

## Inside Art

Carol Vogel

### An Art Experiment In Flashy Las Vegas

Las Vegas may be known for gambling and gaudiness, but when it comes to art, the exhibitions on view there have been surprisingly highbrow. Over the years its galleries have displayed canvases by Rembrandt and Picasso, Monet and van Gogh.

On Tuesday, however, the four-sided marquee of the new Cosmopolitan casino and resort became a canvas for a scrappier kind of art project. Organized by the Art Production Fund, a nonprofit organization that presents public art, it is the first entry in what is to be a series of public art at the resort, called *Pause*, that will run through Sept. 30.

"Most of the art in Las Vegas has been blue-chip brand names, but this has a lighter touch," said Yvonne Force Villareal, a founder of the Art Production Fund. "It's meant to be an unexpected respite in the middle of a busy commercial strip."

Located near the Bellagio, the 2,995-room Cosmopolitan is scheduled to open in December. But the marquee is already running with three videos — one by Yoko Ono and two by T. J. Wilcox — that change every 20 minutes.

Mr. Wilcox's works deal with nature: "Filter" is about a young girl who discovers an endangered turtle in her swimming pool, while "Eau de Vie de Poire" documents the artist's own backyard attempt to make pear brandy. Ms. Ono is represented with one of her signature videos in which the phrase "Imagine Peace" flashes across the screen in different languages while John Lennon's "Imagine" plays in the background.

The roster of artists will change every two months. And by the time the Cosmopolitan opens, the Art Production Fund will have installed site-specific projects inside that include murals and videos.



GLENN PINKERTON/LAS VEGAS NEWS BUREAU

The Cosmopolitan in Las Vegas is the site of a public art series called *Pause*.