Call-to-Artists: Request for Qualifications

Artist sought for José Martí Child Development Center Play-Yard Artwork near the Link Roosevelt Station

BUDGET:  
- $4,000 for design and time with staff and students  
- Implementation Budget established after design approval

DEADLINE:  Tuesday, January 16, 2024 (by midnight for digital application upload)

TIMELINE:  2024: Winter—Artist Selection; Spring—Design; Summer—Implementation

OVERVIEW:

Sound Transit seeks an artist to create artwork for and with the children of the José Martí Child Development Center (JMCDC) that will be located in their exterior play-yard at 1015 NE 67th St, Seattle WA. The JMCDC is next to the north entrance of Sound Transit’s Roosevelt Station.

The artwork should consider the height of children ranging in age from 1-5 years old, engage their imagination, and inspire them with the history and values of the cultures they are being immersed in. The learners at the JMCDC experience a bilingual, bicultural curriculum that emphasizes cultural diversity, social justice, and family involvement to develop children’s self-awareness, cultural pride, and self-esteem. The play-yard artwork should reflect these values.

The JMCDC is affiliated with El Centro de la Raza in Seattle. Applicants are encouraged to visit El Centro before applying to the play-yard project to experience how the daily life at the facility is enhanced with the incorporation of artwork. https://www.elcentrodelaraza.org/jose-marti-child-development-center/

INSPIRATION:

For consideration by the artist --
people to inspire the kids for inclusion in the artwork, in addition to the artist’s own ideas:

- Life of child center namesake José Martí
  - “It is for the children that we work, for they are the ones who know how to love, for they are the hope of the world.”
  ~José Martí (1853-1895)
- Seattle’s Four Amigos, known for their effectiveness as minority rights activist from the late 1960s onward: Bernie Whitebear, Bob Santos, Roberto Maestas, and Larry Gossett
- Concepts that promote Multi-Racial Unity
- Concepts that support the positive representation of the Latino community and its diversity, including Afro-Latino, Indigenous and Mestizo cultures within the Latino community.
- Farmworkers Movement: Caesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta
ARTIST QUALIFICATIONS:
The selected Artist will:

- Have a high-level of artistic skill;
- Demonstrate an ability to promote the values of diverse cultures;
- Understand how to create imagery for and with 1–5-year-old students;
- Be willing to collaborate with the staff and children on artwork development and implementation;
- Demonstrate experience creating exterior murals or durable artwork.

ARTIST SELECTION:
Representatives from the José Martí Child Development Center and El Centro de la Raza will review artist application material to determine three finalist artists. The Sound Transit Art Program, STart, will coordinate and facilitate the process. (How to upload application information below.) The artist finalists will be given tours of the JCMDC and the play-yard. Approximately two weeks later the finalists will present their impressions to the panel who will choose the artist that will work with the kids and staff of JCMDC to create artwork for their play-yard.

PROJECT BUDGET – DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION:

Design Fee: $4,000, with budget for implementation determined after design approved. Includes time researching with staff and students at JMCDC.

Mural Budget: 300-900 square feet of potential surface areas, depending on artist location choices and artwork medium. Implementation budget to be determined after proposal acceptance and will consider square footage, medium and method. Budget will include all costs for prepping, painting, materials, equipment, travel, and taxes.

Deadline: Tuesday, January 16, 2024, by midnight -- via digital submission of images and application materials to the Sound Transit Art Program (STart).

Schedule:

Subject to Change:

- Call to Artists: December 2023 to January 16, 2024
- Finalist Selection: Early February 2024
- Artist Chosen: Late February – Early March 2024
- Artist Research/Design: Spring 2024
- Design Approval/Budget: Early Summer 2024
DESCRIPTION OF ARTWORK LOCATIONS:

The new artwork is intended to enliven the experience of kids in the place where they play with tricycles, balls, games, each other, and their imagination in a protected area outside the JMCDC. Most kids are 2 ½ to 4 feet tall, and extra thought should be given to the lower parts of potential surfaces. Concrete walls in a variety of sizes are a key feature of the play space. The vertical concrete surfaces surrounding the play-yard are eligible as artwork surfaces, including the tops of the support columns. An interior hallway wall is also a possibility for artwork. The large masonry wall of the Roosevelt Station is not eligible as an artwork surface.

A prime artwork location is a concrete wall in the play-yard that faces the school. The center of this wall can be seen at the end of a hallway from the front door of the JMCDC and from other vantage points inside the center. (See illustration below.)

Perpendicular to the 30-foot-long-wall is a planter wall that is about 4 feet high x 20 feet long x 6 feet deep (104 sq. ft.), The area on the two columns above the padding are about 8 feet high and 7 feet around (112 sq. ft. combined). An interior wall near classrooms is about 10 feet high x 8 feet wide (72 sq. ft.).

The future artwork is hoped to spark a feeling of possibility in the imagination of the kids and bring a sense of fun to their play-yard.

The selected artist is asked to spend time with JMCDC staff and students to explore ideas that can be incorporated into the artwork for the school, and to also involve them, at least modestly, in the creation of the artwork.
The biggest play-yard wall is 8 feet high x 30 feet long (240 sq. ft.) and separates the play-yard from Sound Transit’s Link Roosevelt Station next door to the east.

The Roosevelt Station’s cinder block wall, visible in the photo to the left, is not available for mural work.

The 8-feet-high wall that is in front of the cinder block wall and the shorter planter wall perpendicular to it are available for artwork.

The tops of the concrete columns to the left are possible artwork locations.

The artwork could be applied directly to the concrete surfaces, or tactile or mosaic artwork could be created and attached to the wall.

Durability will be a strong consideration for the accepted proposal.
To Apply:

Email the Sound Transit Art Program (STart) indicating the artist’s interest in applying for this project. Artists will then receive further instructions about how to upload application material and given a link to a STart site.

Email interest in the JMCDC project to: start@soundtransit.org

DEADLINE: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 (by midnight for electronic application upload)

The requested JMCDC play-yard application materials include:

- 4-10 images of the artist’s past work, file names as specified on the application site;
- Image descriptions;
- Artist statement outlining how the artist would approach the theme and work with the staff and kids;
- Experience relevant to the project;
- Connection to Latino and diverse cultures.

For more information contact:

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-- José Martí
(1853-1895)