

Aberdeen Seeks Northwest Artists For Weatherwax Project

Local News

Posted by: David Haviland

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ABERDEEN, Wash. - The City of Aberdeen Arts Commission and the City of Aberdeen, announced today a "Call To Artists" for the creation of a significant three-dimensional artwork that will be funded by the Grays Harbor Community Foundation. The Simpson Triangle, a highly trafficked site between the business districts of Aberdeen and Hoquiam, will be the location of the resulting artwork. It will honor the legacy of the Weatherwax family and inspire both local residents and those that pass through Grays Harbor towards generosity and commitment to community. The artwork will be of a scale and level of detail to support both motorist drive-by and up-close pedestrian viewing experiences, and will incorporate architectural sandstone blocks from the old J.M Weatherwax as a re-use material. In 2002, Aberdeen's J.M. Weatherwax High School, a historic building built in 1909, was destroyed by a fire. The Weatherwax family long contributed to the Grays Harbor Community as philanthropists and civic leaders "epitomizing humility, hard work, and generosity." The loss of the building generated community interest in creating a new physical acknowledgment of the Weatherwax family.

Architectural sandstone blocks previously installed on the high school building's facade were salvaged for re-use in the effort to recognize anew these "ordinary people who did extraordinary things," and to inspire others to do the same. A reminder of the Weatherwax legacy, the stones also serve as a symbol of strength and survival, rising from the ashes, and resilience; qualities that Aberdeen residents see within themselves. Some of the stones are permanently displayed in the new high school building which opened in 2007, while others await artistic re-use and interpretation with this public artwork opportunity. This project is open to professional artists residing in Washington, Oregon and British Columbia. An artist selection panel comprised of art and design professionals and community representatives will review all eligible applicant materials and select up to three finalists to develop proposals. The finalists will be paid \$5,000 to attend a mandatory orientation in Aberdeen, develop a proposal, and present the proposal to the selection panel. The panel will review the finalists' proposals and select one artist for the commission. The finalists selected to create a proposal, will consider the available stones and determine how to best re-use them in a new artwork that may include additional materials. The artist will further consider the natural light, weather conditions, and landscaping, as well as the parallel experiences of motorists and pedestrians in designing a public artwork for the Simpson Triangle. The City of Aberdeen will provide physical improvements to the Simpson Triangle site prior to artwork installation in consultation with the selected artist. The consulting firm, **4Culture**, King County's cultural services agency, of Seattle, has been working with the Grays Harbor Community Foundation and the City of Aberdeen to ensure that this process is successful and models best practices in the field of public art. Together they have developed the specifications, selected the project site, and organized the artist selection process. For more information and to see the full Call for Artists please visit WEBSITE URL www.4culture.org. Questions should be directed to Tamar Benzikry-Stern at tamar.benzikry@4culture.org or (206) 296-8692. The GHCF is a 501(c) (3) with a mission: "To improve the quality of life in the communities throughout Grays Harbor County." The public is encouraged to contribute to their favorite charities and may donate to the Grays Harbor Community

Foundation for a variety of purposes. Tax deductible donations may be made to: Grays Harbor Community Foundation, P.O. Box 615, Hoquiam, WA 98520 Or you may find out more by checking the foundation website: www.gh-cf.org or you may contact: Jim Daly at 532-1600 or by e-mail at: info@gh-cf.org