

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Fort Worth Art Commission Public Hearing Will Rogers Memorial Center Historic Tile Murals



When: Thursday, November 21, 2019, 6:00 p.m. – (no later than) 8:00 p.m.

Where: Hazel Harvey Peace Center for Neighborhoods, Room 201 AB, 818 Missouri Avenue, Fort Worth, TX, 76104 [Free parking is available across Missouri Street]

The City of Fort Worth is currently having significant community conversations regarding racial equity in our city. In response to a citizen's concerns regarding the depiction of African-Americans in the 1936 mural on the façade of the Will Rogers Memorial Center Auditorium (section depicted above), the Fort Worth Art Commission is seeking comments from citizens to inform their recommendation to City Council of action(s) to consider with regard to the murals.

After opening remarks by Art Commission Chairman Robert Lee, the City of Fort Worth's Historic Preservation Officer, Murray G. Miller, will make a brief presentation. The presentation will be followed by Citizens Presentations. The public hearing will end no later than 8:00 p.m.

Sign Up to Speak

Citizens wishing to make 3 minute presentations to the Art Commission (*6 minutes if representing a group of 10 individuals who are in attendance*) are encouraged to download a Citizens Presentation card from (www.fwpublicart.org), fill it out, and email it to talkto@fwpublicart.org no later than 3:00 p.m. on November 21, 2019. The Art Commission Chairman will invite speakers to make their presentations in the order in which their cards were received by email. Citizens may also fill out cards at the meeting location prior to the Public Hearing starting at 5:45 p.m.

Citizens unable to attend may email remarks to talkto@fwpublicart.org or my mail comments to: Fort Worth Art Commission c/o Arts Council of Fort Worth, 1300 Gendy Street, Fort Worth, TX, 76107.

About the Murals

The Will Rogers Memorial Center was completed in 1936 in celebration of the Texas Centennial. The main facades of the auditorium and coliseum each feature a ceramic tile mural (10' in height by 200' in length) designed by Herman P. Koeppe and modified and fabricated by Kenneth Gale of the Mosaic Tile Company of Zanesville, Ohio. The auditorium mural illustrates the settlement and industrial development of the West, while the coliseum depicts the various settlers who shaped the cultural heritage of the Southwest. The historical subjects were selected by W. J. Hammond, head of the Department of History at Texas Christian University. (Source: *Cowtown Moderne* by Judith Cohen)

City Council accessioned the murals into the Fort Worth Public Art Legacy Collection in 2006.



Will Rogers Memorial Center Auditorium Tile Mural, 1937, by Kenneth Gale

About Fort Worth Public Art

Fort Worth Public Art is a City of Fort Worth program created to enhance the visual environment, commemorate the city's rich cultural and ethnic diversity, integrate artwork into the development of the City's capital infrastructure improvements, and to promote tourism and economic vitality. Managed by the Arts Council of Fort Worth with oversight of the Fort Worth Art Commission, Fort Worth Public Art strives for artistic excellence and meaningful community involvement. For more information, please visit www.fwpublicart.org.

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