



Rotten City to Fertile Ground: Emeryville's Transformative Investment in Public Art

Amber Evans,
Project Manager, Emeryville
Art in Public Places Program

From pejorative to Pixar ...



BRIAN GOGGIN

Herd Instinct

2001

(Site-specific installation for Emerytech, 1400 65th St.
Emeryville, CA USA)

This slide show was prepared to share the collective work of many people's effort to move Emeryville from what some have pejoratively called everything from: a big box dystopia to IKEAville to desecrated land and perhaps most memorably "rotten"

to a place that above all else, embraces creativity whether among art works or new biopharmaceuticals or curing cancer or reimaging mushrooms as steaks or jackets.



**Mudflat sculptures
put Emeryville and
art together early on**

Mudflat art in Emeryville was first installed in 1965 and removed in 1989 by Caltrans. These installations linked Emeryville to public art broadly as an artist community, but more specifically to the CA College of Arts & Crafts. “Tremendous dragons, huge camels, knights in fantastic armor, a giant Edith Ann, plywood castles, cactus, missiles, thistle, madonnas and prima ballerinas have burgeoned at one time or another,” Chronicle columnist Margot Patterson Doss wrote in 1977, describing the art she found on a walk through the mudflats.

These creative endeavors’ loss are deeply mourned by the entire region and acutely felt in Emeryville

Emeryville’s Public Art Master Plan envisions a permanent installation in the uplands at the Ashby interchange evocative of the scale and imagination of these works. Children in Emeryville are being encouraged to play with driftwood supported by community grants. Pangea Sea Walls Mural Festival artist, Apex, captured one work as here - > in his mural there.

To date efforts to install new works in BCDC’s jurisdiction on the shoreline have not been successful; but murals, as here capture some of the ephemeral



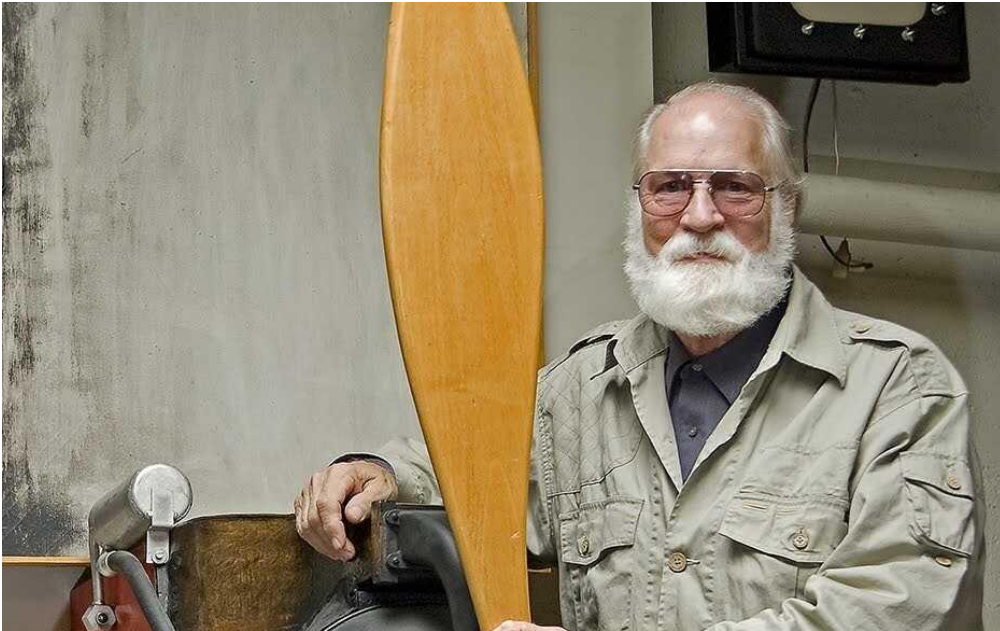
Photo: Seymour Rosen © [SPACES \(Saving and Preserving Arts and Cultural Environments\)](#)



Now the Arts are integrated into nearly every aspect of
Emeryville's Civic Functions

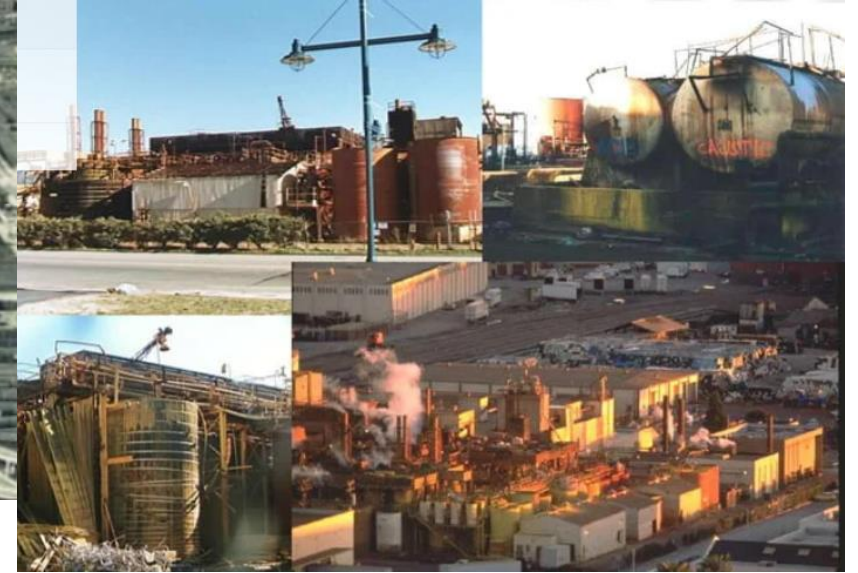
One mudflat artist, more than any other's impact, is still seen in Emeryville today

Tyler Hoare (1940 – January 31, 2023)



His work was preserved by artists at the Compound Gallery and a remaining work installed without “the paperwork” as he said, remains at shorebird park despite the storied man passing last year.

Hoare's popular Red Baron and Sopwith Camel planes blended man and machine — and he continued to place them for 25 years after CalTrans and other state officials banned the practice



**But why is Emeryville called
“The Rotten City”?**



Stella by
Melvin Schuler
in 2001 @ Oaks
Card House

Emeryville Historical Society has detailed the avarice Emeryville was known for

- Political corruption
- Bootlegging during prohibition
- Butcher town
- Speak easy's
- Bribery
- Blackmail
- Construction on native grounds
- Capitalism



Drawn to You by
Evoca1
in 2022 @ Black
and White liquor

But...
Black and White Liquors
Oaks Card Room
Townhouse Restaurant
Are the last vestiges of the old Emeryville

And each of the three now house art, as well as plying their wares

#rottencityfertileground

A quote that just keeps on giving...

The literal answer is the Rotten City moniker comes from a quote by the then Alameda County District Attorney, and later California Governor, Earl Warren.

He said that Emeryville was “the rottenest city on the Pacific Coast.”

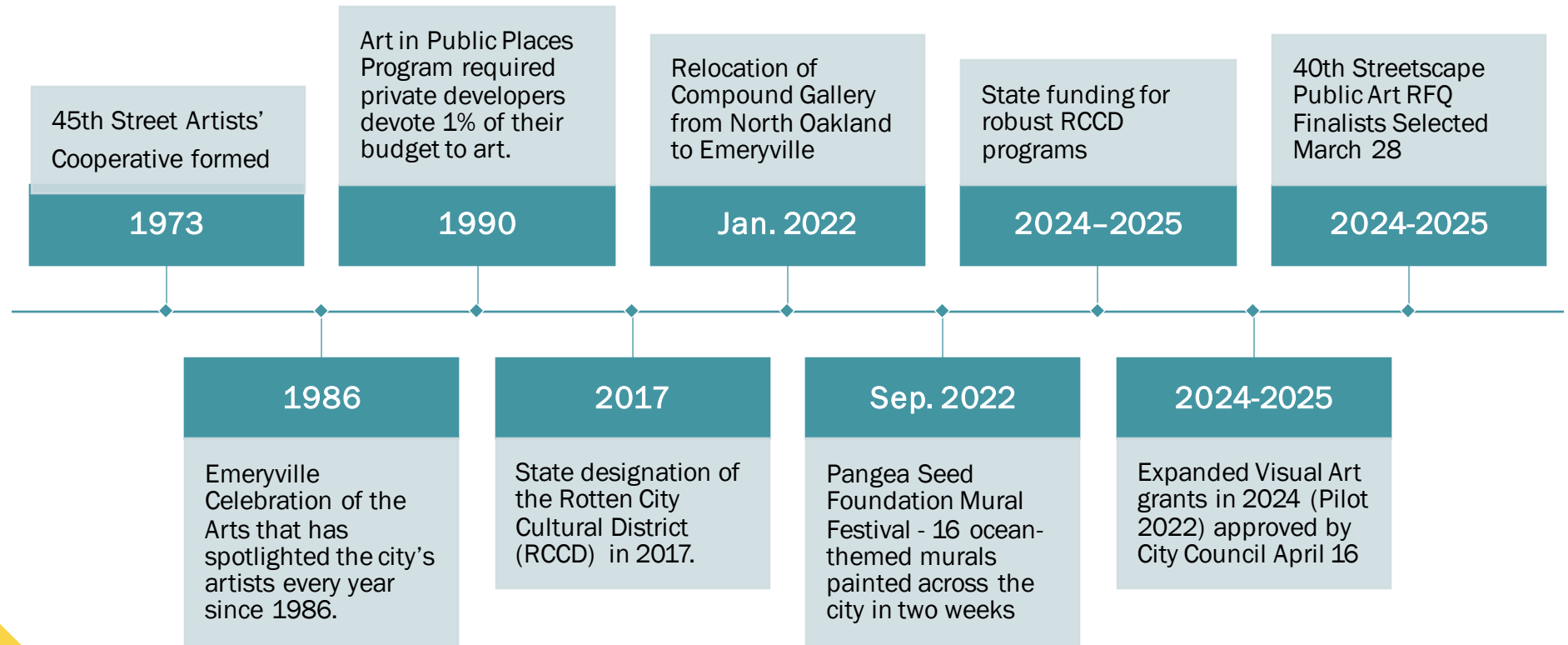




And how did it contribute to fertile ground?

Rich Robbins, CEO of Wareham Development who owns 14 properties (*and a substantial proportion of the privately owned publicly required public art*) in Emeryville says, “Cheap rent” allowed artists to thrive in Emeryville, and this coupled with live/work spaces for scientists and creatives to mingle and Emeryville was set for investment in a space ripe for renewal.

Today's palate of color are the result of 50 years of Investment in Artists and Art



45th Street EMERYVILLE Artists' Cooperative

Uncredited 1973 photo of a group of artists checking out the 4250 Horton building. Priscilla Birge and Michael Murphy (far right) are still Co-op members.



- City of Emeryville's first established arts organization
- Visual artists, musicians, choreographers, writers, designers and fine craftsmen, many of national and international stature, constitute their membership
- Grown from a dozen studios in one converted warehouse building to 80 residents in three buildings
- Non-profit, limited-equity housing cooperative, it is a national model for **affordable artist-owned housing** (*some might even say this is the secret sauce for Emeryville's proliferation of art*)

Foad Satterfield, early & current member shown in front of contemporary work, worked with CETA in 70's



“It’s a story we’ve all heard before: Artists find cheap, funky space in a neglected industrial area and beautify it making the neighborhood more livable. Word gets out drawing more residents and development opportunities. Rents spike and these same artists eventually get pushed out.

Except *this* time, these artists organized, successfully fought back and secured stability that will keep them in the community in perpetuity.”

- Eville Eye’s 50-year retrospective on the 45th Street Artist’ Coop



- In 2018-2019 the COOP sponsored Art Rendezvous which had seasoned artists sharing latest works with COOP members and the broader community over a potluck dinner and wine - it was a coveted invitation to get
- Every other year the Coop opens its doors to invited guests for open studios – go if you can
- Emeryville will always have the COOP and the creation of stable affordable housing owned by artists to look to for creative leadership

Sometimes the best spaces in Emeryville, are the ones you can't see...



**The Coop pre-dates the City Art Program
and has contributed:**

At least:

Two Public Art Committee Members

Two City Council members/rotating mayors

Kala Art founders

An artist commissioned by the city

**9 artists featured in temporary Bus Shelter
Art Program**

**8 artists installed in City facilities under
Purchase Award**

1987 photo of Sharon Wilchar (Art liaison to City for COOP, Director Of ECA and PAC chair for 30 years) celebrating with Laura Davenport and Greg Harper following a successful campaign of the "All-Emeryville Alliance" slate of candidates that included Nora Davis, Harper and Ken Bukowski (Photo: Ken Bukowski Collection)



The first Emeryville mural was known as the *Dutro Mural* by Foad Satterfield & Anna Horvath, he, an early and current resident and, her, a founder of the COOP, painted the mural as a CETA Community Art Project. Says Foad “It was the first such Art Projects in Emeryville!”

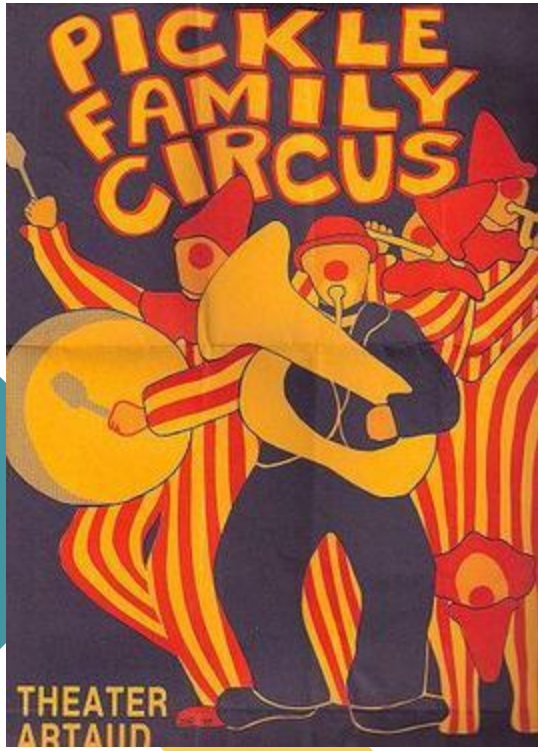
During the years 1974-1980, more than 10,000 artists in the U.S., and an additional 10,000 arts support staff, were given full-time employment as part of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). This was the largest federally-funded artists employment project since the various arts programs of the WPA in the 1930s, yet CETA has been virtually forgotten

CETA in Emeryville

<https://emeryvillehistorical.smugmug.com/Artists/Murals/i-CCjVT9f/A>



CETA - The New Deal No Knows about



Everyone knows about the Public Works of the Great Depression but as a deep recession hit the nation in the 1970's and the Federal government employed 20,000 people to educate and entertain and create new artists endeavors. Those from the Bay Area or long time residents may recall Pickle Family Circus or know the SF Mime Troupe. In Emeryville, that fine looking man in front of his contemporary piece, Foad Satterfield worked with Anna Horvath, one of the two founders of the Coop, to install the City's first mural or public art of any type which remained in Emeryville until the building was removed to create a public park.

Want to hear about actors employed by the effort and their fascinating take on the investment in the arts and education? Click on their names for two videos on youtube:

[Peter Coyote](#) • [Bill Irwin](#)

Prop 28 is returning arts to California Schools learn more [here](#)



EMERYVILLE CELEBRATION OF THE ARTS (ECA)



- Annual month-long juried show of Emeryville residents and employees' finest works
- **Every October for the last 37 years**, including a virtual show in 2020
- Sites vary, using vacant retail and office spaces
- Grown to 200 artworks created by 125 Emeryville artists in last show
- Opening night is the place to be in Emeryville with Dorian Jazz playing
- Nancy Karp choreographs a show for the annual exhibit
- Sarah Kobrinsky a former Emeryville poet laureate, conducts Ekphrastic poetry workshops and readings annually at the show



Art in Public Places



Our first commission was moved several hundred feet and restored on the Emeryville Marina, Peninsula Tell Tail by Anita Margrill

- The City is a relative new-comer to the investment in arts compared to these non-profit endeavors (perhaps because the City officials were busy being rotten)
- But in 1990 the City passed an ordinance to create a fee supporting the installation of art in private and public development in Emeryville and in 2005 residential development was added to the requirements
- Today there are over 600 pieces of public art in 168 installation sites with approximately 1/3 publicly owned and 2/3 publicly accessible on private property split 50/50 indoor outdoor

Redevelopment funneled money to public art

From 1998 -2012, the former Redevelopment Agency required that in projects that the Agency had money invested in that 40% of the 1% for the art be paid to the Art in Public Places fund resulting in the cash need to launch City programs:

2005 – Purchase Award

2009- Bus Shelter Art Program (renamed the *Sharon Wilchar Bus Shelter Art Program* in 2021)

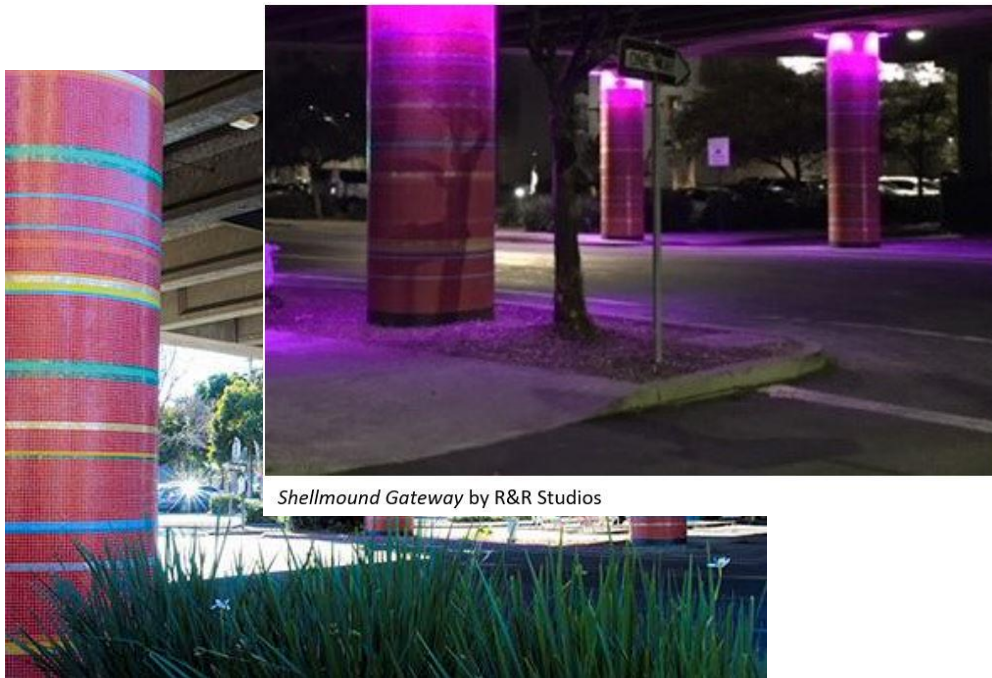
2010 - Annual support for the ECA exhibition

And commission the Sign of the Times in 2004 on 7 utility boxes



Sign of the Times by Seyed Alavi has expanded to 31 utility boxes in 2024 and was award winning at initial installation in 2004 – having been restored twice

As Redevelopment folded these art programs were in danger - City added stable funding



Shellmound Gateway by R&R Studios

- In 2012, the Agency was eliminated by State law.
- AiPP Reserves were sufficient for programs and solicitations for multiple years, but the reserves were declining and the programs beloved
- City Council approved about \$150,000 annually for the programs from property taxes returned to City with the loss of the Agency
- This new funding, secured the Program and the Reserves could instead be used for new solicitations

R&R Studios won an RFQ/RFP process to install in 2017
Shellmound Gateway under Powell on Shellmound Street

EMERYVILLE

PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN

EMERYVILLE, CALIFORNIA
ART IN PUBLIC PLACE



PAMP fostered new champions and launched Mural program, Visual Art grants, and 40th Streetscape Public Art



Master Plan Commissioned for 25 Anniversary of AiPP



Rotten City Cultural District - Creating an Identity of Makers

30 artists' local works are displayed on 15 banners in City Hall. Effort was supported by District, commemorating the year spent sheltered in place and welcoming staff and visitors back to City Hall



City core was designated one of 14 State Cultural Districts in 2017 – benefit was marketing to new arts activities more than the \$10K

As Development rapidly expanded Private Public Art Proliferated & Revenue to City Art Fund Allowed for New Mural Program & State Designation



Joey Rose installed the City's first commissioned mural under the new program – Ascend in Peladeau Park just south of the Powell/Hollis intersection

- The City initiated a Mural program in 2017 and installed its first City commissioned mural in 2018
- Additional City staff supported designation as one of 14 State Cultural Districts in 2017 and launching mural program
- Development with smaller deposits trying to quickly open projects paid the City Art fund vs installing art, while larger projects rapidly expanded the City's Public Art collection on private property
- Joey and his partner Alexandra moved to Emeryville after graduating from CCA and his commission for this mural and then brought the Pangea Seed Mural festival to Emeryville ([CCA is proud of them and the mural festival](#)) – it was Emeryville's second major contribution from it's location between an art school and the bay (the first being the mudflat installations)



Pangea Seed Mural Festival

16 murals

Painted in two weeks across the City

Inspired private businesses and
developers to sponsors murals

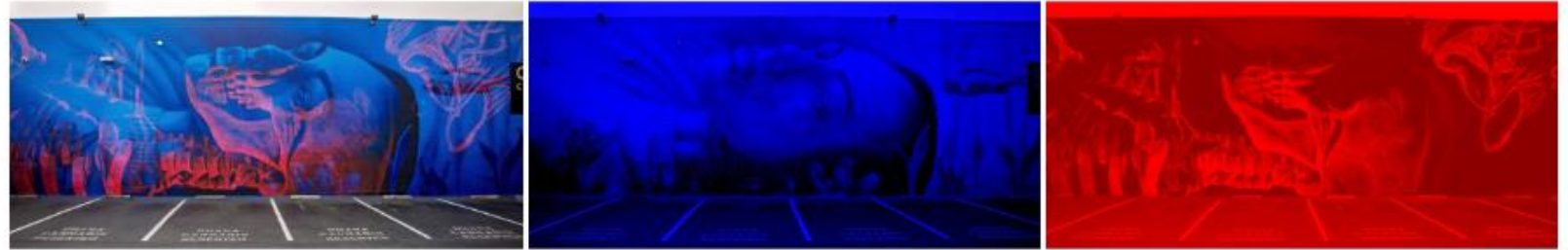
Now 40 murals are in Emeryville with
more to come

A collage of the murals follows. A map
is in the resources at the end of this
presentation



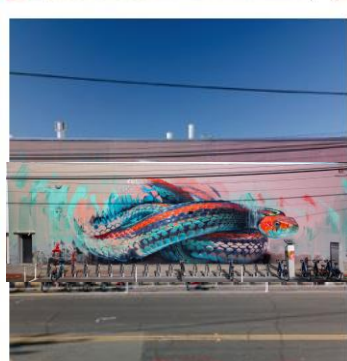
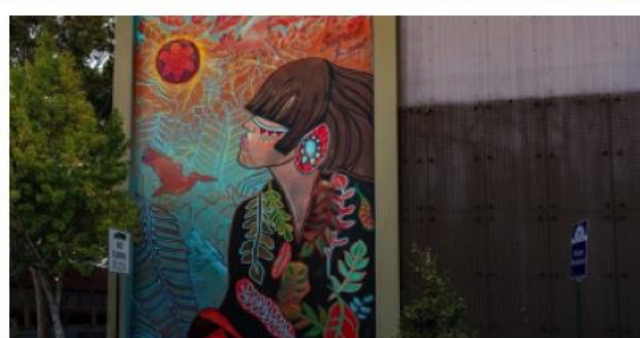
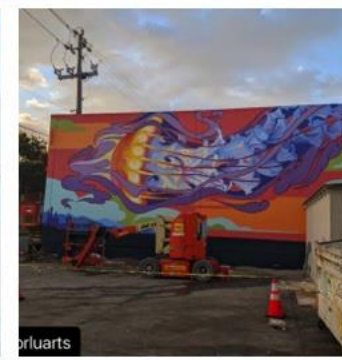
One by Insane 51 should be visited with 3d glasses for the following effect:

<https://www.instagram.com/insane51/reel/CjV5Zl3DpZy/>



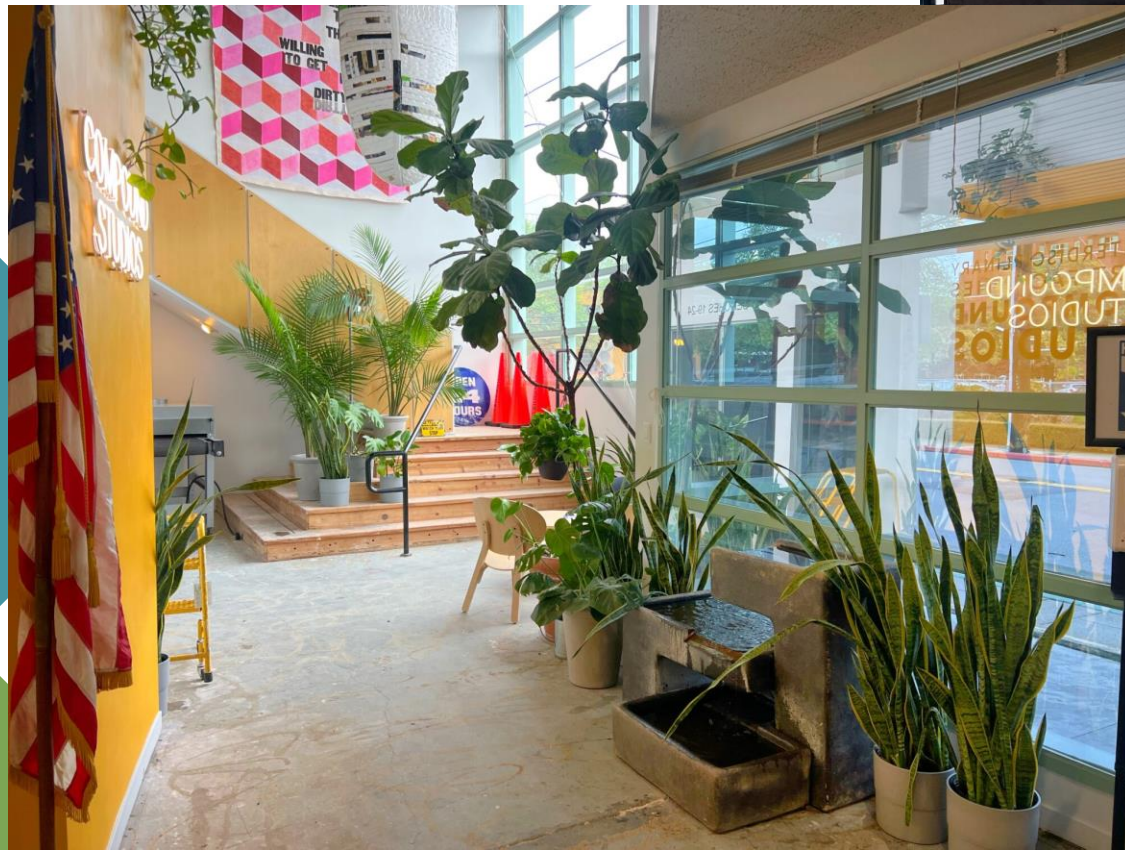
Title: **Harmony**
Location: **Emeryville, California, USA**
Artist: **Insane51**
For: **Sea Walls Emeryville**
A project by: **PangeaSeed Foundation**
Address: **5770 Peladeau St**
Photo Credits: **John Dominé**

Find this at Powell & Hollis



Moving from North Oakland to Emeryville in 2022 created a second artists' epicenter

- RCCD Partners
- 80 artist studios
- Mixed media maker spaces



Compound Gallery



ART RESEARCH LIBRARY

OUR LIBRARY IS FILLED WITH ART BOOKS TO INSPIRE, TEACH AND ENTERTAIN YOU. A QUIET PLACE TO READ, WRITE, AND CHILL.



PRINTMAKING

SCREENPRINTING EQUIPMENT, MULTI COLOR PLATENS, WASH OUT BOOTH, ETCHING PRESSES, CONVEYOR DRYER, COMMUNITY SCREENS, FOOT SHEAR, ACID BATH, EXPOSURE UNITS....



LETTERPRESS

OUR LETTERPRESS PRINT SHOP IS FILLED WITH HISTORIC TYPE, CYLINDER AND PLATEN PRESSES, INK, PAPER CUTTERS AND EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO PRINT POSTERS.



SEW LAB

INDUSTRIAL SEWING MACHINE, INDUSTRIAL SERGER, STANDARD MACHINES, EMBROIDERY MACHINE, THREAD, NOTIONS, DRESS FORMS, CUTTING TABLES....



CERAMIC LAB

SEVERAL ELECTRIC WHEELS, KICK WHEEL, SLAB ROLLERS, EXTRUDERS, GLAZES, TOOLS, DEDICATED SINK, STORAGE, 3 DIGITAL KILNS, WORK TABLES...



WOOD LAB

SAW STOP TABLE SAW, MITER SAW, JOINER, PLANER, DRILL PRESS, WOOD LATHE, BANDSAW, SCROLL SAW, SANDERS, HAND TOOLS, FILTRATION SYSTEM, LUMBER RACKS...



ART LAB

SEVERAL 3D PRINTERS, ABS AND PLA FILAMENT INCLUDED, 90 WATT 24X18 LASER, COMPUTERS...



AMENITIES

ENJOY OUR RECORD LOUNGE WITH A VIEW, WIFI, KITCHEN, COMMON TABLES, PARKING, MAIL SERVICE, 24 HOUR ACCESS, WASH SINKS, STUDIO APP, SECURITY GUARD, INDOOR BIKE PARKING, EASELS, HAMMOCKS, SPRAY BOOTH, AND SO MUCH MORE INCLUDING AN AMAZING INCLUSIVE ART COMMUNITY!

Bus Shelter Program

4 Locations 4 works 4 months



Flora & Fauna

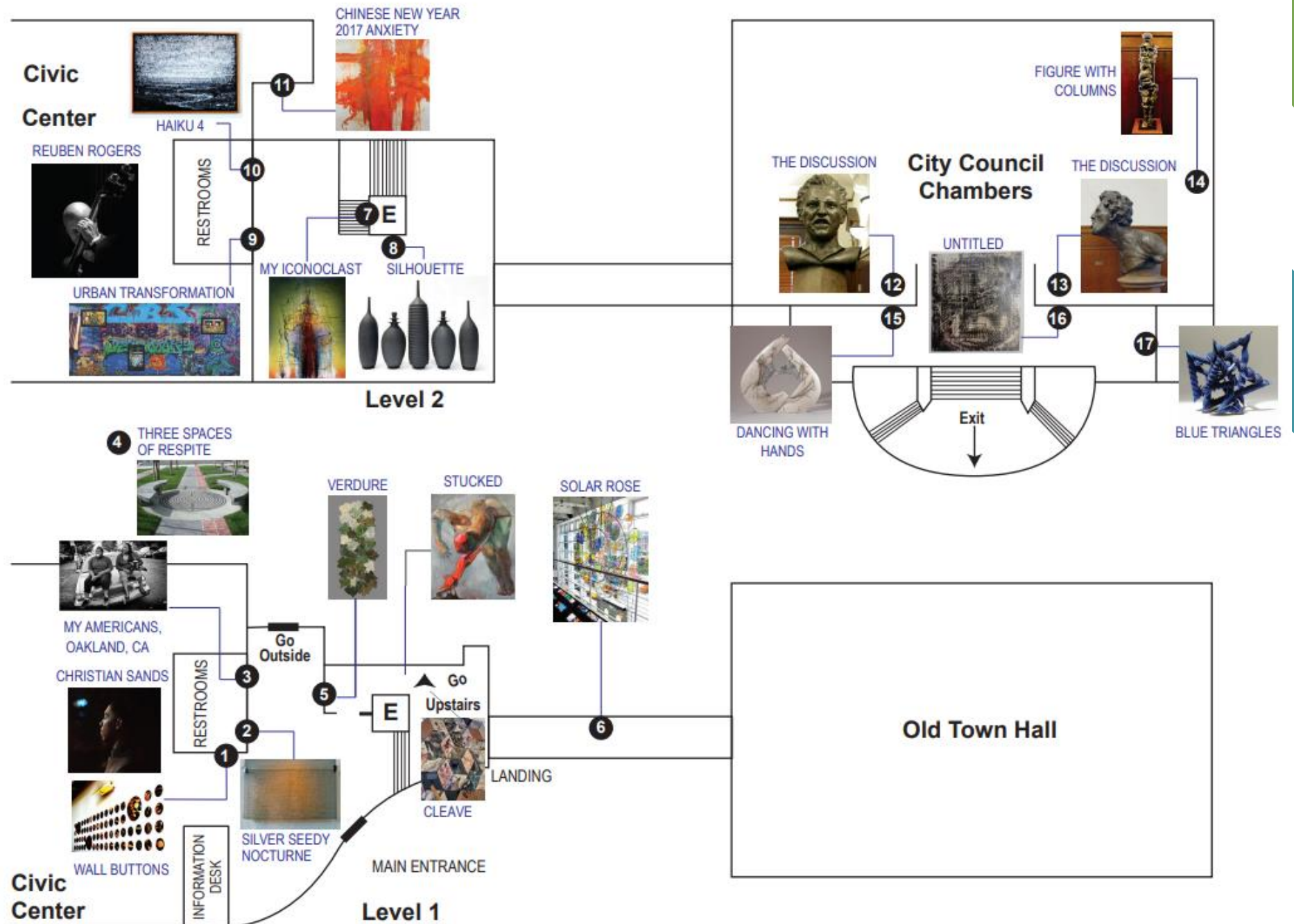


Hollis at 63rd



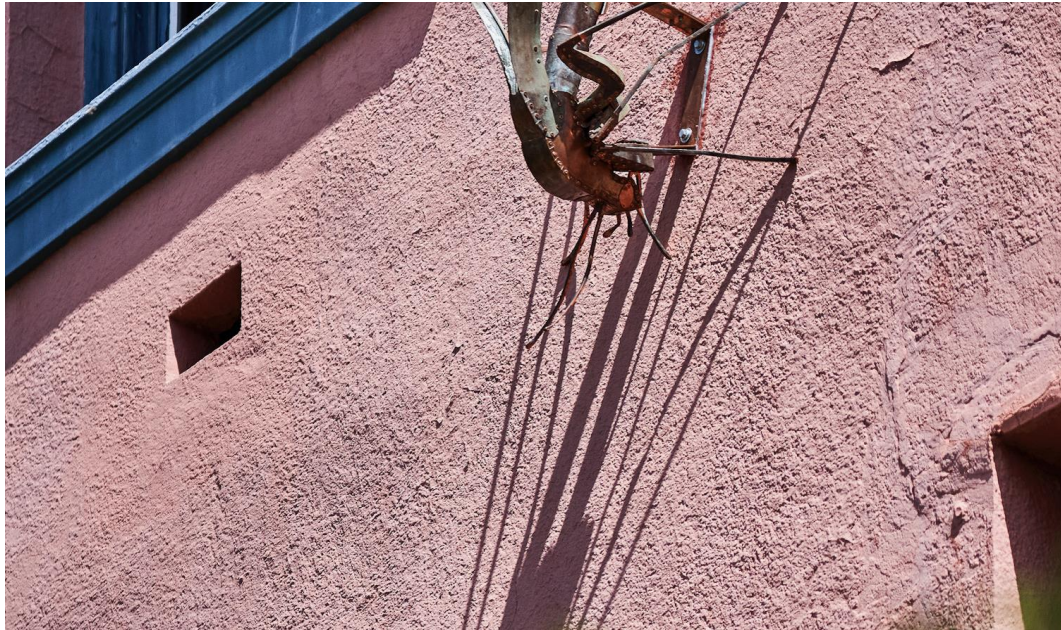
City Hall

- 1.5% AiPP - 2 installations
- Donations - 4 installations
- Purchase Award - 19 installations



CITY HALL ART TOUR MAP

2022 Purchase Expanded to Exterior





2023 Purchase Expanded to Community School

Tuesday, December 12, 2023 | 5:30 p.m.

Emeryville Center of Community Life
4727 San Pablo Avenue

Artist: Mike Farruggia

Dollar Store

wood, pencils, tape measurers, 2023, 49" x 49"

You're Invited to a biking tour ...

Biking Route



Bike tour is approximately 2.5 - 3 hours including 30-minute lunch at Bay Street

1. Start via the Berkeley 9th Street Bike Boulevard
2. Cross Ashby (as dashed in yellow)
3. To the Emeryville Greenway
4. Can be done in either direction



Lunch



City Hall



Greenway



A sample
of what you
would see
if touring
art by
bicycle in
Emeryville:

Public
Private

3d
2d

Static
Dynamic

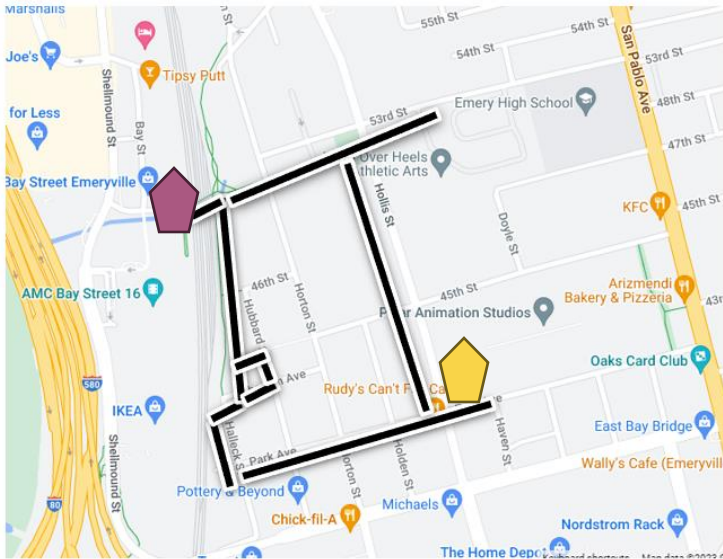
Mix of
media



Images from Top to Bottom, Left to Right: *Emeryville Treasure Map* at Sherwin & Horton Streets (2021) mural and photo by Nigel Sussman; Bus Shelter Program (new works every 4 months); artwork by and photo by Jesslyn Aaland; *chocolate cake with rainbow sprinkles* (2022) private AiPP by Sofia Ramos, Christie Park, photo by Amber Evans; City Purchase Award *Grasshopper* (2023) on City Hall by artist Ken Kalman; photo Amber Evans; Light sculpture installation *Crossing Sign Mosaic* private AiPP (2015); artwork and photo by Therese Lahaie; Blessing Hancock's sculpture *DNA* private AiPP (2019) artwork and photo by Blessing Hancock; Guillaume Ollivier's *Light on the Bay* on Hollis Street (2022) photo by Amber Evans

You're Invited to a walking tour ...

Walking Route



Lunch



City Hall

- Start at City Hall - 1333 Park Avenue (free parking)
- Walk west to Hubbard Street
- North to and through The Emery (see site map)
- Follow Greenway to South Bay front Bridge to Bay Street (lunch)
- Up 53rd to ECCL to see mural across site
- Back to Hollis and south to end tour at City Hall
- The next slides show you art along this route

Fence panels

- Mark Bullwinkle
- 2022
- 26 Caricature cutouts
- in hot rolled steel panels



**Emeryville has a new park,
streets, expanded Greenway, a
ped/bike bridge & ART!**



Jeppe Hein





Hank Willis Thomas



Jeppe Hein



Jim Campbell



Nathan Richard Phelps

END TOUR

NEW WORKS MAY 2024

New Work on the Marina

- *Wind and Stone*
- Ilan Averbauch (*finalist for City commission, installed by private marina*)
- Granite and steel frame
- 15 feet tall
- Emery Cove, 3300 Powell Street



BIOMED CAMPUS



- *Personage*
- Ann Weber
- 4 tall abstract bronze sculptures paired in bold colors (auto Paint)
- Chiron Plaza, Emery Yards



- *Kissee Currencies*
- Mildred Howard
- 8 tall Bronze sculptures made from African coins melted down
- Horton Plaza - east end of the South Bayfront Bridge, Emery Yards

MOMENTUM **BY MARCUS GUILLARD**



6455 Christie Avenue



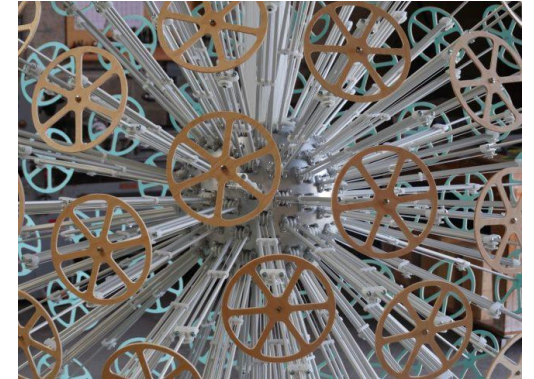


- Proposed size - between 10-15ft
- LED Lighting
- Interactive elements like mirror gazing sphere or ability to walk inside

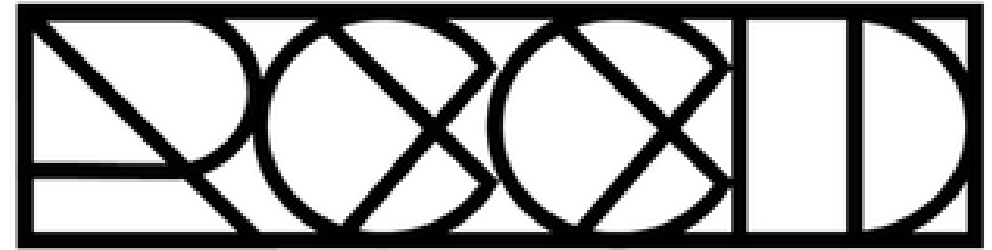
Not only will Bay Street celebrate the installation of a major new Hybycozo sculpture, but they will celebrate with installing of a mural on the façade of the highly anticipated grocery store and additional murals around the center this Summer

Bay Street is reimagining itself as a center of arts

Rotten City Cultural District Now (Makers)



- Major Installation
- Twice annual marquee events
- Printed & interactive maps
- Branding and artist assistance
- Monthly events
- Mini grants
- State funded \$671,000 for two year of programming



Newest Program: Visual Art Grants will bring new art in 2024

Pilot in 2020 was undersubscribed with 4 applications for \$10,000 each but in 2024 with support from ABG under the RCCD launch the City received 29 applications requesting up to \$17,500 and requesting \$438,011 total

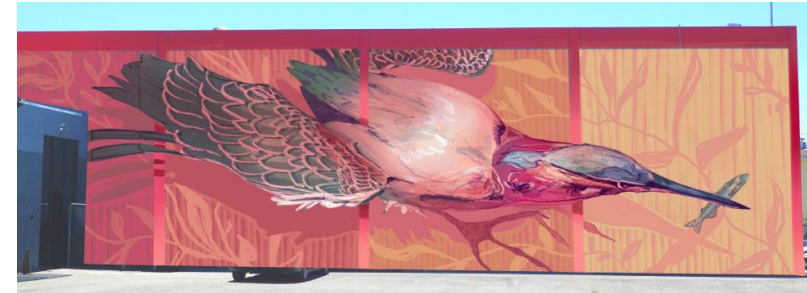
- Approved 8 artists with \$120,500:
 - 3 artists with work pictured here plus Packard Jennings 3 sculptures as here:
 - John Patrick Thomas
 - Salma Arastu
 - Juan Lopez
 - Chris Granillo



50ft x 24ft Wall Mural
Concept Mural - Mock up



"Breaking Ground"
Sean Griffin © 2024
Griffin One Design



Joey Rose's proposal "Green Heron" for Bay Pyrotection at 1315 67th St (mural on 64th Street east of Hollis St)



Rachel Wolfe Goldsmith's proposal *In the Red for Firestation 35* on Powell past I-80 Images on right will be painted in style as on left)



Current Call: 40th Streetscape Public Art RFQ/RFP will bring new art in 2025

5 conceptual designs proposals are expected in Fall 2024 to pick successful team to be installed interactively with the streetscape project 2025 -2026

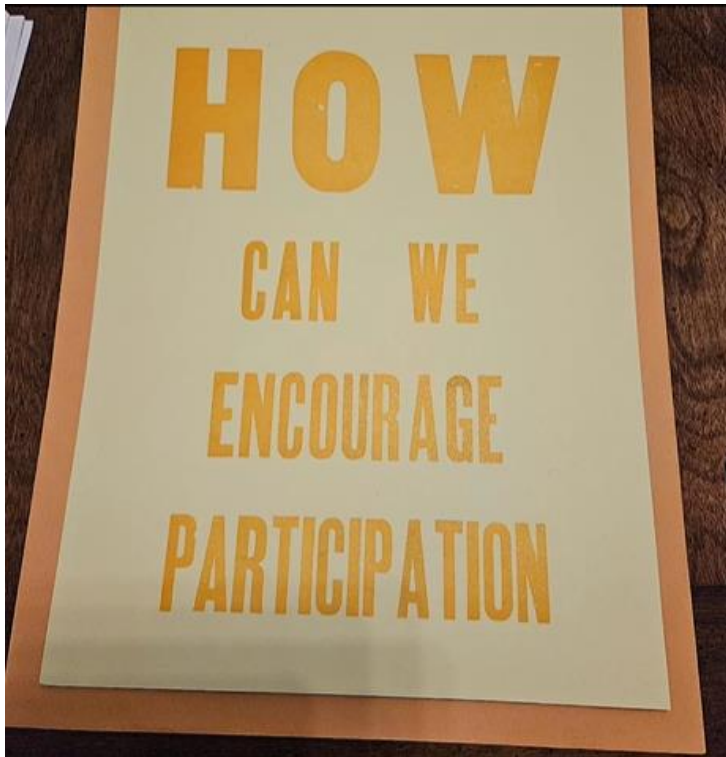
Five teams short listed- 1 local, 2 from So. Ca. and 2 in Oregon

Three components:

- Iconography for City to add to wayfinding signage
- Streetscape installation in 12 locations
- 4 plazas with art installations



Developing a Art & Cultural Center - Reengaged after Several Stalls





Our New Site
Coming Soon

Stay Tuned

MICRO EVENT FUND

We Have Resources On The Way. Join To Stay Updated

Enter your email *

Notify me

Join the RCCD as we celebrate our makers.....

The referenced organizations



-
- [45th Street Artists' Cooperative](#)
 - [Emeryville Celebration of the Arts](#)
 - [Art in Public Places Program](#)
 - [Rotten City Cultural District](#)
 - [Compound Gallery](#)
 - [Sea Walls Mural Festival](#)

Key History Links

-
- [CETA and the Forgotten Investment](#)
 - [50-years-of-history-of-emeryville-artists-cooperative \(Eville Eye\)](#)
 - [City-renaissance-recounted-by-some-of-its-prior-architects \(Eville Eye\)](#)
 - [Remembering-the-notorious-former-emeryville-police-chief-john-lacoste \(Eville Eye\)](#)
 - [Rotten City transformation to a center of high-tech \(Biz Journal\)](#)
 - [City of Emeryville History Summary](#)
 - [East Bay Yesterday - January 9, 2024](#)

Thank you



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www.emeryville.org/PublicArt

www.rottencityculturaldistrict.com

<https://www.ci.emeryville.ca.us/1458/Rotten-City-Cultural-District>