



The image for this issue is a painting by Frida Kahlo, titled “Alla Cuelga Mi Vestido (My Dress Hangs There)”, initiated in New York City, but finished in México City in 1933. When viewing this painting, one is drawn to the top half of the painting depicting some of the symbols of New York City such as factories, skyscrapers, the port, Manhattan Island, and the Statue of Liberty, depicted in the style of a tourist postcard. As one glances to the lower half, it becomes evident that the painting is not celebrating New York City as an industrial/commercial power house and touting its tourist ‘wonders’ , but portraying a city of decay, depravity, alienation, squalor and destroyed human dignity, beneath the illusion of the city’s touted industrial and economic prosperity This is indicated by: the overall dark nature of the painting as seen in: the garbage bins, one with apparent remnants of human body parts; the toilet and the trophy on the pedestal; and the robot-like silver pipe being part of the factory in the right upper corner. In the center is Frida’s traditional Mexican dress featured without her, indicating that her body is in New York, but her *anima* (her creative soul) is in México, longing for the vibrancy of México City and México itself; signifying that she also felt personally alienated in New York. Overall, the painting represents a powerful criticism of the American industrial city; whose characteristics have been magnified in New York City.

(The painting is physically located at The Hoover Gallery in San Francisco, California. The image was found on the website of "Museum Syndicate" (<http://www.museum syndicate.com/item.php?item=2929> ). Further interpretation of the painting can be found at on the website of the "Frida Kahlo Fans" (<http://www.fridakahlofans.com/c0120.html> .) )

Kahlo's painting clearly transmits the message to its audience that cities have an inherent dichotomous nature. In her painting, it is one of the one of the modern industrialized city juxtaposed against its associated depravity. In the same manner, cities can be considered places of excitement, discovery, creativity, prosperity and enlightenment, but at the same time, they can be places of poverty, crime , decay, desperation, alienation, congestion, pollution and societal unrest. These 'ying and yang' relationships in cities have been the most apparent since the development of the modern industrial city in the early 1800s, but were also present in the pre-industrial era cities, but not as pronounced. The disparities in urban areas do not remain eternally rotating in an intertwined vortex but become the impetus for new urban policies seeking to ameliorate them. Urban areas represent places where phenomena emerge as the result of major changes in the meshed forces of technology, politics and economics which have positive and negative effects. When the negative impacts/externalities of these emerging phenomena become overwhelmingly apparent (such as poor housing and sanitation problems among the working population in cities experiencing rapid industrialization and population growth), there have emerged urban critics (such as Charles Dickens) and subsequently social protest to bring awareness of these injustices to the public and later specific policies to alleviate the negative effects of the phenomena. In reaction to the negative effects of industrialization in cities in developed countries there have emerged child labor laws, minimum wage, housing projects, building codes, institutionalized urban planning, water/sewer services, public hospitals and myriad other foundations that make up modern welfare states and their cities, which we now perceive of as necessary to the operation of the city. This progression of thesis and anti-thesis has been manifested in cities throughout its history and will continue to be an intergal part of its continuing development.

Clashing dichotomies is again is on 'the stage of the theater of the city.' Major 'world class' cities and smaller urbanized areas are becoming the focus of global unrest concerning the increasing disparity in income distribution, the influence of major multi-national corporations and financial institutions over local, state and national politics, economic stagnation, corruption, and elitist rule. These inequities are now at the forefront in the urban population around the world. The center of initiation of these protests, as in earlier times, is the squares/plazas of cities. The leading and most vocal protests are occurring in New York City around Wall St and London near St. Paul's Cathedral, which are the primary control points for the global economy. The precedents for these protests were those in Tarih Square in Cairo (Egypt) which is the major gathering place in the city. The results of these self-organized, leaderless and spontaneous protests in Cairo were responsible for the overthrow of a ruling class in Egypt which had been in power for over fifty years. In our interconnected and scale-less world, actions in one city are no longer are restricted to their impact on a specific city or nation, but have trans-national influence. This global movement, centered in cities, is causing an international discussion on how ills of the global political and economic system can be addressed. "On the table" is the concentration of economic and political power of the multi-national and the 'economic elite', income

disparity, participatory democracy, affordable housing, job creation, fair wages, environmental degradation, sustainable energy and other issues. Despite an effort by some critics to discredit this emerging movement's message by proclaiming that it is not universal but has been propagated by the 'dregs of society' or from the 'usual suspects' (fanatical Communists and Anarchists), it is unlikely that these issues will dissipate because they are linked with political and economic structural problems, not with periodic economic fluctuations.