
The Arts of Commuting
Art in Transit
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
M
metro

In fulfilling its mission, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority recognizes that artwork at Metro transit facilities celebrates the cultural interest of the region, adds value to the transit experience, inspires community pride and builds ridership.

Art in Transit Mission Statement, 2017


Stations with Permanent Artworks
RD
Shady Grove
Rockville
Twinbrook
White Flint
Grosvenor-Strathmore
Medical Center
Bethesda
Friendship Heights
Tenleytown-AU
Van Ness-UDC
Cleveland Park
Woodley Park
Zoo/Adams Morgan
Dupont Circle
Farragut North
McPherson Sq
Metro Center
Federal Triangle
Smithsonian
Archives
L'Enfant Plaza
Gallery Place
Chinatown
Judiciary Sq
Union Station
Rosslyn
Foggy Bottom-GWU
Farragut West
Arlington Cemetery
Pentagon
Pentagon City
Crystal City
Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport
Potomac Yard
Braddock Rd
King St-Old Town
Eisenhower Ave
Huntington
Van Dorn St
Franconia-Springfield
Glenmont
Wheaton
Forest Glen
Silver Spring
Takoma
Georgia Ave-Petworth
Fort Totten
Columbia Heights
U St
African-Amer Civil War Mem'l/Cardozo
Shaw-Howard U
Mt Vernon Sq
7th St-Convention Center
Brookland-CUA
Rhode Island Ave
Brentwood
NoMa-Gallaudet U
YL
GR
Greenbelt
College Park-U of Md
Prince George's Plaza
West Hyattsville
OR
New Carrollton
Landover
Cheverly
Deanwood
Minnesota Ave
Stadium-Armory
Potomac Ave
Eastern Market
Capitol South
Federal Center SW
Waterfront
Navy Yard-Ballpark
Anacostia
Congress Heights
Southern Ave
Naylor Rd
Suitland
Branch Ave
SV
BL
Benning Rd
Capitol Heights
Addison Rd
Morgan Blvd
Largo Town Center
SV
Ashburn
Loudon Gateway
Dulles Airport
Innovation Center
Herndon
RestonTown Center
Wiehle-Reston East
Spring Hill
Greensboro
Tysons Corner
McLean
OR
Vienna
Dunn Loring
West Falls Church
East Falls Church
Ballston-MU
Virginia Sq-GMU
Clarendon
Court House

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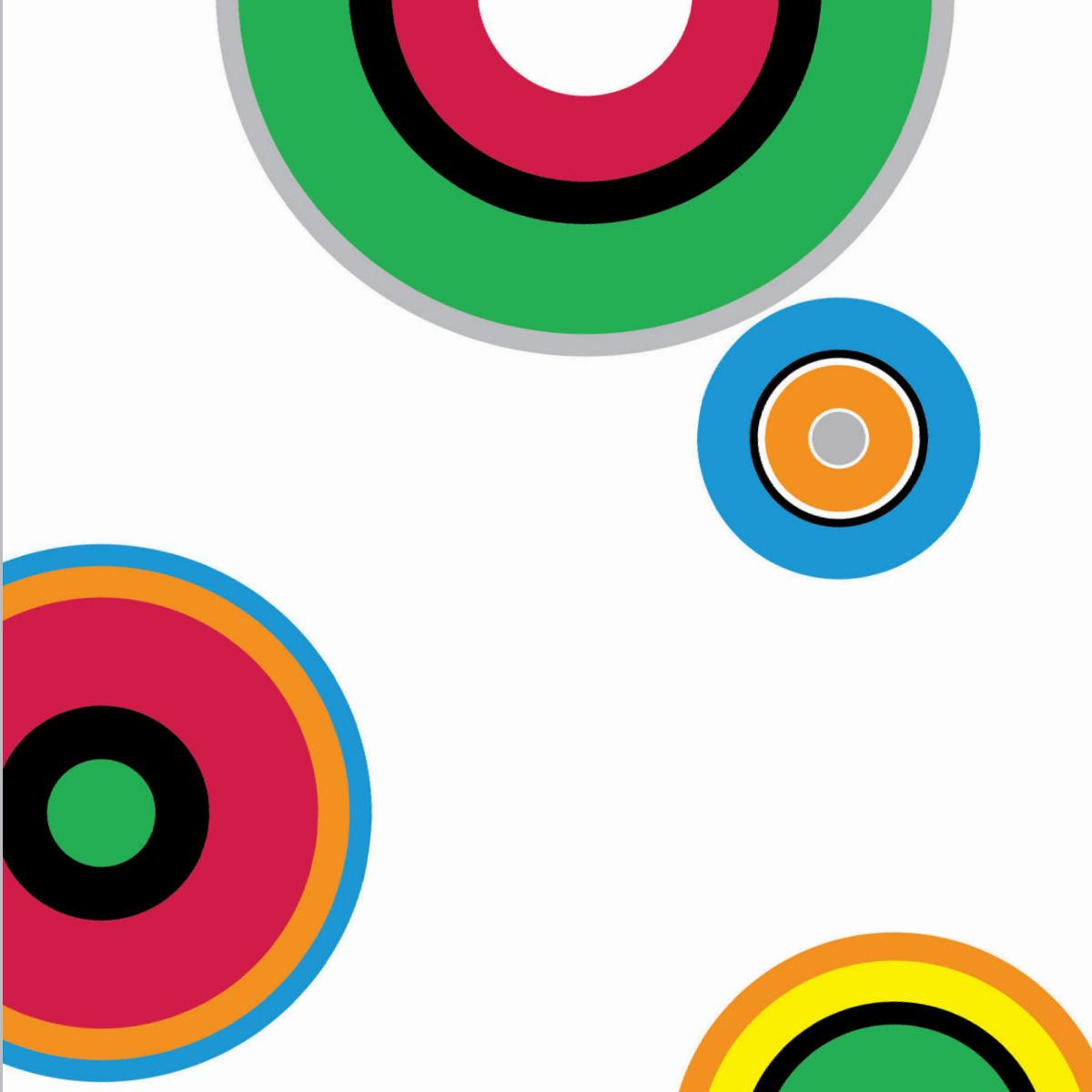
Foreword





From The General Manager and CEO

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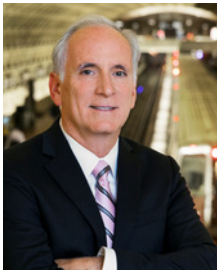

Paul J. Wiedefeld
General Manager and CEO
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

From the Board Chair

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Paul C. Smedberg
Chairman of the WMATA Board
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

From the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts

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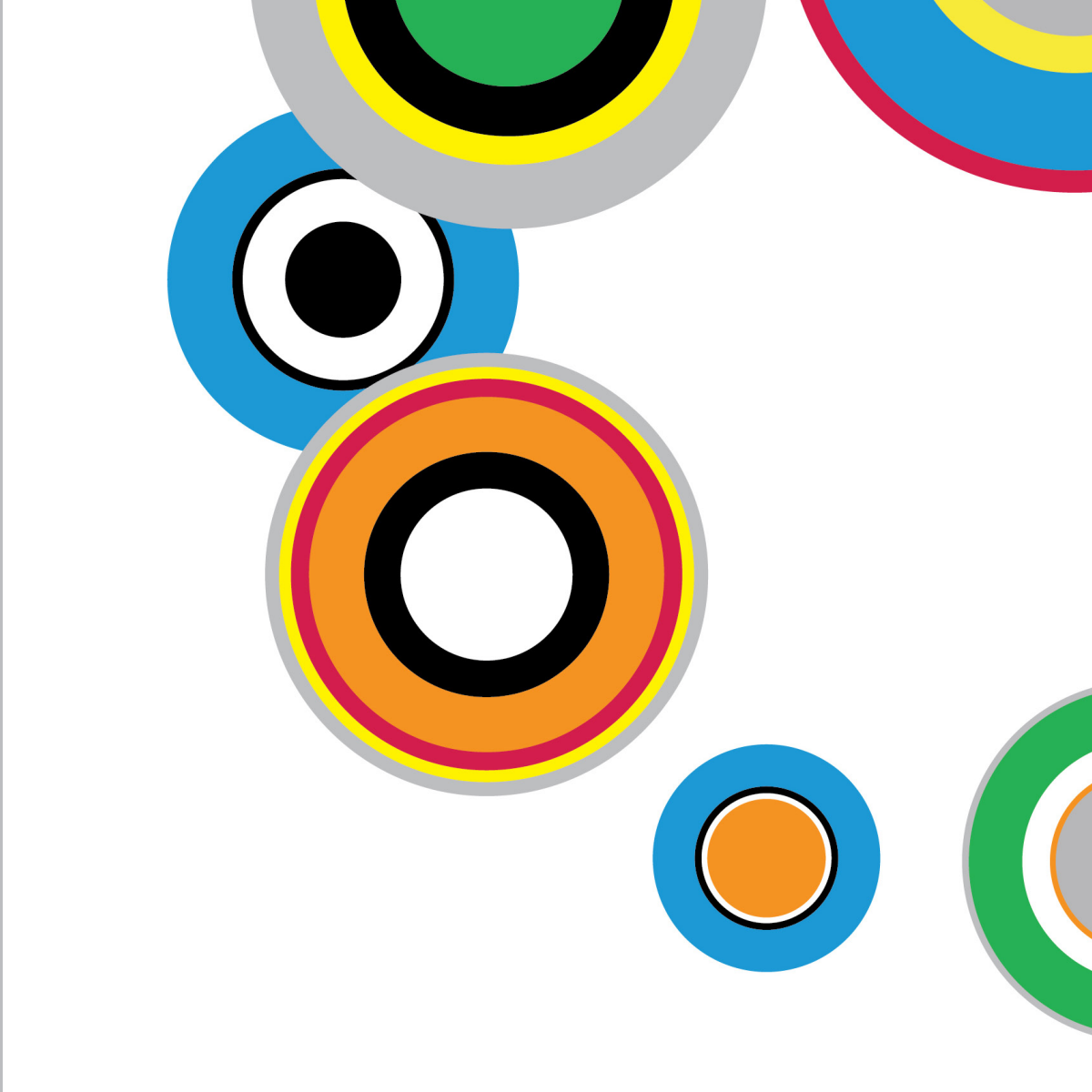
Art in the Transit System





The Art in Transit Program

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Laurent Odde, Ph.D.
Program Manager, Art in Transit
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority



Sketch of *Swallows and Stars* by Deirdre Saunder (1999)
Located at Glenmont Station

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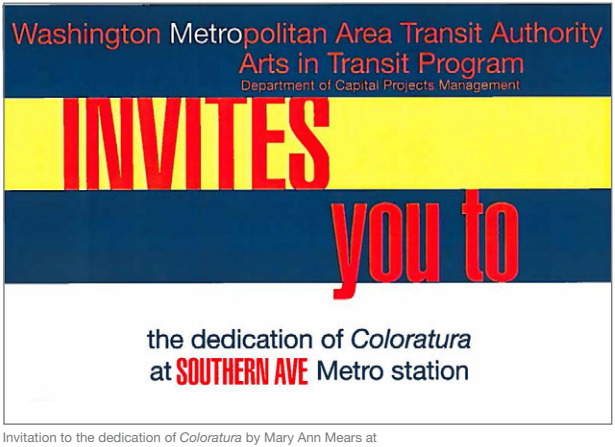
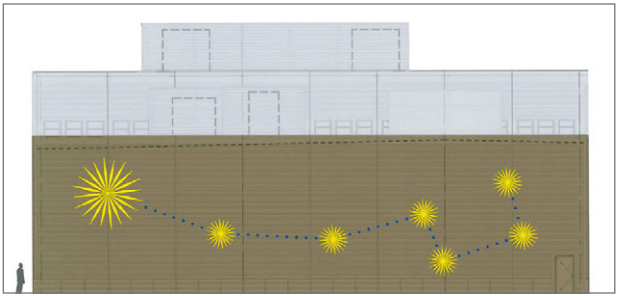


Invitation to the dedication of *Coloratura* by Mary Ann Mears at Southern Avenue station in 2002



Design proposal for *North Star* by Ann Gardner (2011)
Located at the Shepherd Parkway Bus Garage

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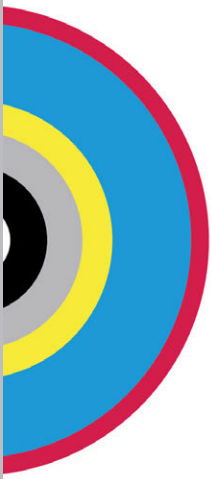
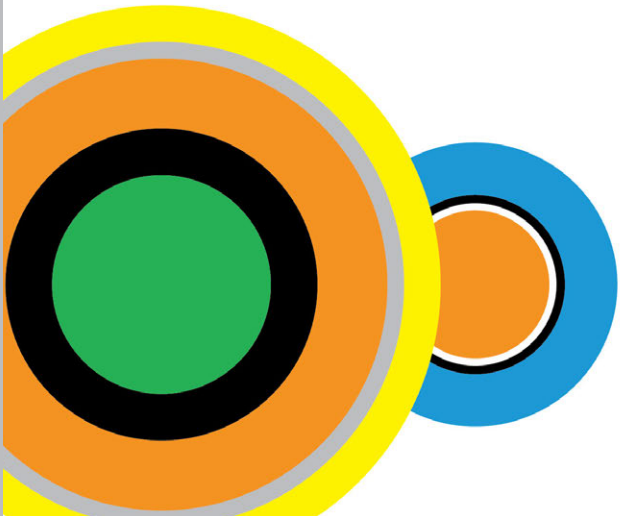
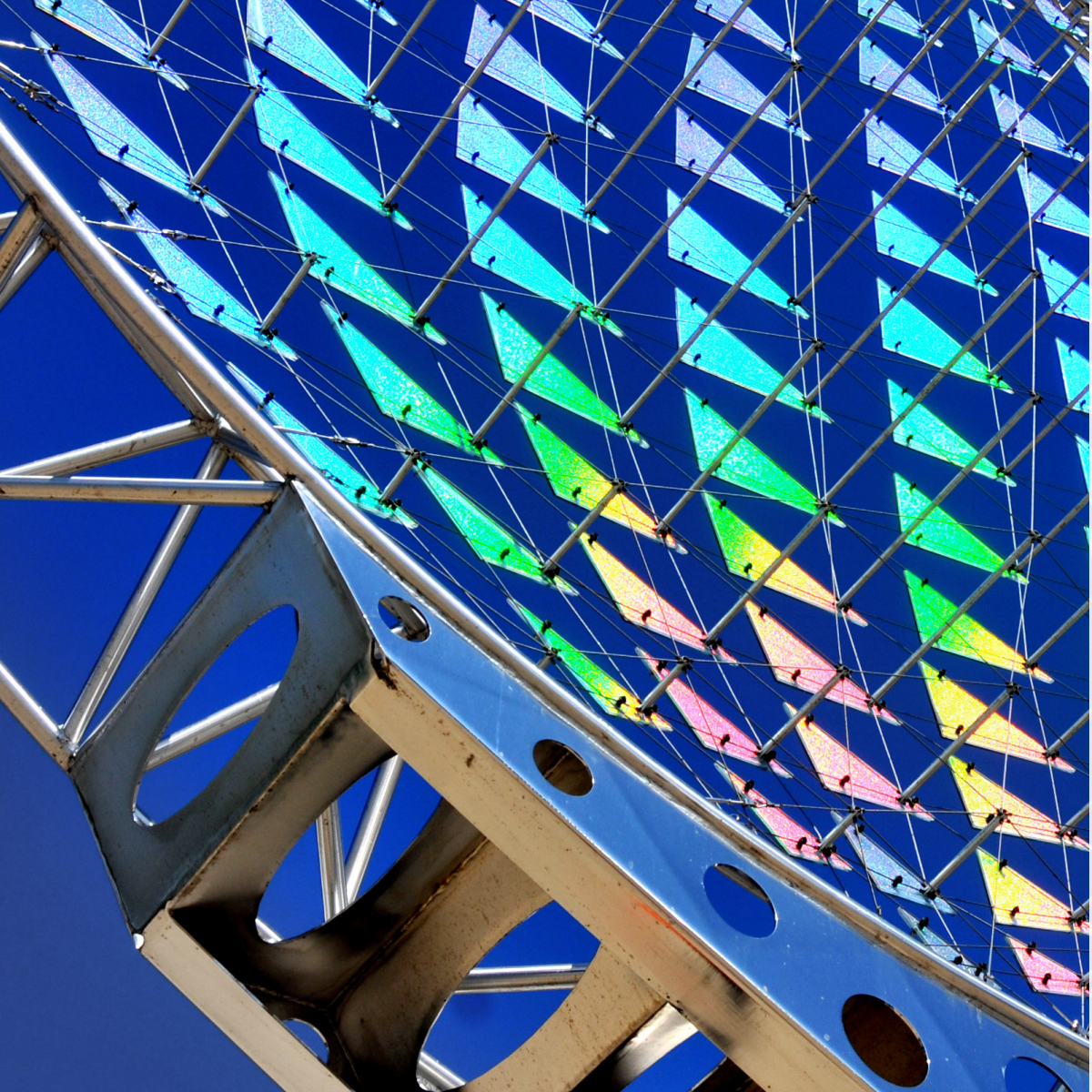
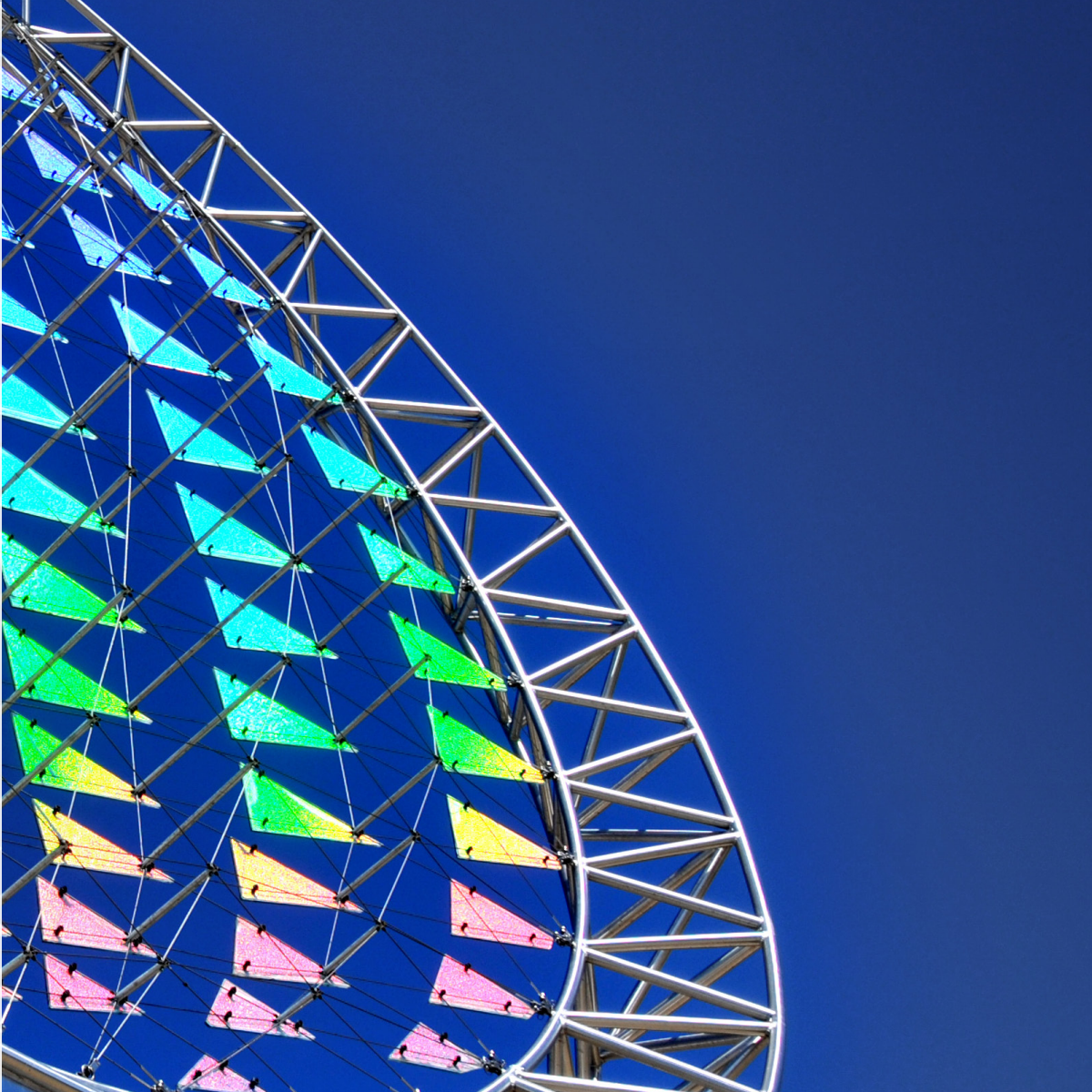
Permanent **Collection**











Largo Lens | 2004

Glass, stainless steel, concrete - Dimensions: 32'3" x 16" x 2'6"

Ray King



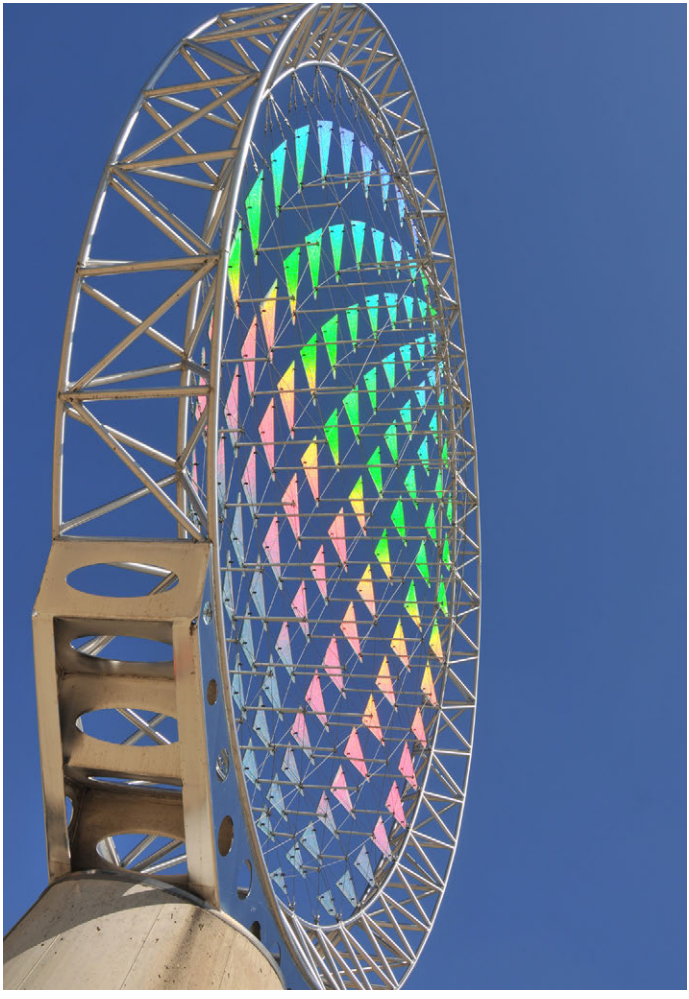
Largo Lens by Philadelphia-based artist, Ray King reflects the artist's interest in the natural phenomena of light as it interacts with glass and optics. The public artwork captures and manipulates sunlight by projecting, refracting and reflecting illumination and color onto the space surrounding the Largo Town Center Metro station. These rainbow-like emanations constantly change, creating a magical and enchanting environment that inspires awe and wonder.

Largo Lens is comprised of laminated glass facets geometrically configured onto a "lens' framework that anchors a tensile structure made of stainless-steel tubes, cables and fittings. The glass elements include a laminated thin layer of laser-etched holographic film sandwiched between two safety glass panes. The glass components are geometrically eccentric to accentuate the curved lens shape. *Largo Lens* faces the southern meridian of the sun to capture and disperse the sun's refractions. The refractive nature of the glass responds to ambient light in unpredictable ways, depending on the angle of light and the orientation of the viewer.

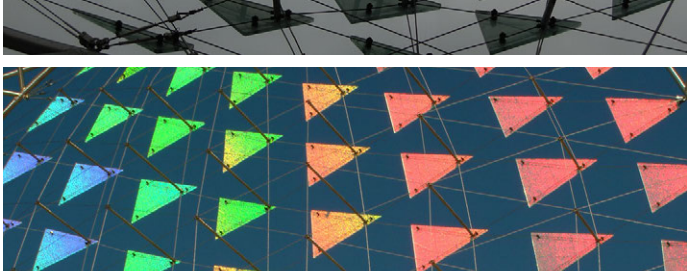
In designing *Largo Lens*, King envisioned a modern, high-tech sculpture which incorporates light in ways that kraken back to ancient monuments and the scientific explorations of Galileo and other mathematicians who were searching for connections with the cosmos. The public artwork is one of a continuing series of chromatic sculptures by Ray King that use spectral light as their medium and are designed to interact with and are animated by sunlight to form a visual conversation with nature.

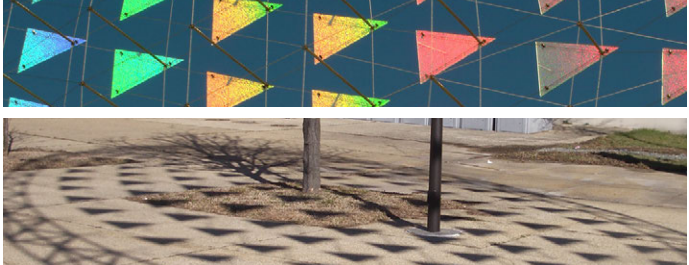
Residents who participated on the Metro Art in Transit art panel to recommend artwork for Largo wanted artwork that would serve as a beacon for the station and the Largo community.

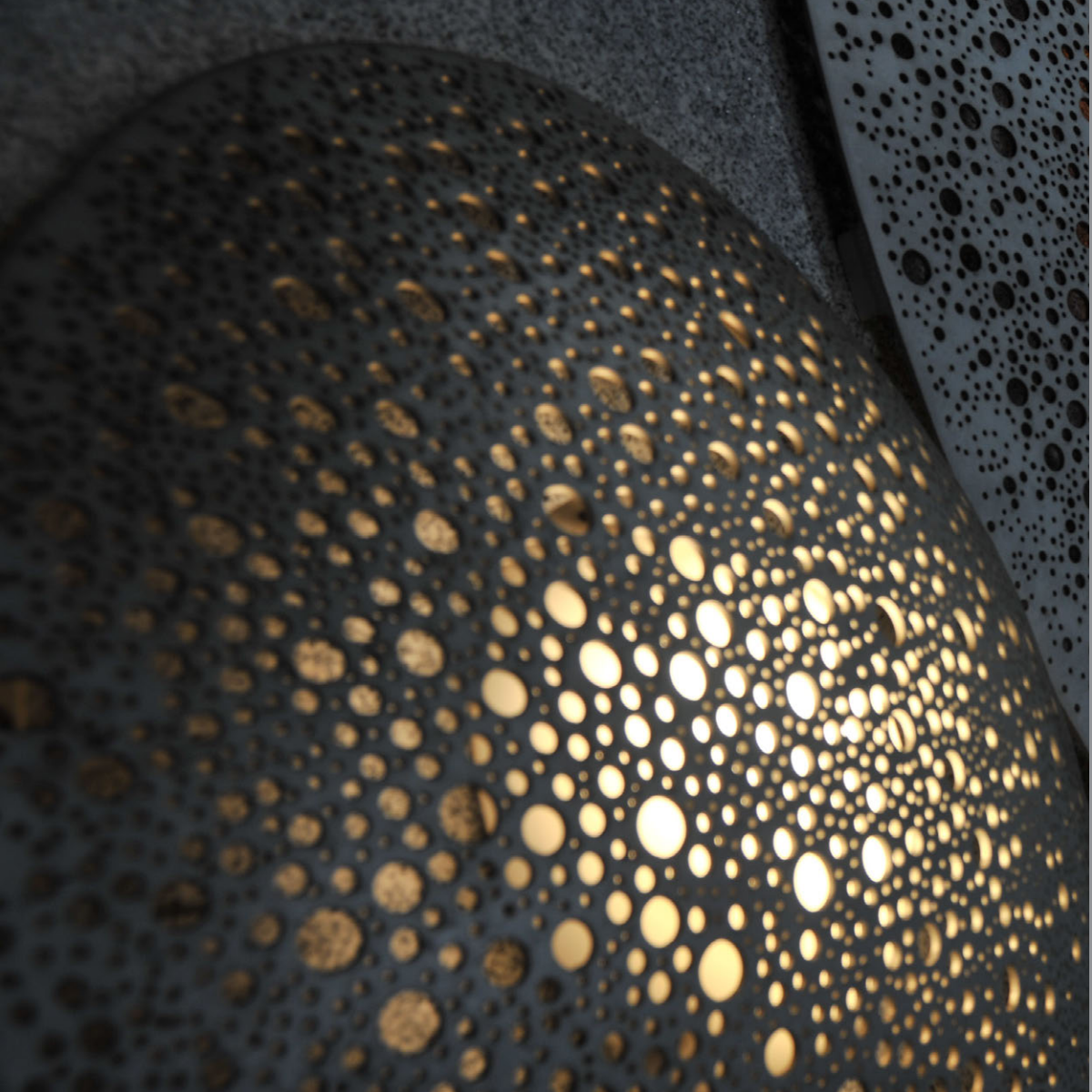
This project was funded by WMATA as part of a capital project at the Largo Town Center Station.













Farragut Spheres | 2011

Aluminum, LED lights - Diameters: 20", 30", 42"

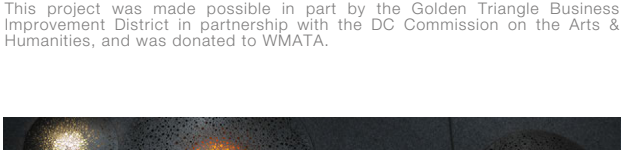
Michael Enn Sirvet



Michael Enn Sirvet is a sculptor, craftsman and designer who creates two and three-dimensional works using metal, hardwood, polymers and other materials. A former structural engineer, Michael has been working full time as an artist for the past several years. Michael's vision makes use of industrial and hand processes to create works that are reflections of his musing upon nature and science.

Farragut Spheres is Michael's first DC public art commission. It is inspired by aerial views of tree-groupings found in the adjacent Farragut Park and the artist's artistic muse – perforated spheres. The light installation comprises a series of 20 wall-mounted back-lit perforated convex aluminum discs with custom-made LED lights. Further to their review of the proposed artwork for the station, the commissioners of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts commented favorably on the visual effect of filtered light and said that this installation would help make the station entrance more inviting to Metro patrons." (Ref. Letter dated February 26, 2010)

This project was made possible in part by the Golden Triangle Business Improvement District in partnership with the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities, and was donated to WMATA.







Technology Triangle Colonnade | 2016

Metal, fiberglass, concrete, LED lights - Dimensions: 21' x 3' x 28" (x8)

David Dahlquist



David B. Dahlquist is a nationally recognized public artist and teacher. His commissions range from tile work and sculpture to major architectural installations. Dahlquist earned a Bachelors' degree in Art from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, graduating with honors. He then earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University in Alfred, New York. He now leads the RDG Dahlquist Art Studio, a comprehensive design and fabrication studio.

Technology Triangle Colonnade consists of eight monumental columns – four at the north pavilion and four at the south pavilion. Randomly sized and spaced triangular patterns cover the columns and their bases.

The public artwork is based on the "New Technology Triangle" that is a major part of the Silver Line transportation corridor. The symbolic triangle, representative of the connection of government, industry, and consumer, becomes a dramatic iconic marker. The colonnade of forms creates a unique site-specific identity for this station. Dahlquist states that "Throughout the development of the project, I was encouraged to reach for a contemporary sculptural form that would call attention to the metro rail, thoughtful of the site during both day and night."

As the project developed, further connections were made with eight poet laureates of Virginia. Passages of the poems are illuminated in bands around each column base to highlight both a pedestrian and vehicular experience. According to the artist, "The sculptural columns create a dynamic connection to the station. Their abstract form, almost chalice-like, invites a wide range of personal interpretation while welcoming people to the new station."

This project was funded through the Cooperative Agreement-Phase 1 between the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) and WMATA.

Up from Tumbling Creek

Rhododendron roots laddered
up from Tumbling Creek,
so I grabbed one and then another
to climb back to the road
while my son shook his hands free,
bare feet skipping rock to rock.

Felicia Mitchell ©2011

Utterly

Quick wind lifting fan after
fan: stripped, going: ginkgo
now gone utterly

utterly gold! When the hour
comes, let us be so grandly
bold.

Vivian Teter ©2011

The Straight Ship-Wakes

The straight ship-wakes across
my brow all lead toward silence,

toward spruce forests and icefalls,
where the only interlocutors are owls,

the only audience constellations
and the purple sidewinders snow drifts make.

Jeff Mann ©2011

I Dream a Bean

sprouts from my hand, its roots
trace lifeline then plunge into vein,
a tendril filling every capillary.
From each finger, a leaf, broad and green.
From the loveline, the first bloom.

Jim Minick ©2011

Seed

I lay down life, crave earth.
Time's bell clangs death, chimes
birth, folds me in its grip.

Harrowed in the grave I twist,
splitting the shell, I leap in the furrow,
An old god, green and knowing.

Sharron Singleton ©2011

Death Transmute Me Please

Into the two-chambered body of the girl bee,
gift me with transparent wings, teach me
lightness and speed, theology of the plum

orchard, license to enter the hive, let my
whole body hum making sweetness in the dark.

David Huddle ©2011

Summer Morning

All night the storm avalanched down the mountain.
At dawn the pond still trembled. The muskrat slipped
Into its hole in willow roots. Wind erased its signature
From water. Only the dragon fly flitted through gusts,
Suturing the torn air with blue thread,
Its wings shimmering like stained-glass splinters.

Henry Hart ©2011

Mystery of Woodlands Mushrooms

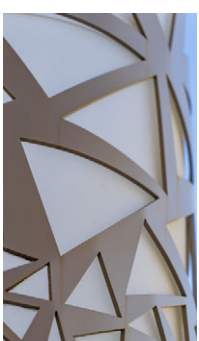
Sad beauty of small lunar towns that rise from basins of dank earth,
from frail but supple ground-whisper of hidden microscopic

spore, congealing in the ever-so-brief aftermath of rain. When all
life's spunk seems lost. An opulence too much—to slump now

in a hissing of spent spirit, milky spheres turned brown as dying
memory. Where they ripen for a moment, fade away.

Dan Stryk ©2011

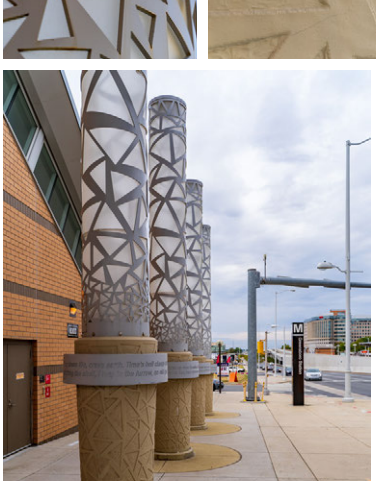

8303
toward silence, toward spruce forest
than plunge into vein, a tendril filling
first bloom.
Jim Minick © 2008

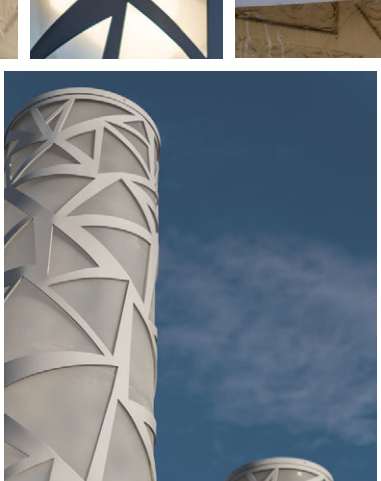







me's bell clangs
furrow, an old







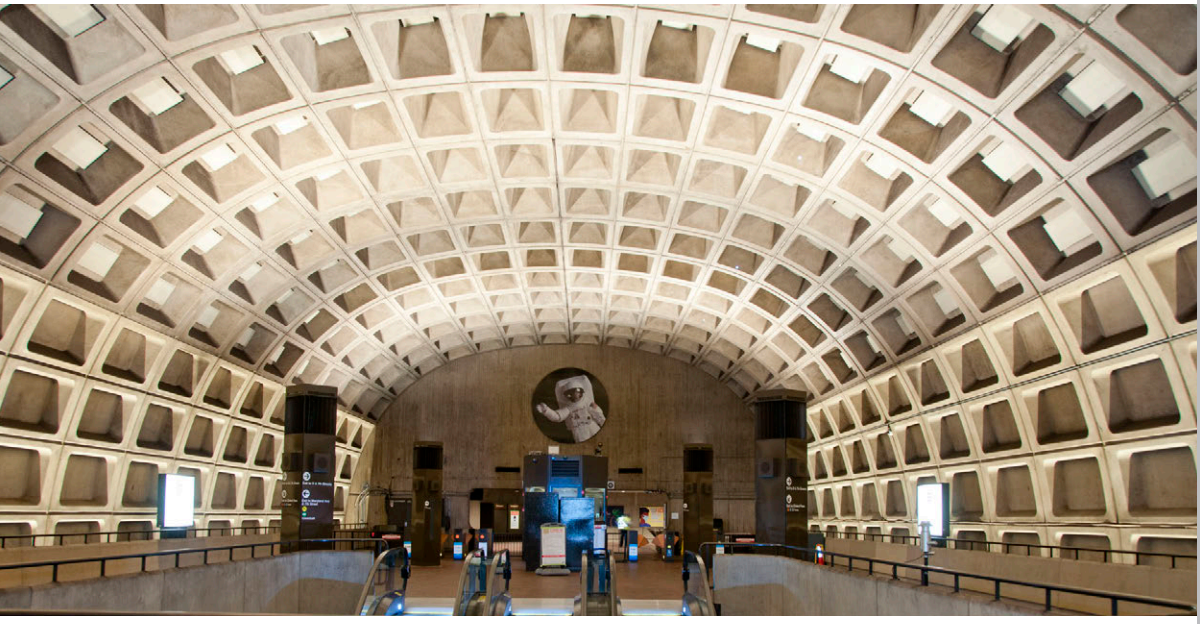




H-E-L-L-O and Space Set | 2005

Porcelain enamel photographs - Diameter: 10' (x2)

William Wegman



William Wegman was born in 1943 in Holyoke, Massachusetts. He received a B.F.A. in painting from the Massachusetts College of Art, Boston in 1965 and an M.F.A. in painting from the University of Illinois, Champagne-Urbana in 1967. He is famed for his popular images of Weimaraner dogs acting out in human situations.

In 2001, William Wegman was commissioned by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Art Program and the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (CAH) DC Creates Public Art Program to produce an artwork using photographs of his iconic pet Weimaraner dogs Chip and Batty dressed in NASA space suits. He was loaned a replica suit, typically used in public exhibitions, to create the illusion of dogs in space. The photos produced also pay homage to the first dog in space, Laika, who rode aboard the Soviet Union's Sputnik 2 satellite in 1957.

Using other photos from that portrait session, Wegman, NASA, (CAH), and WMATA collaborated to produce and install the large-scale public artworks.

H-E-L-L-O and *Space Set* is located above the D & 7th Streets and Maryland Avenue & 7th Street exits at L'Enfant Plaza Metro Station which is the closest station to the National Air & Space Museum or the National Mall.

The project was funded by NASA and the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities and donated to WMATA for display.



L'Enfant Plaza Station









From Model to Rainbow | 2005

Glass mosaic mounted on Aerolam panels - Dimensions: 14' x 39' (400 sq ft)

Sam Gilliam

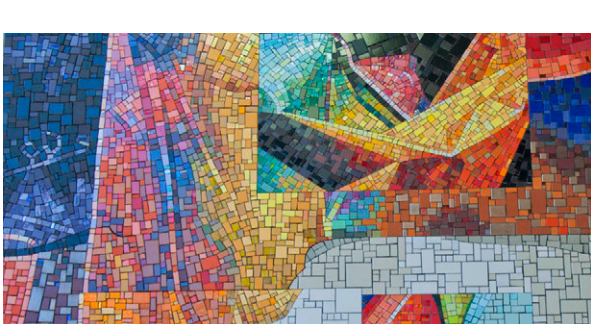


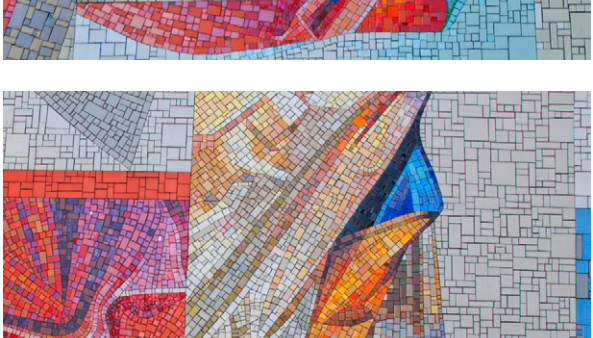
Sam Gilliam is a renowned Color Field painter and internationally acclaimed Washington, DC based artist with a career spanning many decades. He is best known for his innovation of hung and draped canvas outside of the traditional stretcher frame and has also worked with plastics and sculptural elements in his paintings. Later in his career, Gilliam has moved towards more textural and sculptural work, often incorporating wood or aluminum. Gilliam has received honorary degrees from Northwestern University and the University of Louisville; a Norman W. Harris Prize from the Art Institute of Chicago; two National Endowment of the Arts Awards; and a Guggenheim Fellowship.

From Model to Rainbow is composed of ceramic and hand blown glass mosaic tiles mounted on aluminum panels. The mural was fabricated in Ravenna, Italy by Miotto Art, based on the artist's original design. The mural is comprised of 20 sections weighing a total of 2000 pounds that span 400 square feet. Some areas of the artwork project three dimensionally, the depth of those projections being determined by aesthetics and technical feasibility. Sam Gilliam was inspired by notions of using light and color to transform the space and to create a work of art that reflects the vitality of Takoma. The artwork is installed on the south abutment wall of the underpass flanking Cedar Street and facing the south entrance of Takoma station.

This project was funded in part by the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities, and was donated to WMATA by the District of Columbia.











Coloratura | 2002

Painted aluminum, stainless steel - Dimensions: 22' x 30' x 20'

Mary Ann Mears



The primary focus of Baltimore-based artist, Mary Ann Mears's work from the beginning of her career has been creating sculpture for specific sites. The impetus for her work has emerged from an intense conviction about the powerful role of art in a variety of social/cultural settings, public and private. Mears enjoys the challenge of responding to the physical and spatial qualities of new sites, whether architectural -- interior or exterior -- or natural.

Coloratura consists of suspended and high-relief wall sculptures. Mary Ann Mears, uses her trademark brilliant colors, rhythmic patterns and bold forms to create a work of art that is animated, colorful and inspiring. The plain concrete surface of the parapet wall around the stairway provides a neural backdrop for a rich composition of dynamic and colorful forms. As viewers move through the space, either when approaching the staircase or when arriving from trains into the platform, they see the work from multiple perspectives.

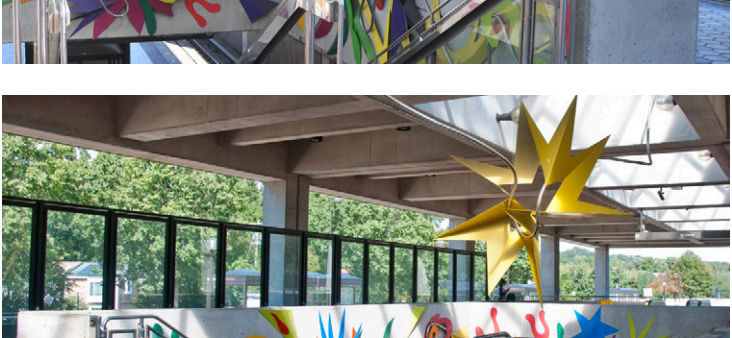
The artist described her work in these terms - "The image of the suspended sculptural element is likely to be interpreted as the diurnal pathway of the sun reflecting the round trip made by many commuters using the station. The linear elements alternatively limned in stainless steel tubing or painted aluminum are a metaphor for journeys and the choices made as to routes and means of travel."

According to Mary Ann Mears, the sources for the images, forms, patterns, and palette that form ***Coloratura*** are the decorative and fine arts of various cultures including African, Latin American, Pacific Islander and Western European. The intent of the artist is to provide a richly layered work reflecting the full panoply of American cultural traditions contributing to an expression of collective exuberance.

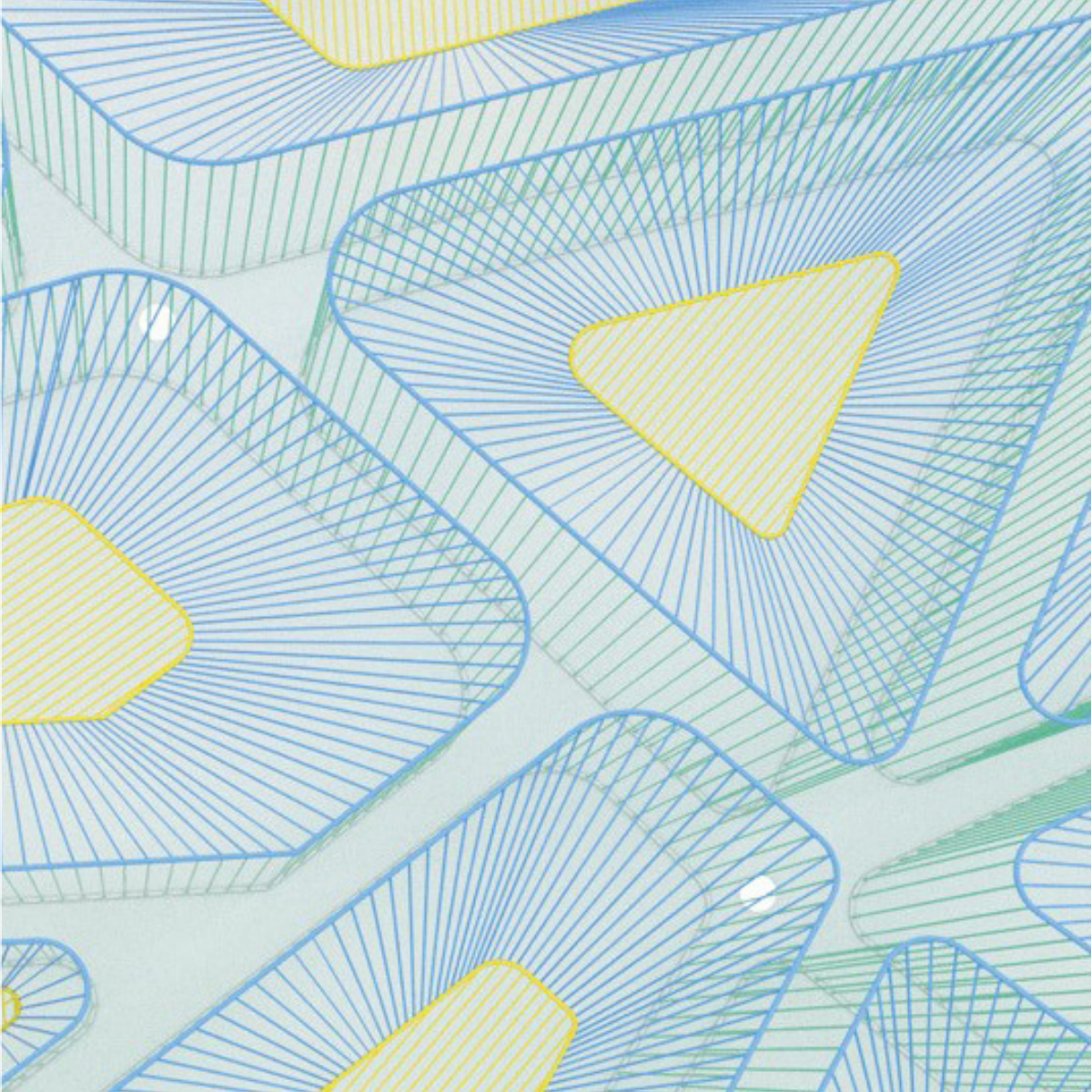
This project was funded by WMATA as part of a capital project at the Southern Avenue Station.











Aura - Hooray - Pebble 2021

Aura: Steel and colored cord - Dimensions: 690 sq. ft.
Hooray: Steel and LED lights - Dimensions: 18'6" x 8'1" x 3'3"
Pebble: Power coated stainless steel - Dimensions: 1'7" x 11'4" x 6'

Hou de Sousa

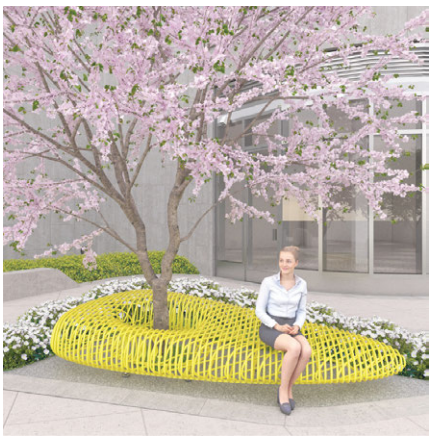


The artist team Hou de Sousa (Nancy Hou and Josh de Sousa) was selected to create three site-specific artworks for the new WMATA DC headquarters. ***Aura*** is a suspended artwork located in the lobby of the building. The sculpture ***Hooray*** and the sculptural bench ***Pebble*** are respectively located on 7th Street SW and on D Street SW. The artists stated that "When designing this triptych of public sculptures, it was easy to find inspiration within the immediate site as well as the broader context of Washington DC. Pierre L'Enfant's visionary urban plan for the District echoes throughout each sculpture proposal, as do the architectural features of Harry Weiss's iconic DC metro stations, and Studios Architecture's fantastic WMATA HQ campus design. From the onset we appreciated how the design of the new HQ building and surrounding landscape reverberate with the geometric qualities of nearby L'Enfant Station and we've worked to maintain a dialogue with each of these critical precedents by deploying a vocabulary of intersecting diagonal lines, rounded corners, and coffered spaces."

This project was funded by WMATA as part of a capital project at the new WMATA DC headquarters.











North Star | 2012

Glass, concrete, steel - Dimensions: 22' x 84' x 1'

Ann Gardner



Ann Gardner is a Seattle, WA based glass artist. She studied Ceramics and Fine Arts at the University of Oregon & Portland State University. The artist has realized several site-specific public artworks, has won several awards, and her work is included in major collections.

In her project proposal, Ann Gardner stated that "Recently looking at the night sky, I realized I've seen the Little Dipper every time I've ever seen stars. It's truly constant – you can look at the sky at night anywhere on the northern hemisphere and there it is, that beautiful constellation with the guiding North Star at the end of the handle. I am neither an explorer nor an astronomer, but instinctively I understand why the North Star has been used as a guide for celestial navigation. No matter where I am, I can locate it and it locates me."

North Star is comprised of reflective glass representation of the Little Dipper (Ursa Minor) with the North Star on the north wall of the Shepherd Parkway Bus Facility. It identifies the building from afar and 'navigationally' represent the place where buses return. It changes during the day, reflecting ambient light, sparkling like the stars. At night, it is lit from two light poles, the surface twinkling as the viewer moves. The six small stars are constructed from stainless steel with metal mesh beds that hold hand-cut, small squares of yellow glass, each piece backed with metallic foil to reflect light. The dome-shaped dots between the stars are covered with small squares of blue-gray glass with reflective metal backing.

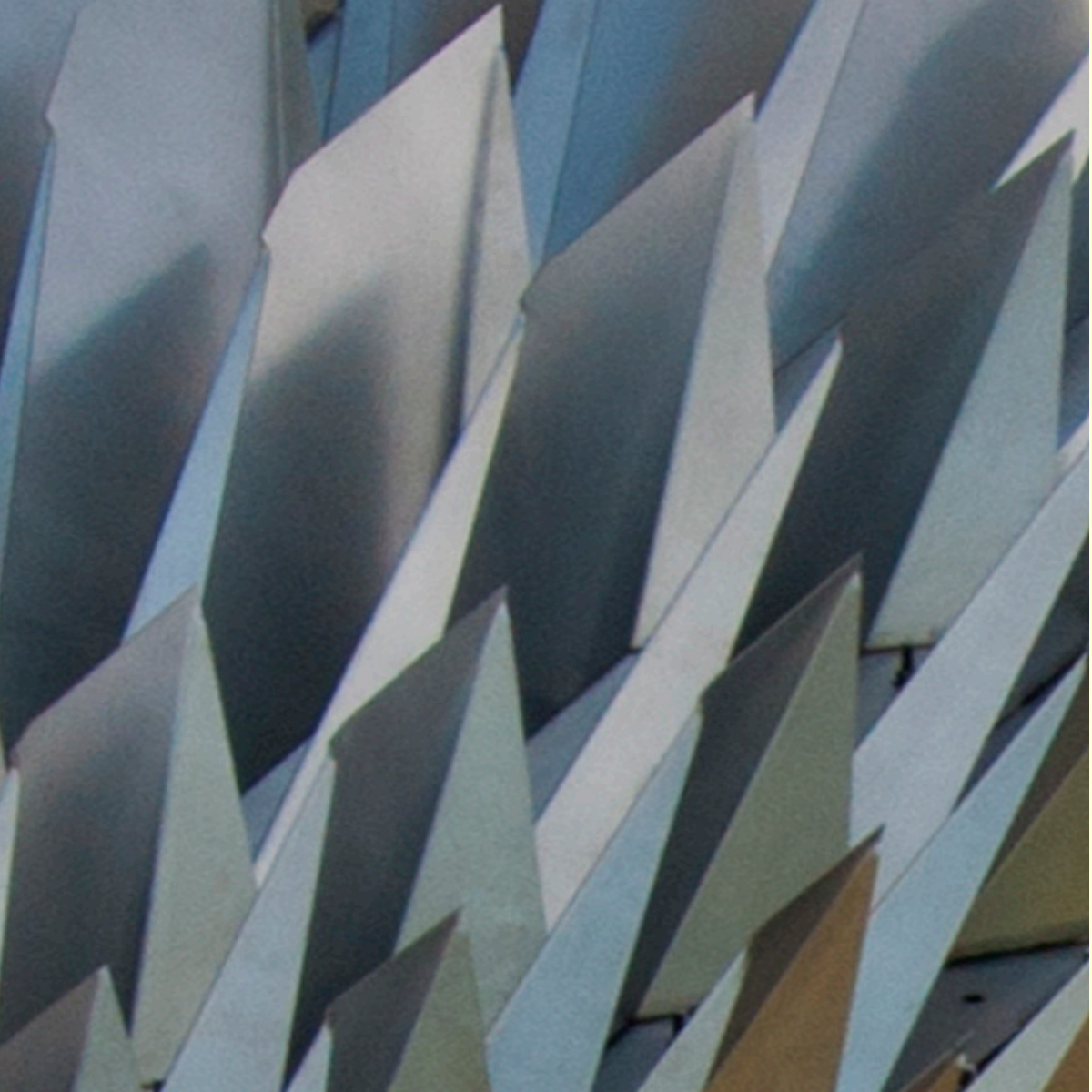
This project was funded by WMATA as part of a capital project at the Shepherd Parkway Bus Garage.







Shepherd Parkway Bus Garage





Plume #3 | 2014

Stainless steel, LED lights - Dimensions: 35' x 17'5" x 2'9"

Volkan Alkanoglu



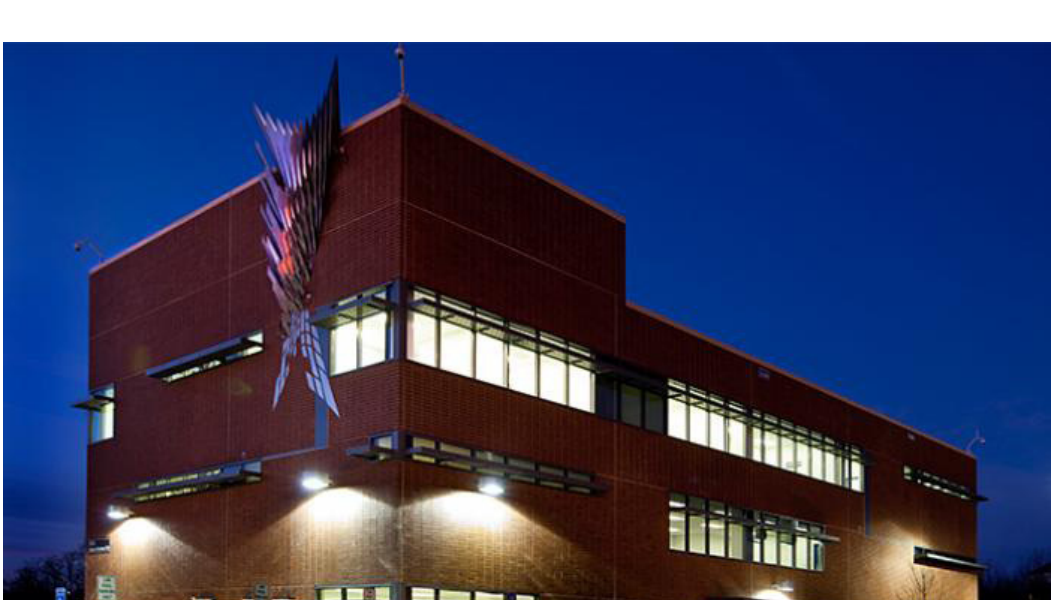
Volkan Alkanoglu is a Portland, Oregon based artist. He is the founding principal of the practice VA | DESIGN. His work is focused on the pursuit of novel form through spatial, material and technological explorations. His work is permanently installed throughout the United States.

Plume #3 was commissioned for the new Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) District II Substation and Training Facility and is dedicated to the memory of MTPD's first fallen police officer Harry Davis Jr. The design comprises a bold surface structure which forms an elegant formal gradient, providing a strong, curios, and visually pleasing addition to the building. The design is conceived as a precious dynamic motion in both its sweeping, curvilinear design and its function as a representative of memory and cultural synthesis.

Plume #3, positioned at the outdoor facade of the MTPD District II Substation and Training Facility, is welded and folded out of sheet stainless steel pieces and connected to the wall with anchors. In daylight the artwork appears as a multiplicity of metallic surfaces networks, with subtle reflective qualities, offering views from the under passing adjacent walkways and while approaching the building by car, bus or bicycle. By night the project assumes an elegant, sculptural presence on its site. It is lit up and made vivid in its internal patterning. The structure opens its additional qualities, displaying its beautiful internal world through light, color and shadow.

This project was funded by WMATA as part of a capital project at the Metro Transit Police Department District II Substation and Training Facility.


6654
Metro Access Rd
POLICE



Metro Transit Police District II Substation

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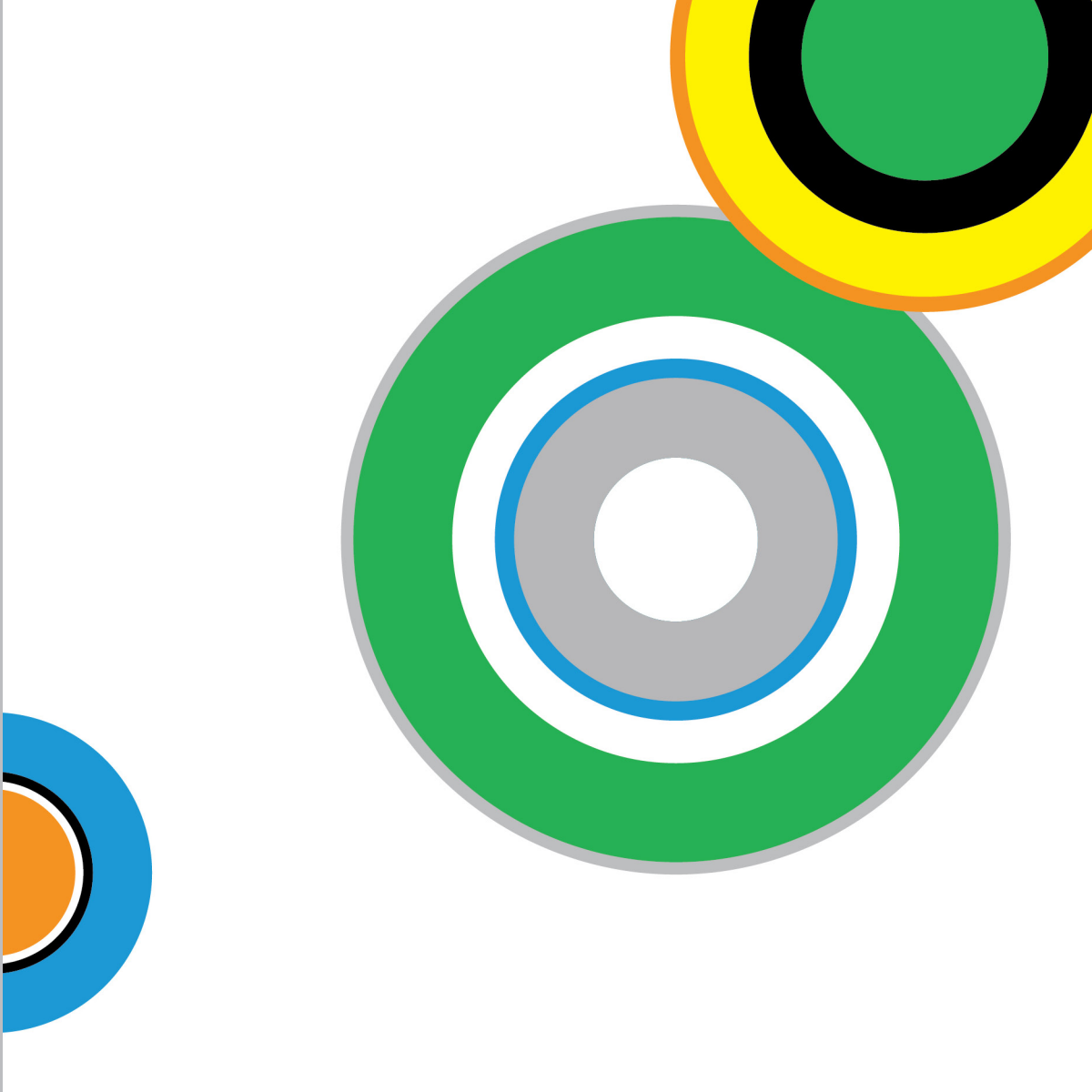
Temporary Public **Art** Projects




LUCKY
REX



Arts Walk Totems | 2016

Teracotta, iron pipe, concrete - Dimensions: 12" x 6'6" x 12" (x32)

Montgomery County Public School Students



In 2016, 32 ceramic totem-like sculptures designed by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) high school students were installed along the new Grosvenor-Strathmore Arts Walk and on Strathmore's campus. The 32 installations designated for the Arts Walk, all large-scale totems, enhance the grounds of the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Parking Garage, providing a physical connection to the arts center while adding visual interest to enhance the experience of the thousands of commuters who use the station each day. The remaining 7 totems were installed on Strathmore's campus, adding to its popular sculpture garden. A dedication ceremony was attended by students and teachers involved in the project, as well as community leaders and members of Strathmore, WMATA, and MCPS.

The totems, all approximately 5-feet-6-inches high, were created in a county-wide, curriculum-based arts project for advanced ceramics students. 14 schools representing all sectors of the county participated in the project. Students worked in teams to develop a concept, renderings, a plan to execute their ideas, and, ultimately, worked to shape and fire the totems. A panel composed of the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, members of the local arts community, Strathmore, WMATA, and MCPS reviewed 82 proposals.

The project encouraged student teams to extend their creativity and self-expression, yielding a variety of designs. Totems on view include abstract works and meticulous geometric designs, as well as thematic works inspired by Washington-area landmarks, Maryland, zodiac symbols, dice, and pets.

The totems were commissioned by Strathmore and Montgomery County Public Schools in cooperation with the WMATA Art in Transit Program and Office of Parking. The project was sponsored by Five Square Development and Clark Construction.

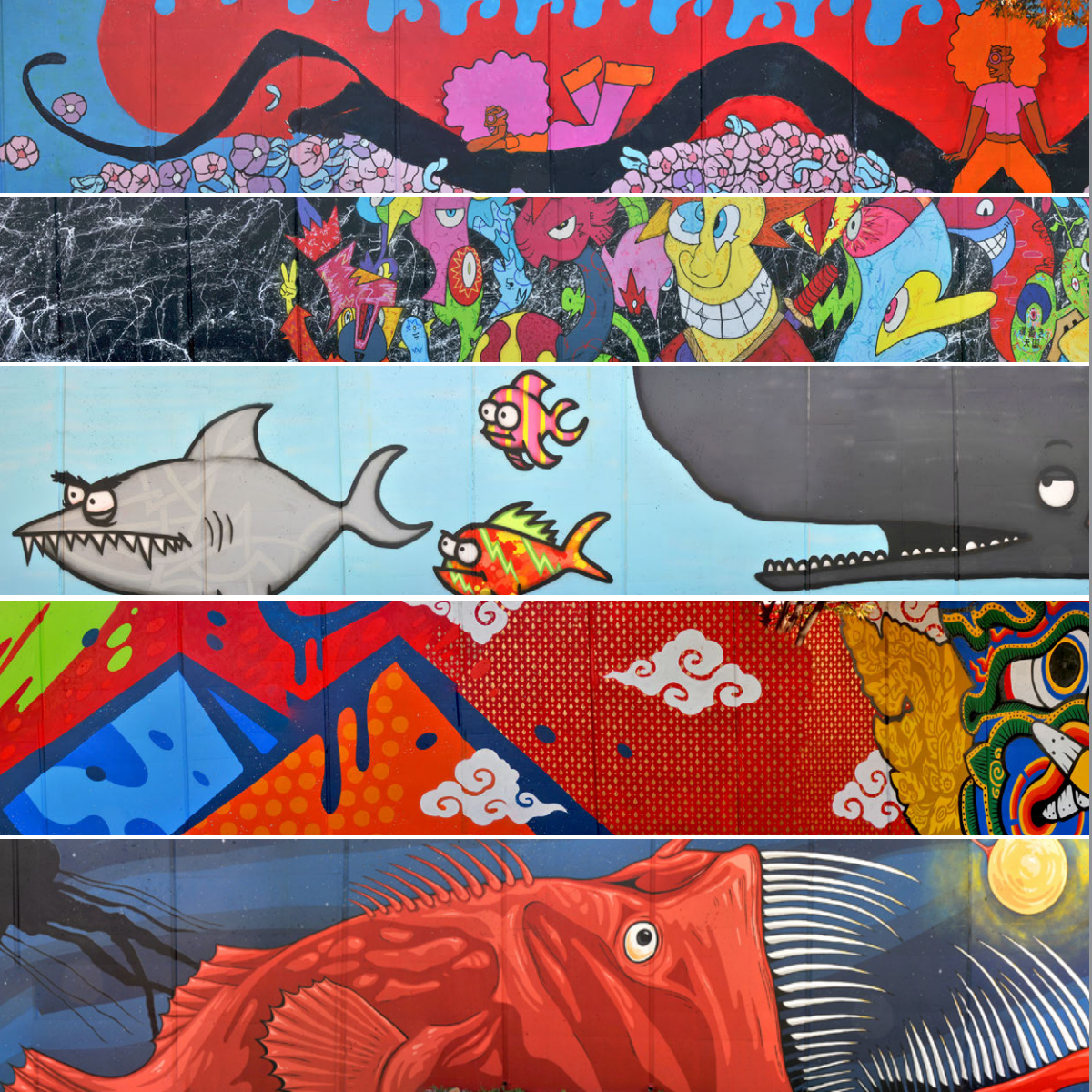














Trap Bob (2020)



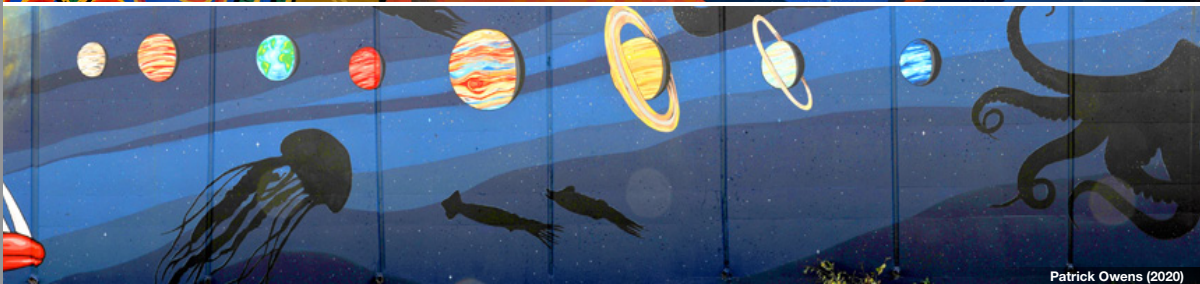
Takashi Nakajima (2020)



Tom Mahoney (2020)



Golden Rabbit • Silent Monkey and Matt Corrado (2020)



Patrick Owens (2020)

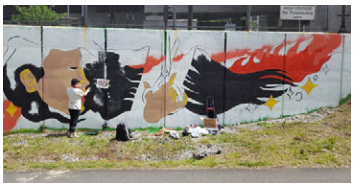
Pow! Wow! DC



Martin Swift (2018)

POW! WOW!, a global art movement that celebrates culture, music, and art in cities around the world, was established in the NoMa neighborhood in 2016. Led by D.C. artist Kelly Towles, the 10-day international mural festival each year brings artists from the D.C. region and around the globe together to paint larger-than-life murals that adorn building walls, enliven streetscapes, and beautify the community.

As part of the international mural festival, a partnership between Pow! Wow! DC, NoMa Business Improvement District, and WMATA's Art in Transit Program leads to the creation of mural artworks painted by mural artists on the public-facing side of a 900-foot long retaining wall at WMATA's Brentwood Rail Yard facility (North of the NoMa-Gallaudet Metro station, along the Metropolitan Branch Trail).



Marni Manning (2019)



Nick Zombro (2019)



Jacob Eveland (2016)



Wing Chow (2018)



BroCoLoco (2018)



MASPAZ + CHELOVE (2017)



Golden Rabbit Silent Monkey (2018)



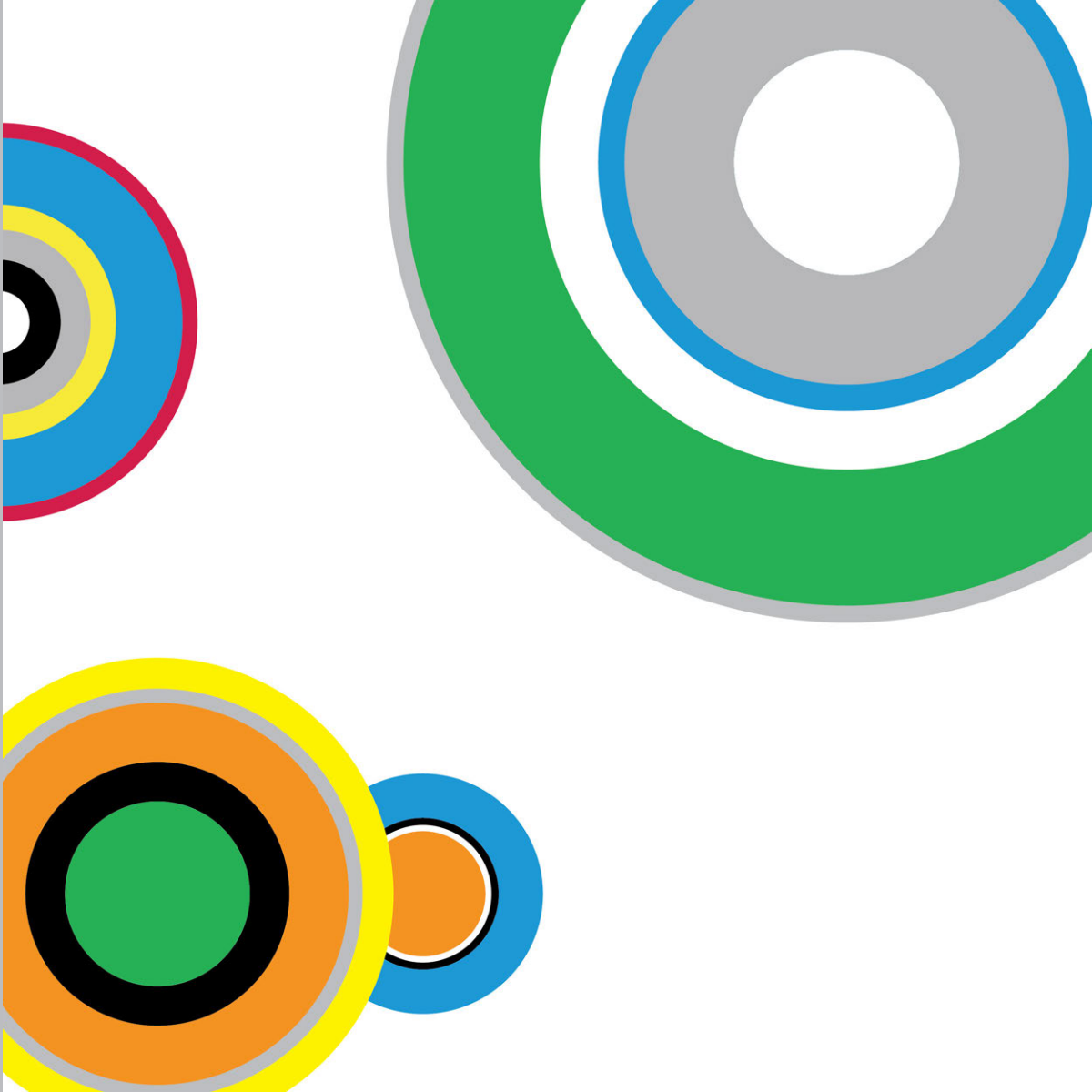
HKS181 (2016)



Tracie Ching (2019)

Digital **Art** Installation Series



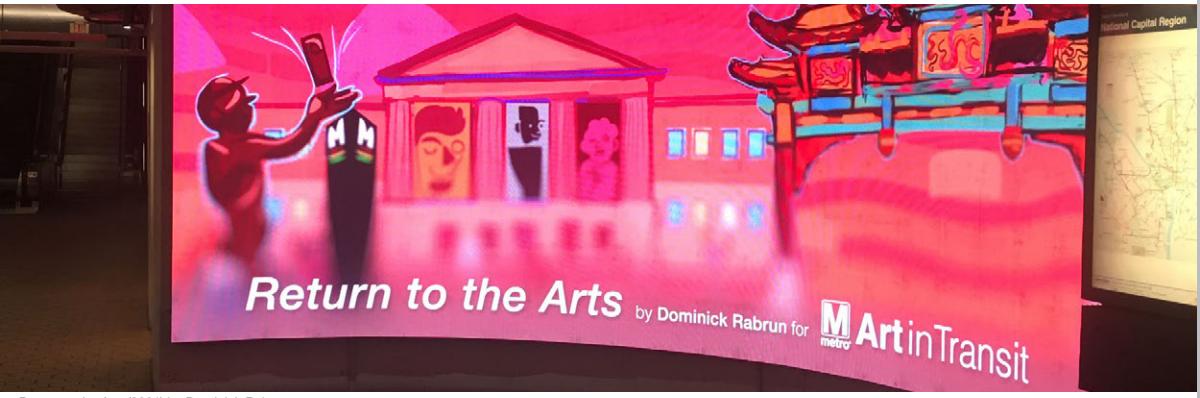




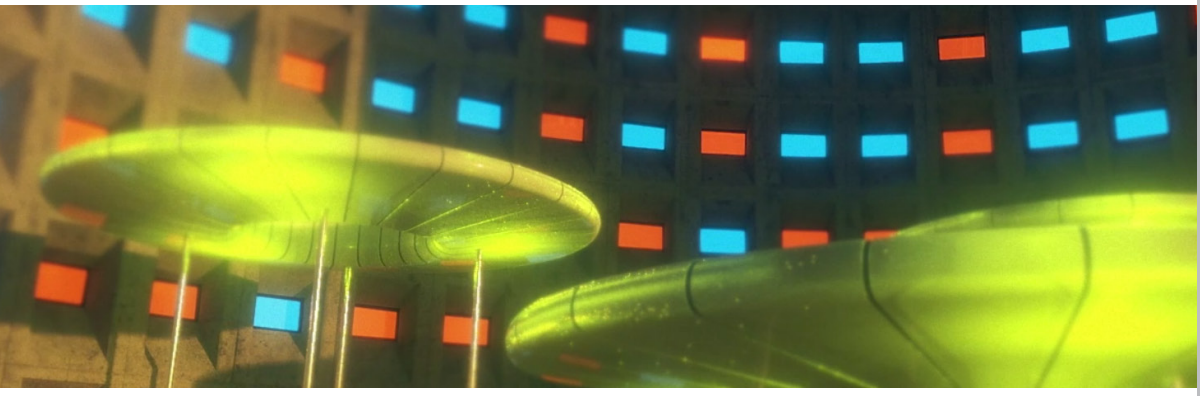


Righting Reflex **(2021) by Amber Frid-Jimenez**

Digital Art Installation Series



Return to the Arts (2021) by Dominick Rabrun



Celebrating DC's Brutes (2020) by Nathan Gamson

Since 2020, as part of Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's commitment to promoting art in the region, the Art in Transit (AIT) Program seeks to further develop its offering on the transit system's growing digital media network with a series of art installations highlighting artists' creativity and the creative cultures of the communities served by WMATA.

WMATA's digital media network includes screens with several unique screen sizes in a growing number of metro stations that present digital artworks prominently to the public and customers. Dynamic and engaging digital artworks realized by artists in new media and by arts organizations are regularly featured on the digital displays. A selection panel composed of local arts professionals reviews submittals and selects finalists to develop proposals for digital art.



Variegata Expanded (for Washington) (2021) by Pascual Sisto



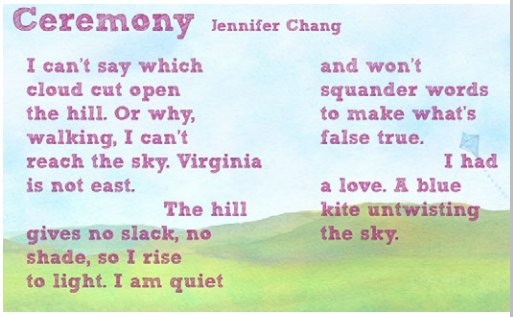
Poetry in Motion



Poetry in Motion



Gift by Czeslaw Milosz

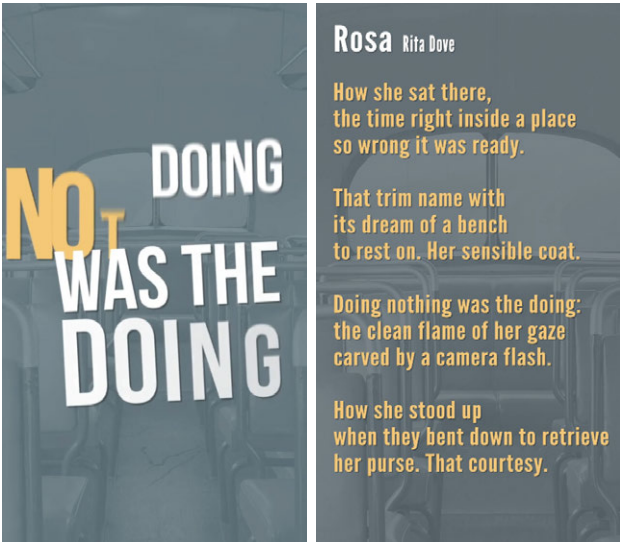


Ceremony by Jenifer Chang



Winter Poem by Nikki Giovanni

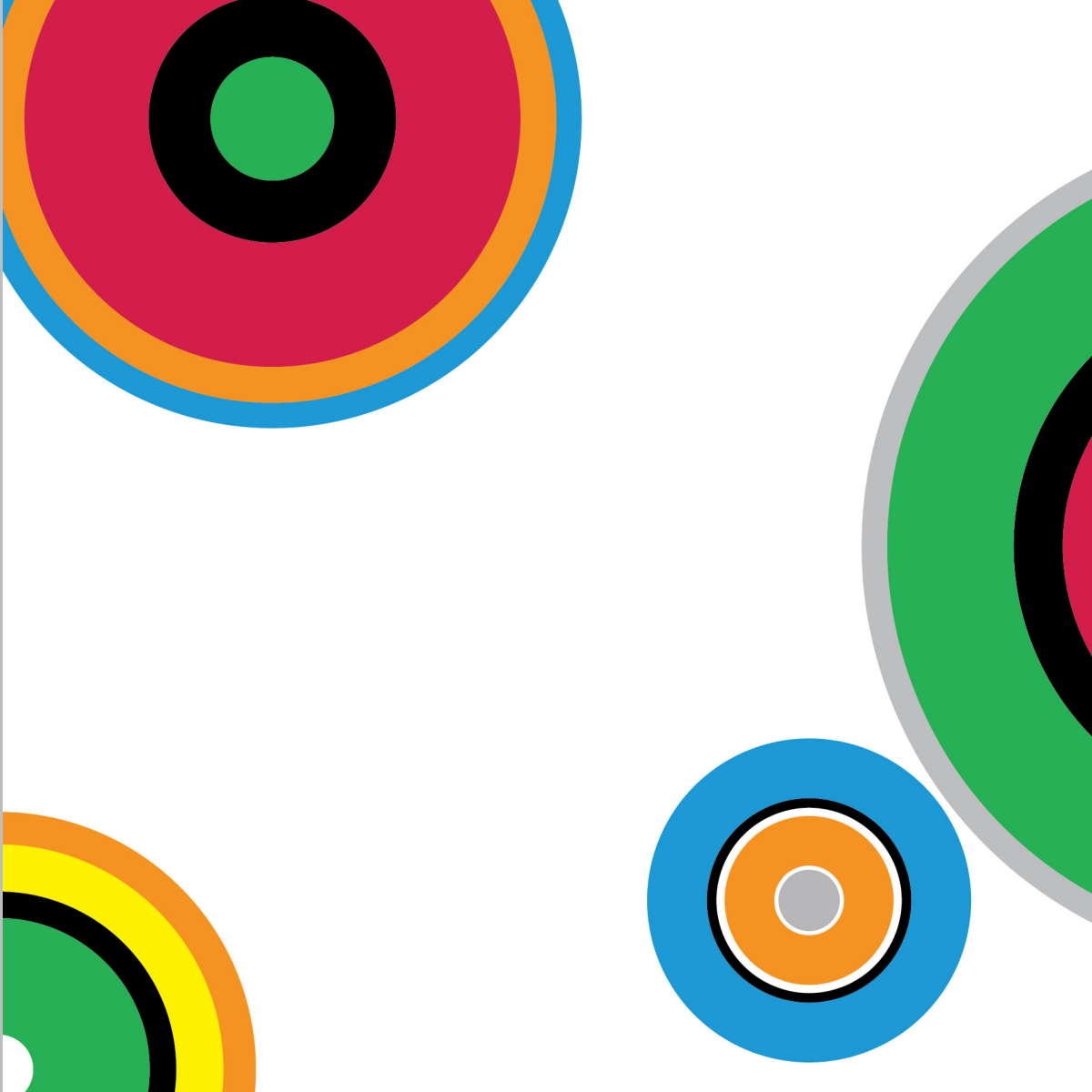
In 2020, the WMATA Art in Transit Program and the Poetry Society of America (PSA) collaborated to present Poetry in Motion®. WMATA developed video animations of poems that are displayed on digital screens at Metrorail stations and poetry in the transit systems of cities throughout the country exposing it to millions of viewers every day. Poetry in Motion®, which was launched by MTA New York and the PSA in 1992, currently appears in transit systems in Los Angeles, Nashville, Providence, San Francisco, and New York City. WMATA is the program's most recent partner.



Rosa by Rita Dove



Performing **Arts**







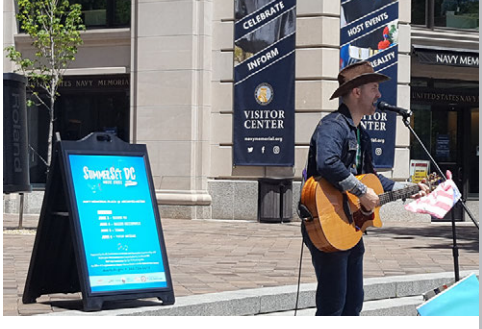
Performing Arts











The WMATA Art in Transit Program has developed programs where local performing artists and entertainers are invited to respond to a Call for Artists and attend auditions for various programs such as MetroPerforms! and SummerSet DC.

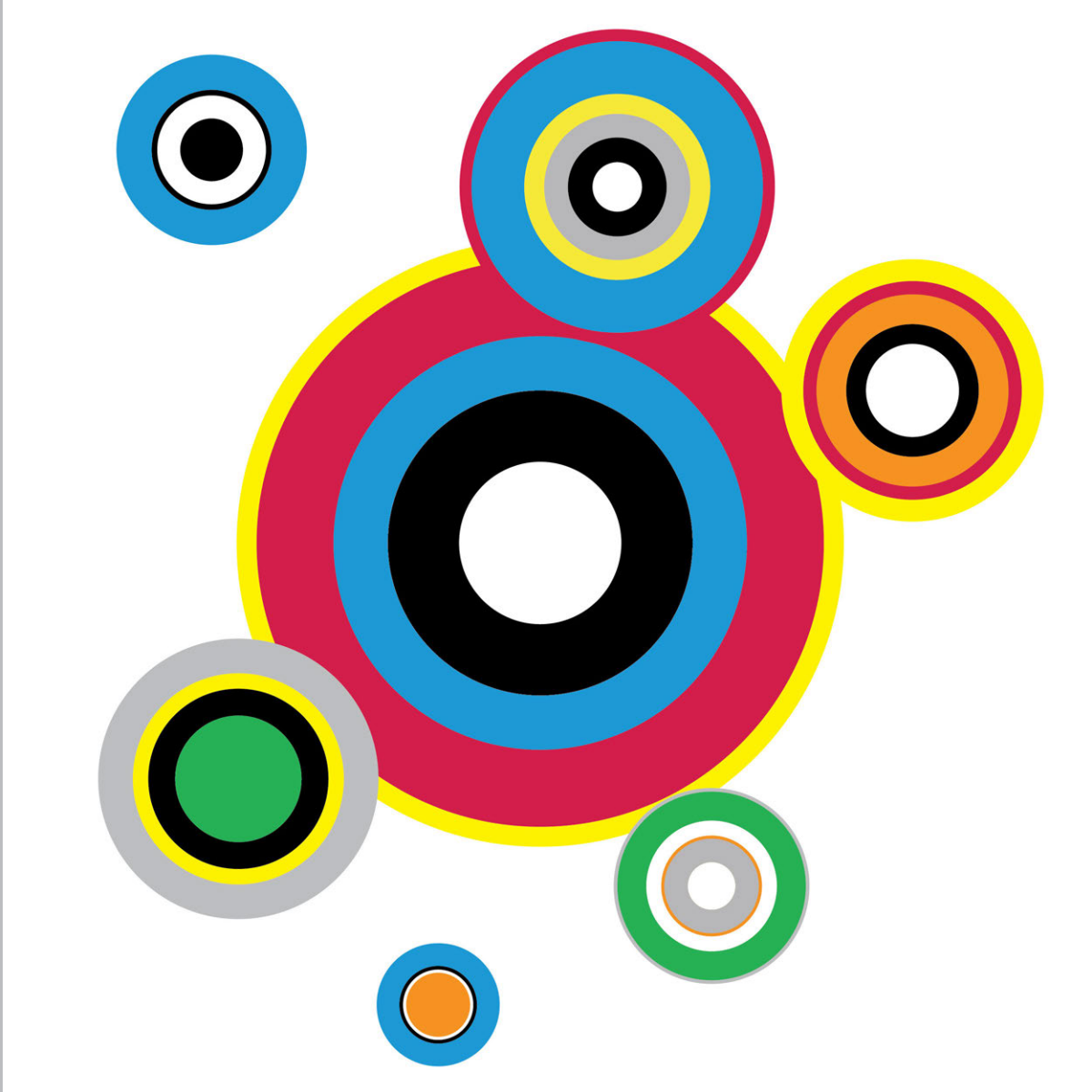
The MetroPerforms! Program, managed by Metro's Art in Transit program, offers local artists the chance to make Metro station entrances their stage. Art in Transit also has collaborated with the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage as part of its MetroPerforms! Program.

In addition, Metro's Art in Transit program offers local artists the chance to be selected to perform for Music on the Mall, a summer long program developed by Metro in cooperation with the Office of Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, the National Park Service, and the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities. Music on the Mall brings live entertainment to the Nation's Capital with selected performers and live visual artists who perform on the lawn of the National Mall on Thursdays during the lunchtime hour.





Acknowledgements



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Additional information on (the) WMATA's Art in Transit Program is available at wmata.com/artintransit

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