The Life and Times of Dr. Martin Candelaria

Mural Legend:

The mural on the three walls of the north stairwell of Candelaria Hall on the University of Northern Colorado campus in Greeley, Colorado reflects the life of Dr. Martin Candelaria. On the stairwell tower are scenes reflecting the culture and heritage of Dr. Candelaria's Hispanic Colorado and New Mexico heritage, beginning from lower left. See mural outline on back page of this handout.

1) The five siblings view their parents' graves.

- Martin is pictured with his brothers Julian and Jose Inez and his sisters Rebecca and Delfina.
- Martin's mother died after breaking her neck in a buggy accident in 1903 when her buggy ran into a tree. She died a few weeks after the incident at the age of 28.[1]
- Martin's father died of pneumonia in May 1907, which he contracted while herding sheep in October 1905, at the age of 39.[1]

2) Martin's parents advise to pursue education.

- Michael Welsh wrote in his article entitled "El Hombre Grandote: The Formative Years of Dr. Martin Candelaria, 1896-1918" that, "Their father had told them: 'You can lose everything, but if you have an education no one can take it from you.'"[1]

3) Illuminated by his Hispano culture, symbolized by candle holder and other images.

4) Morning glory and columbine flowers symbolize new growth and beauty.

- Martin was very in touch with nature as a result of his upbringing, which is why these images are symbolic of his life.[1]

5) Martin dances with Tia (Aunt) Anita Gurule, while two young girls, Spanish and Indian, lead the happy procession.

- Martin went to live with his Tia Anita Gurule after his mother's death when his father, Anastascio Candelaria, could no longer care for him and his four siblings.[1]
- While there, Martin was beaten by his aunt and uncle and tormented by his cousins.[1]
- In his childhood, Martin interacted with the Native American population frequently, which greatly influenced him in later years.[1]
- Martin's mother, Maria Fidelia Abeyta was of Ute Indian heritage and her father was an advisor to Indians in the area.[1]

6) Martin, nurtured by the best of native and Hispano cultures (represented by the dove) graduated from the Menaul School for Boys in Albuquerque, NM in 1918.

- A Presbyterian minister by the name of Rev. James A. Menaul received funding to open a boarding school. The school was primarily meant to serve Spanish speaking boys from northern New Mexico.[2]
- This was the educational experience available for children at the time, as there was no public education in the area.[2]

7) As a WWI soldier, Martin and other Hispano-Mexican soldiers helped balance democratic justice.

- In the summer of 1918, Martin enlisted in the American Expeditionary Force and served in WWI for a year .[3]

8) Martin was inspired by Cuban poet Jose Marti.

- Jose Martí, in addition to being a poet, was also an essayist, a journalist, a revolutionary philosopher, a translator, a professor, a publisher, and a political theorist.[4]
- Martí dedicated his life to the promotion of liberty, political independence for Cuba, and intellectual independence for all Spanish Americans.[4]
- Some common themes seen in Martí's writing include the concepts of freedom, liberty, and democracy.[4]
- Martí died in military action on May 19, 1895, fighting for the rights of his people.[4]
- Candelaria embodied many of the same beliefs and traits as Martí.

9) "I carry in my soul the language and heritage of my people, and I shall pass it on to others."

10) Martin, in 1948, arrives at UNC and is welcomed by then President Bill Ross.

11) Martin teaches Spanish and establishes Foreign Language Department in 1948.

12) Numerous friends, colleagues, and family gaze approvingly upon Martin.

13) Martin and wife Fay, in the prime of their lives, carry on education and pass on their light.

14) Martin, inspired by the community and its harsh existence (cactus plants) always projects a positive vision (rainbow).

15) Martin and Fay, with Candelaria Hall and Don Quixote in the background, pass on their experience and heritage to younger generations.

- Don Quixote and his faithful squire, Sancho Panza, travel around Spain to find glory and adventure in performing good deeds for people they come across.

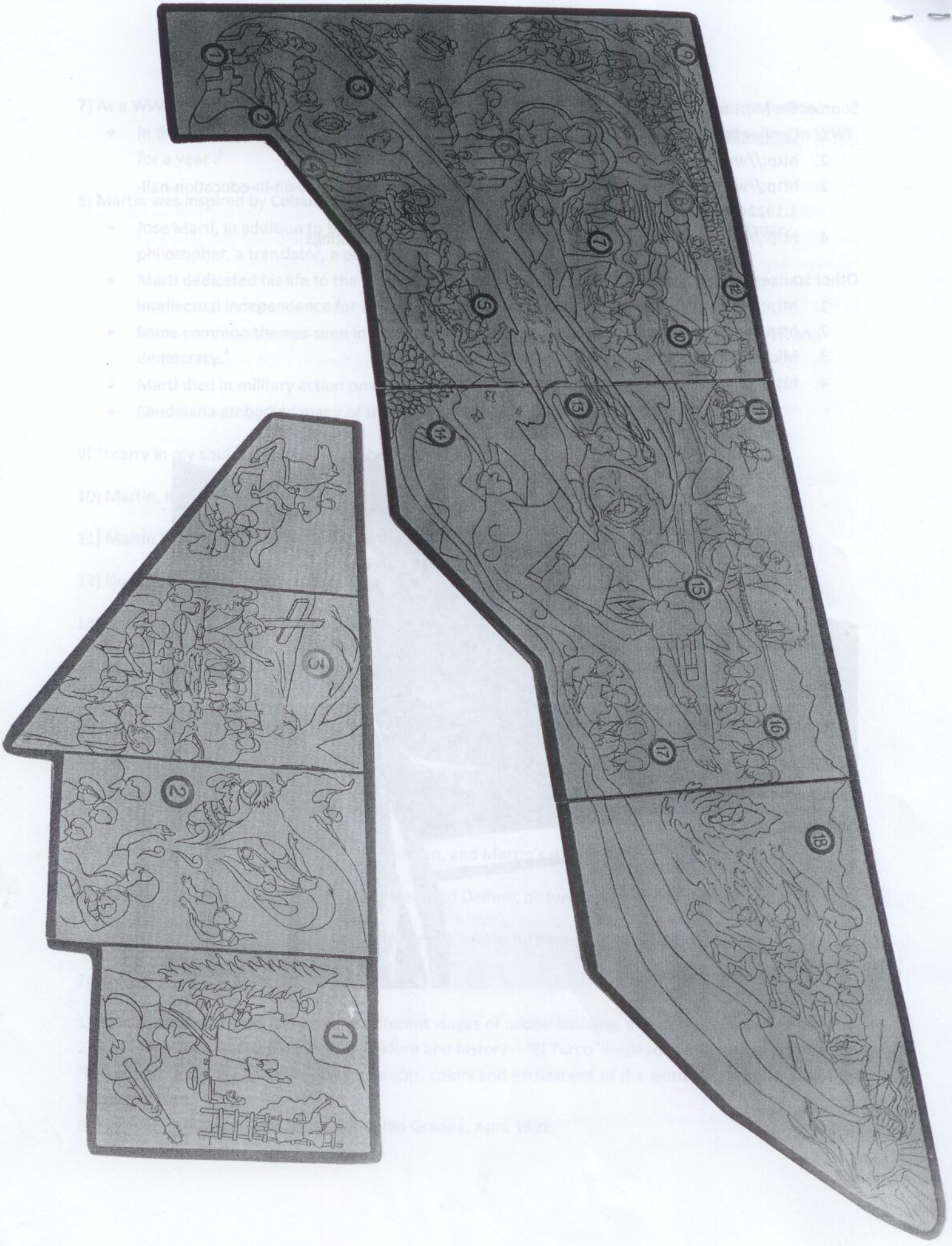
16) Martin's son Roger pictured with his children, and Martin's daughter Sylvia pictured with her sons.

17) Martin's siblings Julian, Rebecca, Jose Inez, and Delfina, pictured in later life, from left to right.

18) Hands reach to accept his light and experience, and in turn venture into the future with confidence.

Tower scenes:

1) Four adults and a child carry on the different stages of adobe building, a singer serenades the group.
2) A grandmother storyteller narrates folklore and history—"El Turco" misleads Coronado expedition, "La Llorona" finds her children, Navajo dancer, colors and excitement of the world expressed in Hispano-Mexican dance.
3) The first Thanksgiving on banks of the Rio Grande, April 1598.



Sources for Martin Candelaria Information:

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3. http://www.uncmirror.com/legacy-of-first-hispanic-professor-lives-on-in-education-hall-1.1922431
4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jos%C3%A9_Mart%C3%AD#Writings

Other sources for Information Relating to Martin Candelaria:

1. http://extras.denverpost.com/news/news0827o.htm
2. http://www.menaulschool.com/connect/alumni/
3. Michael Welsh: http://www.unco.edu/history/mw.html
4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menaul_School