



Anna Berke, Chair
Sharon Dennehy, Vice-Chair
Kat Zagaria Buckley
Phoebe Cole
Alison Gibbs
Ronnie Wilson, Creative Portland appointee
Kelly Hrenko, City Manager appointee
Stephanie Motter
Saa Rosenblatt
John Whipple
Sarah Michniewicz, City Councilor appointee

Management & Administration
Sean King, Urban Designer with Planning & Urban
Development Department

PORTLAND PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE

Wednesday, February 26, 2025
4:00 PM Online Via Zoom

1. Zoom Meeting Information

Due to the existence of an emergency or urgent issue the Portland Public Art Committee will conduct this meeting by remote methods/technology at the Zoom link provided below, in accordance with the requirements of 1 M.R.S. section 403-B and the City Council's Remote Participation Policy. Allow your computer to install the free zoom app to get the best meeting experience.

For more information on how to use Zoom, please go to: <https://www.portlandmaine.gov/remotepud>. Public comment will be taken; written comments may be submitted to publicart@portlandmaine.gov

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://portlandmaine-gov.zoom.us/j/81634418875> or One tap mobile : US:

+19292056099,,81634418875# or +13017158592,,81634418875#

Or Telephone: Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 929 205 6099 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 669 900 6833 or +1 253 215 8782

or +1 346 248 7799

Webinar ID: 816 3441 8875

International numbers available: <https://portlandmaine-gov.zoom.us/j/81634418875>

2. Call to Order (Berke)

- Roll call (King)
- January 15, 2025 meeting minutes

3. Governance/Board Development (Berke, Dennehy)

A. Committee chairs updates

4. Staff Updates

- A. Report of decisions at the meeting held on January 15, 2025.
- B. Public Art fund balance - no updates

5. Project Reports

- A. Community Art Grant
 - 1. Peace Action Maine and artist Stephen Oliver - discussion tabled until March 19, 2025
- B. Sarah Sze Artwork in Congress Square Park (Cole, Hancock, Whipple):
 - 1. Congress Square Redesign Phase B - staff preparing construction bid posting by end of February for park infrastructure project. Committee member to share updates from the Friends of Congress Square Park Capital Campaign Committee private fundraising.
- C. Conservation Projects - ACTIVE
 - 1. Jewell Box (Dennehy) - Committee member and/or staff to provide updates and coordination with service providers about possible alternatives to remediate issues with vandalism.
 - 2. Passing the Torch (Zagaria) - Committee member to provide updates for light fixture replacement within sculpture.
 - 3. Rustle Diptych II - Staff to provide updates to inground light fixture replacement.
 - 4. Langlais Birdhouse Heads - Staff has not received updates from Tuckerbrook Conservation LLC.
 - 5. Portland Bricks (Dennehy, Gibbs) - Committee members and/or staff to provide updates from artist Ayumi Horie.
 - 6. East Bayside Mural (Dennehy) - Committee member to provide updates based on Parks Department support to remove mural in Spring 2025.

6. Subcommittee Reports

- A. Acquisitions (formerly "Gifts") Subcommittee (Cole, Zagaria, Hrenko)
 - 1. Subcommittee members to share updates.
 - 2. Gift inquiry form from Libbytown Neighborhood Association.
 - 3. Gift inquiry form about India Street monument.
 - 4. Gift inquiry by Alice Spencer.
- B. Communications Subcommittee (Mottet Berks, Gibbs)
 - 1. Subcommittee members to share updates.
 - 2. Video project by USM Media Studies, request to utilize PPAC logo and graphics.
- C. Collection Management (formerly "Site Selection") Subcommittee (Dennehy, Givvs, Berke and Zagaria)
 - 1. Subcommittee members to share updates.
 - 2. Conservation assessment proposal for FY25 - staff and subcommittee members to distribute RFP to potential conservator to review proposals received at a later date.

7. Other Business

8. Public Comment

9. Meeting Adjourns

FY25 - Public Art Fund (July 2024-June 2025)

TOTAL PPAC Balance		
A	Total Balance (includes FY25)	\$ 366,690.23
B	Total Encumbrances	\$ 202,172.00
C	Remaining Balance	\$ 164,518.23

Remaining Encumbrances from approved budget plans			
	Activity	Description	Budget
A	Congress Square Public Art	New Commission - Sarah Sze artist	\$ 176,000.00
B	Bramhall Square Artwork	New Commission - Chris Miller artist	\$ 26,172.00
	Total Encumbered		\$ 202,172.00

FY25 - Proposed Budget Breakdown				
	Activity	Description	Proposed FY25 Budget	Current Budget Balance
A	Conservation and Maintenance	To cover routine maintenance, priority conservation items	\$ 10,000	\$ 6,100.00
B	Contingency Fund	To cover repairs, theft, relocation, Community Art grant, plaque purchase, etc.	\$ 10,000	\$ (1,856.30)
C	New Artwork	New acquisition + install:	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000.00
	Total FY25 Budget		\$ 50,000	\$ 34,243.70

FY25 Expenses	Funding Source	Total (PAID)	Project Notes
Taggart Objects Conservation LLC	Conservation and Maintenance	\$ 3,900.00	Wax protection (Hiker, Czar Reed), Pullen Fountain (PO #77136)
Maine Stone Scapes	Contingency	\$ 9,500.00	Loring memorial etched granite post work
Port City Glass	Contingency	\$ 2,023.90	Glass replacement at Jewel Box
Burr Signs	Contingency	\$ 332.40	Acrobatic Dogs sign at Jetport

FY25 Encumbrances	Funding Source	Total (UNPAID)	Action
Delta	Conservation and Maintenance	\$ 2,838.14	Purchase accent sculpture element (Quantity 4)
CBE	Conservation and Maintenance	\$ 3,043.00	Passing the Torch

Portland Public Art Application

Community Art Works Application (Pt 1)

The attached application must be completed. In brief, applicants should address the following:

1. Describe the conceptual vision for the Community Art Works project:

ASTRAGAL is a small faceted columnar sculpture intended to promote Peace individually and collectively. The sculpture's inspiration came from Peace Action Maine's desire to express a long term commitment to fostering peace, by the International Peace Pole Movement, and to honor the legacy of former board member Tina Malcolmson. Tina was a professor who studied the poetry of George Herbert, among others, and recited poetry at peace vigils. The sculpture's three primary sides feature text promoting peace in Maine and the World, and a poem titled **'Bright Where You Stand'** which is meant to inspire the individual. A fourth side features refractive graphic patterns inspired by the fresnel lens of a lighthouse.

The vision for the sculpture has evolved since members of Peace Action Maine initially engaged with representatives of the Portland Public Art Committee and as the beauty and potential of the Amethyst Waterfront Park site were revealed. The small columnar sculpture is designed to be site specific, inhabiting a small grassy area that divides two bench swings that offer a view of Casco Bay. The sculpture's faceted form and translucent colors/graphics are meant to resonate with the constantly changing light conditions of the surrounding sky and ocean, numerous weathered pilings that stand nearby in the surf, and more distant lighthouses. In fact, the form of the sculpture's frame is inspired by an **astragal**, the system used to enclose lighthouse lantern rooms with glass.

2. Identify the potential neighborhood site(s) for the art work;

Amethyst Waterfront Park serves the local community of Portland, including Downtown and Munjoy Hill, but also national and international visitors who arrive via nearby cruise ships to enjoy Portland and its waterfront attractions.

3. Explain what makes the potential site(s) important to the neighborhood;

The site provides serene setting for peaceful contemplation for adjacent neighborhoods, but also as a destination to serve a much broader constituent. The sculpture and its poetry are intended to enhance the sense of peace provided by the waterfront vista and the existing pair of swings. The addition of the peace pole sculpture can enhance the park as a destination, encouraging residents and visitors to pause and reflect.

4. Identify a non-profit organization that can receive funds on behalf of the project;

Peace Action Maine (PAM) is a Portland based organization that has promoted peace throughout Maine since 1982. PAM has both a 501C4 and 501C3 status (Maine Peace Fund arm). We have a core membership of 120, a mailing list of 833, and ongoing connections/collaboration with numerous peace and social justice organizations across Maine. PAM is also an affiliate of Peace Action National, an organization with over 70 autonomous affiliate and chapter organizations, and over 100,000 members.

5. Provide the contact info and mission statements of the team members and project lead:

Our Mission:

Peace Action Maine is a voice for education and a center for all people committed to disarmament and creative responses to conflict.

Stan Scott, Board Member and Treasurer
stan.scott@maine.edu
207-838-7927

Martha Spiess, Board Chair
mspiess@myfairpoint.net
207-232-8270

Stephen Oliver, Board Member and artist (project lead)
meta4ormosis@gmail.com
207-595-1334

6. List the skills or background desired in an visual arts professional:

Design, fabrication and installation skills utilizing multiple mediums that include: masonry, stainless steel welding, graphic design, resin fabrication.

7. Describe the scope of the visual arts professional's role:

Conceptual design
Proposal preparation
Design development
Fabrication and coordination with material suppliers
Installation

8. If there is an interest in engaging a particular visual arts professional or the application is coming from a visual arts professional, please provide a resume and slides of previous work. If a visual arts professional has not been selected, please list the qualifications desired.

Stephen Oliver
- Resume provided
- Portfolio examples provided

9. Detail sources of additional matching funds (cash and/or in kind sources).

Peace Action Maine will match project funds with current assets and/or donations.
Funds for a 50% Community Arts Program match are in place.
Board Member Stephen Oliver is providing in kind effort in the conceptual design/proposal stages.

10. Timeline for completion of project. (proposed)

2024

August 29th - Initial meeting with Sean King at Amethyst Park
October 16th - Present idea to Public Art Committee (for Annual Budget approval?)
November/December - Approval Process

2025

January-February - Approval/Contract Process, finalize graphic design of resin panels
March- Fabrication of stainless steel frame
April - Order digitally printed resin panels
May - Pick up resin panels, cut and edge finish sculpture's translucent cladding (4pcs.)
June - Installation (very minor excavation by hand, placement of concrete footing, stone base, and river stone surround.

Portland Public Art - Community Art Works Application (Pt 2)

Astragal, A Public Art Sculpture Proposal, Amethyst Park, Portland Maine

Submitted by: Stephen D. Oliver
207-595-1334
33 Kansas Road
Bridgton, ME 04009

On Behalf of: Peace Action Maine
PO Box 3842
Portland ME 04104

Statement of Intention:

Peace Action Maine proposes the installation of a custom designed and fabricated sculpture titled ***'Astragal'*** as a permanent addition to the City of Portland's Public Art collection through the Community Arts Works Program. The proposed sculpture relates thematically to the worldwide Peace Pole initiative, while contextualizing it to Maine and responding to the beautiful waterfront location of the Amethyst Park. This particular site stood out for its accessibility to both the local community and visitors while being rich aesthetically and metaphorically. In this location, the columnar sculpture is meant to resonate with many pilings that remain in the harbor, weathered remnants of old piers that lined the water's edge which offer a striking juxtaposition and a metaphor for the global peace pole movement.

The translucent columnar form of the ***'Astragal'*** sculpture is meant to be a striking beacon for peace, changing with existing light conditions and enhanced by sunrises and sunsets. The sculpture's form is triangular, but includes a faceted fourth side in the form of an inverted triangle. Each side communicate peace on global, local and individual levels utilizing color/ graphic design and text or poetry.



A pair of bench swings frame the central proposed sculpture site



Proposed sculpture location



Bench Swing and pedestrian activity



Waterfront view with pilings



Art Display in Amethyst Lot Park



Silhouettes of pilings at Amethyst Lot Park



Changing light conditions



Sunrise

Descriptions of 'Astragal' sculpture sides:

- **Side 1 - South Waterside:** Translucent blue with collage graphics that evoke the world's oceans with the vertical text reading: **'May Peace Prevail on Earth'** (This side would be viewed while traveling Southwest on the Eastern Promenade Trail towards the Ocean Gateway Pier with the waterfront and pilings on one's left side.)
- **Side 2 - North Waterside:** Translucent green graphics with collage that evoke the forests and Northern Lights of Maine with vertical text reading: **'May Peace Prevail in Maine'** (This text is meant to be viewed while traveling Northeast on the Eastern Promenade Trail with the waterfront and pilings on one's right side with the largest portion of Maine's coast in the distance.)
- **Side 3 - Inland Facing:** Translucent purple blend of colors reflecting Amethyst stone , collage graphics reflecting the horizon/coast with a poem a titled **'Bright Where You Stand'** occupies the side of the sculpture which faces Munjoy Hill and is tangential to the two adjacent bench swings that frame the sculpture site. Pedestrians on the Eastern Promenade would discover this poem while circulating around the sculpture. The intention is to convey the idea of 'Be the Peace', inspiring openness and kind actions that may further peace on all levels, a key core tenant of Peace Action Maine, and dear former board member, Tina Malcolmson, whom we would like to dedicate the sculpture too. We propose a small plate at

the base of the sculpture acknowledging Tina and Peace Action Maine without any logo per PPAC guidelines.

Poem, 'Bright Where Your Stand':

For peace be a light
Bright where you stand
With glimmering presence
Future command

As homeward beacon
Shining tide
Gift of solace
Place to land

One for each other
A rugged coast
Softened in unity
Shaped by the grace of time

Small plaques at base:

Memorial plaque

'Dedicated to peace worker, Tina Malcolmson by Peace Action Maine

Before her passing, Tina was a dedicated peace worker, and a professor who studied the poetry of George Herbert, that helped inspire the poem included in the design. Tina herself read poetry during peace festivals in Brunswick Maine and we would hope that the sculpture might serve as a place for others, of different backgrounds and organizations to do the same on the Portland Waterfront. Poetry readings could activate the space around the sculpture, similar to the way that temporary pianos have helped animate the space at Amethyst Park.

Title Plaque

Title: *ASTRAGAL*

Date: 2025

Artist: Stephen D. Oliver

Medium: Stainless steel, digitally printed architectural resin, granite, river-stone

Notes on Amethyst (purplish stone):

Purple amethyst is said to provide emotional support in the form of confidence and calmness. This includes protection from the negativity of stress and anxiety. Many people use this stone for work-related stress and meditation.

- **Side 4 - Facing directly waterside:** This fourth side features iridescent light refractive graphic patterns inspired by the fresnel lenses used in lighthouses. AS a narrow inverted triangle it enables the sculpture to retain three main sides for strength. The chamfering used to create this side is also used on the top to shed water.

Proposed Sculpture Location:

- Amethyst Park waterfront on a level grassy patch between two swing-sets that face the eastern promenade trail and waterfront. The site is ADA accessible.

Materials:

- **Structure:** 316L Stainless steel welded armature.
- **Cladding:** Digitally printed exterior grade architectural resin. This material allows for creative graphic design and imagery including text. It also comes in semi-transparent sheets. Semi-transparency will enable the sculpture to dynamically change in color and hue while circulating around it and based on changing sunlight/weather conditions.
- **Hardware:** 316L Stainless fasteners with EPDM washers
- **Base:** Raised stone platform (granite/or fieldstone) with space for a small label and memorial plaques. The base would incorporate drilled through stone to receive footing anchors.
- **Landscape surround:** A perimeter area of river-stone/gravel above landscape fabric framing the base of the sculpture. This limits organic matter from splashing on the sculpture during rainstorms and eliminates the need for mowing/edging where the sculpture meets the ground.
- **Footing:** Precast concrete with embedded 316L stainless steel threaded rod at sculpture mounting points. This footing would be covered by stone base and river-stone landscape surround.

Design/Construction: The sculpture is designed with triangulate structure and extremely weather resistant nautical grade materials. The design is also purposely simple to fabricate, assemble, install, and maintain which is reflected in the overall cost.

Dimensions/Shape:

Triangular with sides approximately 18" each

Height:

Approximately, 5-6"

Weight:

Approximately 100lbs excluding base and footing, an additional 100-150lbs

Title:

ASTRAGAL

Colors:

Blue, Green and Amethyst (purple/violet) in translucent and refractive combinations.

Staff recommends a mortared stone or poured in place concrete (possibly with an aggregate finish) in lieu of the loose gravel or river stone proposed. This is to avoid future maintenance concerns with mowing around the sculpture.

Technical Requirements and Description:

Maintenance and Safety:

- Constructed of the low maintenance, highly durable, weather and UV resistant materials including stainless steel and digitally printed exterior grade architectural resin which can be cleaned with gentle detergent or light power-washing if desired. The surface finish on the architectural resin is matte, enabling restoration in the case of minor abrasion.
- The sculpture is designed to shed standing water, snow and ice. The sloped top also enables rain to wash it off.
- The base extends a limited dimension from the sculpture to avoid creating a tripping hazard.
-

Proposed Schedule: (Upon Approval)

November - Consideration of proposal by PPAC

December - Consideration of City Council

2025

January - Contract Process

February - Finalize graphic design of resin panels

March - Fabrication of stainless steel frame

April - Order digitally printed resin panels, Fabricate formwork for precast concrete footing, Stone base fabrication, procure river-stone and landscape fabric.
Order label/memorial plaques.

May - Pick up resin panels, cut and edge finish sculpture's translucent cladding (4pcs.)

June - Installation (very minor excavation by hand, placement of concrete footing, stone base, and river stone surround, bolting down sculpture armature, cladding armature with precut resin.

Display Dates - Permanent

Removal Date - Permanent

Required Supporting Materials:

- Resume (see attached)
- Structural Sketches of the proposed work. (See attached)
- Detailed photo, map, or maquette of proposed piece on site. (see above)
- Up to ten images of relevant work with slide sheet (see attached)
- Optional statement of intention. (see above)
- Signage Listings (see above)

Supporting Materials - Resume

STEPHEN OLIVER

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD

THROUGH ART AND DESIGN

33 Kansas Road Bridgton, Maine 04009

Email: meta4ormosis@gmail.com Cell: 207-595-1334

Website: www.stayintheriver.com

EDUCATION

1998 RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN, Providence RI Presidential Scholarship
Master of Fine Arts Degree, Furniture Design w/ Public Art Concentration

1988 NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, Newark NJ Elson T. Killam
Scholarship
Bachelor of Architecture Degree

1986 E'COLES D'ART AME'RICAINES, Palais de Fontainebleau, France Summer
program in art, architecture, and landscape design.

EXPERIENCE:

PUBLIC ART / MUSEUM COMMUNITY ARTS ADMINISTRATION / EXHIBITION
DESIGN/ ARCHITECTURE/ CONSTRUCTION / FURNITURE DESIGN

2024

PARKLAND 17 NATIONAL MEMORIAL DESIGN COMPETITION, Parkland, FL

I was chosen as one of six finalists out of 52 entries. After securing a finalist position for this important memorial to the 17 lives tragically lost to gun violence on Valentine's Day of 2018, I recruited the leading Architectural firm of Wannemacher Jensen Architects (#1 Firm Award, FL AIA, 2023) to collaborate in the evolution of my initial concepts for the second stage of the competition. The title was '**The Transformation of Tears**' and combined 17 legacy poems which I authored to be etched into artistic glass prisms in a reflecting pool. The innovative design utilized digitally created concrete formwork to create elegant sculpted walls to be skim coated with ground glass. Landscape elements included 17 Pink Trumpet trees that bloom around the anniversary of tragedy and a Royal Poinciana Tree, marking the entry, which blooms brilliant orange in the Summer (the color of gun non-violence). The projected budget was \$1.2 Million.

2023

**AFRICATOWN INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL IDEA COMPETITION, Mobile AL
4th Place Winner**

My submission involved designing 15 venues along a 10 miles stretch of waterways deemed the 'Blueway' by the National Park Service. The design's elements included a yacht club, public spaces and pavilions at historic sites including the discovery site for the slave ship Clotilda. I also incorporated sculptures and large scale public art installations, including one spanning the Africatown Bridge, the largest physical element in the Mobile Alabama Skyline.

2022

**TARPON SPRINGS BLACK HERITAGE PUBLIC ART COMPETITION, Tarpon
Springs, FL**

Unanimous Winner

'Onward, Upward, and Forward Together' is a pair of sculptures designed for two sites and celebrates the history of Black and Bahamian sponge fisherman, the community that grew around it, and their collaboration with Greek sponge fisherman. During and extensive research and design process, a third sculptural element was added to this large commission, now completed in 2024. The project involved digital design, welding, site work and formwork for concrete. All aspects including design, fabrication, transportation, and installation were performed by myself. The budget was \$135,000

2021

INTERACTIVE PUBLIC ART GRANT FROM CREATIVE PINELLAS Largo, FL

Unanimous Winner

'Saw the Past, See the Future' was a touring interactive public art sculpture supporting of a county-wide initiative to build awareness of a help network for behavioral and mental health, and substance abuse. I utilized my training in furniture design to create a mobile sculpture that was a take off on a see-saw. The intent was to playfully highlight the importance in relationships to avert or remedy crisis in each other's lives. I performed all aspects of the tour including scheduling, set up and breakdown throughout Pinellas County for several months. I also designed and printed a companion t-shirt that was given out to those sharing their stories of personal trials or to those who might help someone else through a personal trial. The budget was \$6,000

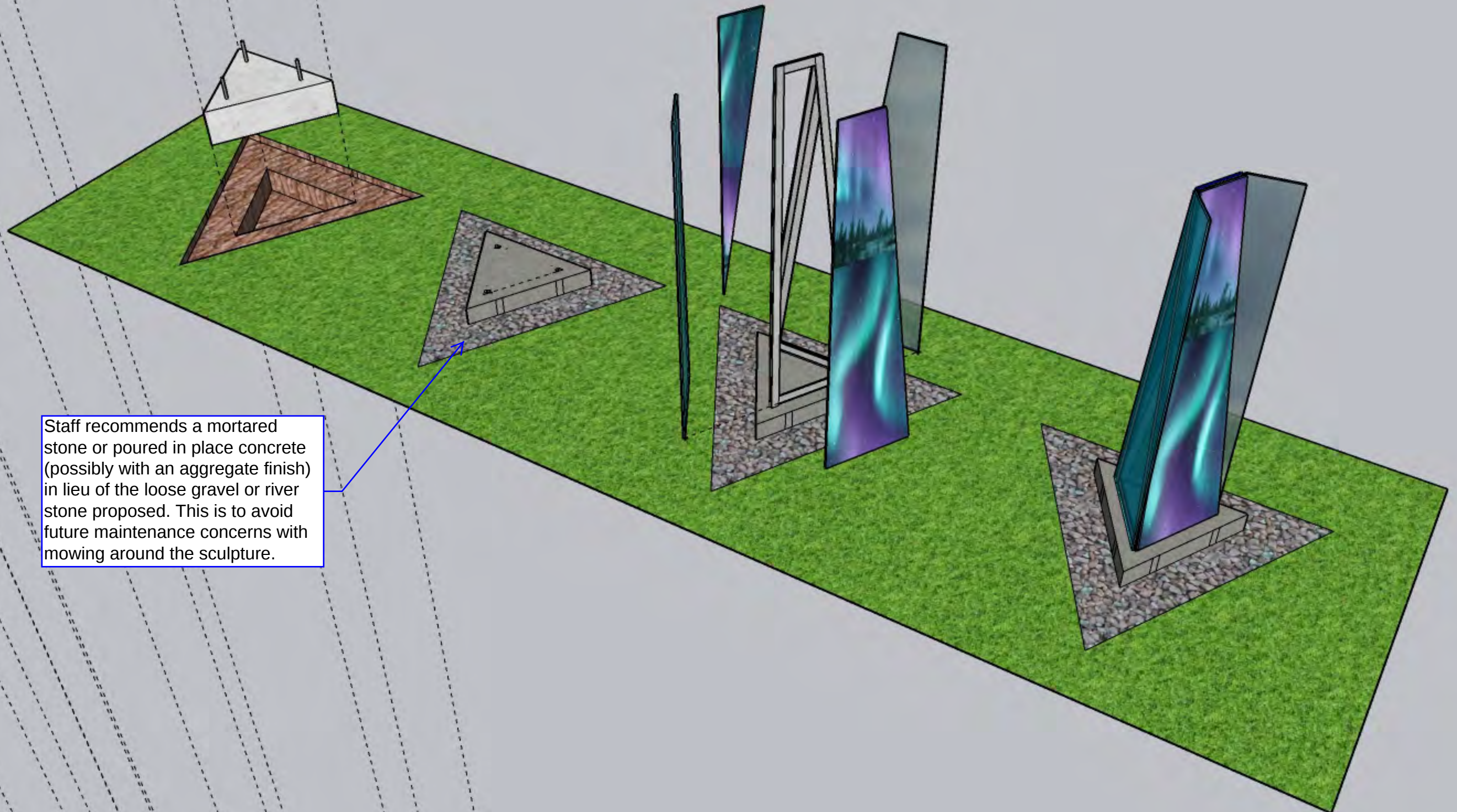
2014

PUBLIC ART SCULPTURE COMPETITION, Gulfport FL

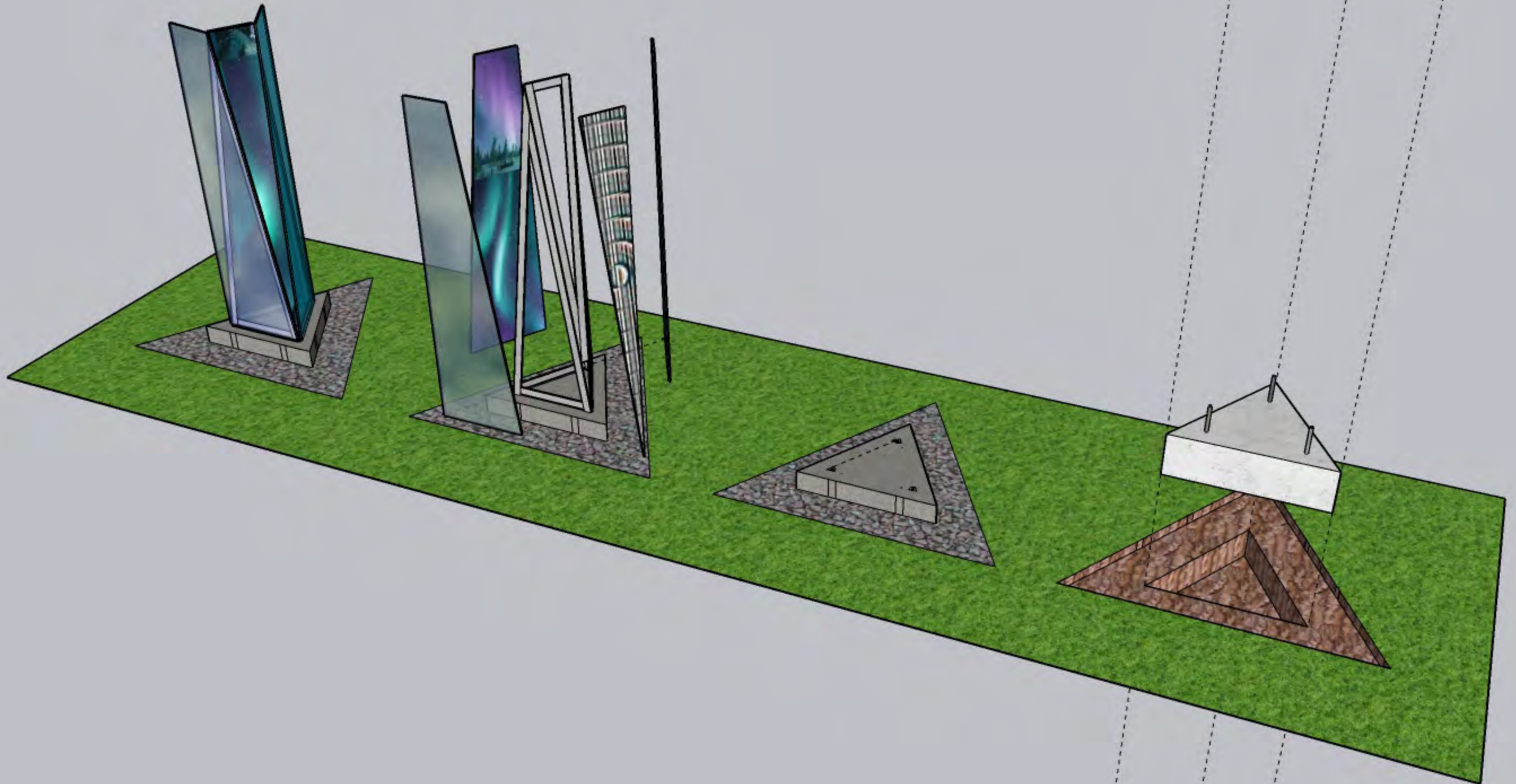
Unanimous Winner

'Best Kept Secret' is a celebration of embracing diversity and is comprised of laser cut stainless steel, copper, colored acrylic panels and acrylic painted aluminum. This project incorporated two short poems written about the town of Gulfport and its people. All aspects of the project including installation were performed by myself except for laser cutting. The budget was \$8,000

For more information see: <http://affinityartspeace.blogspot.com/>



Staff recommends a mortared stone or poured in place concrete (possibly with an aggregate finish) in lieu of the loose gravel or river stone proposed. This is to avoid future maintenance concerns with mowing around the sculpture.





FOR PEACE
BE A LIGHT

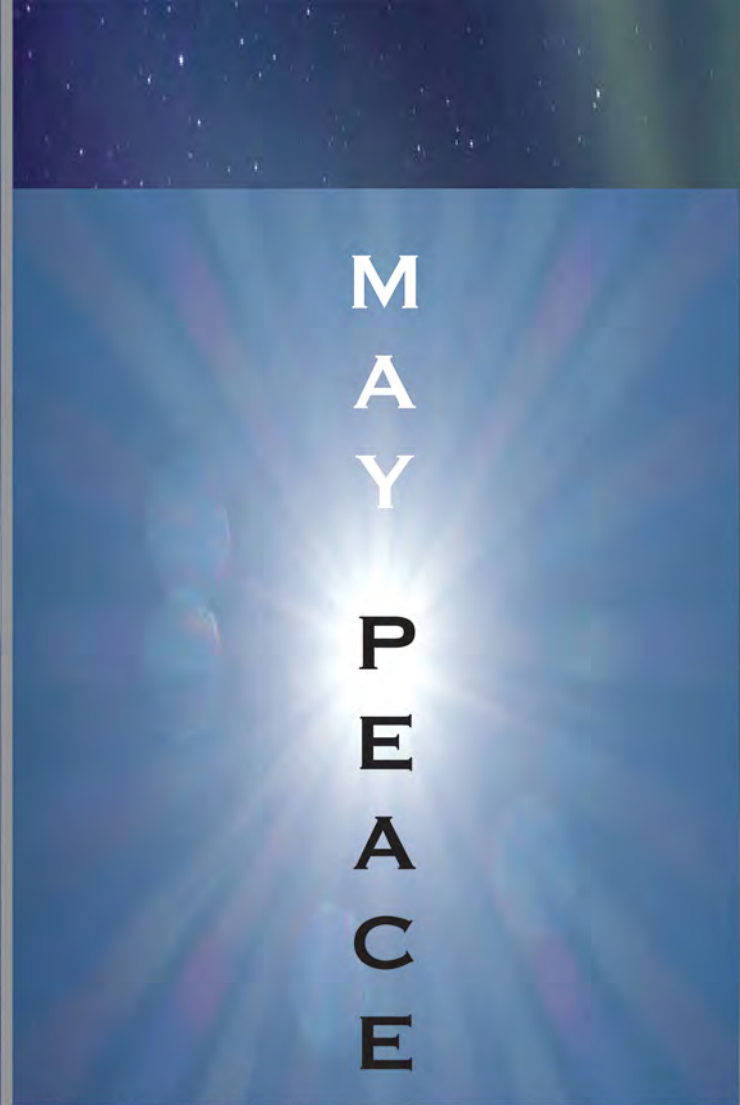
BRIGHT
WHERE
YOU
STAND

WITH
GLIMMERING
PRESENCE
FUTURE COMMAND

AS
HOMEWARD BEACON
SHINING TIDE
GIFT OF SOLACE
PLACE TO LAND



ONE
FOR EACH OTHER
A RUGGED COAST
SOFTENED IN UNITY
SHAPED BY
THE GRACE OF TIME

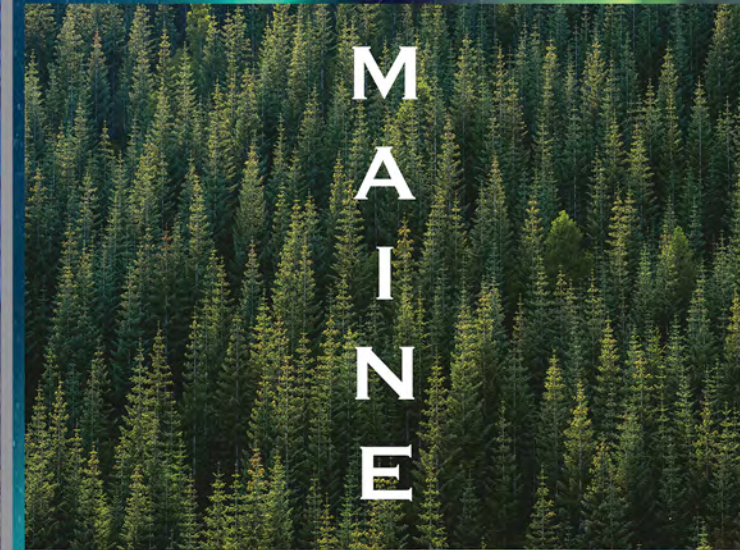


M
A
Y

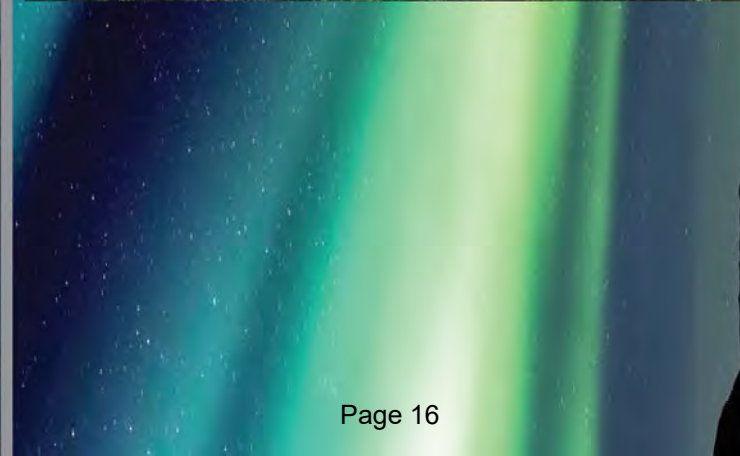
P
E
A
C
E



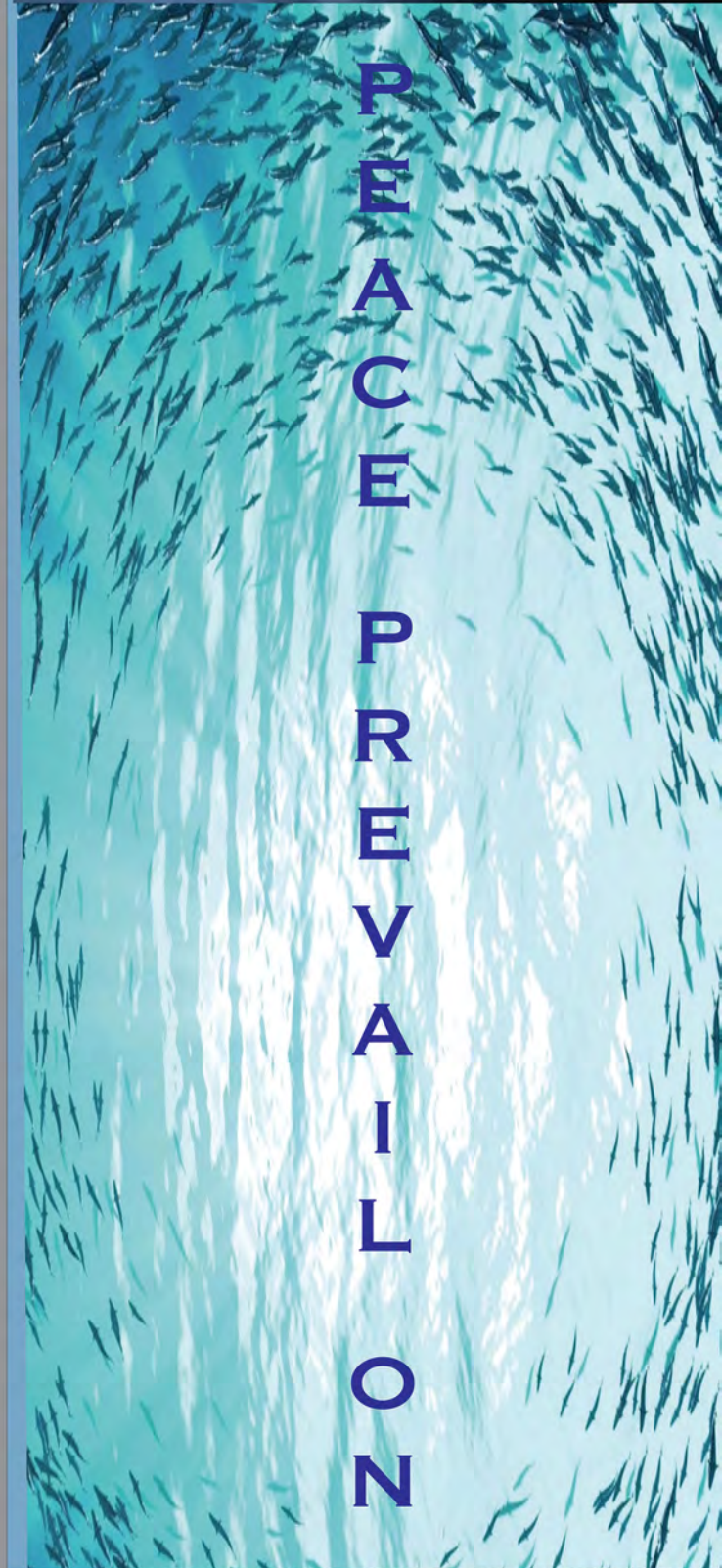
P
R
E
V
A
I
L
I
N



M
A
I
N
E



M
A
Y



P
E
A
C
E

P
R
E
V
A
I
L
O
N



E
A
R
T
H



Portland Public Art - Community Art Works Application

Astragal, A Public Art Sculpture Proposal, Amethyst Park, Portland Maine

Budget:

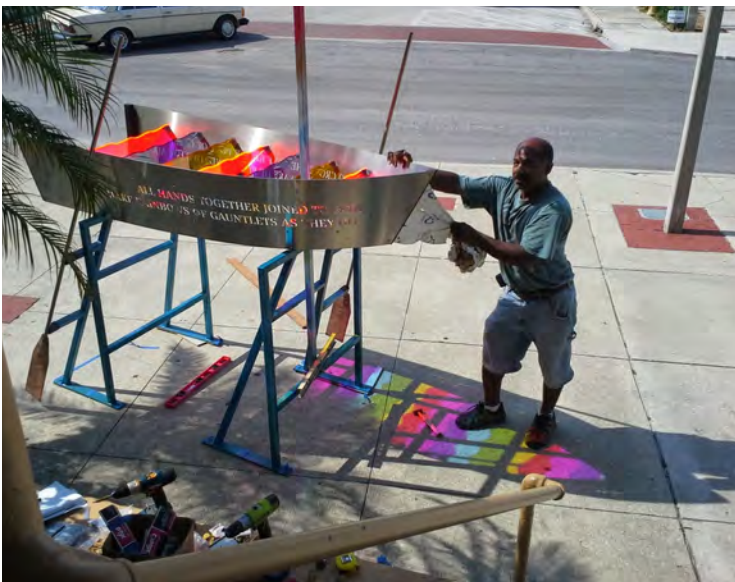
Astragal Components	Cost
Digitally Printed Resin	1,500
316L Stainless Steel	650
Stainless Hardware	50
Welding Sundries	50
Studio	400
Utilities	150
Concrete and Formwork	100
Stone	200
Labor	3,100
Transportation	300
Subtotal	6,500
Contingency	650
Total	7,150

Submitted by: Stephen D. Oliver
207-595-1334
33 Kansas Road
Bridgton, ME 04009

On Behalf of: Peace Action Maine
PO Box 3842
Portland ME 04104



BEST KEPT SECRET



INSTALLATION, & LIGHT EFFECT ON THE
GROUND BELOW SCULPTURE



VIEW FROM BELOW

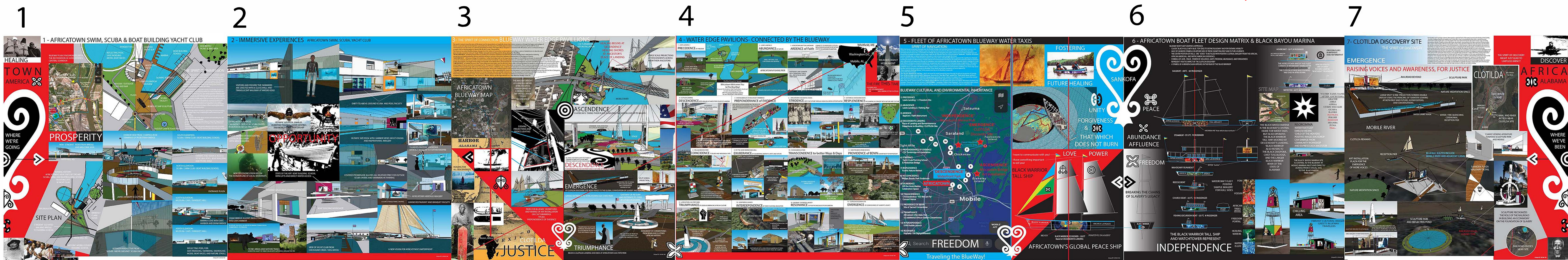


SUNRISE THROUGH KEEL HOLE

Supporting Materials - Relevant
experience and artist examples of
previous work

Presentation Boards in order

Supporting Materials - Relevant experience and artist examples of previous work



Presentation Boards in alternative order, revealing Sankofa Message



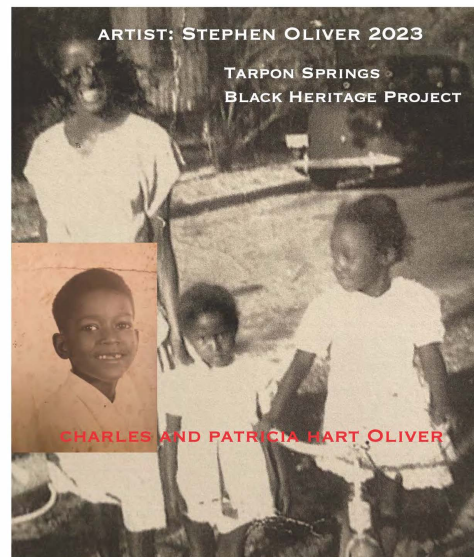
Unique ID: 129160-104



Forward and Upward Together - South View From Street



Resin Pickets and Corner Detail



Interior View
(Sculpture encloses drainage /Rain garden area)

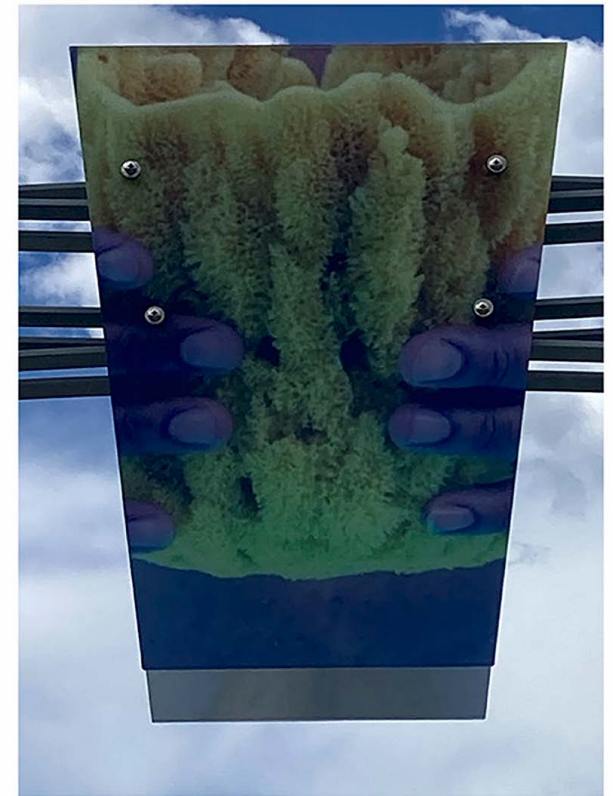


North View featuring 'Billy The Kid Emerson'

Supporting Materials - Relevant
experience and artist examples of
previous work



ONWARD TOGETHER', Tarpon Springs Black Heritage Project
- Sculpture#1 at the Sponge Docks



Top Detail Facing The City



Sculptural Way-finding Element
(sculpture in background)

Supporting materials - Relevant experience and artist examples of previous work

Embrace of 17 Life Legacies

Alyssa Miriam Alhadeff, 14

*Love still streams
through the tears
for a miracle*

*A gift of life
A joy that brought laughter
That grew in beauty and
boldness
To strive and discern
Beyond her years*

*A gift to the world
Rising each morning
Spreading sunshine*

*A gift to those around her
Who look toward infinity
As love streams through the
tears*

*A gift on Valentine's day
A life sparkling like diamonds
The sweetness of a smile*

*A legacy that still renders
miracles
Each time and place the words
I LOVE YOU
Begin a new day*

I read that Alyssa's mother told her that she loved her while dropping her off at school and found that very poignant and universal. I then learned she also gave her a special gift because it was Valentine's Day.

I thought about how a parent might first shed tears of joy when welcoming their child into the world, how love would stream through those tears of joy. I tried to express how this same love is a constant, even through tragedy. The example of this exchange is a universal call for us to treasure our loved ones every day.

I learned that she excelled in debating competitions and soccer which exemplified her growth. I loved learning that her soccer team began wearing her number '8' sideways to represent infinity. Each thing I learned help structure and color the poem.



'The Transformation of Tears', Parkland 17 Memorial

- Art Glass Prism Memorials with original Life Legacy Poems (example)