

## **GIFTS OF PUBLIC ART**

On occasion a generous benefactor will propose a gift of public art to the City of Baltimore. While the City is highly appreciative of donations of artwork, it is not always able to accept these gifts and the responsibilities associated with owning an artwork. Conscientious ownership of public art requires a commitment to complete regular maintenance of the work and grounds that surround the piece, as well as a commitment to conserve and protect it.

In addition, the City, the Public Art Commission and The Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts must cope realistically with the economic and administrative obligations inherent in responsible ownership of an artwork. Therefore, donated artworks can only be accepted if the donor has agreed to cover the entire costs of installation, including (but not limited to) any alterations to the landscape or area around the artwork that are needed to allow the artwork to appear aesthetically appropriate in its chosen location and any architectural or engineering services required for safe installation. The donor must also sign the Conservation & Maintenance Agreement that requires a commitment from the donor to cover conservation expenses for at least 10 years.

When contemplating the donation of public artwork to the City that has not been created, the Commission requires that the potential donor consult the Commission prior to the choice of the artist or artwork. The purpose of this consultation is to introduce the potential gift and donor to the Commission and provide the donor with guidance in both the choice of the artists and the location of the proposed artwork. This consultation will be coordinated by the Commission staff.

The Commission reserves the right to reject any commissioned work of art submitted for approval without prior consultation and approval of the Commission.

The Public Art Commission must consider the following when reviewing a proposed gift of artwork:

- Whether the artwork appropriately fits into and adds value to the City's public art collection,
- Will the City have a suitable location for the work,
- And, does the artwork require a reasonable or excessive amount of maintenance and conservation?

## **STEPS FOR PRESENTATION TO THE COMMISSION**

1. Prospective donors should begin by contacting the Public Art Coordinator at the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (410-752-8632), who is charged with staffing the Commission, to prepare for and schedule the consultation and presentation to the Public Art Commission. As the Commission schedule is often full, the donor should be in contact with the staff as early as possible to allow enough time to prepare for the presentation and to allow for the process of site selection to begin.

2. Commission staff will give general guidelines to assist the donor with preparation to the Commission. The donor should keep in mind that the goal for the presentation is to provide enough materials to allow the Commission to get a strong sense of what the actual artwork will look like, information on the medium employed in the work, installation requirements, knowledge of the artist's vision for the work and a short explanation as to why the donor wishes to donate the work to the City.
3. All presentations must be made by the donor or donor's representative and must include the following:
  - At least three electronic images from various perspectives (in a Powerpoint presentation or in jpeg format) of the proposed donation; if the artwork already exists, images that view the artwork from every angle should be prepared; if the artwork is in the planning stages, as complete a representation as possible should be prepared, along with several other examples of the artist's work.
  - If the materials used in the work are unique, a sample of that material should also be included in the presentation along with any appropriate material specifications. Commission staff should be consulted to advise if this is necessary.
  - Information on the methods of fabrication and how the artwork will be installed.
  - The artwork's maintenance and conservation needs.
  - A history of the artwork and artist, along with any other pertinent information.
  - A brief statement explaining why the donor wants to contribute this generous gift of artwork to the City.

### **OUTCOME OF PRESENTATION/VOTING**

The Commission may vote immediately following the presentation and discussion or in an upcoming meeting pending resolution of outstanding questions. The review process will generally have one of the following outcomes:

**Outcome 1.** The Commission may vote immediately following the presentation to accept the proposed artwork. In this instance, the Commission may provide additional input on the possible site for the artwork. The Commission staff then works with the donor, artist, affected City agency and community, and other installation professionals to see the project through to completion.

**Outcome 2.** The Commission may vote immediately following the presentation to accept the proposed artwork with certain conditions (these conditions may vary from artwork to artwork). If the donor and City agree to the conditions, the Commission staff then works with the donor, artist, affected City agency and community, and other installation professionals to see the project through to completion.

**Outcome 3.** The Commission may postpone voting until an upcoming meeting. The Commission may then ask the donor to prepare additional information on the artwork, artist, materials, installation procedures, etc.; may seek additional input from outside professionals or the community; or may want to conduct further research and discussion.

**Outcome 4.** After the initial presentation to the Commission or after additional information on an artwork has been provided to the Commission in subsequent meetings, The Commission may also choose to not approve a proposed gift. If the artwork is not approved, a donor may resubmit the proposed gift during the next Commission term; these terms correspond with each Mayoral term.

### **SITE SELECTION**

Because of the coordination necessary between various City agencies and communities involved in artwork placement, the task of identifying possible suitable locations for the donated artwork is the responsibility of the Commission Staff. When recommending a location, members of the Commission staff should take into consideration any input from the Public Art Commission and the donor or artist, any risk factors associated with various locations, the durability of the materials used in the artwork, the artist's vision for the work, the community impact of artwork placement, the impacted City Agencies, and any other site or logistic challenges. The Commission Staff will present these options to the Public Art Commission who will make the final decision on site location.