



# Cultural Arts Programs

## *Cultural Arts & Marketing Division*

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### **PUBLIC ART ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEM IV.**

**Title:** Open Proposals 2004-05: New Proposal for Completion of McClymonds High School Project by Deborah Lozier  
**Submitted by:** Steven Huss, Public Art Coordinator  
**Committee Date:** September 15, 2008

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#### **SUMMARY**

Staff requests that the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) review and consider approval of the new proposal below submitted by artist Deborah Lozier for the completion of her public art commission through the Open Proposals 2004-05 Program.

#### **BACKGROUND**

In 2004, Cultural Arts & Marketing Division staff revived the 1990's-era *Open Proposals Program*, which funded proposals initiated by artists and community organizations to develop temporary or permanent public art projects for City- and non-City-owned spaces. Seven projects proposed by Oakland-based artists and organizations were approved for funding in November 2004. Applicants were encouraged to seek multiple sources of funding: the total budget of all seven projects was approximately \$160,500, with the City's contribution leveraging roughly \$86,000 in matching funds from other government and community sources. Five projects have been completed. The projects by artists Deborah Lozier and Gwyan Rhabyt remain uncompleted.

Deborah Lozier was commissioned to create a sculpture gate for the new McClymonds Mini-Park (adjacent to McClymonds High School) at 2528 Linden Street in Oakland. The project entailed the design, fabrication and installation of a 40' x 10' pedestrian gate, to be made of steel sheet, rod and tubing and vitreous enamel. The project was to be a collaboration of Ms. Lozier, leading three additional artists, students from McClymonds and inmates participating in the Vocational Machine Shop at San Quentin's *Back to Work Program*. The commission amount was \$15,000 against a total project value of \$30,500. Ms. Lozier has already received \$7,500 from the City of Oakland.

At the January 9, 2006 PAAC meeting, staff reported that the "complex collaboration process has been challenging" at the McClymonds Mini-Park and that "funding for the park is problematic;" a completion date was not set. At the October 1, 2007 PAAC meeting, staff announced an 18-month extension (through the end of 2008) to complete the two remaining Open Proposals 2004/05 projects. At that meeting, Ms. Lozier acknowledged the challenges she has faced in completing her project. I noted that the project has already met the Open Proposals Program intent that funded projects act as catalysts for change in the community.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There is no direct financial impact associated with this review and potential approval.



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### **New Proposal for Open Proposal 2004**

**Deborah Lozier, artist applicant**

#### **Background & Description**

##### **Prologue**

One of the major components of my 2004 Open Proposal was community involvement, most importantly working with the students at McClymonds high school. This I can safely say was a huge success. Difficult in the beginning, but looking back four years later at what we have accomplished, and will continue working toward is truly a work of art. There is no, one key object to show for it yet, but rather a process which has changed many lives and defined for me a new understanding of community art. That it is of course about bringing change, needed improvements and beauty to a blighted area. But more importantly it is about people relating with each other, and forming relationships that might otherwise not have developed. Art becomes the vehicle - a gestalt of energy that has the promise to produce personal change by building community through people affected by and through the creative process. It requires an open ended and organic approach because authentic relationships take time to develop and one can not always anticipate the road blocks and missteps which interfere with progress. My mantra has become two steps forward; two steps back. The forward steps create the blooms and leaves. The two steps back grow the roots and foundation. This is absolutely not what I set out to do, yet is way more than I ever could have imagined.

##### **History**

In 2003, Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation, the UC Berkeley Y-Plan, West Oakland Community Organization and Hood Design began a collaboration for a redevelopment project involving McClymonds high school and the McClymonds Mini-Park located across the street at 26<sup>th</sup> & Linden St. in West Oakland. Walter Hood of Hood design is a neighbor of mine at 3016 Filbert Street, located a block near the school. I attended one of their community planning meetings for the project and became very excited about the quality of the students' presentation. I had recently become aware of Oakland's Open Proposal program and approached Walter for ways to participate. Being a sculptor and metalsmith and part of a larger community of metal artists through the Bay Area Metal Arts Guild, I was excited to work on the project and become more involved with the high school students. Walter explained they needed a gate. I wrote a proposal to submit to the Open Proposals program and received a \$15,000.00 grant from the City with a promise of matching funding from Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation.

For reasons beyond my control, the park redevelopment project first went on hold and then in May of 2008 became unrealistic enough to discourage further planning actions. Since my Open Proposal has always been dependent on this larger project becoming a reality, I decided to gather the positive outcomes of my work so far and project it toward the goal of creating a viable piece of art on the school grounds. One which does not depend on a bigger scheme coming into play, or matching funding for its successful completion.

##### **Positive Outcome – Student Involvement**

During the last four years my colleague Kate Short and I have worked on a weekly basis in the art room at McClymonds, and then when the school split into two smaller schools, at EXCEL. We initiated classroom projects and discussions around the Open Proposal project, the results of which I incorporated into an overall design for the gate. The results and the gate design were also displayed in an exhibition curated by Kate Short *Art is Community* at the Craft & Cultural Arts Gallery in Oakland. Last spring



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artwork done by the advanced art students with our guidance was exhibited in the exhibition *Being Here: Oakland Through the Arts*, also at the Craft & Cultural Arts Gallery. In 2006 I received a minority outreach grant from the Society of North American Goldsmiths and used the funding to set up a small jewelry and enameling station in the art room. This program proved invaluable in bonding with the students and developing their interest in the overall plan for the Open Proposal project. It became the turning point for trust and respect, which has grown into many lasting relationships. In June I attended the graduation ceremony for the school and watched freshman I had met four years ago graduate, many with honors and all with college plans. Along with completing my Open Proposal contract with the City of Oakland, my goal is to inspire new relationships beyond that of the art room to make learning with the arts an integral part of EXCEL and the McClymonds Educational Complex. My role as adjunct professor at California College of the Arts in the Jewelry/Metal Arts Department has opened a door for the possible collaboration with the Community Arts Program at CCA, initiating a class centered around working with high school students, specifically those at the McClymonds Educational Complex, to insure that art will remain a priority on the campus and continue to be a valuable resource for the students.

### **In Summary**

My inspiration and focus has always been rooted in working toward the realization of the initial conceptual plan. The actual fabrication of the gate was never in question, but its installation would be a misuse of funds without the overall plan coming into play and getting built. Now that I realize the foundation for my Open Proposal will not come to fruition, I feel confident that proposing another site and project at the school is not only realistic, but good for the community, most notably the students at the McClymonds Educational Complex.



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**New Proposal for Open Proposal 2004**  
**Deborah Lozier, artist applicant**

**New Proposed PERMANENT Site:**

**Exterior Wall of Gymnasium, Northern Facade**  
**McClymonds Educational Complex, 2607 Myrtle Street, Oakland, CA.**

### **Site**

The entrance to the gymnasium is a key spot for rejuvenation at the school. Sports has always been a source of pride within the McClymonds community. With the award winning basketball season of 2007/08, that sense of pride has completely spilled over into all areas of the school. One of our class assignments was a photo field trip of the school grounds documenting and searching for beauty and disrepair. The exterior of the gymnasium came up often as we discussed opportunities for empowerment through art. The public comes to the school for basketball, football, swimming and other events throughout the year and this is a key gathering area. As it is now it is plain and anonymous. Our new proposed plan is to create a low relief enamel on steel sculptural mural across three of the five bays on the northern facade of the building. The relief will be visible from the street, and be a welcoming image to visitors coming onto the school grounds, complementing an existing mural and the Plaza of Peace created in 2002.

### **Theme**

Working with the students on themes pulled from the park project dialogs using narrative, time lines and objects, we will encourage students to create designs in the classroom that go beyond the typical symbols of school pride. A major theme in the EXCEL mission is empowerment through community involvement and to “embrace the rich cultural and historical experiences of West Oakland.” I am sure the standard symbols of basketballs and footballs will find a place in the finished work, but they will be defined by a larger embrace of the West Oakland experience.

### **Design & Fabrication Specifics**

Along the northern facade of the building are 5 bays divided by concrete columns. Each bay is 8' tall by 16' wide, with columns 9" deep. Our plan is to create a low relief mural 3' tall by 16' wide extending along each of the first three bays. The fabrication principles will be similar to that of the initial gate proposal. We will create a steel frame and outline, but here the structure will be bolted to the wall rather than incorporated into a functioning gate. The enameled sculptural shapes will be fabricated to relate to and be placed into this outer framework. We will also propose to the OUSD to paint the facade and the area next to the entrance. The project also lends itself to a future classroom mural along a bay located on the eastern facing facade.

### **Student & School Involvement**

The major accomplishment from the last four years is the relationship we have developed with the students. There will be opportunities for students to participate in many forms, from offering insights on themes and design, to actually working in my studio drawing and enameling on panels. We have met with the new art, and social justice teacher Robin Gibson, and she is very open and interested in continuing the relationship we fostered with the previous instructor. Robin has an interesting background as a mural artist and instructor with at risk youth at the Community Day School for expelled students in Oakland. I have made contact with two other continuing instructors over the summer, Tara Landry –



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math & science, and Rachael Hereford – Spanish. Both are enthusiastic about our work with the students, and about incorporating art principles into their classrooms. Our initial plan is to begin working with the two art classes on Fridays, and then allow the concepts to spill over into projects for other classrooms. The more student involvement there is, the more it will be accepted and respected, therefore maintained.



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## **New Proposal for Open Proposal 2004**

**Deborah Lozier, artist applicant**

### **Budget**

#### **Raw Materials: \$5,000.00**

18g Enameling Iron - \$1,500.00 (already purchased)

vitreous enamel - \$300.00 (already purchased)

oxides - \$500.00

framing steel - \$1,500.00

consumables - \$400.00

installation hardware - \$300.00

exterior paint – \$500.00

#### **Outsourcing: \$1,600.00**

powder coat for superstructure- \$800.00

etching of stencils: \$800.00

#### **Studio Expenses: \$2,800.00**

electricity- \$800.00

contract labor - \$2,000.00

#### **Insurance: \$1,000.00**

#### **Installation: \$1,500.00**

contract labor - \$1,000.00

equipment rental - \$500.00

#### **Total: \$11,900**

#### **Maintenance &/or Contingency: \$3,100.00**

