasons people love Colfax Avenue so dearly is that it always stays true to itself. In a word, Colorado’s most famous avenue is authentic. We frequented Colfax as wide-eyed, fun-seeking college students, whispering our plans in hushed tones and showing up incognito, maybe to attend our first close-quarters concert or to revel in the experience of an iconic dive bar. But just as we moved from jobs to careers, from seedy boyfriends to long-term life partners, the avenue is amid a transformation—particularly here on West Colfax. Times, they are a changin’.

But how does an avenue evolve while still maintaining its soul? Simple—repurpose, redevelop, reinvent! Once abandoned buildings become transformed through big ideas, collaboration, and entrepreneurship. Mid-century businesses intermingle with new local haunts, against a backdrop of light rail. West Colfax and its certain charm, is beginning to sparkle once again.

This issue of the magazine spotlights the reinvention and rediscovery taking place here, all in a spirit of authenticity that has always been at this avenue’s core. Welcome to West Colfax, lately.

- Liz Black, Managing Editor

PUBLISHERS NOTE

A word about Liz . . . She’s a fiery, super-creative, thirty-something, who serves as our managing editor, but that’s not her most important title—she is “Mom” to baby Henley who will soon celebrate her first birthday. Liz fills both roles with equal vigor; she’s a joy a to work with—and the same holds true for our little team. Each with more to do than anyone could ever finish, Liz, along with Miranda Samon and Melanie Stover, all have their fingerprints on this magazine. Fiercely opinionated, we argue, cajole, and even fight, but mostly laugh our way through each day. I’m deeply grateful for their intense commitment and the passion that “these millennials” have for creativity and community.

And special thanks to our friends at the City of Lakewood—amazing people and amazing partners! Your forward-thinking support is the catalyst for the transformation taking place here. Thank you!

- Bill Marino, Publisher / Editor-in-Chief

Comments, suggestions? Email us at: editors@westcolfaxlately.org

FROM THE MAYOR

In my first year as Mayor, I’ve had the pleasure of seeing the arts and culture ventures along West Colfax take shape and receive recognition that reflects the progress and authenticity of this historic corridor.

One such accolade comes from a powerhouse arts organization, the National Endowment for the Arts. The NEA recently awarded a \$100,000 grant to Lakewood in partnership with 40 West Arts District to create an arts loop—the largest award given by this program. This loop will be a distinctive way to provide a visual walking and bicycling experience through the burgeoning creative district, and will help attract new businesses and enhance the area’s recreational and cultural assets. Now that’s some genuine recognition!

West Colfax also has caught the attention of 5280 Magazine with a profile in a recent edition, and The EDGE Theater and other 40 West fixtures continuing to garner “Best of” wins in *Westword*. It’s clear that West Colfax is on the move. From business to arts, from culture to creativity, I invite you to check out all the things happening lately along West Colfax Avenue.

- Mayor Adam Paul,
City of Lakewood



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Lakewood's Perspective on
Colorado's Most Famous Avenue

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Cover photo by Zane Balogh of two RMCAD
students in front of David Ocelotl Garcia's
mural, "Manifesting our Future."

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Photo by Miranda Samon



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Photo by Zane Balogh



Illustration by Molly McCraw



Photo by David M. Dunda

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ARTISTS, MAKERS, OUTLAWS & GEEKS

PROFILES OF CREATIVES SHAPING THE DISTRICT

By Allison Cohn



ARTISTS

Johanna Parker *Folk Artist*

Perhaps you've seen the hummingbirds flitting around the West Colfax corridor, embedded in the various murals that call the area home. If you look closely, they're everywhere—a treasure hunt of sorts, a local game of Where's Waldo? Johanna is the creative behind this unofficial, yet iconic mascot. It came about organically when designing the mural located on the side of King's Rest Motel (7013 W. Colfax Avenue). The hummingbird has since caught on, representing Project COLorFAX, a mural movement intended to "rejuvenate West Colfax via vibrant art."

Johanna makes folk art, papier-mâché and hand-sculpted characters. Although she excelled in her formal education, folk art was never in her curriculum. "Folk art is created by an artist that hasn't been formally trained in that particular genre." What she doesn't mention, in her humble manner, is that she's nationally renowned and her work has been featured in over 30 publications. Her creations have a cult following with their vintage appeal inspired largely by the art deco style. "I make upscale toys for adults. People tell me that my art makes them smile."

But Johanna wasn't always producing such shiny, happy stuff. She used to be Art Director for Denver's NBC Channel 9, designing custom graphics, animation and billboards. "News is so negative and has such a propaganda spin to it," Johanna explains. "I had to get out of it. I was getting migraines; it wasn't healthy for me."

Johanna made a change—and never looked back. And over time, she ended up more and more connected to 40 West Arts District. "40 West has pulled me out of my hermit-hood," she adds. "It's given me a purpose, connecting the community with the art and visa versa. I was sort of in hiding for years and just made art in my home studio. It's been nice to reconnect with other artists, to have a place to go to right outside my door for inspiration. That's why I got plugged in. It's like a family." Johanna no longer gets migraines.

It takes a certain kind of person to recognize potential while staying grounded and committed for the full transformation. But these innovators—the forward thinkers and the believers—are those kind of people. They combine a helping of genius with just a pinch of crazy; that's what makes them innovative and unique.

Whether it's the maker, with his arsenal of tools and equipment used to create the perfect brew; the outlaw, a Philly gal who doesn't always play by the rules; the artist who uses her brush to create more than just a painting, or the geek, who goes down a rabbit hole of self-discovery to connect the dots in an entire community—these capable characters are a sampling of the doers, who are leaning on the levers to create the tipping point on West Colfax. Let us introduce you to them, our artists, makers, outlaws, and geeks.



David Ocelotl Garcia
Muralist

Perhaps the most applicable use of the phrase “go big, or go home” is when it’s stated by a muralist. David is the artist behind the largest mural painted during 40 West Arts’ 2015 West Colfax MuralFest (an arts and music festival held each year in the heart of the district). You can see the mural, titled *Manifesting Our Future* on the corner of 16th Avenue and Teller Street. David has coined the term Abstract Imaginism to describe his unique style, which combines “the spontaneity of abstraction with the perception of his imagination.”

David describes the creative process behind his mural, first studying the area and getting a feel for its history. But he decided to focus his theme on the future of the corridor. “I picked four characters that represented my interpretation of the community, focusing on revival and renewal. There’s a hummingbird that’s leading the group of people, which is a metaphor representing inspiration,” he says. “The hummingbird is a cultural symbol for me; it embodies a positive cultural identity in Mexican tribal philosophies.”

In regard to getting the community involved in his creation of public art, David says, “It’s becoming more important to me to not only share the mural, but to share the experience.” David reminisces about MuralFest last year when a local named Greg Squires offered to help him with the process but “you never really know how serious people are.” Perhaps he underestimated how enthusiastic and genuine 40 Westers tend to be. Greg, an accomplished artist in his own right, chipped in during the weeks leading up to the festival, and provided a ton of support the day of the event as well.

“I like that public art is unpredictable,” David muses. “If they ask me to break down the effects, I tell them ‘I don’t know, but they will be positive.’ That’s all I can guarantee. The art will have a life of its own.”



MAKERS

Anthony Martuscello
WestFax Brewing Company

Anthony saw how happy his dad was after he left his full-time career to start his own business and knew that would be his ultimate goal, too. After studying engineering at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York, he worked for several Fortune 500 companies—all the while, teaching himself to home-brew beer in his basement. Anthony eventually made the move to Colorado and opened up WestFax Brewing Company in March of 2016, officially leaving his engineering career behind.

Anthony appreciates all varieties of beer, but his preferences are entirely seasonal. “There will be days where all I want is a craft lager and some days I just need a bunch of hops in my face,” he says. So not surprisingly, at WestFax, his goal is to “brew beer for everybody.” Anthony wants people to be able to walk into his brewery and order anything on the list because it’s all top quality beer—even if it’s not their favorite style. “A lot of industry people try to pigeon hole beers into a certain category, but if it’s a good quality beer then who cares?” Anthony also strives to throw a few twists into his brewing style, straying outside of the traditional guidelines—sometimes adding a hint of peach or vanilla or even coffee to his beer.

One of the smartest things Anthony did was to hire a master brewer named Alex Stansbury, who’s got 16 years of experience at Tommyknocker Brewery in Idaho Springs. Alex is one of the most established brewers in Colorado. “Right from the get-go, our beer was pretty flawless because Alex produces such solid brews,” Anthony says. WestFax’s best selling beer so far is a hoppy red ale called Casa Roja (translates to “red house”)—a play off of neighboring Casa Bonita. Anthony describes it as “not overly hoppy and well balanced.” And it pairs well with sopapillas.



Andy Sprenger

Sweet Bloom Coffee Roasters

Andy first fell in love with the coffee shop scene of the Pacific Northwest during his espresso-sipping college years in Bellingham, Washington—specifically at a little place called Tony’s. He’s come a long way since then, traveling from Kenya and Lebanon to El Salvador and Guatemala, learning about all things coffee. But as fate would have it, he ended up back in the neighborhood where he grew up to open Sweet Bloom Coffee Roasters.

While Sweet Bloom sources coffee from all over the world, Andy’s preferred beans come from Ethiopia, which is where coffee naturally grows and originates from. “The purest coffees from Ethiopia are some of the best smells out there,” says Andy. Sweet Bloom also sells a lot of coffee from Colombia, which is very well received. Andy refers to Colombian brews as “full-bodied crowd pleasers, chocolatey and really sweet.”

Tucked away on Reed Street a block north of West Colfax, Sweet Bloom is a dream come true for the 20 artists at 40 West Studios located right next door. Initially, the shop drew a lot of coffee geeks and industry people when they opened in 2014, but they’re getting busier and busier with each passing month. “I think people who are super passionate about coffee will come out of their way to visit us,” adds Andy, who was featured on the cover of *Barista Magazine* in 2015. “And as we continue to grow, we’re seeing more and more of a local presence, which is definitely pretty cool.”

Sweet Bloom’s whole bean coffee comes beautifully packaged in a black and white bag, which is a work of art in itself. Andy’s wife did the etching on the front and a local design shop, The Made Shop helped to complete the custom design. Andy thoughtfully explains, “We want the customers who buy our coffee to be thrilled with every aspect of the product we present to them.”



OUTLAWS

Judy Cybuch

Gallery of Everything

Judy is very inclusive, for being dubbed an “outlaw.” She’s actually a total sweetheart, but her colorful chest tattoos and Philly attitude may be intimidating to the faint of heart. Her Gallery of Everything includes a bit of—well—everything, featuring collections from about 40 different artists ranging from jewelry to mixed media pieces. Of her artist cadre she says, “We’re a little off the wall . . . because we’re looking for a wide variety.”

Judy doesn’t care much for rules. She doesn’t follow them, so she doesn’t tend to make them either. While most other galleries have stipulations and qualifications for their artists, Judy says, “Bring it in, drop it off. I’ll sell it. Life’s good.” Using her gallery space to give artists the opportunity to get their work in front of the public and make a profit is really rewarding for her. She wants people to come into Gallery of Everything and see it as the sort of space they’d want to put their art in. The sort of space that they need to come back to again and again. Lauri Ennis, one of Judy’s partners, says they chose this specific space for their gallery because it used to be an old magic shop that she would frequent as a kid growing up in the neighborhood. Gallery of Everything pays homage to that magic juju with its curious and eclectic assortment of treasures.

You could call her a collector or a curator, but Judy isn’t ashamed to admit she’s a total hoarder. “It’s an addiction. I’ve been doing it for over 40 years, buying and selling.” She especially loves recycled art, most of which she makes herself (think: plastic baby doll heads in bird cages and such). “I save everything. I know I don’t have the talent to paint or draw in the traditional sense, so this way if I make a mistake no one knows. It’s Judy’s way, so there are no mistakes.”



Joe Margotte
Chicago Style Beef & Dogs

Joe Margotte has been a quintessential part of West Colfax since the mid-60s, although, as he puts it, “I’ve been in and out of here several times.” Not only does Joe use old family recipes at the restaurant—which serves way more than just hot dogs—but Joe’s Chicago, as the locals call it, also pays homage to the Windy City with an extensive collection of Chicago memorabilia. And it was all started on a whim. “There was nowhere out here where we could get this type of food. We’re a niche operation. Probably 95% of our clientele are or were Chicago-based at one time or another.” Joe’s gruff voice gives him an abrasive feel, but he totally means well when he says, “We don’t have what everybody enjoys—or what everybody thinks they should enjoy.”

Joe’s favorite menu items (of which there are about 40) are obviously the standard, down-home Chicago fare: the hot dog with mustard (NEVER ketchup), relish, onion, pickle, peppers, tomato; and the Italian beef sandwich, which is “kind of hard to describe.” It’s piled high with very thinly sliced beef on “a wonderful bun and an Italian juice, served with both sweet and hot peppers.”

A huge supporter of 40 West Arts, Joe has gone as far as to have a designated table in his restaurant for district literature, brochures, and even this magazine. He was awarded the 2016 ‘Legend Award’ (an award for far-reaching and continued support for the corridor) by the West Colfax Community Association. Joe and his wife Luann ran the restaurant for years—and have seen the famed West Colfax avenue in its heyday and in decline, “but we are seeing a lot of new things coming now that’s bringing the Avenue back. While still a spry octogenarian, he’s turned the day-to-day operation over to next generation, but they continue the same legacy—that special Chicago “charm” . . . a gruff demeanor with a warm heart—and really good food.

GEEKS

Kevin Yoshida
Architect + Urban Designer

Located in what was once Lakewood Lanes Bowling Alley (circa 1950) is the office of The Abo Group, a sustainable architecture firm where Kevin, among his other professional pursuits, serves as the managing principal and director of design. Kevin has his hands in a number of West Colfax’s planning and urban design projects. “I guess I’m considered a geek because I’m always trying to bring a bigger picture to whatever the task is from a visual standpoint, whether it’s with 3D programs or hand sketches,” he explains, all the while scrolling through 3D renderings of 40 West projects on a large screen. It’s all very meta.

Kevin’s work in the corridor is broad and deep. As the local business improvement district (BID) board president, his close collaboration with BID Director and 40 West Arts Board Chair Bill Marino is responsible for moving a host of milestone projects forward, including the new 40 West Arts Gateway Monuments slated for installation later this year. They both espouse a process that combines the convergence of creativity and critical thinking—a partnership that sparked the founding of The Creativity Lab of Colorado (see story on page 22).

Kevin’s planning process sometimes involves playing with Legos to allow a tactile experience of fundamentals, such as Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (as it applies to communities). Collaborations range from designing large-scale streetscapes to planning cultural events, like MuralFest. “There’s no reason why we can’t think of MuralFest as a 24-hour city,” he says. “The event requires adherence to the same principles.” Even for a single day event, Kevin references classic Roman city planning starting with two cardinal access streets, then considering gathering spaces and terminus points.

In such a meticulous planning process, Kevin is careful not to overshadow the history of West Colfax. Whether it's artists, local residents or longtime business owners, Kevin encourages people to get involved in the emerging community—especially the cultural assets and under-utilized spaces, like the old motels and Lakewood Elks Lodge. "It's important to find the balance between authentic and kitsch. How do we riff off of that and make it meaningful and relevant? We want to invite the new while honoring what's already here and the memories of the past."



All photography in this story by Miranda Samon

Richard Eversley
Motion Graphics Artist & 40W Studios Artist

As a child, Richard watched his older cousin launch his career as an artist by first becoming an engineer for NASA. Witnessing that same cousin showcase his art at the Smithsonian set young Richard's gears in motion. He realized there was a very practical way of going about becoming an artist, by first excelling in the field of science.

Richard's trajectory has taken him from material science engineer to computer programmer to motion artist. His impressively fine tuned skills allow him to pull solutions from multiple angles. When confronted with queries or challenges, Richard is able to take a technical approach, but through the eyes of a creative. As a result of studying fine arts at CSU, Richard boasts a degree of fierce independence. Because his program there was so heavily focused on technique, he likes to be in control of all elements of his projects. Richard strictly wants to do things that no one has done before.

Fast forward to the present: Richard runs a small technology firm called elipteo, helps manage 40 West Studios, and makes Motion Art. "I don't know anybody that's coined that name as an art movement," Richard says. He put together both the Motion Art Expo at 40 West Arts and in the Santa Fe Arts District, featuring Digital Motion Artists from around the world. He's also the mastermind behind something called Curious TV, a virtual gallery based on Motion Art. Richard's idea with Motion Art is that he's replaced the traditional tools one would normally use (paint brush, canvas, frame) with more technical instruments, overlapping facets of digital, video, and physical installations.

On the other hand, he's currently working on a collection of abstract expressionist paintings on clear canvasses. He asks his viewers, "How often do you get to see the back of a painting?" Never.

From the days of dusty wagons full of pioneers and seekers of gold and silver, to the fast-driving times of the 50s and 60s, Colfax Avenue has seen more than its fair share of artists, makers, outlaws, and geeks—and they continue to shape the West Colfax corridor today and into the future.



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Go West!

The hip, quirky, and unique destinations that are making West Colfax cool again.

- By Allison Cohn



We're sure you've been here before. Yep, that annual trek you make with the kids or your college buddies to the most famous of pink castles – Casa Bonita – puts you right on West Colfax. But did you realize that when you're standing outside that iconic fountain on a weekend afternoon you're actually smack dab in the heart of a vibrant arts district? 40 West Arts District to be exact and the area is home to public art, locally brewed beer, fresh roasted coffee, and quirky local specialty shops. Plus, the place is packed with art galleries—you've just got to know where to find them. That's where we come in. The "Daycation" guide below will give you some of our current picks and recommendations for spending a day in the district.

EAT & DRINK

Susie's Sweets (1470 Carr Street)

Get your sugar high on the corner of Colfax & Carr at Susie's. What started off over 20 years ago as Colorado Cookie Company has evolved into Susie's Sweets, specializing in mouth-watering, soft-baked cookies. You can build your own custom box of goodies from a variety of fresh-from-the-oven cookies, brownies, macaroons, sugar cookies, toffee, fudge and more.



Locals get their morning caffeine at Sweet Bloom.

WestFax Brewing Company (6733 W. Colfax Avenue)

Nothing screams "up-and-coming neighborhood" like a shiny new brewery moving into Lamar Station Plaza. This sleek new(ish) watering hole is hyper focused on making small batches of tasty, genre defying beers. So far, they've been getting a lot of overflow from Casa Bonita tourists, luring them in with hoppy ales to wash down those sopapillas (and perhaps calm their nerves after spending three hours with the kiddos, holed up in a windowless arcade). This family and dog-friendly establishment brings about a sudsy sense of Colorado craftsmanship that makes the locals proud to call it their own.

Sweet Bloom Coffee Roasters (1619 Reed Street)

Sweet Bloom is one of West Colfax's best-kept secrets, located off of Colfax on Reed Street. It's so secret that it doesn't even have a proper sign on its shop, but coffee nerds throughout the city still come flocking because of the quality of its beans. Sweet Bloom harvests the freshest coffees from around the world, as curated by their owner Andy Sprenger. Grab a seat inside the modern, metal and wood interior or take your cup o' joe to go and wander around the corner to take in the seven murals painted on 16th Avenue during 40 West Arts' 2015 MuralFest (a number of other galleries and studios are walking distance, as well).

Chicago Style Beef & Dogs (6680 W. Colfax Avenue)

Part restaurant, part museum, Chicago Beef & Dogs (located on Colfax, between Otis & Newland Streets) has been paying homage to Windy City fare in Lakewood for over 20 years. Joe Margotte and the gang use family recipes to make their Italian beef, pepper-and-egg sandwiches, corned beef, pastrami, bratwurst and more. Enjoy an Italian ice and listen to your favorite Chicago sports game over the radio, old school style.

Lakewood Grill (8100 W. Colfax Avenue)

Holding down the fort since 1950, Lakewood Grill is your classic dive bar with pinball, pool, and pub food. Grab a burger or a smothered burrito and wash it down with one of the many beers on tap. In addition to serving up brews and beef, Lakewood Grill also hosts live music multiple nights a week. It's hard to miss the red brick building; the 'Lakewood Grill' sign is one of the iconic neon variety that made Colfax Avenue famous.



Martissa Spencer tops off the latest batch at Susie's Sweets.

**Pho 2 Love
(6593 W. Colfax Avenue)**

This authentic Vietnamese noodle house and grill, located in Lamar Station Plaza, has an overwhelming amount of (reasonably priced) boba smoothie flavors to choose from (plus lots of 40 West local art hanging on the walls!). You'll be served your massive bowl of steaming Pho impossibly fast—great for a quick *hangry* fix.



Fresh mint compliments a dish at Pho 2 Love.

Photo by Miranda Samson

SHOP 

**Gallery of Everything & Red Herring Art Supply
(6719 W. Colfax Avenue)**

Tucked in tight next to Casa Bonita, Gallery of Everything is run by a gaggle of colorful women with an affinity for oddities. *Westword* voted Gallery of Everything “Best Gallery Shack Up” in 2016, which accurately sums up the place. It’s a mix of local art from more than 30 different creatives, which gives the place a surreal feel to it. You’ll go in not quite knowing what you’re looking for and you’ll leave not really sure of what you’ve seen. Gallery of Everything is also home to Red Herring Art Supply, which sells hard-to-find, high-quality art supplies made from some of the oldest materials still available. The art supply shop is named after a murder mystery novel from 1931 and boasts the slogan, “Life is a red herring for art.” They carry brands such as Ceracolors, Rubley Colours and Natural Pigments that use minerals, resins, gums and plants from Afghanistan, Chile, Russia, Uzbekistan, India and Kenya.



There’s something for everyone at Gallery of Everything.

**Chain Reaction Records
(8793 W. Colfax Avenue)**

Pop in to visit the boys at Chain Reaction Records (near Colfax & Dudley Street), Denver’s punk and heavy metal headquarters. Owners Josh Lent and Justin Lent like to embrace all things eclectic, especially music. Not only do they sell rare (and not so rare) vinyl LPs, but they’ve got CDs and cassettes (for people who still use those) and assorted memorabilia, ranging from t-shirts and books to posters and jewelry. Chain Reaction has “all the stuff you can’t find anywhere else and some you can.” Think: High Fidelity meets Empire Records, with a Sid Vicious sneer.

**Golden Music
(10395 W. Colfax Avenue)**

In a classic, international-style building, designed by noted architect Raymond H. Ervin, the flagship location of Golden Music at West Colfax & Miller Street, repairs, restores, sells, and rents instruments. It also boasts a collection of some of the most distinctive and beautiful stringed instruments on the planet (in addition to others like woodwinds, accordions and ethnic drums). And, because the building is a former bank, dozens of rare violins, some more than 300 years old, are housed in the impressive, steel-doored vault. Golden Music also advocates for the local music community by hosting drum circles and other events.

**Rockley Music Center
(8555 W. Colfax Avenue)**

Get your history fix at Rockley Music: the oldest continuous running business on West Colfax, family owned and operated since 1946. It services and repairs pianos, sells bowed-string instruments, and provides both private and group lessons. Rockley's recently added a 140-seat performance hall to host community events and recitals, too. This place is super dedicated to raising money for music education, donating over \$17 million to the cause since 2007.

**ARC Thrift Store
(6791 W. Colfax Avenue)**

Located in Lamar Station Plaza (home to Casa Bonita), this massive thrift store has endless aisles of clothes, furniture and bric-à-brac (the best part of any consignment store). Passing through the ARC's pearly gates—ahem, electronic sliding doors—is like entering a Narnia of used stuffs. You could kill hours in there, either perusing the racks and shelves or just people watching. On Saturdays prices get slashed in half, which means better deals but longer lines.

**The Altar Bridal Consignment
(9629 W. Colfax Avenue)**

You're not even engaged. Actually, you're single. Fine. But looking at pretty, lacy things is still a fun pastime for most ladies, even in the 21st Century. The Altar Bridal Consignment has hundreds of dresses, spanning all sizes and price points. The shop is overflowing with designer, discontinued and vintage dresses. And the store offers large dressing rooms and plenty of extra seating, so your friends can ooh and ahh when you step out in the perfect dress.



Photo courtesy Chain Reaction Records

Photo by Bill Marino

Photo by David M. Dundas

Golden Music owner, Mary Brainerd stands guard at the vault.

Intricate beading is just one option at Altar Bridal.

Photo by David M. Dundas

A concert in progress at the newly constructed Rockley Music Performance Hall.

SEE, PLAY & EXPERIENCE



Above: Container Collective owner Brittany Hopkins assists a student in downward dog. Below: A youthful bamboo engineer constructs a bicycle.



The EDGE Theater (1560 Teller Street)

It doesn't get more original or well, edgy than this theater which runs innovative and eclectic shows right in the heart of 40 West Arts District (the location is also 40 West Arts Gallery). Its performances run the gamut of comedy to tragedy, and if you still need a reason to forgo movie night and choose this for your next date, the EDGE won multiple 'Best of Denver' awards in the 2015 and 2016 editions of *Westword*, including 'Best Boundary-Pushing Theater.'

Container Collective Yoga & Bikes (1492 Ammons Street)

Container Collective is a thoughtful pairing of yoga and bicycles, located on Colfax & Ammons Street. Owners Russ and Brittany Hopkins are both extraordinarily knowledgeable about their respective passions; he builds bikes and she teaches yoga (and is actually a professionally trained dancer). They've brought together their skill sets under one roof to collectively promote open mindedness and sustainability. Her yoga classes span all levels, and there's always a new workshop, retreat, or other community event going on. He offers unique two-day workshops where you can build your own bike out of bamboo—it's as much about the process as it is about the awesomely hip bike you take (or ride) home.



Actors gesture during a dynamic scene in *Getting Out* at the award-winning EDGE Theater.

Salt Spa (1450 Hoyt Street)

Looking to zen out? Haven't been able to breathe through your nose since last August? Head to Salt Spa, which offers a treatment called Halotherapy designed to clear pollens, viruses and toxins out of your lungs and nose. Basically, you sit in a comfy lounge chair in a room that's filled with over three tons of salt. Tiny granules of the stuff are also blown into the room. By inhaling salt particles, airway inflammation is reduced. The treatment is for anyone suffering from respiratory issues, or those just wanting to relax and ground. Feel free to fall asleep or meditate during the treatment (most people do).

Hyperspace Arcade (1601 Reed Street)

This 1980s-themed arcade is a major throwback to the glory days of quarter games, Tab soda, and Journey on the jukebox.



Photo by Rachel Graham



Photo by David M. Dunda

A pin-ball close up reveals a player's score at Hyperspace Arcade.

But forget the change machine; you can splurge on \$10 for a full day (\$45 monthly passes are available for the die-hard geeks) and come and go as you please. From pinball and vector games to classic favorites (think Donkey Kong and Pac-Man), there are oh-so many options to nerd out and lose yourself amongst the blips and graphics, climbing closer and closer towards that high score.

Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design (1600 Pierce Street)

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design (RMCAD) is the kind of place that makes a nineteen-year-old actually want to go to class. The 23 acres of landscaped grounds are covered with 17 historic buildings that date back to 1904 and include a sculpture garden and four art



Photo courtesy of RMCAD

Campus tours highlight RMCAD's historic buildings.

galleries. The campus is awash with acclaimed artists, designers and influencers—some faculty, others guest lecturers. With a new degree program in Business for the Creative Industries, you can schmooze with creatives, even if you intend to monetize them later. (Tours available by appointment).



Photo by Miranda Samon

The Hyperspace Arcade sign, pointing you to fun.



Photo by Miranda Samon

Buddy Bravo sells his prints during RMCAD's summer arts and crafts market, FARMCAD.

DISTRICT ART GALLERIES



Lakewood Arts Gallery moved to the District in 2015.



Monochromatic beauty is evident during the Black, White & Metal exhibition at 40 West Arts Gallery.



Ina Gustafsen of INK Designs molds new jewelry inside 40 West Studios.

40 West Arts Gallery (1560 Teller Street)

Okay, to be accurate 40 West Arts District isn't one space, it's an all encompassing collective of galleries, public art installations, a slew of neighborhood murals, and more—all packed generously into a few block radius. But when we're talking about 40 West Arts Gallery, we mean the little-engine-that-could space on Teller Street a half block north of Colfax Avenue. In addition to hosting approximately 10 shows per year, the gallery also serves as the hub for programming including senior and youth programs, family initiatives, an Artist in Residence, and the very magazine you're reading now.

artists who make up 40 West Studios are all dramatically different, but still successfully cohabitate and learn from each other—making for a beautiful mash up of art stuffs.

Faye Crowe Studio and Gallery (1528 Teller Street)

Faye's 2,000 square foot studio (located steps from 40 West Arts Gallery) is full of original oil paintings that are gripping, bold and dramatic. Her work is inspired by the local Colorado environment and landscape, featuring imagery of people and horses. Style wise, she leans towards abstract expressionism, while utilizing her design and architecture background.



Bright walls offer space for artists at C2 Gallery.

40 West Studios (1615 Reed Street)

Sixteen individual local artists have galleries and workspace located inside the building just next to Sweet Bloom Coffee Roasters. This collaborative space allows for maximum creativity, spanning a broad spectrum of media. The concept of sharing creative space permits artists to witness each other's process as it evolves from concept to creation. The

C-Squared Studios and C2 Gallery (1520 Teller Street)

Owner and artist Chad Copeland has a vision, and one that includes lots of collaboration with his community. C-Squared Studios builds custom metal and wood fabrication, furniture, handrails, fountains and more. But C-Squared is about more than just making a living. In fact Chad has opened his studio to teach welding and fabrication techniques to the surrounding community. He's also built



Faye Crowe engages guests during an art walk at her gallery and studio.



Christopher Weed's Connected, an award-winning sculpture at Lamar & 14th, celebrates community.

PUBLIC ART

MURAL ART

Mural art is sort of a “thing” for 40 West Arts District. With a program titled COLorFAX, focused on beautifying West Colfax through art, and MuralFest, a one-day festival featuring internationally recognized mural artists, 40 West Arts prides itself on public art. You can see the results of 2015 MuralFest at the intersection of 16th Avenue and Teller Street. The seven murals feature a painting style and subject matter that is extremely diverse, allowing you to enjoy a dynamic “outdoor gallery” that ranges from bold and abstract to soft and nostalgic. Other murals abound throughout the district including Martha Pinkard-Williams’ “Stardust” (8755 W. 14th Avenue) and Bobby Magee Lopez’s work “Hear the Train A Humming” (13th Avenue and Lamar Street).

SCULPTURE ART *Lakewood Legacy Trees* by Lonnie Hanzon

Track down (but don’t climb) local artist Lonnie Hanzon’s “Lakewood Legacy Trees” located at the Lamar Street RTD Station. These whimsical saplings start off with solid brick

roots and grow up into mosaiced trunks, their spindly branches budding with bright cherries and Monopoly houses amidst green leaves. The trees are indigenous to the West Colfax neighborhood.

Connected by Christopher Weed

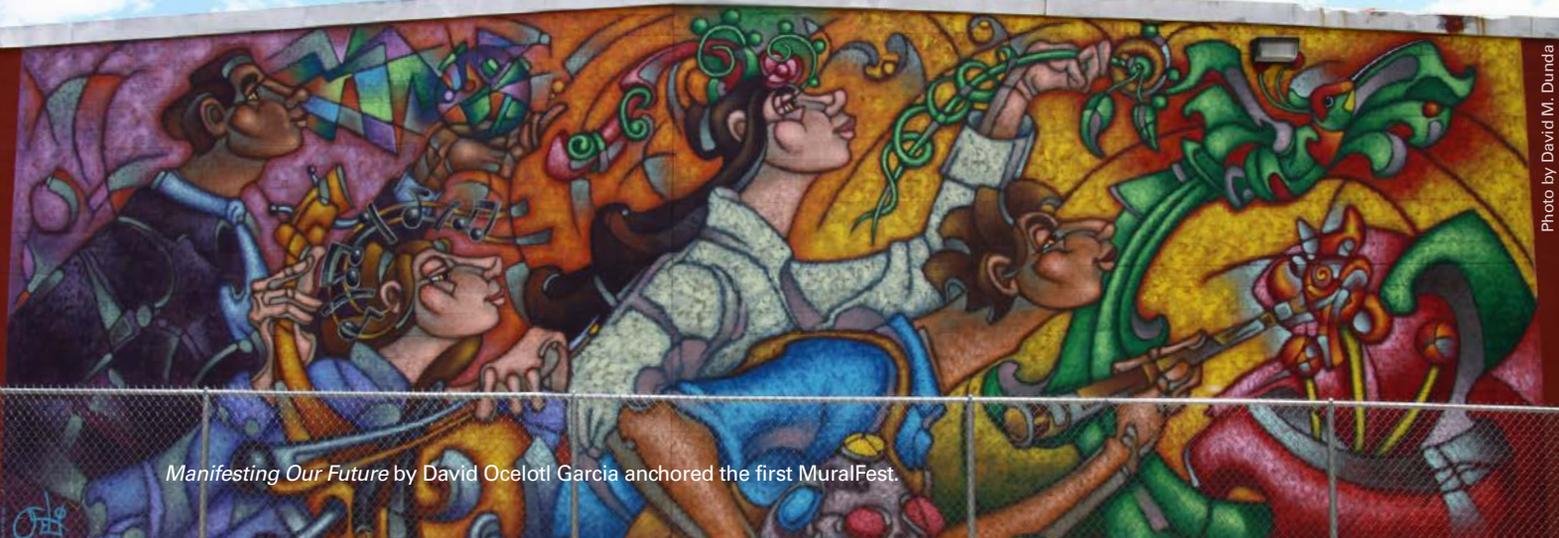
You’ve heard of Giant Jenga, but have you seen these larger than life puzzle pieces? These four enormous, stainless steel jigsaw tiles are about 22 feet long by 10 feet wide and weigh 5.5 tons each. The connected theme of the puzzle pieces reflects Colfax’s importance as an avenue that unites and connects so many parts of the city and the communities within it. “Connected” is lit up at night, so it can be enjoyed by both motorists cruising past and dawdling pedestrians alike.

There’s much more, lots more, tons more that we can’t capture here. But if you speak to the locals who know this area best, they’ll tell you that West Colfax is reinventing itself again through the arts. So next time you’re in the area, take a break from Casa Bonita cliff divers, and wander around the district. Both are works of art, in their own right.

C2 Gallery, a separate area for local artists to hang their work.

Lakewood Arts

This non-profit arts organization has been promoting the local creative community since 1988, ranging from theater, music, visual arts, dance and literature. For next to nothing (or nothing), you can enjoy its various events and exhibits (First Fridays are always fun), live concerts (usually local jazz and/or Americana musicians) and local performances. Lakewood Arts also offers a number of workshops and courses throughout the year, so you can get your fix in everything from mosaics to watercolor.



Manifesting Our Future by David Ocelotl Garcia anchored the first MuralFest.



The Bettmanns of Colorado Frame & Art Restoration, in business for 40+ years, celebrate the grand opening of their new building on West Colfax.

QUINTESSENTIALLY COLFAX!

LAKEWOOD'S FAMOUS AVENUE FOLLOWS ITS ROOTS TO RENEWAL

By M. Perry Williams

Change is happening . . . some small steps and some giant leaps—but change nonetheless. Lakewood's West Colfax is amid a remarkable resurgence . . . and for those who've not visited it recently—you're in for a big surprise.

The west end of Colorado's most famous avenue remains a commercial corridor that celebrates its glory days and its well-deserved moniker of "Gateway to the Rockies." Today, West Colfax still has meaningful connections to its roots—the supper clubs, dance halls, and motor inns— but also authentic offshoots to new arts experiences driven by a community that dusted itself off and decided to cultivate change.

Not since the 1950s has West Colfax experienced such a transformation. While there is still plenty for community leaders to work on, the year since the first issue of this magazine has marked meaningful achievements—too many to capture in a short article—but here's a sampling, a Top Ten List, gleaned from milestones just since the start of 2015:

1. The momentum continues at 40 West Arts, one of only 18 certified creative districts in Colorado. The nonprofit organization has seen significant statewide recognition and incremental growth in galleries and activities, accompanied by a doubling of creative enterprises and patronage, while contributing to the corridor's positive economic trajectory—a more than 11% increase in sales tax revenues.

2. Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design (RMCAD) has grown its on-campus and online enrollment to more than 1100 students. But enrollment doesn't tell the whole story. RMCAD has established deep community connections through the Artist in Residence Program, its Visiting Artist, Scholar, & Designer Program, FARMCAD markets on its historic campus, a commitment to volunteerism, and a new degree program that hits the sweet spot: a Bachelor's in Business of Creative Industries.

3. Estimates for new corridor residential development range from 2500-3000 units in just the W Line corridor, including WestLink at Oak Station, Zephyr Street Apartments, luxury townhomes at Mountair on 10th Avenue, the hip-and-cool West Line Flats a block from the Lamar Station, 40 West Residences at Colfax and Gray, the next phase of Lamar Station Crossing, and others in the various stages of planning, all bringing the "heads and beds" that drive investment in additional consumer amenities.

4. The major improvements at Lamar Station Plaza in the heart of the arts district is a game-changer. The classic, 1950s retail center on West Colfax is home to the iconic Mexican-themed entertainment complex Casa Bonita, plus new tenants, such as WestFAX Brewing Company, Planet Fitness, Lakewood Arts Gallery and Gallery of Everything, which makes the plaza a key destination for the burgeoning 40 West Arts scene. Since its 2015 purchase of the plaza, Broad Street has invested millions in site improvements—and a public-private partnership with the City of Lakewood resulted in a new public park on site that will host arts district and other community activities.

5. Signature companies, such as FirstBank and Terumo BCT built new headquarters, collectively investing more than \$100M and bringing hundreds of new jobs to the corridor. Prestige Imports, on West Colfax since 1984, is also planning a major expansion of its Audi and Porsche dealerships. In addition, longtime entrepreneurial mainstays, including Rockley Music, the Bettmans of Colorado Frame and Art Restoration, and Veldkamp's Flowers and Gifts, spent millions in dollars and effort to build or upgrade their West Colfax-based businesses. All this is on top of the City of Lakewood's multi-million dollar capital investments in the corridor, including improvements at light rail stations and along Lamar and Pierce Streets.

6. 2015 marked the first-ever West Colfax MuralFest, a one-day celebration of the arts, with live bands, 30+ art

booths, food trucks, the unveiling of new murals, and fun activities for the whole family. The first installment attracted artists from throughout Colorado and across the nation, drawing more than 2000 people; the next iterations of the festival are destined to be even larger. (In 2016 organizers received inquiries from artists from more than a dozen states and six countries! The 2016 festival is slated for August 20 at Lamar Station Plaza.)

7. Since the beginning of 2015, the district has unveiled 14 new public art installations (sculptures and murals). That doesn't include the six new murals to be unveiled in August 2016 during the 2nd West Colfax MuralFest. *Westword* honored both Bobby Magee Lopez's "Hear the Train A Humming" mural and Christopher Weed's "Connected" sculpture as "Best of" for New Public Art Installation in 2015, joining other noteworthy installations, such as Martha Pinkard Williams' "Stardust" mural at The Action Center and Lonnie Hanzon's "Lakewood Legacy Trees" at Lamar Light Rail Station.

8. The EDGE Theater, led by Rick and Patty Yaconis, has broken new ground in local theater, staging more Denver-area and regional premieres than any other suburban theater—and in doing so, garnering a long list of recognition, including "Best Actor" and "Season of the Year" from *Westword*, while more than doubling ticket sales since moving into the district.



Terumo BCT, Lakewood's largest private employer, built its new world headquarters in the corridor.

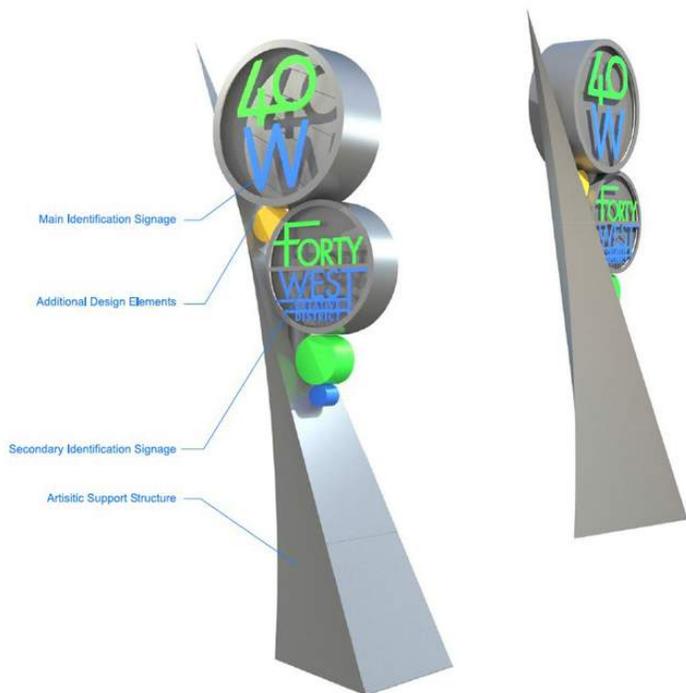


Celebrating another gallery opening, Baby Henley is a big hit with Lakewood's number one bachelor, Mayor Adam Paul.

COMING SOON – 13th & Newland St.
LAKEWOOD, COLORADO
Momentum Development, LLC



West Line Flats, 155 residential units with its own dog park and loads of other millennial-friendly amenities, is under construction ½ block from Lamar Street Light Rail Station.



New gateway monuments will soon welcome visitors and locals to Lakewood's 40 West Arts, a state-certified creative district.

9. Following the approval of the new, more flexible, mixed-use oriented Lakewood Zoning Ordinance, the City embarked on a forward-thinking path of comprehensive community planning that paved the way for revitalization. Milestone planning included the 40 West Arts Urban Design and Mobility Plan, the new West Colfax 2040 Vision Plan, and the 40 West Arts Place-making Implementation Plan. All played integral roles in the formation and growth of the arts district and the ability to secure meaningful grants, such as those awarded from the EPA, CDOT, Colorado Creative Industries, the Boettcher Foundation, the State Historical Fund, Xcel Energy Foundation, and most recently, NEA's Our Town Grant.

10. New business activity in the last two years has outpaced the previous four years combined. In addition to activity already mentioned that brought nearly 1000 new jobs to the corridor, the district has welcomed the arrival of 40 West Studios, Lakewood Arts Gallery, Gallery of Everything, Red Herring Art Supply, Guiry's Paint & Art Supply, C2 Gallery and C-Squared Studios, Hyperspace Video Arcade, and a host of other businesses too numerous to list.



City of Lakewood's Alexis Moore shares the vision for an arts loop during a community meeting at 40 West Gallery.

“There’s such a mix of activities throughout Lakewood, and that’s especially true along historic West Colfax,” asserts Mayor Adam Paul. “It’s clear this corridor is on the move.”

So what’s the next big thing? With all this momentum, the availability of light rail, and other active partnerships—such as the expansion of Mountair Park Community Farm by Sprout City Farms—young professionals, couples, and families are “discovering” West Colfax, accelerating the economic transformation. Movers and shakers say there’s more to come and share their top picks for what’s next.

Creative District Gateway Monuments: “I’ve seen the model and drawings,” says Kevin Crehan, the landscape architect and principal at Solara Designs who designed the new park at Lamar Station Plaza. “They’re works of art—18’ foot sculptures that communicate creative energy and serve as dynamic entry features. They say ‘something cool is happening here!’”

Lakewood-West Colfax Business Improvement District, in collaboration with the City, WCCA and

40 West Arts, is funding the creation and installation of these large 40 West Arts gateway monuments in the median on West Colfax, heralding the arrival of commuters from east and west—a key step in implementing the comprehensive strategies outlined in the place-making plan.

40 West Arts Loop: “It’s quite an honor to receive the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Our Town Grant,” reflects Alexis Moore, principal planner with the City of Lakewood and member of the 40 West Arts District Board. “We’re excited to work with the community to implement the arts loop vision they first identified several years ago when planning for the area. This grant will help us design a unique artistic experience, develop a local amenity for walking and biking, and advance place-making in a way that adds to the economic vibrancy of the district.”

With the NEA Our Town Grant, the largest award in Colorado in 2016 and the largest ever for Lakewood, the City and 40 West Arts are amid a two-year process to create the first phase of an arts loop envisioned as a continuous and distinctly designed pedestrian and

bicycle route circling 40 West Arts District, connecting people to unique art experiences along the way, in parks, and other public and private spaces.

Artspace: “Affordable housing and workspace for artists and artisans is a key factor in keeping creatives in a district,” explains Kevin Yoshida, Lakewood-based architect and urban planner, who designed the Artspace project in Loveland, Colorado. “Simply put—you can’t have a creative district without creatives. Artspace solves this problem in a long-term, sustainable way and helps catalyze economic activity as well.”

After successful feasibility and market demand studies and a unanimous vote of City Council in April of 2015, Artspace, a national nonprofit provider of artist creative space with 40+ projects across the country, is working with the City of Lakewood to finalize the site for a proposed 40-50 live/work units as well as flexible gallery display and gathering space, creating a perpetually affordable artist enclave for the district.

The Creativity Lab of Colorado: “With all that’s happening here, the west-side needs an entity focused on creative ventures, and that’s the core purpose of

The Creativity Lab,” says Bill Marino, one of the Lab’s co-founders. “Teaming up with Colorado Creative Industries and RMCAD is a natural. Together with our community partners, we believe we can have a significant impact on existing creative enterprises and new creative start-ups.”

The Creativity Lab is centered around creativity, innovation, and the entrepreneurial spirit. A public-private nonprofit formed in the district and supported by Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design

and Colorado Creative Industries, and other community partners, The Lab serves students and start-ups, emerging entrepreneurs and existing businesses, creatives and community leaders through three focus areas—a Creative Business Incubator, a Community Design Studio, and an

Institute for Creative Community Leadership. The overarching purpose of The Lab is to nurture creative industry start-ups, cultivate new jobs, support the growth of existing creative enterprises, and foster community transformation by developing the next generation of creative leaders.

“Our organizations all share a common focus on creativity and innovation as we help move students, start-ups and our community forward in today’s creative economy,” adds RMCAD CEO Christopher Marconi.

Gateway monuments, an arts loop, live/work space for artists, and a creativity lab . . . quintessentially Colfax, isn’t it? Authentic to the area . . . innovation based on need . . . all focused on transformation for people, businesses, and the community.

West Colfax has made inordinate progress. It’s come from a 30-year decline to the up-and-coming place for creatives to convene. What does former Mayor Steve Burkholder, now Cheerleader-in-Chief call it? He sums it up in one word: “Miraculous!” And adds, “I can’t wait to see what’s next!”

Creativity Lab co-founders, Bill Marino (left) and Kevin Yoshida collaborate on space-planning for MuralFest. The Lab is now located on the campus of RMCAD.

“Our organizations all share a common focus on creativity and innovation as we help move students, start-ups and our community forward in today’s creative economy.”



Photo by Jennifer Coulter



"Reinvention" mural concept by Richard Marks from MuralFest 2016



GoWestColfax.org



WestColfax.org



40WestArts.org

THANK YOU!

The Reinvention of West Colfax wouldn't be possible without all of you—the passionate and engaged West Colfax Community!

A special THANK YOU to the Board & Committee members who volunteer to serve our three organizations—all working together to ENERGIZE historic West Colfax!

BOARDS: Ron Abo, Cindy Baroway, Gloria Enger, Kathi Hasfjord, Nanette Neelan, Dan Lundin, Christopher Marconi, Bill Marino, Carrie Mesch, Alexis Moore, Johanna Parker, Nina Rockley, Gretchen Schaefer, Ron Seigneur, Katja Walton, Stu Wright, and Kevin Yoshida

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Sunlight highlights 100-year-old brick on a building at Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design.

What We're Loving Lately

CLASSIC WEST COLFAX DESTINATIONS, THEN AND NOW

By Leah M. Charney

Starting with its humble beginnings as a rutted mining trail before becoming the Gateway to the Rockies, to its new designation as an arts district, "everything old is new again" is more than just an idiom when thinking about the West Colfax corridor. There's now a recurrence in the kind of expansion, opportunity for investment, and new development that has attracted residents and businesses for more than 160 years.

What 'We're Loving Lately' is seeing Colfax return to a vibrant destination, à la the heyday of the 1950s and 1960s. Dare we say, West Colfax is becoming cool and hip again?

In this modern era, nostalgia plays a larger role in what we value than possibly ever before. Amid new buildings and construction, the old structures, seemingly forgotten, and beautiful but in-need of a restoration are also paid the attention they're due. So, the sound of bowling pins falling and the whirl of the ball return is replaced by the thoughtful murmurs of architects shuffling blueprints. A classic shopping center sees

a rebirth through new lighting, facade work, and businesses opening. What once was a tuberculosis sanatorium created for healing is now a college campus concentrating on creating.

If there's one thing West Colfax knows how to do, it's reinvent itself. Up and down "The 'Fax," many spaces are being repurposed, revitalized, and reused, signaling the dawn of a new era.

REPURPOSED

What once was Lakewood Lanes (a bowling alley), now houses The Abo Group and Gallery 8025. The Abo Group is a design, planning, and architecture firm, while Gallery 8025 is a carefully arranged section of the building devoted to sculpture. But, after being in a traditional office on West Colfax for a number of years, why relocate into an old bowling alley? Businesses often outgrow their space but this move embodied something deeper. Ron Abo, president of The Abo Group, explains, "We fell in

love with the exposed steel bow truss roof and the openness of the space.” In fact, Ron reminisces that for years before the move, his wife “would comment on how much she loved the building every time we passed by.”

According to Abo, these kinds of transitions are nothing new to Colfax. “When I was growing up, JCRS Shopping Center was the only place to go besides Downtown Denver to shop,” he recalls. “In the mid 1970s, a department store in the corner of the plaza was converted into Casa Bonita. After shopping in the same space and then going to Casa Bonita, I was amazed, even as a young architect, at how space can be transformed into something so radically different from its original purpose.”

REVITALIZED

Beyond a new name, the redevelopment of Lamar Station Plaza (formerly the JCRS Shopping Center) includes an updated exterior, tree planting, new tenants—like a brewery and a fitness center—and even a farmer’s market and plans for an on-site public park (set to be complete in July of 2016). The updated name echoes the new transportation hub, Lamar Light Rail Station, a mere two blocks from the center. The physical site was once part of the 148-acre Jewish Consumptive Relief Society (JCRS) health care campus founded in 1904, but was redeveloped into the Lakewood area’s first shopping center in the early 1950s.

According to Broad Street’s Thomas Yockey, president of the commercial real estate firm that owns the majority of the plaza, Broad Street focuses “on purchasing and operating older shopping centers in established, relatively dense neighborhoods.” In other words, sustainability is at their core and this desire to reuse existing retail structures comes down to dollars and cents. “Repurposing existing structures allows us to maintain reasonable rental rates, which is important for the viability of the retail businesses in our centers. In turn, those businesses can provide reasonably priced goods and services to our most important audience, the nearby residents who frequent the shopping center,” says Yockey.

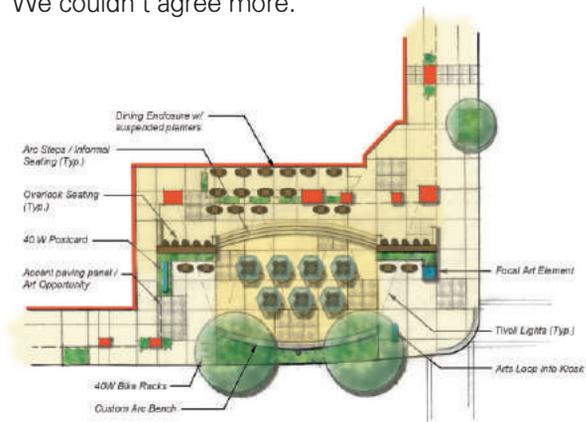
But being on Colfax isn’t just about economics. The folks behind Lamar Station Plaza are loving the vibrant, growing arts scene, too. “The murals, art pieces, art events like MuralFest, RMCAD and galleries of 40 West Arts District make the West Colfax corridor so unique,” tells Yockey. “We look forward to being part of that cool arts scene for many years to come.”

REUSED

Call it a re-birth or a re-imagining or just call it progress, but the way we use land changes. When the Jewish Consumptive Relief Society was first founded in Lakewood in 1904, tuberculosis was a rampant health issue (vaccines wouldn’t first be used to prevent T.B. for 20 years after). But since 2002, when Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design (RMCAD) purchased the remaining JCRS buildings and 24 surrounding acres, the site, now listed on the National Register for Historic Places, has been home to art. Thousands of students have participated in the 10 undergraduate degree programs, six certificate programs, and one graduate program RMCAD offers. This infusion of young talent and new practicing artists has reinvigorated a historic space.

As Colfax adapts and remodels itself into a commercial and residential district more befitting 21st century needs, there’s so much reinvention to love. As Abo says, “The community of people is growing every day. New businesses are moving in, residences are being built, and there is a buzz about West Colfax.”

We couldn’t agree more.



Above: An early conceptual rendering of the new park at Lamar Station Plaza provided by Kevin Crehan



Windows look toward Colfax Avenue and sky at Gallery 8025/The Abo Group.

The 7 Deadly Sins of Colfax

YOUR GUIDE TO LIGHTHEARTED UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

By Leah M. Charney

The infamous quote about Colfax that it's "the longest, wickedest street in America" might be pushing it, but Colfax isn't exactly pure. Plus, sinners always have better stories anyway, right?



GLUTTONY.

For those who love food—sometimes more than they love people—there's no better place than Davie's Chuck Wagon Diner. The classic menu, portion sizes, and all-day breakfast make for an eater's delight. You can have a chicken fried steak and make it "Christmas" (red chili and green chili) and also smothered in two kinds of gravy (why you'd want to is another question, but you absolutely can). It's almost as if the 17-foot tall cowboy is tipping his hat to those of us looking specifically for a place to wear stretchy pants. You know the ones. They're typically saved for special occasions, like Thanksgiving and all-you-can-eat buffets.

GREED.

Sure, you could selfishly take up an entire row of seats on the bus or West Line light rail—because really, your backpack is more important than a pregnant woman on crutches—or embrace sin #2 in a more novel way. This is an arts district on West Colfax, after all, and if there's one thing both the arts and the avenue have in common, it's booze. So get into 40 West Arts Gallery or Lakewood Arts Gallery on First Friday and drink up, buttercup. That free wine and beer isn't going to drink itself, and besides, you can always use the excuse that a little alcohol brings out the art critic in everyone (yeah, artists love that).

SLOTH.

So, you're the type of sinner that would rather lie in the grass and let the sin come to you. Hey, that's okay. There's certainly no shame in passive sinning and let's face it, Americans love to be lazy (so I hear). One of the best ways to revel in your "slothiness" is at one of the many parks—Mountair, Walker-Branch, or Aviation . . . all Lakewood parks within a block or two of West Colfax. Recline in lush grass—and down a 'tallboy' in a brown paper bag or an eighth of an ounce wrapped in white rolling papers. (Editor's note to reader: This is illegal. The magazine does not condone these actions.) With multiple parks to choose from, you can rotate your sinning among them—breathe in a bit of fresh air while creeping out the youngsters and offending their parents.

PRIDE.

Humility ain't your game, baby, and that's okay. While it may rhyme with sinner, if you don't play (and play often), you'll never be the biggest winner. Your kind is easy to spot. Like in the back of Casa Bonita, holed up in front of a Skee-Ball machine spitting tickets out like a sprinkler, showing off your prowess by claiming top tchotchke from the prize counter. Or dominating Ms. Pac-Man and

showing those young'uns at Hyperspace Vintage Video Arcade how joysticks are really ruled. And over at Lakewood Elks Lodge #1777, dauber in hand, chest puffed up, shouting, "BINGO!" before the little old ladies know what hit 'em.

LUST.

Whether you want to don a wig for your next dinner party or hold your own theatrical rendition of every Barbra Streisand musical ever made, you can find plenty to lust after at the classic costume outlet, Disguises. Prepare to let your freak flag fly, because this Colfax gem isn't merely a costume store, it's a megamart of masks, capes, tights, tassels, hats, sequins, shoes, and gloves. And if the very idea of lust has you desiring something more . . . passionate, well, you'll find dancewear, stilettos, and an entire department devoted to sexy costumes. After all, mama always said a sin worth doing is worth doing well.

ENVY.

Colfax makes it easy for jealousy to be mutual. Like the gym rat coming out of Planet Fitness who gazes longingly across the parking lot. In the setting sun, his glance looks more like a glare. The guy at WestFax Brewing Company makes eye contact through the window for just a moment before going back to his pint. The gym rat imagines the taste of that ice-cold, frosty, frothy beer. The beer drinker wonders what it would be like to have those chiseled muscles and that hot bod. Each wonders, "Why's that guy get all the fun? What if I traded one six pack for another?" What if, indeed?



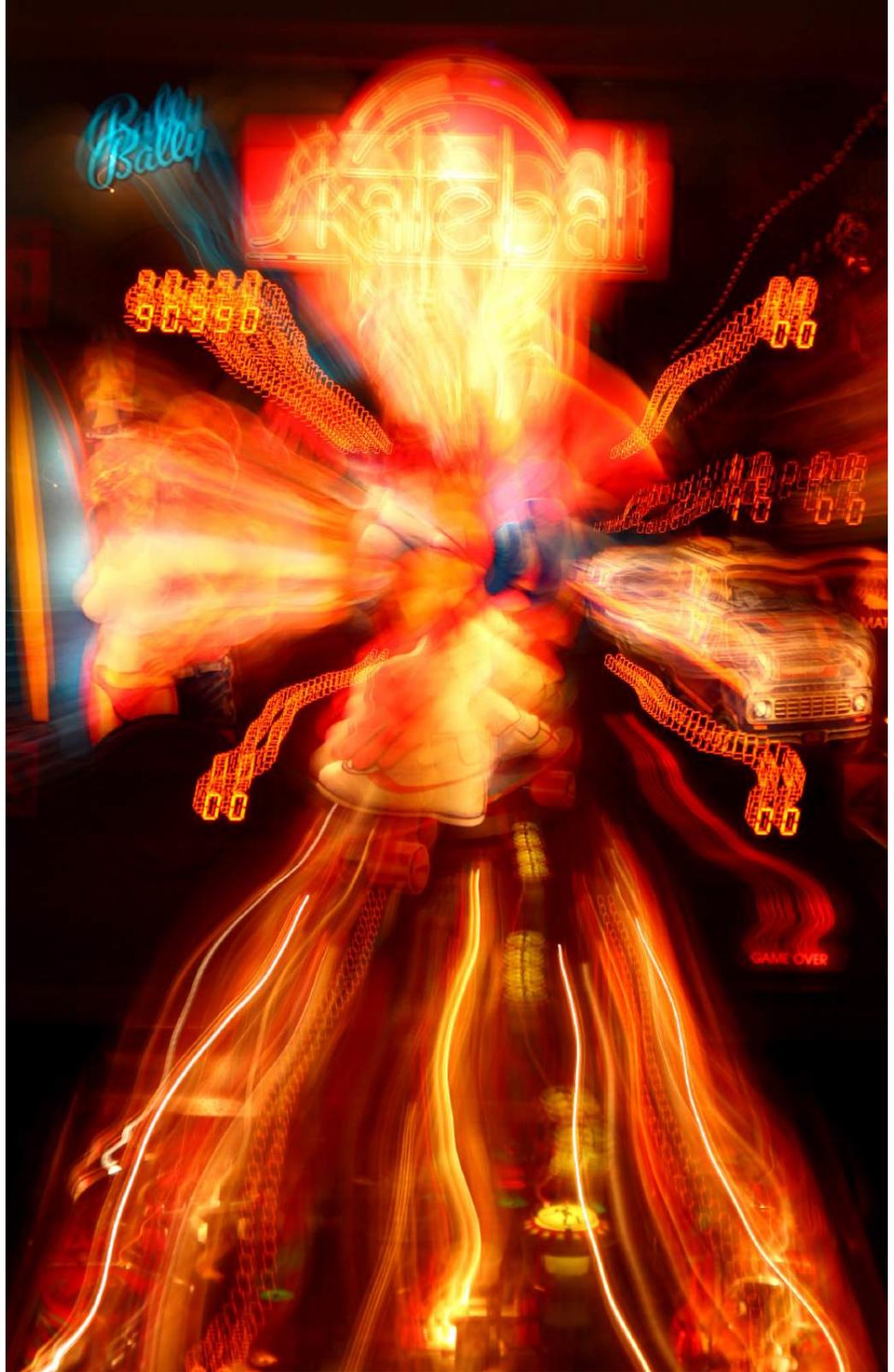
Illustrations by
Molly McCraw

WRATH.

The embodiment of this sin isn't directly on Colfax, for it's far too "dangerous" to be right on the main drag. The Colorado Department of Motor Vehicles sits just beyond the safe confines of 40 West Arts District at Pierce Street and 20th, but the sinning certainly slops over. There's no rage quite like the slow swell of DMV rage. A place claiming to be full of order, yet somehow is the most entropic. When will your number be called? Why is only one booth open during the lunch rush? How come this is the only place to register a scooter or non-motorcycle? Who invented this bureaucratic madness? Dante never knew the DMV. But had he, he certainly would have added an extra special circle of hell for such a place. Stay away if you can: Only gluttons for punishment dare enter.

Colfax Avenue has always been a place where the full spectrum of humanity is on full display—from the up-and-coming to the already fallen. Of course, locals know that Colfax has a little something for both the sinners and the saints. Come for the stories, stay for the experience, and walk away with a smile on your face (and perhaps a misdemeanor ticket from the Lakewood Police Department).

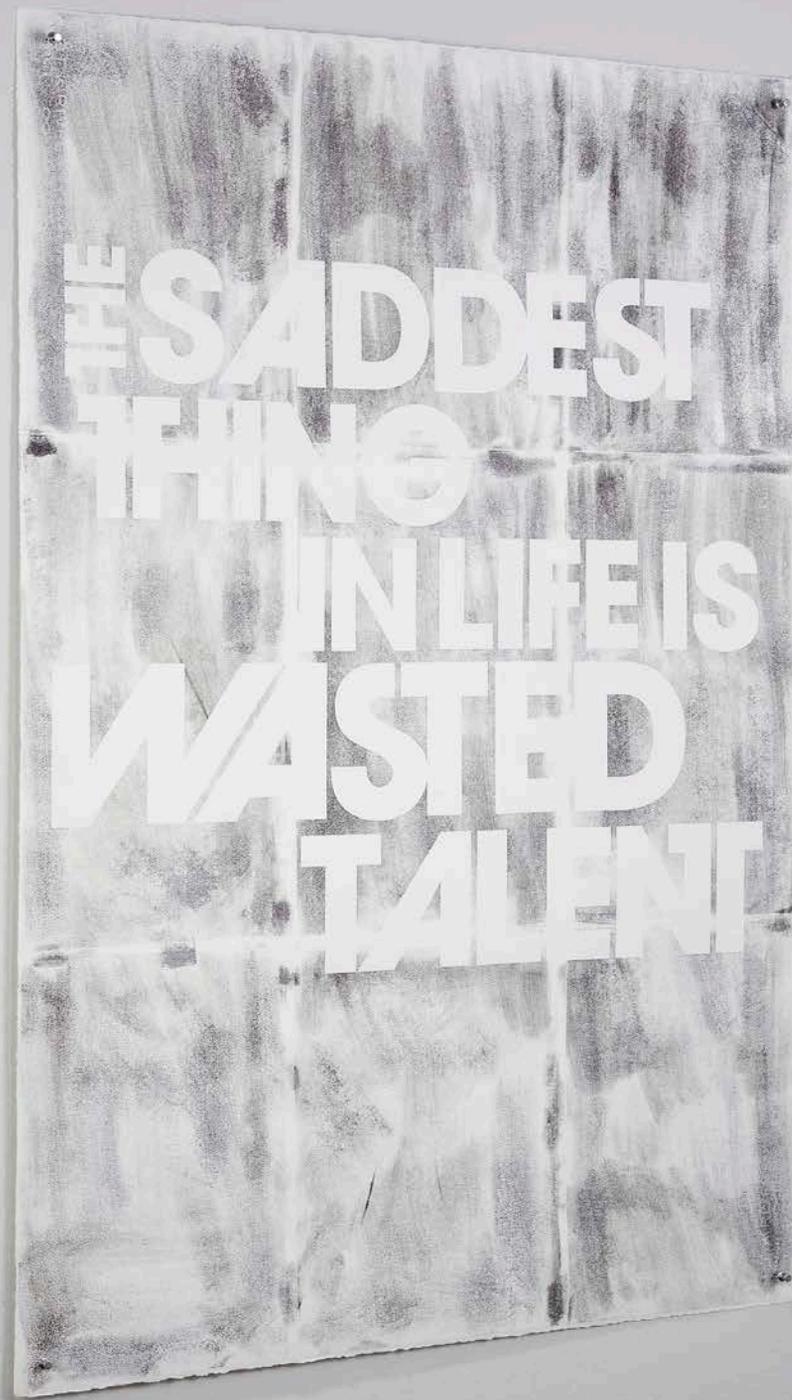




When I was a kid, any spare change in my pocket always ended up in a pinball machine. They were everywhere, easy to find and hard to beat. Even so, just watching the shiny chrome ball bounce around like crazy, setting off bells and lights was mesmerizing. The real fun began as the ball headed for the flippers. Timing was everything. There was always one more round

to play, one more chance to beat the highest score. I came across this pinball machine at Hyperspace Arcade in Lakewood and worked to create an image that reflected the energy and lure of the contraption. If you have never played a pinball machine, or feel that you would like to take on the challenge one more time, the machine is still there, waiting for you!

— David M. Dunda



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