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/rc0.
- After receiving Art Commission approval, any necessary permits, certificates of occupancy, legal agreements, or other city approvals are still required. These must be applied for separately 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:  □ Conceptual Review  [X] Conceptual/Final Review  □ Final Review  □ Courtesy Review

Has this project been come before Art Commission before?

[□] No  [X] Yes, when:_____________

Duration of project: From ___/___/____ to ___/___/____

Permanent?  [□] No  [X] Yes
Conceptual Review for Art in Parks
Hutabut LLC

Project Location

Address: Frick 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
BIO

In the 1980s, Matthew Geller switched his studio practice from primarily sculpture to the production of video works, reworking the structure and style of television storytelling with comic narratives that played off conventional genres—documentary, fairytale, melodrama. Employing fragmentation and disjunction as storytelling devices, Geller intercut several seemingly unrelated anecdotal stories into cohesive, if nonlinear, narratives. Beginning with his fellowship at the American Academy in Rome, he integrated his skills as a storyteller and sculptor by creating intimately observed worlds in miniature. For the past 18 years, he has taken these ideas, changed the scale, and extended the possibilities for site and a chaotic viewership by producing temporary and permanent public art, which has been described in various ways, from "urban earth-works" to "industrial baroque settees."

Geller has created public artworks throughout the United States and in Canada. He has exhibited at the: Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum, New Museum, Kunst Kanaal—Amsterdam, Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum—Eindhoven, Witte de With—Rotterdam, Smithsonian Institute, Los Angeles Contemporary Art, Queens Museum, Boston ICA, Chicago MCA, Moderna Musset—Stockholm, among others.

Geller’s public artwork has won numerous awards, and he has received fellowships from the American Academy in Rome, National Endowment for the Arts, and New York Foundation for the Arts. He has received grants from Creative Capital, New York State Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, Jerome Foundation, Foundation for Contemporary Art, and Greenwall Foundation, among others.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Matthew Geller’ history with public art has included many object-based and site-specific artworks integrated with their environment. The artworks are participatory, interactive, and kinetic, promoting inclusivity and creative uses of the site. While his work is visually eclectic, his work always creates moments of respite, contemplation, and delight, befitting the site’s functional and visual context. This would also be the case for the Frick Park public artwork, which will provide a sense of place, create a landmark and a destination, and foster the ideals of an inclusive and diverse community.

Geller purposefully use materials from the everyday outdoor environment—anything from benches, to swings, to canopies, to pipes—and bring them into the realm of art. He creates a level of connection to the familiar while highlighting elements of awe and
beguilement, often using existing artifacts from the site and retrofitting them to make a micro public square or landmark that encourages creative patterns of use.

The works are spirited, accessible, participatory, and very often unexpected. By considering behavioral design and combining strong visuals with dynamic elements activated by people and changes in ambient light and weather, the resulting work is in constant flux. The artwork becomes part of the community's fabric and is integral in shaping how we live in public space. The idea is to surprise while fostering a sense of community around an unlikely object or site.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

• August Frick Park tour focusing on potential sites
  - Sarah Minnaert, Public Art & Civic Design Manager, Department of City Planning
  - Erica Heide, Park Ranger
  - Kathryn Hunninen Sr. Manager of Special Initiatives, Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy.

• Site review by Tom Paulin, Superintendent, Department of Public Works
  - No issues with the site.

• Squirrel Hill RCO (SHUC) meeting
  - Presented past work and share potential sites
    - SHUC to share information with other RCOs adjacent to the Park, and others.

• AiR Community Meeting, November 10th

• Sophia Fang, Frick Park Storyteller
  - Meeting to discussion public art and storytelling project status and process

• Engage Park Survey
  https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/art-parks/hutabut-llc
PROJECT DESCRIPTION
The Park began when Henry Clay Frick, upon his death in 1919, bequeathed 151 acres to the City of Pittsburgh. This was at the height of popularity for the merry-go-round (aka carousel) when approximately 4,000 merry-go-rounds were in the United States. Today there are about 400. Referencing both the earlier popularity of the merry-go-round and Pittsburgh’s industrial past, Geller’s proposed public artwork uses the merry-go-round’s visual and functional language to create a participatory interactive and kinetic work that will be a destination and a gathering place. The seats rotate to foster conversation or one’s view of the landscape. The canopy animates by swaying in the wind and due to vibration created as people sit on or off the seats or rotate the seats. Located on the west side of the Park on Riverview Hill, the artwork leverages its setting by making the panoramic views, its vertical tree-like structure, and the changes in scale that result from the multiple viewpoints all critical elements of the artwork.
The canopy teeters like a seesaw as people sway on the benches. When it rains, water is funneled from the roof through drainpipes to troughs on the ground and then to the adjacent rain garden. By teetering the canopy, those on the benches can determine from which pipe the water drains. The muse for Upper Blush is an issue critical to Norfolk’s future—rising tides. The circles of light on the ground created by the skylights reference the moon and the teetering and swaying mimic the ebb and flow of the water. The human interaction that influences the balance and the flow of the water serves as a metaphor for larger issues associated with floodwater.
Centipenty
2021
Wing Luke Elementary School
Painted & unpainted stainless steel
3’ x 2’ x 42’

Centipenty is a colossal teeter-tottering spring rider that bounces, sways, pivots, and clangs. The 24 seats, in 3 sizes, derive their dimensions from the Wing Luke classroom chairs for kindergartners through 5th graders, who activate the movement and sound with their exuberant participation.
The bench, supported by four compression springs, rocks, and sways. It's possible to gently rock or to go for a ride, much the same way kids enjoy a spring-rider in a playground. The dynamics of compression springs and their uneven spacing means the structure responds differently depending on where one sits and how many people are sitting on the bench. The artwork's sloped canopy includes nine translucent colored polycarbonate skylights and rocks along with the bench. On sunny days, the canopy's shadow and color projections on the ground move in sync with the bench.
Artwork Sites Under Consideration
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Painted & unpainted stainless steel • Round concrete footer