

# Artist creates work for Ali's PV home

An emotionally challenging period for Scottsdale artist Jim Sudal provided an unexpected and rewarding payback: the opportunity to immerse himself in a truly one-of-a-kind ceramic wall mural for Lonnie and Mohammed Ali's Paradise Valley home.

Titled "Butterflies and Bees," the 5-foot by 5-foot, 325 pound piece was nine months in the making, from concept to installation, and now shares space in the Alis's living room with four prized Andy Warhol portraits. After visiting the space, Mr. Sudal came up with a color palette designed to harmonize with the rest of the room and add warmth.

Within the large golden blossoms of the prickly pear cactus, Mr. Sudal spent hours and hours layering hundreds of tiny clay butterflies and bees as a tribute to the fighter's iconic saying, "fight like a butterfly, sting like a bee."

Mr. Sudal considers the piece his finest to date, and, in a thank-you letter, Lonnie Ali wrote, "It (the mural) will be a family heirloom for generations to come."

Born and raised in Connecticut, Mr. Sudal moved to Tucson to study international business at the University of Arizona and received his master's degree from Thunderbird American Graduate School of International Management in Glendale.

Not long after accepting a corporate position in San Francisco, he returned to the Valley to oversee marketing and public rela-



Artist Jim Sudal with Lonnie Ali in front of "Butterflies and Bees"

tions for the Desert Botanical Garden. While there, Mr. Sudal began creating mugs, bowls and platters for the garden's gift shop.

After eight years in the marketing position, his passion for ceramics grew into a full-time venture, and his work evolved from hand-thrown ceramic pieces to intricately

sculpted stoneware murals.

Following an exhibit of his work at the Desert Botanical Garden, Mr. Sudal opened a working studio and exhibition gallery in an historic adobe building in Old Town Scottsdale.

Other notable commissioned pieces include a mural on display at North County Health Services in Oceanside, Calif. and pieces featured in a solo expedition sponsored by the Desert Botanical Garden.

Mr. Sudal has recently spoken with former Scottsdale Mayor Sam Campana about creating a very large-scale mural for the entrance of the new Audubon Arizona center in Phoenix depicting a flowing river of life with flora and wildlife indigenous to the desert.