Art Commission Application Form

You must submit the following along with this form as a single PDF.

• Individual or organizational statement (250 word max)
• Letter of intent that includes history of project and its impact on the community (500 word max)
• Visual materials (See Art Commission Guidelines for requirement)
• Budget describing cost of materials, artist fees, maintenance, installation, etc.
• Two letters of support from project partners or neighborhood organizations
• One letter of support from the Department of Public Works or Department of Mobility & Infrastructure

Notes:

• You may be required to hold a Development Activities Meeting with the applicable Registered Community Organization prior to Hearing. For more information, visit pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/rco.
• After recieving Art Commission approval, any neccessary permits, certificates of occupancy, legal agreements, or other city approvals are still required. These must be applied for seperately at the appropriate City departments and are the responsibility of the applicant.
• Application format is a digital copy of full application form, required documents, and the presentation to be projected at the Hearing as one single PDF. Send all documents to pacd@pittsburghpa.gov.

Project Information

Type of Project:  
- [x] Conceptual Review
- [ ] Conceptual/Final Review
- [ ] Final Review
- [ ] Courtesy Review

Has this project been come before Art Commission before?

- [x] No
- [ ] Yes, when:_________________

Duration of project: From _____/_____/_____ to _____/_____/_____ 

Permanent?  
- [ ] No  
- [x] Yes
Conceptual Review for Art in Parks
Ginger Brooks Takahashi

Project Location

Address: Schenley Park – exact location to be determined

Neighborhood: Squirrel Hill

Applicant Information

Name: Sarah Minnaert, Public Art & Civic Design Division, Department of City Planning

Mailing Address: 200 Ross St, 4th Floor, Pittsburgh PA 15219

Phone: 412.255.8996 Email: sarah.minnaert@pittsburghpa.gov

Relationship or Role in Project: Public Art & Civic Design Manager
Ginger Brooks Takahashi  
Schenley Park  
Artist Statement

I am a conceptual artist who works with spaces, language, people and plants to create site responsive work that asks questions about our surroundings, our resources, and how we might creatively co-exist. My creative process begins with research and multiple forms of listening, being in conversation not only with the people who use and work in a space, but also observing the land, the plants, and the layered histories of a site.

Over the past two years, water has been a focus as I developed a public art piece with community organizations, Upstream PGH and Center for Civic Arts, through the Office of Public Art’s Environment, Public Health Arts initiative. During this time, I have been learning about our underground (culverted) streams in Pittsburgh and thinking about how human relationships to water are charged with our connections between land access, water, history, industry, people, and plants. Nine Mile Run Viewfinder makes use of existing manhole access to the culverted stream. Replacing these manhole covers with custom viewfinders at three sites in Wilkinsburg will allow the public to see/hear/smell the underground stream. The piece was installed this Summer at Hunter Park, Whitney Park, and West Street. Because my work is not limited to a medium or material, I consider the environment the work will live in, and the resources available that will best communicate the values and concepts of the artwork.

I have almost twenty years of experience of working collaboratively as an artist with multiple publics, and every situation is unique. From designing a graphic that celebrates LGBTQ lives for the Diversity Billboard project in Westmoreland County; conceptualizing an atrium installation taking into the consideration how the pandemic affected our ability to share indoor space at Tufts University Art Gallery; creating a performance piece that examines my relationship to Pittsburgh’s air quality, the steel industry, and xenophobia; coordinating projet MOBILIVRE–BOOKMOBILE project, a touring artist book collection; to working as a Teaching Artist with Dreams of Hope, an LGBTQ youth theater company and arts education nonprofit. These are just a few examples of working in, and with publics, as an artist and educator.
My piece for Schenley Park will highlight affective relationships to water, specifically the historical presence and memory of public springs located within the park. This artwork will take the form of a spring fed fountain that fills a stone tub, with adjacent stone seating, inspired by Japanese garden design and sites for ritual cleansing.

My process began with an invitation to visit the Neill Log House, invited by the neighborhood group that is heading the renovations. I noticed the Catahecassa Fountain in close proximity to the log house and started to research the history of springs in the park, and in Pittsburgh. I visited the Heinz History Center to do research on the history of Schenley Park in August. I met with Matthew Falcone of Preservation PGH who applied for historical status for the Catahecassa Fountain, and who has done extensive research on the history of springs and fountains throughout Pittsburgh.

I presented my ideas to the RCO/Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition on August 17, 2021 and met with Tom Paulin to speak generally about possible sites in Schenley Park. I’ve been in conversation with Garry Sciulli, the park’s Maintenance Manager, who guided me to the two proposed sites. I’m aware that there may be more potential springs that I have not yet located/visited.

I will meet with DPW in early November to discuss the logistics around my plan. I have been in touch with Martin Drilling who is experienced doing this type of work, and will meet on site in December. I have consulted with Suzanne Pace who does traditional stone work about the general scope of the project. I’m interested in working with her on the stone elements and landscape design.
Ginger Brooks Takahashi
Proposal for Schenley Park
I am a conceptual artist who works with spaces, language, people and plants to create site responsive work that asks questions about our surroundings, our resources, and how we might creatively co-exist.
My creative process begins with research and multiple forms of listening, being in conversation not only with the people who use and work in a space, but also observing the land, the plants, and the layered histories of a site.
Nine Mile Run Viewfinder, 2021-2023
Upstream PGH and Center for Civic Arts
Office of Public Art’s Environment, Public Health Initiative
NINE MILE RUN VIEWFINDER
BY ARTIST GINGER BROOKS TAKAHASHI
SITES IN WILKINSBURG, PA
Nine Mile Run Viewfinder, 2021-2023
Upstream PGH and Center for Civic Arts
Office of Public Art’s Environment, Public Health Initiative
We Will Open With You, 2018
Collaboration with Dana Bishop-Root
Williams College Museum of Art
Mock-up for We Will Open With You, 2018
Collaboration with Dana Bishop-Root
Williams College Museum of Art
My proposal for Schenley Park highlights human connections to water, specifically the historical presence and memory of public springs located within the park.
This artwork will take the form of a spring fed fountain that fills a stone tub, with adjacent stone seating, inspired by Japanese garden design and sites for ritual cleansing.
Proposed Site #1: Spring behind Westinghouse Memorial
Proposed Site #1: Spring behind Westinghouse Memorial
Proposed Site #2: Spring/Headwaters of Panther Hollow
Proposed Site #2: Spring/Headwaters of Panther Hollow
Artist’s Concerns:

- Site accessibility for visitors
- Waterflow design without electricity
- Basin cut from stone from Appalachian Plateau
Projected Timeline:

November ‘21: Art Commission Conceptual Review

Dec’ 21-Jan ‘22: Design Waterflow, Basin, and Landscape

February ‘22: Art Commission Final Review

March ‘22: Fabricate Stone Basin and Seating Drill and Install Pump

April ‘22: Install Basin and Seating Landscape Design

May ‘22: Public Reception