



Above: Artwork by MInso Kim  
Pictured left: Artwork by Adriana Paola.

# The Boulder Bunny

## RABBIT ART CHALLENGE

We all know how the sight of a bunny can bring a smile to our faces, and in Boulder, Colorado, USA, this year rabbits have been raising spirits and uniting the local community through a bunny-themed art exhibition.

By **Andrea Hudson**

W all plaques featuring rabbits appeared on the streets of central Boulder between April and September as a result of the Boulder Bunny Rabbit Art Challenge. The event was organised by Creative Catalyzers, a non-profit cultural leadership organisation based in Boulder County. Comprised of leaders from various sectors of society, the organisation works with local businesses, partners, sponsors and volunteers with the aim of

bridging and uniting different sectors of the community through creative arts.

Peter Vitale, a Creative Catalyzers leader and business real estate developer came up with the idea of the Art Challenge in April, shortly after the Covid-19 lockdown. He proposed that the works be exhibited in an outdoor public art gallery so that they could be viewed by passers-by whilst they were out exercising, dog walking or grocery shopping. In a year where everyday life changed very dramatically for all of us, the aim of the project was to bring

about smiles and an atmosphere of positivity to counter the fear, sadness and anxiety caused by the effects of the virus.

Angie Eng, the director of Creative Catalyzers and co-organiser of the event chose the theme of bunnies for the Art Challenge – with a concept of springtime and new beginnings in mind, the rabbit’s associations with good fortune, growth, harmony and rebirth in many civilisations and cultures made it an ideal subject.



Mary Mueh’s artwork on display for passers-by to view

For the Art Challenge, entrants painted or created a bunny-themed design on a 12” x 12” piece of plywood. The plaques were then displayed in the windows and on external walls of shops and businesses in and around Boulder. No details were given of the exact locations of the pieces as the organisers wanted viewers to experience the surprise and delight of unexpectedly encountering a bunny on their journey. A total of 30 artworks were received from both professional and amateur artists who ranged in age from 3 years old to those in their seventies. The aim of sparking creativity was well and truly embraced with designs featuring paint, textiles, mosaic and a variety of recycled materials.

The exhibition opened on April 22nd to coincide with the 50th anniversary of Earth Day – the planet’s largest civic event, and the 30 designs ranged from the humorous to the profoundly touching and featured a variety of bunnies from the well-known to treasured family pets.

■ The White Rabbit from Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland, complete with his umbrella and pocket watch, appeared on 2 of the plaques, including one by local mosaic artist Jane Glotzer.

■ Colorado-born digital painter Android Jones submitted his mystical depiction of the other-worldly Black Rabbit of Inlé from Richard Adams’ epic rabbit tale, Watership Down. The design can be purchased as a print or T-shirt from his website androidjones.com.

■ Artist Nikita Coulombe had previously created several animal artworks using just a single line. She continued this theme for the Art Challenge with her ‘Bunny Love’ one-line depiction of 2 rabbits, which can also be ordered as a print or on a variety of items from her website nikitacoulombe.com.

■ Angie Eng created a pair of white bunny ears on a black background from a collage of old plastic keys from computer and IT keyboards.

■ Joy Redstone, director of Naropa Community Counselling, views creative art as part of a healing process and a means to lift spirits and connect with those who may be grieving or feeling alone. She was inspired to create her piece by the widespread grief, fear and loss caused by the pandemic and the heartbreaking stories of those who succumbed to the virus, isolated from their families and loved ones, and her design with a central vortex of black feathers, has a little white rabbit riding a slice of geode towards the spirit world.



The Boulder Bunny Rabbits have certainly fostered a real sense of community spirit and positivity in what has been a very uncertain and difficult year, and the organisers hope to make the open-air gallery a regular event with a different theme each time. The words of 11 year old Mary Mueh, who used her pet bunny April as the inspiration for her painting of a springtime rabbit garlanded with leaves and flowers summed up the aim of the Art Challenge quite fittingly: ‘My rabbit inspires me and makes me happy already, so I thought that maybe she could do so for others too’.

All photographs courtesy of Angie Eng, Creative Catalyzers, [www.creativecatalyzers.org](http://www.creativecatalyzers.org)



The White Rabbit - Jane Glotzer



Black Rabbit of Inle - Android Jones



Bunny Love - Nikita Coulombe



Bunny Ears - Angie Eng