

Proposal for community public art project

The Cultural Arts Commission welcomes, with gratitude, a grant from The Friends of the Sherwood Center for the Arts, which will be used to create a public art project depicting experiences or reflections of Sherwood citizens during this pandemic and the resulting quarantine. Here are the steps the Commission has identified in order to execute this community project:

1. Identify and bring on board an artist with experience in large community projects, and has experience with paper art and design;
2. Solidify the scope and design with the artist;
3. Get the information out to Sherwood citizens, with clear ways to participate;
4. Install the resulting community art piece at the Sherwood Center for the Arts, and explore ways for people to view it.

Our goal is to have an artist design and construct a sculptural piece to be installed in the lobby of the Center for the Arts. The piece will be viewable through the windows, and will be lit strategically in the evening, creating an intriguing focal point in the Sherwood Old Town area. The Old Town area is populated during these summer days and evenings by residents strolling or walking their dogs, children skateboarding and listening to music, and visitors enjoying outdoor dining close to the Arts Center. We want this project to add to this “cultural district” atmosphere.

We hope that the finished piece will provide an inspiring and unifying representation of the myriad hopes, dreams and concerns that have arisen amongst our city’s residents during this difficult time.

The piece itself will be constructed from digital photos elicited through social media and sent in by Sherwood residents. The photos will depict activities, undertakings, new things discovered, or simply thoughts/emotions that have come to the fore during the quarantine. The Arts Commission has discussed two intersecting themes: “What I wish for you...” (inspirational words of hope or joy that people wish for their fellow Sherwoodians), and “What feels like Sherwood/what feels like home” (a theme of home, safety, community). Another element of the piece may be what has helped us cope during this historic pandemic.

We look forward to working with an artist to help bring these themes into harmony, knowing that aspects of several themes could be explored. The artist may also help us narrow the focus to one of these themes. The individual, submitted photos will be assembled by the chosen artist into a true community collage, which would take residence in the lobby of the Arts Center, enhanced by creative lighting.

In a nutshell, the goal of the project is to inspire the citizens of Sherwood to find meaning in their experiences of the pandemic, to remind them of the importance of empathy and community (togetherness), to bring attention to the Arts Center itself, and to provide an example of what public art can accomplish, as the Cultural Arts Commission and the city embark on a public art campaign.

We will explore the possibility of preserving this piece of community art, and possibly hanging it somewhere permanently in the city, all thanks to your generous gift.

Thank you for the opportunity to create this memorable and uplifting gift for our city, and for considering our proposal.

Submitted by the Sherwood Cultural Arts Commission, July 2020