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Murals offer a long look at wheel love

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BY KERI GUTEN COHEN
FREE PRESS SPECIAL WRITER

Thirty-two murals, mostly 8-feet-by-20-feet, stationed throughout the MotorCity Casino, offer a stylized, modern take on the rich automotive, industrial history Detroiters know well.

Many of the old photographs collaged in the murals were supplied by Henry Ford Museum. They provided inspiration for graphic designer George Hernandez of Penpoint, a Pasadena, Calif., company specializing in digital art reproduction.

"I went to every car show in Southern California," Hernandez said. "I started seeing cars everywhere. I kept working at concepts, searching for something creative to pull it all together:

What emerged were murals based on Route 66, car engines, lots of 1920s grill work and flast cars with fins, a time line running from the Industrial Age to the Information Age.

Several are unframed and fit around structural posts. These are more painterly, looking more like the famous Diego Rivera work at the DIA, which inspired some of the works.

The murals were created in about three months on computer. The panels are applied to walls with adhesive in the same way wallpaper is hung.

Hernandez says the casino has commissioned five more murals.

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