

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

DATE: MAY 23, 2018
TO: ARTS & CULTURE COMMISSION
FROM: ROCHELLE BRANCH, CULTURAL AFFAIRS DIVISION MANAGER
SUBJECT: Final Art Plan Approval for the Rotating Public Art Exhibition Program
Phase III Site-Specific artworks developed by: Matthias Neumann for
Bonnie/Del Mar; Cliff Garten for Foothill/Walnut; and Karen Reitzel for Sierra
Madre Blvd/Sierra Madre Villa Avenue

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Arts & Culture Commission approve the Final Art Plans for:

- 1) Matthias Neumann's *basics #25 (double-cube)* for the Bonnie Ave./ Del Mar Blvd. site in District 7;
- 2) Cliff Garten's *And the Angel Wants to Go Back to Fix Things* for the Foothill/Walnut site in District 2; and
- 3) Karen Reitzel's *Calm a Little Pint of Soul* for the Sierra Madre Blvd/Sierra Madre Villa Avenue site in District 4; and
- 4) Approve said artworks with the following conditions:
 - a. Artworks shall meet the Department of Transportation and Public Works requirements;
 - b. Artworks shall be sited without obstruction from commercial and City signage; and
 - c. Staff shall conduct inspection of artwork prior to installation and a final inspection after artwork has been secured at its respective site.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City of Pasadena's Rotating Public Art Exhibition Program aims to establish an outdoor art gallery that enlivens the urban landscape and produces dynamic visual experiences for residents and visitors. In addition, the Program seeks to expand the context for public art in Pasadena, create more opportunities for artists in the public realm, stimulate discourse about public art, and provide a cultural draw for tourists.

After successfully installing a total of eighteen artworks during Phases I and II, the Program completed the selection process for its third iteration in the summer of 2017. The Phase III Selection Panel recommended eight artworks for loan—five extant artworks and three concepts to be created as site-specific artworks—that the Arts & Culture Commission approved on August 9, 2017. The five extant artworks were installed in March and April 2018. The Final Art Plans for the three new artworks being developed in response to their respective sites are now poised for the Commission's review and approval. Once approved, the Final Art Plans will be implemented. The three new artworks are anticipated to be installed in the summer of 2018, with a new program brochure following soon thereafter. A dedication event to recognize all of the artists and artworks in Phase III of the Program is expected to occur in the fall of 2018.

BACKGROUND:

The impetus for the Rotating Public Art Exhibition Program arose from an earlier directive included in the Cultural Nexus, the City's Cultural Master Plan. Policy 9, "Create a new vision for public art in Pasadena," recommends an increased presence and awareness of public art throughout Pasadena.

The Rotating Public Art Exhibition Program aligns with the Public Art Master Plan Recommendations #1, 2, 4, 8, and 9. These recommendations highlight the importance of siting public art in all of Pasadena's neighborhoods to: reinforce the diverse characteristics of place, acknowledge public art as a vehicle for urban beautification efforts citywide, employ public art in the activation of a more walkable city, strengthen cultural vitality in areas with abundant pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and expand opportunities for access to and engagement with Pasadena's Public Art Program. All Rotating Public Art Exhibition Program sites have been vetted through the Departments of Public Works and Transportation, and are accessible to pedestrians who are walking and/or using wheelchairs.

Created within the City's CIP Public Art Program, the Rotating Program also produced a new model for community engagement by utilizing Neighborhood Arts Advocates, alongside arts professional, in the art selection process. The process employs a new model for community engagement that redefines "stakeholders" beyond the district level by including an expanded number of community representatives from every City Council District who select art for their own neighborhoods.

The Concept for the Rotating Public Art Exhibition Program was developed by Cultural Affairs staff and approved by the Arts and Culture Commission on January 13, 2010. Subsequently, the program was approved by City Council on July 19, 2010. On April 4, 2011 staff presented the Selection Panel's Phase I recommendations to City Council as an information item and on April 13, 2011 the Arts and Culture Commission approved those recommendations. On December 12, 2012 the Arts and Culture Commission approved the Final Report for Phase I and also approved the launch for Phase II of the Program, including the addition of two more sites.

Though initially intended for deinstallation beginning in 2015, the Phase II contracts were extended into 2017. Due to contractual obligations, the deinstallation of Phase II artworks occurred in October 2017.

PHASE III OUTREACH:

Request for Proposals

In March 2017, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for loans of existing sculptural works and site specific concepts from artists, artist teams and/or galleries for exhibition. A Community meeting was conducted on April 17, 2017 to review the Rotating Program goals, encourage applications, highlight specific locations for artwork, explain the Selection Panel review process, and answer questions. The RFP called for loaned artworks that are engaging, sufficiently durable for placement outdoors and that allow for attachment to a structural footing at the site. The RFP also explained that the City seeks to commission three new temporary artworks uniquely conceived as site-specific projects. For these installations, selected artists participate in a two-step artwork development process that includes returning to the Arts & Culture Commission for review and approval of their Final Art Plans. All artworks are expected to be in place throughout a 36-month exhibition period.

The RFP was widely distributed to inform the community about the Program and to solicit artist submissions. Outreach was conducted to reach the general public, local arts community, and neighborhood residents, as well as through partnerships to reach an expanded artist pool. The RFP and community meeting flyer were noticed through numerous arts and community networks including:

- Cultural Affairs website and mailing list
- LA Culture Net, Pasadena Culture Net and Neighborhood Connections
- City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, Metro Transit Authority, and Northwest Programs Office and Citywide mailing lists
- Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena Museum of California Art, Pasadena City College, Otis Art Institute, and Art Center mailing lists
- Americans for the Arts Public Art Network and Public Art Coalition of Southern California
- General press release
- Hard copies to City libraries
- Art foundries (greater Los Angeles area)
- Public Art consultants (California)
- Curators (Independent and Institutional)
- University Art Departments (for referral to recent MFA grads and faculty)

By the submission deadline of May 15, 2017, the City received 22 artist and artist team submissions, composed of 8 in the loaned category, 9 in the site-specific category, and 5 that applied for both categories.

ARTWORK SELECTION PROCESS:

On July 11, 2017, the Phase III Selection Panel—consisting of arts professionals and Neighborhood Arts Advocates—convened to review the applications and discuss their recommendations. A unique element of the Rotating Public Art Exhibition Program is that the selection process includes a majority of neighborhood representatives. This component supports the Program's goals to engage members of the public who are not already a part of the

art community by including them in the selection process and encouraging them to become arts advocates in their neighborhoods. To implement the community selection component, staff requested that each Councilmember recommend two Neighborhood Representatives to participate on behalf of their Council District. The Phase III Panel also included public art professionals. In total, 11 Neighborhood Representatives participated as voting members on the Panel. The Panel reviewed every application for artistic quality, originality and impact, considering durability of materials and appropriateness of scale at the various sites. Applicants with registration as a Local Pasadena Business addresses and/or Micro-Business received additional points. City representatives from the Departments of Public Works and Transportation also reviewed the existing artworks for their suitability in the public right of way.

Selection Panel Recommendations

The Panel recommended five existing artworks for loan and three artists to develop proposals for the site-specific locations—for a total of eight. Scores were based on the selection criteria outlined in the RFP, including (1) Appropriateness of existing works and/or proposed site-specific work and (2) Artistic achievement as demonstrated in the résumé of the artist and quality of proposed artwork or previous projects. The third criterion—for quality and durability of materials and construction methods—was reviewed by a contracted arts professional. Staff reviewed the Local Pasadena Business and Micro-Business categories.

The entire pool of finalists was recommended based on overall votes by the Panel, after which specific artworks/artists were negotiated as matches to the eight sites based on advocacy by the Neighborhood Arts Advocates from each site’s District. As with Phases I and II, the site-specific proposals are being developed in conversation with City Staff and will be presented to the Arts & Culture Commission for final approval.

The recommended artworks (extant category) and artists (site-specific category) that the Arts & Culture Commission reviewed and approved on August 9, 2017 are as follows:

EXTANT ARTWORKS

Site	artist
Council District 1: Washington/Glen	Patricia Vader
Council District 3: Sunset/Mountain	Craig Cree Stone
Council District 5: N. Lake (between Maple & Villa)	Adrian Litman
Council District 6: 300 E. Green St. Pasadena Convention Center (lobby)	Joyce Dallal
Council District 7: S. Lake/Oakwood Place	Michael Todd

SITE-SPECIFIC ARTWORKS

RETURNING WITH FINAL ART PLANS 05/23/2018

Site	artist
Council District 2: Foothill/1985 E Walnut	Cliff Garten
Council District 4: Sierra Madre Blvd./Sierra Madre Villa Ave.	Karen Reitzel
Council District 7: Bonnie Ave. /Del Mar Blvd.	Matthias Neumann

ARTWORK LOCATIONS:

All City sites have been vetted through the Departments of Public Works and Transportation. All sites are accessible to pedestrians who are walking or using wheelchairs. Some of the sites, but not all, are also readily visible from the street. Soon after installation, sites are equipped with durable metal identification plaques affixed to each pad. New for Phase III of the Program are lawn signs geared to vehicular traffic.

TIMELINE:

In July 2017, artists were notified of Selection Panel recommendations. Upon the Arts & Culture Commission's approval of the Panel recommendations on August 9, 2017, Artist Agreements were finalized with the City Attorney's office. Those contracts were distributed to the eight finalists in December 2017 and executed in February and March 2018. The five extant artworks were installed in March and April 2018.

Once approved, the Final Art Plans for the three new site-specific artworks will advance to implementation. The three new artworks are anticipated to be installed by late summer of 2018, with signage and a new program brochure following soon thereafter. A dedication event to recognize all of the selected artists and artworks featured in Phase III of the Program is planned for the fall of 2018.

FINAL ART PLANS:

Matthias Neumann's 'basics #25 (double-cube)' for Bonnie Ave. / Del Mar Blvd. site

Basics #25 (double-cube) is part of the artist's ongoing series of public interventions under the title *Basics* that explores an abstracted notion of form, space, and materiality in public sculpture. It will be constructed adjacent to the bus stop as a double-cube, with each cube faceted on all four sides, and the two cubes rotated against each other 90 degrees. The scale and placement are considerate of the site, recognizing the different speeds and modes that viewers will experience the artwork. The tilted faces of the artwork will allow a shifting perspective and engage vantage points both from S. Bonnie Avenue as well as from E. Del Mar Boulevard. The four center components will be painted primary colors, while the rest of the sculpture will retain its natural wood finish, slightly darkening over time.

Materials and construction: Made with 2' x 4' lumber, the proposed artwork will employ the logic, materiality, and detail with which previous installations in the series have been constructed. The sculpture will be set back from the sidewalk. Its geometry will not invite physical access onto or into the sculpture, by angling the constructive planes and narrowing the perspectival diaphragm to a 2' x 2' opening. The life span of 3 years was a consideration in the choice of materials. The artwork will be constructed out of wood (cedar, redwood or pressure treated, to be determined) with stainless steel fasteners. The installation will include eight parts that will be assembled on site, with 8 anchor points into the concrete pad. No maintenance is anticipated.

Dimensions: 8' x 8' x 16' (width x depth x height)

Weight: approximately 3000 lbs.

Site: The Bonnie Ave. /Del Mar Blvd. site, across the street from Pasadena City College, is flanked by single family homes. The site is not landscaped. Due to the proximity of a tree and bus stop, the artwork will be installed on the western end of the parcel to provide maximum access and visibility.

Cliff Garten's 'And the Angel Wants to Go Back to Fix Things' for Foothill/Walnut site

The artist proposes his sculptural concept of an angel, articulated as follows:

"On a busy street in Pasadena, an angel sits on a triangle of land, waiting. Cars pass in two directions. The idea that angels are everywhere—or that they even exist—is an historical conundrum. The site is a left-over piece of land, too small for the value of real estate and defined by the roads that pass it, an indeterminate space. The angel has perched here.

*History is an angel being blown backwards into the future,
History is a pile of debris,
And the angel wants to go back to fix things
To repair the things that have been broken
But there is a storm blowing from Paradise
And this storm keeps blowing the angel backwards into the future
And this storm
This storm
We call Progress*

Laurie Anderson, *the dream before*, paraphrased from Walter Benjamin, *Theses on the Philosophy of History*

The angel is based upon a liturgical stone figure that is stretched from its formal posture into a kind of apparition, a wind-blown blur that is not quite defined until one travels past its widest frontal presentation and clearly sees its human profile from the side. The angel is positioned so that its human form is only glimpsed for a moment, maybe connecting with us as we pass in our car. This angel is there for us, or maybe it is not."

Materials and construction: The angel will be made of coroplast, a recycled plastic packing material. The sculpture will be comprised of 250 laser cut sections of ¼" coroplast, stacked on a steel frame, separated by ¼" openings. The materials is translucent, appearing white in the sunlight, but transparent when viewed between sections at eye level. As eye level changes, the sculpture becomes transparent in different sections, contributing to the elusive effect of the form. At night, the angel will be illuminated from within by strings of fluorescent lights that make the entire form glow.

The sculpture will be delivered as one piece, installed with a small lift, and bolted to the pedestal. All fluorescent lights will be installed in the sculpture when it arrives. The electrical connection will be coordinated with the City electrician and before bolting down the sculpture.

Dimensions: 10' x 6' x 11' (width x depth x height)

Weight: approximately 600 lbs.

Site: The Foothill/Walnut site is in a commercial area in east Pasadena. The parcel on which the sculpture will be placed is an elongated triangle. The artwork can be viewed from a distance by drivers approaching from each of the streets that form this intersection. Space surrounding the artwork's footing also allows for pedestrians to experience the sculpture from all sides and angles.

Karen Reitzel's 'Calm a Little Pint of Soul' for Sierra Madre Blvd. /Sierra Madre Villa Ave. site

The artist proposes her sculptural concept of an endangered local butterfly, articulated as follows:

"Once a very common butterfly in Southern California, the Quino checkerspot landed on the federal list of endangered species twenty years ago and its numbers have continued to decline. Habitat loss due to development isn't the only cause; the Quino checkerspot was the first species to have climate change officially listed as a threat. A study by the National Academy of Sciences states that the butterfly is an early warning indicator of climate change in North America. Using the Quino checkerspot as the subject of this proposed piece aims to address environmental concerns that affect us all and to enrich the audience's sense of self and place. It intends to inspire contemplation of relationships between ourselves and the world around us."

Materials and construction: A set of sixteen powder-coated aluminum angle posts will present a dynamic series of four vibrantly painted images of the Quino checkerspot and a stylized blossom of the dwarf plantain, the plant on which it lays its eggs.

Two sides of the sculpture will show the painted checkerspot wing pattern and two sides will show a blank butterfly shape, so that both the presence and absence of the butterfly will be visible. The four painted images will shift and blend as a viewer's position changes when moving past the piece. At the intersection of Sierra Madre Blvd. and Sierra Madre Villa Ave., the perspective from each street will offer a unique visual experience.

The sculpture will be mounted on a powder coated steel base that anchors into the concrete pad. There will be a powder coated steel top for added security. The design will be applied with a two-component acrylic urethane with a high level of durability, color retention and the same qualities as graffiti coating. The sculpture and its base will be delivered to the site in pieces and assembled during installation with tamper resistant bolts.

Dimensions: 84" x 86" x 68" (width x depth x height)

Weight: approximately 678 lbs.

Site: The site located at E. Sierra Madre Blvd. & Sierra Madre Villa is a median that spans part of Sierra Madre Blvd. The artwork can be viewed from a good distance by vehicular traffic approaching via the streets that form the intersection. Pedestrians may also experience the work via the adjacent crosswalks that provide access to the parcel.

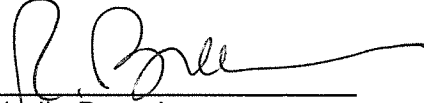
ESTIMATED TIMELINE OF NEXT STEPS:

- May 2018 - Approval of Site Specific Final Art Plans by Arts & Culture Commission
- Summer 2018 – Approved Plans proceed with implementation, inspection & installation
- Fall 2018 – Dedication Event to recognize all 8 artworks installed with Phase III

FISCAL IMPACT:

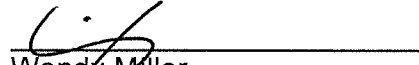
The Rotating Public Art Exhibition Program Phase III budget of \$95,000 was appropriated by City Council in Fiscal Year 2017-2018.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rochelle Branch
Cultural Affairs Division Manager
Planning & Community
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Prepared by,



Wendy Miller
Public Art Curator

Attachments:

- Attachment A – Neumann proposal
- Attachment B – Garten proposal
- Attachment C – Reitzel proposal