



MEDIA ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Artwork Dedication: *The Ancestors* at Plaza Circle, By Julia Ousley



What: Artwork Dedication *The Ancestors*

When: Saturday, November 4, 2017, 10 AM – 11 AM

Location: 5900 Block of Plaza Circle, just south of East Rosedale and west of I-820, 76112 (inside the Plaza Circle walking path)

(Fort Worth, TX) The City of Fort Worth Public Art Program is dedicating a new Community ID Public Art Project, *The Ancestors*, by local artist Julia Ousley.

Project Background

Historic Carver Heights is the first community created by and for Black professionals. Multiple generations live in the neighborhood, including many of the founding generation from the late 1940s and early 1950s.

In 2010, the Historic Carver Heights Neighborhood Association applied for and was awarded a Community ID: Public Art in Neighborhoods public art project for Plaza Circle.

The community chose the city-owned green space maintained by Park and Recreation as the site for their project because through their efforts, this location had recently received improvements, including a walking path.

A budget of \$50,000 was allocated for the project from the Public Art Fund and the Project was included in the Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Work Plan and Budget. Local artist Julia Ousley was competitively selected from a diverse pool of qualified Texas-based artists, through a proposal process outlined in the Fort Worth Public Art Master Plan.

About the Artwork

The community requested an artwork that would commemorate and celebrate the significance of their history and founders along with their place in Black history, including the Civil Rights Movement.

In keeping with the community's desire that the artwork contain a timeline, Artist Julia Ousley designed a walking labyrinth inlaid with engraved granite plaques that name distinguished founders of the Historic Carver Heights Community, interwoven with granite plaques chronicling significant events of the Civil Rights Movement. Areas of brick pavers define the labyrinth and frame its concrete footpath.

At the center of the labyrinth are three steel towers of different heights topped with cutouts of men, women and children, symbolizing generations of the community standing on the shoulders of their ancestors. Smaller, symbolic house forms accompany the central sculpture. These vertical elements act as a marker and help to draw people to the site.

It is expected that visitors to Plaza Circle will enjoy the walking path, experience the artwork and come away informed and inspired by the rich history of this unique neighborhood and its citizens.

About the Artist

An artist and architect, Julia Ousley's work is driven by the interaction of shape, form and balance; and her work is frequently marked with architectural as well as human symbols and signifiers. Her work engages with themes including the human body, the human condition, the built environment, and the place where these intersect.

Ousley holds a Masters of Fine Art from the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY and a Masters of Architecture from the University of Texas at Arlington. She has more than ten years' experience in public art, including commissions in Brooklyn, NY, San Antonio, TX, Orlando, FL, Tuscon, AZ and Carbondale, CO. In addition to public art, Ousley has an active sculpture practice with solo and group exhibitions around the state and across the country.

About Fort Worth Public Art (FWPA) - A City of Fort Worth program advised by the Fort Worth Art Commission and managed by the Arts Council of Fort Worth, FWPA was established in 2001 to create an enhanced visual environment for residents, commemorate the city's rich cultural and ethnic diversity, integrate the design work of artists into the development of the city's capital infrastructure improvements, and promote tourism and economic vitality in the city through the artistic design of public spaces. Learn more by visiting: www.fwpublicart.org.

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