

## 2 moving ahead: new projects

### N4<sup>th</sup> Theatre and Lobby Gallery

by Marjorie Neset

#### N4<sup>th</sup> Theatre Renovation

The North Fourth Art Center will have a state-of-the-art black box theatre. In early 2005, projections that the theatre would open this fall have not been realized but that's not really bad news! There were insufficient funds to complete the process until new CDBG funding was made available this spring...and now the theatre will be more accessible and better equipped than originally possible. At this time the design process is very nearly complete and construction will begin in the early fall. Jonathan Craig and Scott Moore of Kells & Craig Architects, Inc., are finalizing plans for the 170-seat black box theatre and innovative lobby gallery. *The North Fourth Art Center is the only contemporary arts center in the U.S. with a central focus on presenting and exhibiting the work of people with disabilities and other unique perspectives.*

#### N4<sup>th</sup> Theatre Programs

The N4<sup>th</sup> Theatre is going to feature a most exciting array of artists...with disabilities, without disabilities...and always with something distinct to say or sing or dance. To make the N4<sup>th</sup> Theatre's programming unique, we have talked to performing artists with disabilities, to artists from a multiplicity of cultures, to artists from here and abroad...and to the people who want to see and participate in their work. The consensus: We all want a theatre where artists are invited to perform because they have a new story to tell...a new dance to dance, because the work they offer is rare...excellent... touches our community in a special way, the N4<sup>th</sup> Theatre is a theatre for artists with unique perspectives and experiences, and for art based on unusual ideas and uncommon abilities. The N4<sup>th</sup> Lobby Gallery will reflect the same eclectic approach, offering Insider Art, the work of North Fourth's apprentice artists and teachers, and Outsider Art, from a community of artists who work outside the mainstream. There will be work from the North Valley community, theme shows connecting visual and performing works, and exhibits that are simply brilliant and unique! The qualities that make our

theatre programming distinctive will apply to the Lobby Gallery as well.

So here are some of the REAL program plans—putting names to concepts! Of course, VSA's resident companies Buen Viaje Dance and Equilibrium Theatre will present seasons of new work twice a year; festivals and other events will be co-sponsored with ART X 3 partners, Out ch'Yonda and OFFCenter Art Space; one or two resident companies from the community will utilize N4<sup>th</sup> as home base for their productions; and talented performers, with and without disabilities, from throughout New Mexico will be invited to present their work here.

*Out of the Ordinary* festivals usually present New Mexico artists with disabilities, but on special occasions, other artists may be included. For example, this fall Joint Forces from Eugene, Oregon, here for a VSA/North Fourth residency will perform October 1. Global DanceFest, will present a truly international program over the next year including CanDoCo Dance (London), Salia ni Seydou (Burkina Faso), Eiko and Koma (NYC/Japan), Cathy Weis (NYC), Deja Donne (Italy/Czech Republic), Tokounou (NYC/Guinea) and Corpuscule Danse (Montreal)—companies co-sponsored with NewArt New Mexico, UNM Theatre and Dance Department and Tricklock Company's *Revolutions International Theatre Festival*. We offer our heartfelt thanks to the legislators who have made it possible to ensure that people with disabilities have full access to the arts: *Rep. Gail Beam; Sen. Dede Feldman; Rep. Danice Picraux; Sen. Richard Romero; the late Rep. Raymond Ruiz; Rep. Edward Sandoval and Rep. Daniel Silva.*



### UETF Sculpture Project Nears Completion

by Susanna Kearny

It was a happy moment when several VSA apprentice artists placed the first of many tiles they had created onto the sculpture taking shape in front of VSA's North Fourth Art Center. They began the project in the fall of 2002, when artist Cassandra Reid solicited input from everyone at the center to design a tile sculpture funded by the City of Albuquerque's Urban Enhancement Trust Fund (UETF).

Throughout the following winter and spring, apprentice artists attending clay classes and a weekly Native American class created over eight thousand tiles for the streetscape project. The sculpture consists of two large gateways connected by a low wall that gracefully curves along Fourth Street. This piece is one of many improvements undertaken by neighboring businesses at Fourth and Griegos, and is reminiscent of another UETF tile sculpture by Beverly Magennis at Fourth and Montano.

Thanks to legislation sponsored by Senator Dede Feldman for Fourth Street improvements, a landscaping design has been implemented in conjunction with the tile sculpture. Construction began in the spring of 2004, made possible by the concerted efforts of many and especially Karen Dunning of the City's Dept. of Family and Community Services; Dan Martinez and Pedro Pino of the City's Capital Implementation Program; Morrow, Reardon, Wilkinson, Miller, Ltd., landscaping architects; Lee Landscapes and KEB Concrete. Artist assistants Angelica Lucero, Jesse Williamson, Daniel Schufft and Kristy Padilla have also worked very hard to see the project to completion.

When it came to naming the sculpture, artist Cassandra Reid asked VSA apprentice artists for help. She worked with their most popular concepts such as *creative*, *doors*, and *culture* to develop the title, *Doorways to Imagination*. The sculpture will be dedicated on **Saturday, October 16, 2004.**



PHOTOS, Cover left to right: Painting by Angelica Harrison; Scott Heron in *Electric Haiku*, photo by Richard Termine. Page 2: Theatre photos top to bottom, left to right: Salia ni Seydou in *Weeleni*; Ksenia Vidyaykina in *Electric Haiku*, photo by Richard Termine; Cathy Weis, photo by Lilly Aloma; Eiko and Koma, photo by Gordon Wilson; Sidiki; Larry Lorenzo, photo by Lynn Wozniak. Sculpture photos: by John Nez, bottom photo of Cassandra Reid and Roger Torres placing tiles made at North Fourth.

