

THE NEIGHBORHOOD PUBLIC ART PROJECT

*A Community Collaboration by the Richmond Art Center, the City of Richmond,
and the Richmond Arts and Culture Commission*

Project Description:

The Neighborhood Public Art Project serves as a launching point for engaging Richmond community members in the creative arts process by partnering Neighborhood Councils, Non Profits, and community groups with professional artists. Over a period of several months, artists and community members collaborate to develop and produce public art projects which aim to spark dialogue on community issues, provide a platform for learning and sharing in the arts, create a shared experience in community art practices, produce temporary and/ or permanent public artworks, and activate public spaces for community interaction. Through a series of workshops, project proposals are developed by the artists in collaboration with key community members. While not mandated by the grant, the community partner' of the 2006-2007 cycle, all of which were Neighborhood Councils, chose to target their project towards engaging youth in their communities. The recipients of the 2006- 2007 grant were:

Shields- Reid: Artist Juan Santiago collaborated with youth from the Center for Human Development in Shields- Reid to develop a ceramic- based public art piece. Through 15 weeks of intensive workshops, this group developed their skills in clay and built a ceramics studio in the Shields- Reid Community Center. Youth training under Juan's supervision have continued to share their skills by offering twice-weekly free ceramics workshops for small children and older youth at the center through this past Summer. The Neighborhood Council of Shields Reid plans to attain funding to continue this artist-residency, youth- training model in the upcoming year

Iron Triangle: Artist Kamau Patton worked with a group of youth to curate an exhibition from the Richmond History Museum's archive this Summer. This group investigated the history of Richmond and, through this process, had the opportunity to investigate how that history is formed, and how personal narratives and personal artifacts in the collection can be curated to tell historical narrative. Titled "Sparkle, Shine, Shimmer: A selection of objects that go..." The groups exhibition was in the downstairs gallery of the Richmond Museum of History during the month of August.

Parchester Village: Artist Plinio Hernandez worked with the Parchester Village Neighborhood Council and the Parchester Village Community Center to provide a series of arts workshops out of the community center. A trans-generational group of community members worked together to develop a time capsule, which addresses Parchester Village's 50 year history as a community and record the thoughts and ideals of current community members on how they imagine Parchester Village 50 years from now. The final project will consist of an archival book to be housed in the Richmond Museum of History, and a catalog and video which will be distributed to the 400 homes which comprise this community.

Coronado/ Santa Fe: Artist Ana Fernandez worked as an artist-in-residence out of the Martin Luther King Center, running twice- weekly, free arts workshops for youth. Youth in the workshops investigated environmental issues such as waste and recycling, while learning painting and sculptural techniques. They produced a series of temporary sculptural pieces at the community center, as well as completed a design for a permanent piece to be included in the redesign of the Martin Luther King Park. The sculptural metal & light piece, which will illuminate either the exterior entrance or a street- facing wall of the center at night, is a reference to Dr. Martin Luther King's famous 1963 "I have a Dream" speech and is meant to act as a visual metaphor for a "great beacon light of hope" – as King referred to the Emancipation Proclamation in his speech. The interior body of the letters will be laser cut with the hand-writing of community members, which we hope to produce through a number of creative writing workshops.

To Learn more about the upcoming cycle of Neighborhood Public Art Projects, contact:

Julia Hamilton, Richmond Art Center 510-620-6776 julia@therac.org