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What to Ask Before Applying for a Public Art Commission

Regina Chavez Chapman is Arts Program Manager for Albuquerque International Sunport. This article is a summary of a presentation she gave as part of the Harwood Center Public Art Workshops.

Imagine you are the artist of a mural mistakenly painted over by maintenance crews; or of a metal sculpture that was rebuilt by a contractor who significantly improved your version; or of a sculptural fountain that costs over $100,000 in annual maintenance because of poor design. In these true scenarios, the artist, the public or both ended up dissatisfied. This article will offer questions that every artist should ask themselves and a public art program before applying for and accepting a public art commission.

A project committee, usually comprised of artists, architects, site and community representatives, and an arts administrator, is often used to select public art. The committee's recommendation is then forwarded for passage by others in the governmental food chain. If accepted, which could require more approvals, a contract is drawn up between the contracting agency and the artist. Here are a few contractual points to be aware of before you apply:

- **Design Change:** no one wants to limit creativity, but the public wants to know what they are getting. Any substantial change in the scope, design or material of the work must be approved in writing and in advance.
- **Time of Performance:** deadlines can be critical to the project’s success. Are you prepared to meet them?
- **Compensation:** payments are usually made based upon the progress of the project. Will your cash flow support the project’s payment schedule?
- **Guarantee:** a typical guarantee on workmanship and material is one year. This includes work done by the artist and subcontractors. Ask yourself; will the colors and surfaces hold up over time, the elements, graffiti, and kids climbing? Are you current with the technology of your art? Have your materials held up well over time? Will your materials hold up to the stress of a larger scale if asked to create a larger work of art? Do your subcontractors guarantee their workmanship and can you guarantee their work?
- **Maintenance Instructions:** be prepared to provide written maintenance instructions for your artwork. Can anyone do the repairs and maintenance? Should special materials and equipment be used? Do you wish to be notified for all maintenance and repairs? Are you aware of any specific maintenance practices that could damage your art?
- **Insurance:** be prepared to show proof of commercial general liability, automobile, transportation/cartage, all risk installation, and workers comp.

Sounds like a lot, but it will protect you in the long run.

- **Copyright and Removal or Relocation:** who will own the copyrights to your work of art? If for any reason the work must be removed or moved to a new location, the contracting agency must make a reasonable attempt to notify the artist in writing per the Visual Artists Rights Act (VARA) of 1990. Information about copyright and VARA can be found on the Internet or at a public library.
- **Repairs and Restoration:** the contracting agency will make a reasonable effort to consult with the artist concerning substantial repairs and restoration to the work.
- **Other Considerations:** does your work comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and address general safety concerns? Does it require special lighting, temperature and/or humidity controls, and are these addressed in the contract? Will reasonable measures be taken to ensure that your art is protected from unnecessary abuse? Does the contracting agency have policies for deaccessioning (permanently removing) art? Do you want the right to buy back your art?

It takes time to build an exceptional reputation as an artist, but it only takes one project gone bad to destroy it. Become familiar with the Visual Artists Rights Act of 1990. Understand your contract before signing. Enjoy the process and have fun with your public art!
Pojoaque Wellness Center and Pojoaque High School seek to commission an artist to work with the Pojoaque High School art students in the design and creation of a ceramic mural for the indoor swimming pool at the Pojoaque Pueblo Wellness Center. The design of the mural will be created in conjunction with the students. The final mural should be bright and lively and reflect the importance of water. Pojoaque means “water drinking place” in Tewa. Project amount: $7,750. Open to NM residents only. For more information, contact Karen Rudd 505/890-5453. For a prospectus, contact Art in Public Places, NM Arts, PO Box 1450, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1450, 505/827-6490, instate toll free 800/879-4278.

Prospectus #139
DEADLINE: AUGUST 31, 2000

The Parkview Elementary School Local Selection Committee in Socorro seeks to commission an artist to enhance their new library. The style is open and a variety of permanent materials will be considered, including paint, recycled materials, mixed media, tile, fabric, etc. The artist will create the work but the committee would like to promote student ownership and arts education through some involvement with the children. Students could perhaps collect materials, collaborate on theme or design ideas and/or create a border. The artwork should spark the imagination and promote literacy and the joy of reading. Project amount: $6,000. Open to NM residents only. For more information, contact Karen Rudd 505/890-5453. For a prospectus, contact Art in Public Places, NM Arts, PO Box 1450, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1450, 505/827-6490, instate toll free 800/879-4278.

Prospectus #140
DEADLINE: JULY 31, 2000

Piedra Vista High School Local Selection Committee seeks to commission a two-dimensional mural for an interior wall of the library in the new high school. The committee is looking for an artist to create a 4 ft. x 8 ft. mural that promotes school pride by depicting a panther, the school’s mascot. The committee suggests a Florida panther, which is a dark mottled brown, in a natural New Mexico setting. Artists will be required to submit a brief sketch of the proposed mural. Project amount: $5,000. Open to NM residents only. For more information, contact Karen Rudd 505/890-5453. For a prospectus, contact Art in Public Places, NM Arts, PO Box 1450, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1450, 505/827-6490, instate toll free 800/879-4278.

Prospectus #141
DEADLINE: AUGUST 31, 2000

New Mexico Arts seeks applications from printmakers, photographers and other artists working in multiples for 9 residencies to take place in NM high schools: Corona Schools, Farmington High, Gallup High, Goddard High, Jemez Valley High, Los Lunas High, Lovington High, Portales High, and West Las Vegas High School. Artists will plan the residency in collaboration with teachers in these schools, conduct a ten day hands-on program for students, and sell 15 prints of one of their artworks for permanent display at each of the participating schools. Selected artists will receive $6,250 for the first residency to cover the cost of their time, supplies, and purchase of 15 prints from one original. If an artist is selected by more than one school, they will be paid an additional $1,750 to cover the second residency and supplies. Residencies will take place in school year 2000-01. Open to NM residents only. For more information, contact Karen Rudd 505/890-5453. For a prospectus, contact Art in Public Places, NM Arts, PO Box 1450, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1450, 505/827-6490, instate toll free 800/879-4278.

Prospectus #142
DEADLINE: AUGUST 31, 2000

Selection Committee wishes to purchase or commission exterior three-dimensional artwork for the baseball and soccer fields. Artwork should be fun, playful, animated, and accommodate children. Artwork must be durable as there is no shade, minimal security, and plenty of wind. The committee is open to a variety of creative ideas and locations around the fields. A weather vane or clock to be placed on top of the blue metal-roofed concession stand are among some suggested ideas. Open to NM residents only. Project amount: $6,500. For more information, contact Karen Rudd 505/890-5453. For a prospectus, contact Art in Public Places, NM Arts, PO Box 1450, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1450, 505/827-6490, instate toll free 800/879-4278.

The Cultural Corridors: Public Art on Scenic Highways program would like to notify artists of an upcoming project commemorating the City of Santa Fe and its place along the Camino Real. $120,000 will be available to commission an experienced public artist or artist team to create a site-specific exterior artwork. Applications will include up to ten slides of previous work, a current resume, a one page written proposal and a proposal sketch. This project is a partnership of New Mexico Arts, New Mexico State Highway Department and the City of Santa Fe. Open to all US residents. You must receive the prospectus to apply to this project. To be placed on a mailing list to receive the prospectus when it’s available, contact NM Arts, PO Box 1450, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1450, 505/827-6490, instate toll free 800/879-4278.
The City of Albuquerque announces a Public Art Project for Tres Placitas Park, a new five acre park located on Cibola Loop and Cuba Rd. NW, near Cibola High School. The Tres Placitas community is a unique neighborhood recently developed by a non-profit housing developer, designed primarily for first-time home buyers. The intent for the outdoor sculpture/work of art is to reflect community ideals, and celebrate the dream of home ownership, for both adults and children. The Planning Committee is interested in all styles or forms of art. The sculpture and its site will become a gathering place for children and adults and it must be accessible to persons with disabilities. The site is at the southern portion of the park and includes either the grass area; along the trail through this section; and/or, the less improved, natural, native plants area. Open to all artists residing in New Mexico. Project amount: $50,000. Site improvements will be provided by the Park developer. For a Prospectus, please contact Public Art Program/CIP, City of Albuquerque, PO Box 1293, Albuquerque, NM 87103, (505) 768-3829, http://www.cabq.gov/cip/cipartr2.html

**Instate Opportunities**

**DEADLINE: JULY 21, 2000**

The City of Farmington Division of Cultural Affairs and the Northwest New Mexico Arts Council announce their third annual Regional Juried Art Show, Sept. 30 through November 17, 2000. Juror is internationally known photographer Oscar Lozoya. Open to all artists 18 years or older, residing in NM, UT, CO and AZ. For a prospectus, send a $10 SASE to: City of Farmington Division of Cultural Affairs, 3041 E. Main St., Farmington, NM 87402. Lozoya will be giving a two-day photography workshop Sept. 28-29, 2000 at the Henderson Fine Arts Center of San Juan College in Farmington. For more information or to register for the photographic workshop, contact Jim Burgess at San Juan College, 4601 College Blvd., Farmington, NM 87402, 505/326-3311.

**DEADLINE: DECEMBER 31, 2000**

New Blood: New Mexico/Sangre Nuevo: Nuevo Mexico 2001. Call for entries for emerging artists currently residing in NM without commercial gallery representation. All media, fresh thought and technique encouraged. Exhibition April 6-27, 2001, Van De Griff Galleries, 688 Canyon Rd., Santa Fe. Opportunities for promotion, exposure, sales and representation. Submit 8 quality slides or photos of current work, 100 word artist's statement, SASE and a $20 administrative fee to: Artwork, 1701a. Lena St., Santa Fe, NM 87505. For more info, contact: artworksfe@aol.com

**MAY 25 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 29**

The Los Alamos County Art in Public Places Board, Los Alamos County Lodgers’ Tax Advisory Board and Los Alamos National Bank are jointly sponsoring the 8th Annual Summer Sculpture Exhibit. Shidoni Foundry/Gallery provided the sculptures for the exhibit, which is entitled “Past, Present and Future.” Visitors may view the exhibit inside the County Municipal Building and outside around nearby Ashley Pond. For more information, contact Sheila Evans, Los Alamos County Public Works Dept., at 505/662-8118.

**Upcoming issues of the bulletin and prospectuses are available on our web site at: www.nmarts.org**
Wildlife Artists Selected for Game and Fish Building

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish Local Selection Committee (LSC) selected four finalists for the public art project to be located at their new building in Santa Fe. The LSC sought to commission an artist or team to create an interactive and educational artwork for the central area of the lobby. The decision was very difficult since 37 New Mexico artists applied. Each of the finalists chosen worked in a different media.

Dani Drewnicky of Sandia Park, carves wonderful wood reliefs of animals. She loves nature and wildlife and works as a volunteer art teacher at San Antonio Elementary School in the east mountains. There she works with the students to instill a sense of delight in the wildlife and cultures of the area.

Albuquerque painter Sharon Higgins creates large paintings depicting the wildlife and nature of New Mexico. She has done several commissions throughout the state for various public facilities and the New Mexico State Fair. Artist Mary O’Brien of Albuquerque uses many different art media to illustrate the natural world. For the Game and Fish project, she submitted slides of her ceramic tile work that depicted animals and their habitats. Through her artwork, she wishes to encourage an appreciation of the surrounding area’s natural beauty.

Sculptor Evelyn Rosenberg of Albuquerque uses metals, mixed media and explosives to create her works of art. She has done many commissions using animals and nature as the theme of the artwork. Each piece she creates is very site-specific and is dictated by the site and its users.

New Mexico Tech Finalists

From a pool of 47 talented artists who applied to the New Mexico Tech project, four artist teams were selected as finalists. The artists in the competition were from throughout the United States and exhibited a great deal of diversity and use of media.

The artist team of Douglas Warnock, Susan Gamble, and Roberto Delgado of Los Angeles was selected based on each artist’s use of different media and the prospect of how they would collaborate to create a unique artwork for the site. All of the artists work three-dimensionally and have created large site-specific public artworks.

Notice To All Artists Under Contract with New Mexico Arts

For contracts instituted this spring, NM Arts has combined several tasks on one invoice to simplify and speed up the payment procedure. The Final Invoice is to be submitted by the artist only after the work of art has been delivered, installed with plaque, all documentation specified in the contract has been sent to NM Arts, and has all the required signatures. The Final Invoice not only requires the Artist’s and the Project Director’s signatures, but also that of the Owner Agency signifying acceptance of the work. We believe that this step will shorten the time that the Artist must maintain insurance on the artwork, as the Notice of Acceptance transfers title and ownership to the Owner Agency.

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING MODIFIED REQUIREMENTS WHEN INVOICING NM ARTS FOR FINAL PAYMENT:

- The project plaque must be installed at the same time as the artwork.
- Invoices must have all required signatures.
- The “Notice of Acceptance” area must have the proper signature.
- Documentation must be attached to all FINAL invoices.
- NMA will still provide invoices that follow Section 3.
- Compensation/Payment of the contract

A subscription to the Art in Public Places Bulletin, published bi-monthly by NM Arts, is available at no cost by calling the AIPP Staff at (505) 827-6490 or instate (800) 879-4278. For inclusion in the August/September 2000 Bulletin, submit copy and/or photos no later than July 1, 2000. Please address correspondence regarding this publication to: Carla Sanders, NM Arts, P.O. Box 1450, Santa Fe, NM 87504 (505) 827-6490 or instate at (800) 879-4278, fax (505) 827-6043.
Los Angeles artist Lloyd Hamrol creates monumental stone and masonry artworks combined with earthworks. His artworks imbue a sense of mystery and are reminiscent of ancient ruins. He has completed numerous public artworks throughout the United States.

The artist team of Howard and Kathleen Meehan of Santa Fe enjoy surprising the viewer by the inclusion of unexpected elements in their artwork. They feel that it keeps the viewer intrigued. They are seasoned public artists who have created numerous public art projects both in New Mexico and across the nation.

Masayuki Nagase, a stone carver from Berkeley, California, creates massive stone environments. Her works create a timeless, monumental ambiance as if nature itself sculpted the rocks and their surroundings. She has created site-specific artworks throughout the world.

State’s Public Art Program Recognized by NEA

New Mexico Arts has received a letter from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) congratulating the agency for one of its most innovative public art programs, Cultural Corridors: Public Art on Scenic Highways.

“Cultural Corridors is this country’s best example of public art on trails and highways,” wrote Anthony Tighe, NEA Intergovernmental Affairs Specialist. “We congratulate New Mexico Arts in creating a unique partnership with the New Mexico Highway and Transportation Department that supports outstanding public art.”

Tighe, together with representatives from the US Department of Transportation, the White House and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, attended a presentation on the Cultural Corridors program given in March by New Mexico Arts Public Art Administrator Carla Sanders at the National Millennium Trails meeting in Annapolis, Maryland. Cultural Corridors, an initiative of the Art in Public Places program, represents a partnership of New Mexico Arts, the State Highway & Transportation Department and communities that utilizes federal highway transportation enhancement funds with state and local matches. The Art in Public Places program promotes public art as a resource for education, advocacy and economic opportunity throughout New Mexico.

Suspended in Space

The University of New Mexico at Los Alamos selected Santa Fe sculptor Gina Telcoci to create the artwork for the new Student Services Building. The artwork is entitled “Natural Order” and will consist of three to five hanging forms. Each will be a simplified, abstracted, organic form. The forms will be constructed of large scale reed and other natural materials. The construction technique for the artworks will echo traditional basket-making. The pieces will be stained with acrylic colors in muted hues of the earth. Gina is a sculpture instructor at Santa Fe Community College and a professional artist.

Funding for New Mexico Arts and its programs is provided by the State of New Mexico and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

ABQ ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Eight seniors at Los Volcanes Senior Center on the Westside of Albuquerque helped produce and set tiles for a three-panel mural titled, “Los Volcanes.” The mural by Placitas artist Daisy Kates depicts the volcanoes on the West Mesa. The individual panels illustrate a similar view in different aspects and colors. The borders around the scenes include pictorial tiles depicting plants, animals and other symbols representing the life and natural forms found on the west mesa. The mural will be dedicated June 28, 2000 at 10:30AM. The project was funded by New Mexico Arts’ Art in Public Places Program and the City of Albuquerque Public Art Program.

On Saturday, May 6, the North Valley of Albuquerque celebrated the dedication of two new sculptures, “First Furrow” by Susan Grant Raymond of Colorado and “Tree of Life” by Beverley Magennis of Albuquerque. “First Furrow,” a bronze depicting the strength and joy of the agricultural history of the North Valley is located at the Gerald Cline Police substation at 5408 Second St. NW. Located on North Fourth St. just south of Montaño Blvd., “Tree of Life” is a ceramic tile mosaic landmark welcoming all to the North Valley and depicting images from the earliest cultures of Mexico and New Mexico.

SUSAN GRANT RAYMOND
Gerald Cline Police Substation
Albuquerque Public Art Program
First Furrow
bronze sculptures

BEVERLEY MAGENNIS
Fourth and Montaño NW
Albuquerque
Public Art Program
Tree of Life
ceramic tile mosaic