



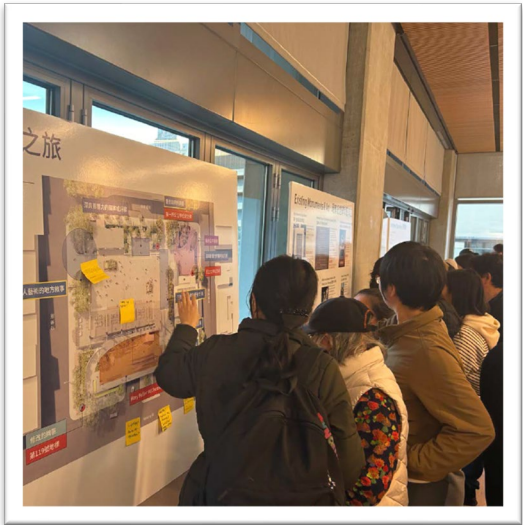
PORTSMOUTH SQUARE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

RECOMMENDED ARTISTS + PROPOSALS | VISUAL ARTS COMMITTEE | AUGUST 20, 2025









UNITY TRADITIONS RESPONSIVE EDUCATION INSPIRE

CONNECTIONS PUBLIC LOCAL LANDMARK

DIVERSITY ACTION RECOGNITION THREADS STORYTELLING

GATHERING HISTORY **SITE SPECIFICITY** CONVERSATION

SERVICE NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONSHIPS PLACEMAKING

EMPOWER **COMMUNITY FORTITUDE** IMPACT

ROOTS CIVIC MEANINGFUL FUTURE LIVING ROOM SAN FRANCISCO

OUTREACH EXPERIENCE **ART & ACTIVISM**

VISION ENVIRONMENT UNDERSTANDING LEGACY

AWKNOWLEDGMENT ADVOCACY CULTURE GUIDANCE SOLIDARITY



Portsmouth Square Improvement Project
Art Enrichment Budget

Art	\$ 644,700
Administration	\$ 184,200
Conservation	\$ 214,627
ART ENRICHMENT TOTAL	\$ 1,043,527
Artist Selection	\$ 35,400
Field Expenses	\$ 2,000
Photography + Signage	\$ 5,000
Internal Contingency	\$ 52,400
SUBTOTAL ART EXPENSES	\$ 98,700
TOTAL ARTWORK BUDGET	\$ 491,000



Shan Shan Sheng. *Active Memory* (2010), Betty Ann Ong Chinese Recreation Center. Photo: Bruce Damonte

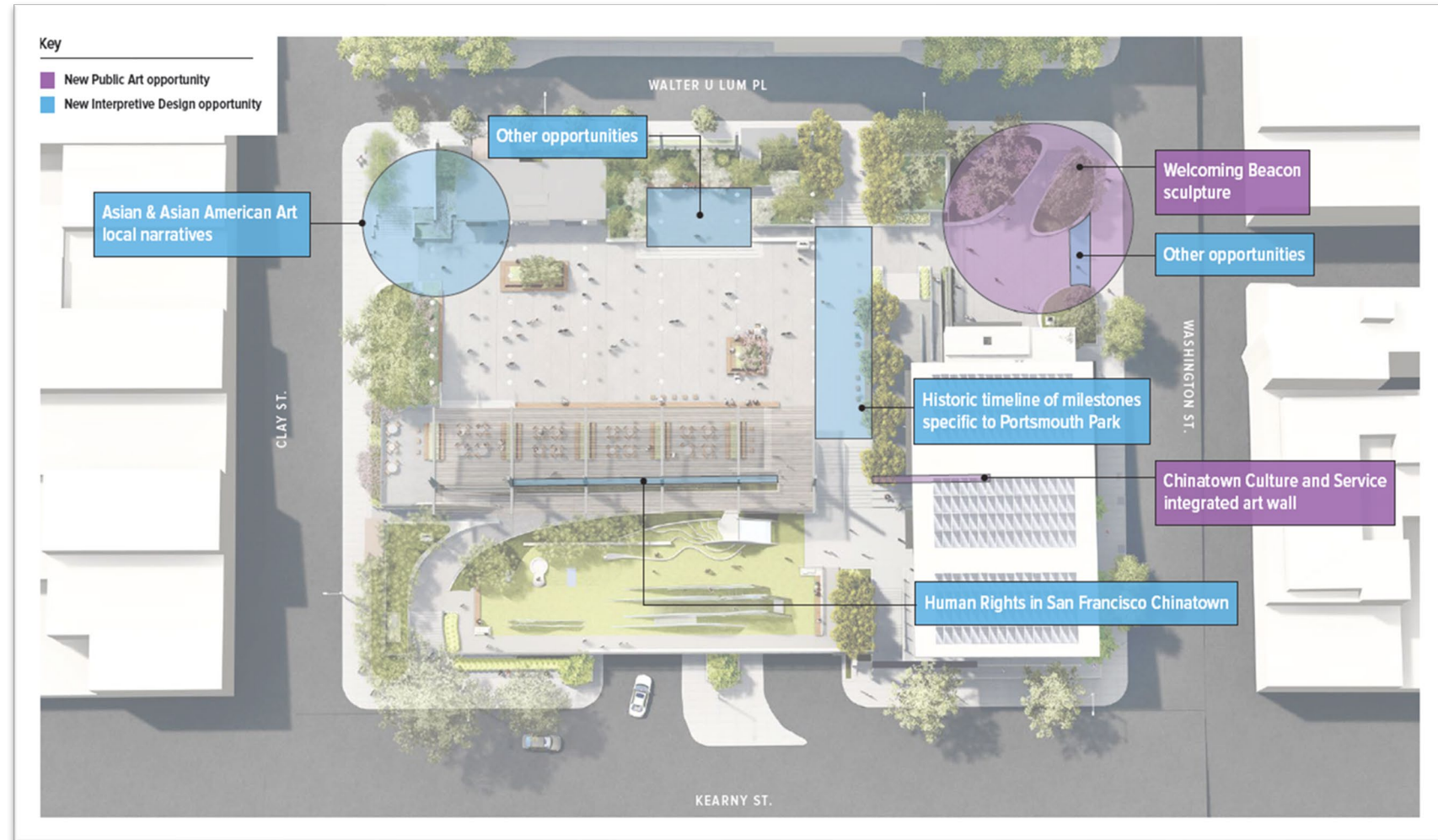
Portsmouth Square Public Art Opportunities

○ Sculpture

- Located at the corner entrance of Walter U Lum and Washington Street.
- Human scale and comprised of durable, sustainable materials intended for exterior use, such as stone or metal.

○ Art Wall

- Located on exterior and interior of clubhouse adjacent to the building entrance from the plaza.





WALTER U LUM AND WASHINGTON ST - ARRIVAL COURT

Portsmouth Square Sculpture Project Goals

- Acts as a **welcoming beacon** to the Portsmouth Square Plaza
- Is **highly visible** from the street and draws people into the park space
- Celebrates the people, history, and values of San Francisco's Chinatown communities



Portsmouth Square Sculpture Budget

- **\$340,000**, inclusive of all artist fees, as well as associated expenses for artwork design, fabrication, insurance, transportation, and artist's consultation during installation.
- Sculpture Installation Budget: \$23,000, to be managed by SFAC under separate contract.





CLUBHOUSE

Portsmouth Square Art Wall Project Goals

- Reflects **community culture and community service** in San Francisco Chinatown
- Creates an impactful **indoor and outdoor narrative experience**
- **Bridges and enhances the connection** between Portsmouth Square and its new community clubhouse
- Involves a **component of community engagement programming** led by the selected artist



Portsmouth Square Art Wall Budget

- **\$151,000**, inclusive of all artist fees, as well as associated expenses for artwork design, fabrication, insurance, transportation, and artist's consultation during installation.
 - Installation Budget: \$30,000





ARTIST REVIEW PROCESS

**Portsmouth Square Improvement Project
Artist Review Process to Date**

SFAC Public Project Plan Approval
May 15, 2024

Chinatown Artist Registry Request for Qualifications
July 11 – October 7, 2024

Artist Review Panel One
January 16 and February 18, 2025

Artist Orientation
April 4

Conceptual Design Proposals Due
June 9

Proposal Public Comment Period
June 30 – July 21

Final Artist Review Panel
August 13





CHINESE
CULTURE
CENTER
OF SAN FRANCISCO

舊金山中華文化中心

PORTSMOUTH SQUARE ARTIST REVIEW PANEL

VOTING PANELISTS

- **Erina C. Alejo**, Artist, Cultural Worker and Arts Administrator
- **Caroline Cabading**, Executive Director, Manilatown Heritage Foundation
- **Kevin B. Chen**, Artist, Curator at the Fine Arts Gallery at San Francisco State University
- **Candace Huey**, Curator, Edge on the Square
- **Marci Kwon**, Assistant Professor, Co-Director, Stanford University Asian American Art Initiative
- **James Lee**, Principal, SWA Landscape Architecture
- **Noah Levy**, Project Manager, Recreation and Parks Department
- **Amy Zhou**, Senior Planner, Chinatown Community Development Center

NON-VOTING PANELISTS

- **Mary Chou**, Civic Art Collection and Public Art Director, San Francisco Arts Commission
- **Paris Cotz**, Program Associate, San Francisco Arts Commission
- **Hoi Leung**, Curator, Chinese Culture Center
- **Jackie von Treskow**, Senior Program Manager, San Francisco Arts Commission



Julie Chang, Maiden's Dress, 2019, Willy "Woo Woo" Wong Playground. Photo by James Watkins; Courtesy of San Francisco Recreation and Parks

PANEL TWO PROCESS

1. Presentation of proposals by each finalist followed by questions from panelists.
2. Summary of public comment received during proposal display.
3. Panel discussion of each proposal, followed by scoring based on criteria.
4. Staff tallies votes and announces results.
5. Panel recommendation presented to Visual Arts Committee and Full Commission for approval.

SCORING CRITERIA

1. Artistic Merit (1 – 10)

- a. Originality of concept and vision
- b. Degree to which work engages the viewer emotionally, intellectually, spiritually
- c. Quality of craftsmanship or mastery of skills and techniques

2. Relevant Skills and Experience (1 – 10)

- a. Assessed ability of artist to successfully implement a proposed project, such as the ability to work constructively with other project stakeholders, meet deadlines, willingness to resolve issues as they arise, and generally manage the demands of the project.
- b. Cultural competency and/or significant connection between the artist and the project constituency, or experience that may particularly qualify an artist to meet project goals may also be considered.


3. Meets Goals of the Project and the Civic Art Collection. (1 – 10)

4. Appropriate to Site (1 – 10)

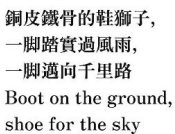
- a. Proposed artwork is appropriate for its intended display location in terms of scale, media, design or imagery and is judged to be relevant within the context of the surrounding community, and is compatible with the mission and operations of the client department

5. Feasibility and Maintainability (1 – 10)

- a. Artwork evaluated relative to its feasibility and evidence of the artist's ability to successfully complete the work as proposed. Factors to be considered include, but are not limited to: project budget, timeline, and the artist's experience.
- b. Due consideration shall be given to the structural and surface soundness, and to inherent resistance to theft, vandalism and weathering, and to the cost and amount of ongoing maintenance and/or repair anticipated.



PORTSMOUTH SQUARE SCULPTURE RECOMMENDED ARTIST/PROPOSAL



PORTSMOUTH SQUARE SCULPTURE



PORTSMOUTH SQUARE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC ART PROGRAM ENTRANCE COURT SCULPTURE ARTIST REVIEW PANEL TWO SUMMARY

MEETING DATE
August 13, 2025

VOTING SELECTION PANELISTS

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Kevin B. Chen, Artist, Curator at the Fine Arts Gallery at San Francisco State University
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Amy Zhou, Senior Planner, Chinatown Community Development Center

PROCESS

Three artist finalists presented their proposals for the Portsmouth Square Improvement Project – Sculpture Opportunity. The Artist Review Panel discussed the finalists' proposals and scored each artist on the following criteria (1= low score):

- Artistic Merit (1-10)
- Relevant Skills and Experience (1-10)
- Meets the Project Goals and Goals of the Civic Art Collection (1-10)
- Appropriateness to the Project Site (1-10)
- Feasibility and Maintainability (1-10)

RESULTS

Cathy Lu	44.88
Bijun Liang	40.88
lee + boles faw	39.71

ARTS COMMISSION APPROVAL

Discussion and possible action to approve the conceptual design proposal *Nuwa's Hand (Fruits of Chinatown)* by Cathy Lu for the Portsmouth Square Improvement Project Entrance Court Sculpture, as recommended by the Artist Review Panel.

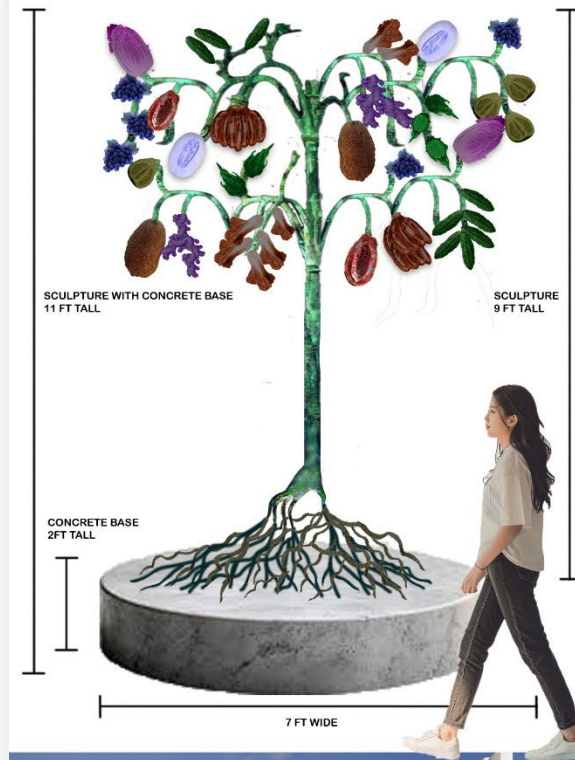
Discussion and possible action to authorize the Director of Cultural Affairs to [enter into](#) a contract with Cathy Lu (dba Cathy Lu Studio) for an amount not to exceed \$340,000 for the design, fabrication, insurance, and consultation during installation of a sculpture for the Portsmouth Square Improvement Project entrance court at Walter U. Lum and Washington Street.



Cathy Lu

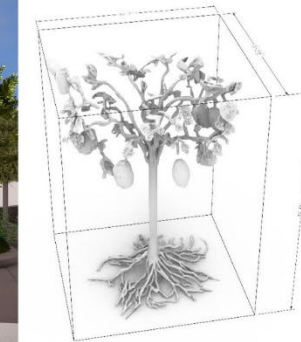


Cathy Lu (she/her) is a ceramics-based artist who manipulates traditional Chinese art imagery and presentation as a way to deconstruct the assumptions we have about cultural authenticity. By creating ceramic sculptures and large-scale installations, Cathy explores what it means to be both Asian and American, while not being entirely accepted as either. Unpacking how experiences of immigration, cultural hybridity, and cultural assimilation become part of American identity is central to her work.



NUWA'S HAND (FRUITS OF CHINATOWN)

PUBLIC ART PROPOSAL FOR PORTSMOUTH SQUARE CHINATOWN BY CATHY LU



Example fruits: lychees, dragon fruit, hami melon, jackfruit, pomelo, bok choy, papaya, ginger, bananas, napa cabbage, bitter melon, and grapes. Fruits are made of aluminum and coated with colorful polyurethane paint with a protective clear coating.

Nuwa's Hand (Fruits of Chinatown) is a site specific bronze and aluminum sculpture on a concrete base in the Walter U Lum Pl. and Washington St. entrance to Portsmouth Square in Chinatown SF. It is a 9 ft sculpture of a greenish jade colored tree combining elements of Chinese mythological creation goddess Nuwa (her hand) and Fusang (a mythological sacred tree) that features the different fruits and produce of Chinatown. Colorful produce such as bok choy, jackfruit, bananas, etc. grow on the eight branches of this tree, with the base of the tree ending in Nuwa's hand rooting into the concrete base.

Nuwa is both a creation goddess and an artist; she is a reminder of our agency and ability to shape and change the world as we want it to be. I show her hand rooting into the ground as a way to speak to the experiences of Chinese residents fighting to maintain space despite historic and current racism and gentrification, as well as the experiences of immigrants and diasporic peoples at large making home in a new land.

From her hand grows a spectacular tree that branches out with fruits that represent Asian diasporas. By depicting fruits that would not normally grow together, I speak to experiences of hybridity, of different peoples and cultures coming together in community. The fruits will also be depicted with their interior flesh showing as a way to show power in vulnerability. This sculpture is about the resilience of Chinatown and its people, its abundance, and the strength in living as part of hybrid cultures and communities.

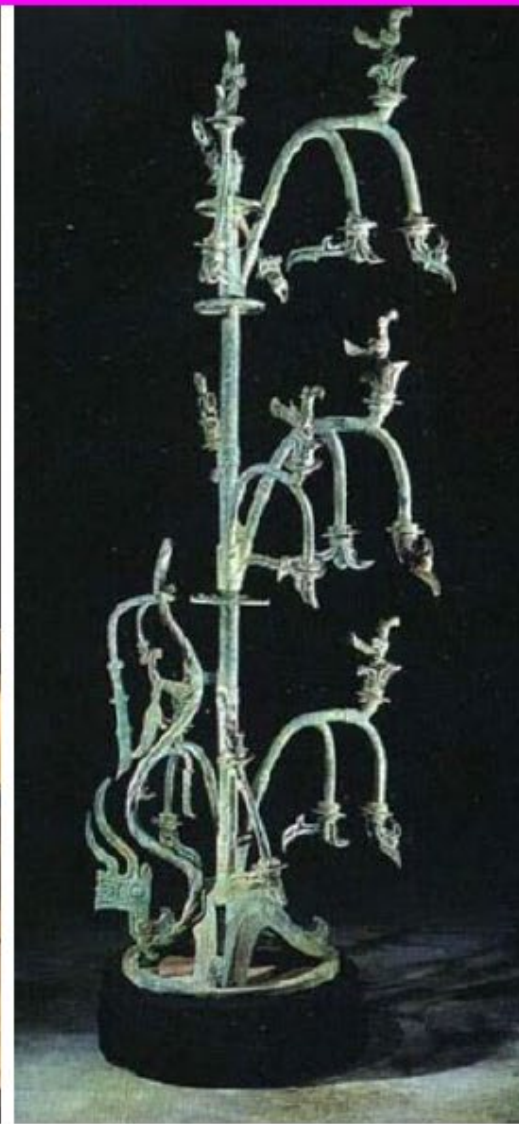


View of Branch: Eight branches total, each branch is 3-4 ft.



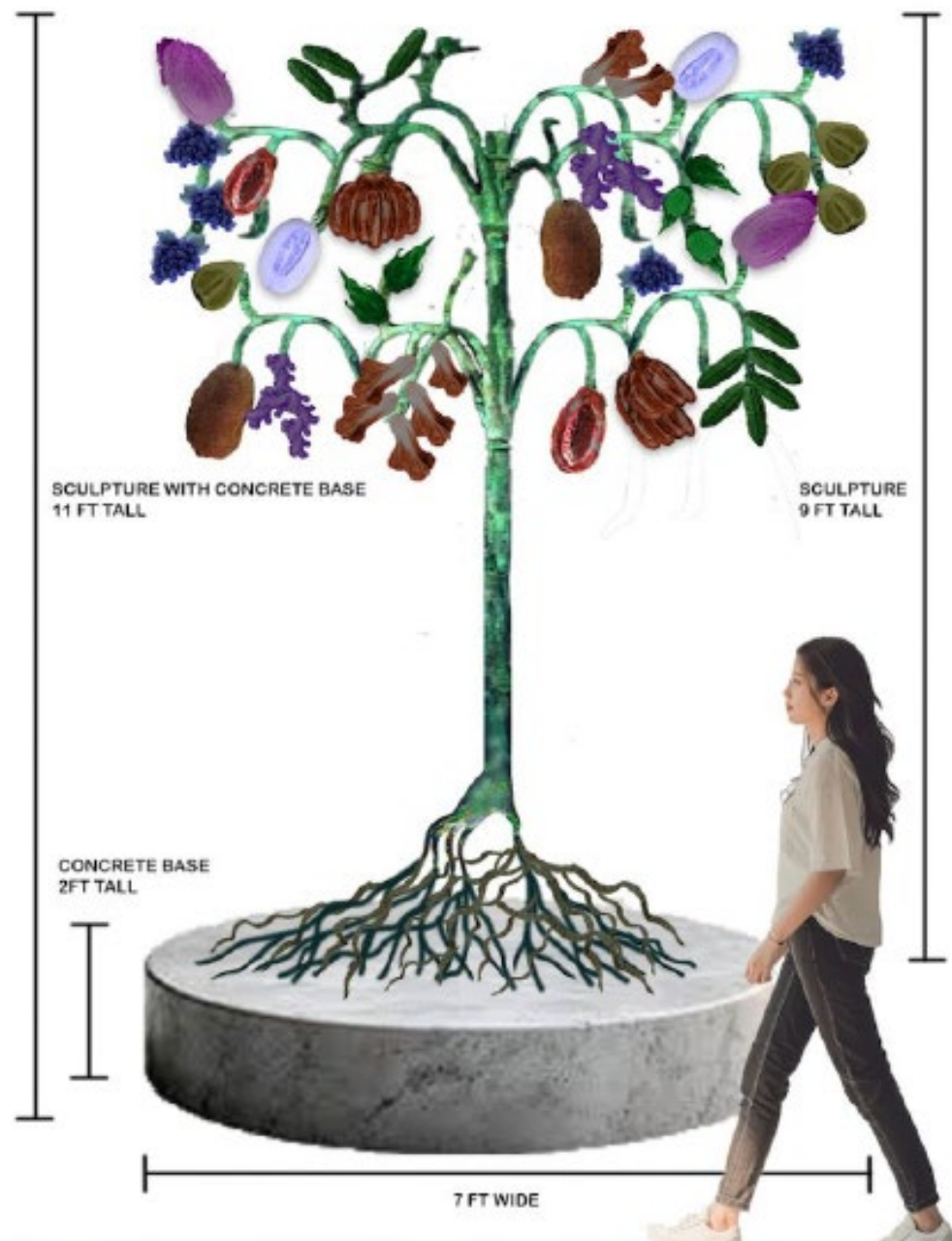
Detail of tree trunk. Made of bronze with green patina. Texture resembles hand sculpted clay.

NUWA'S HAND (FRUITS OF CHINATOWN) / 女媧之手(華埠的果實)



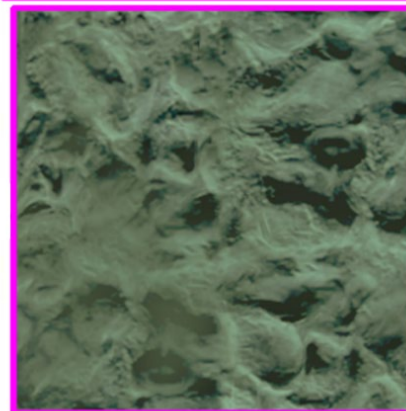
Chinese creation goddess Nuwa 女媧 (her hand) and Fusang 扶桑





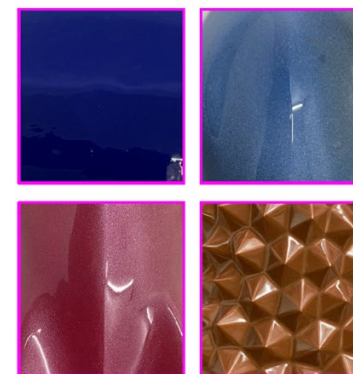
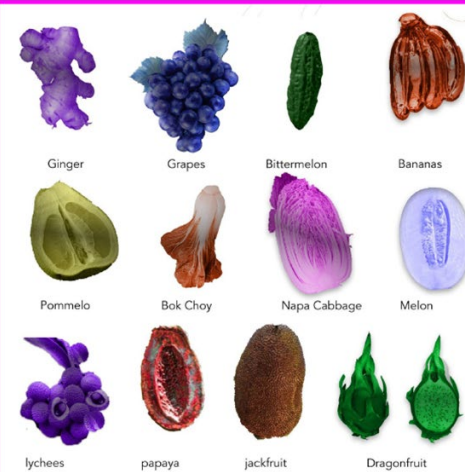
MATERIAL : BRONZE

Roots, trunk, eight branches



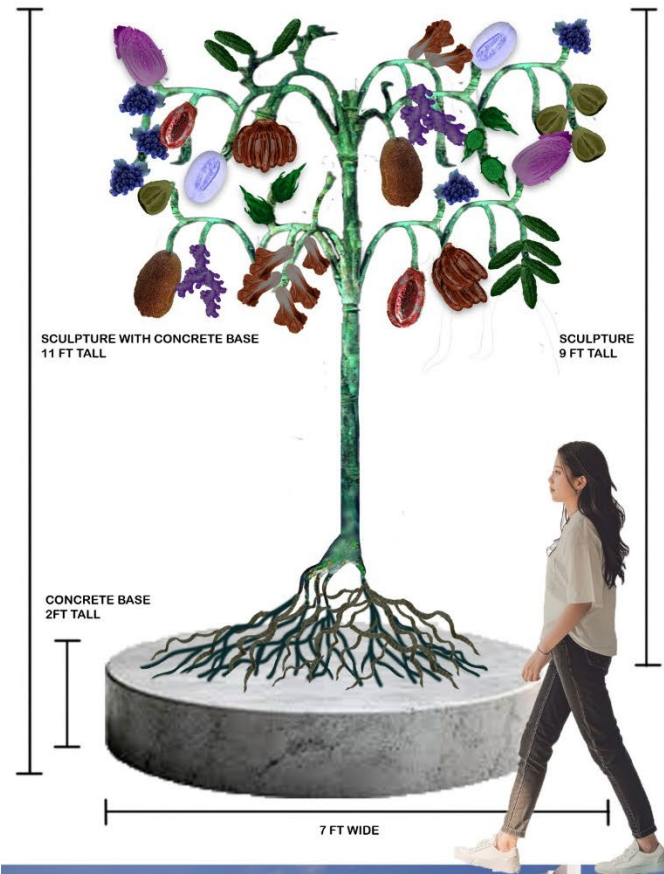
MATERIAL : ALUMINUM

Fruits



NUWA'S HAND (FRUITS OF CHINATOWN)

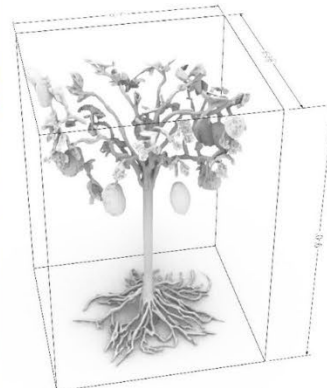
PUBLIC ART PROPOSAL FOR PORTSMOUTH SQUARE CHINATOWN BY CATHY LU



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PORTSMOUTH SQUARE CLUBHOUSE WALL RECOMMENDED ARTIST/PROPOSAL

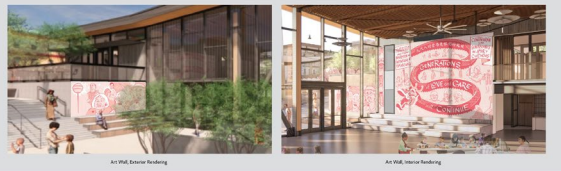
Generations of Love & Care

Christine Wong Yap 葉黃嘉雯 Art Proposal for the Portsmouth Square Clubhouse Integrated Wall

Initial Concept

TO BE FURTHER DEVELOPED WITH COMMUNITY INPUT

Generations of Love and Care is my joyous, multigenerational, and interactive tribute to the people of Chinatown, which celebrates the Chinese New Year Parade as a space of belonging, collective effervescence, and cultural and civic pride. Dozens of everyday residents march alongside a dragon in a proud display of unity, diversity, and cooperative movement. Building upon my past projects, I utilize a color palette of peachy-pink and coral, hand-lettered texts in multiple languages, flags and banners, and graphic illustration style. Porcelain enamel on steel panels provide a vivid, durable, long-lasting, and easy-to-clean substrate for the beloved "living room of Chinatown."



Inspirations



COMMUNITY ARTIST INSPIRE
The arts and crafts center have a history of community art projects. The Portsmouth Square Clubhouse has been a space for community art projects. The space is a place where people can come and see and create. The space is a place where people can come and see and create. The space is a place where people can come and see and create.

THE BEAUTY OF CHINESE
The Chinese people have a rich history of art and culture. The Chinese people have a rich history of art and culture. The Chinese people have a rich history of art and culture. The Chinese people have a rich history of art and culture. The Chinese people have a rich history of art and culture.

Community Engagement



ARTIST INSPIRATION THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
I plan to continue to work with the community to create a space where people can come and see and create. I plan to continue to work with the community to create a space where people can come and see and create. I plan to continue to work with the community to create a space where people can come and see and create.

Interactivity



INTERACTIVITY
The mural will be a space where people can come and see and create. The mural will be a space where people can come and see and create. The mural will be a space where people can come and see and create. The mural will be a space where people can come and see and create.

RISING PHOENIX 鳳凰涅槃

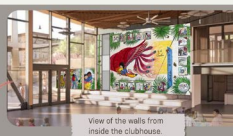
Kayan Cheung-Miaw 嘉欣

Art Proposal for the Portsmouth Square Club House Art Walls

The Chinatown and Manilatown neighborhoods surrounding Portsmouth Square are historic communities of resilience and rebirth. My design for ceramic tile murals on the clubhouse interior and exterior walls foregrounds the acts of heroism and love that turns crises into transformation.



The artwork will first be created as watercolor and ink paintings, which will then be edited digitally and printed onto 12" square ceramic tiles. The tiles will be laid out by professionals as a grid to compose the image in mural form.



View of the walls from inside the clubhouse.



Architectural drawings of both walls.

COMMUNITY TREASURES 社區嘅寶藏

Proposal for the Portsmouth Square Clubhouse Art Wall SFAC Public Art Project: Jenifer K Wofford

Chinatown's history, community and values are priceless treasures. "Community Treasures" will showcase the wonderful variety of these riches. Portsmouth Square's importance as the "living room" of the neighborhood, as well as the "jewel box" design of the new park, calls for artwork that makes people feel at home and feel treasured.

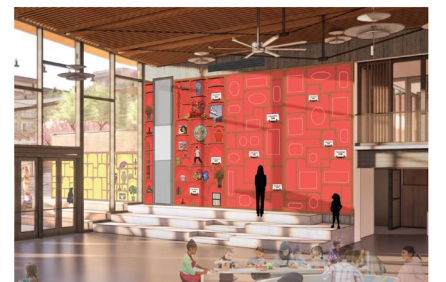
This mural will be a community treasure wall both inside and outside the Portsmouth Square Clubhouse. It references traditional Chinese cabinets, and their place in living rooms both large and small.

It will be grand in scale like the treasure cabinets of San Francisco's Asian Art Museum and Beijing's Imperial City, but will display additional objects that are precious to Chinatown. The history of the neighborhood is not defined by imperial acquisitions, after all, its treasures are more intimate.



Treasures are precious, but not always traditional. While this new wall will certainly include some classically beautiful ancient curios, what will set it apart is the inclusion of objects and images that speak to collective action and community on the ground level for the people that have been gathering here for decades.

The complete inventory of treasures will be co-created with the community in workshops. Two important questions for these workshops are: What do you value? What objects do you hope will remain precious in the future?



The mural will be digitally illustrated in a clean, simple style, and then printed on ceramic panels for durability and longevity.

The basic "treasure wall" idea is fixed, but certain additions are part of the plan.

Many shelves are still blank, because the objects they contain will be developed later in community workshops.



PORTSMOUTH SQUARE CLUBHOUSE WALL



PORTSMOUTH SQUARE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC ART PROGRAM CLUBHOUSE ART WALL ARTIST REVIEW PANEL TWO SUMMARY

MEETING DATE
August 13, 2025

VOTING SELECTION PANELISTS

Erina C. Alejo, Artist, Cultural Worker and Arts Administrator
Caroline Cabading, Executive Director, Manilatown Heritage Foundation
Kevin B. Chen, Artist, Curator at the Fine Arts Gallery at San Francisco State University
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PROCESS

Three artist finalists presented their proposals for the Portsmouth Square Improvement Project – Clubhouse Wall Opportunity. The Artist Review Panel discussed the finalists' proposals and scored each artist on the following criteria (1= low score):

- Artistic Merit (1-10)
- Relevant Skills and Experience (1-10)
- Meets the Project Goals and Goals of the Civic Art Collection (1-10)
- Appropriateness to the Project Site (1-10)
- Feasibility and Maintainability (1-10)

RESULTS

Jenifer K. Wofford	361
Christine Wong Yap	358
Kayan Cheung-Miax	353

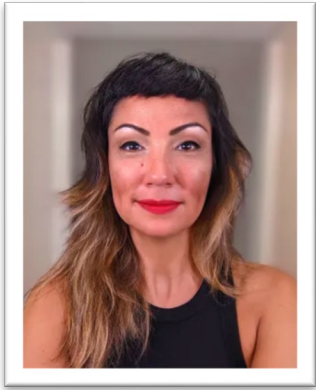
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Discussion and possible action to approve the conceptual design proposal by Jenifer K. Wofford for the Portsmouth Square Improvement Project Clubhouse Integrated Art Wall, as recommended by the Artist Review Panel

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Jenifer K. Wofford



Jenifer K Wofford is a San Francisco artist and educator whose work plays with notions of hybridity, authenticity, and global culture, often with a humorous bent. With a practice that is multidisciplinary but deeply rooted in drawing and painting, Jenifer is committed to an intercultural approach that champions a broad diversity of communities. Recent highlights include work shown at SFMOMA and Santa Cruz Museum of Art + History and public murals at the Asian Art Museum, in Chinatown, and a new housing development in the Haight.

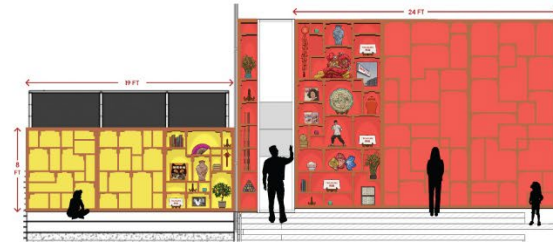
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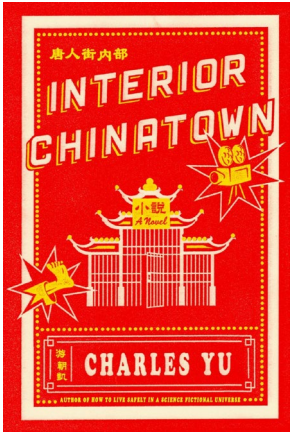
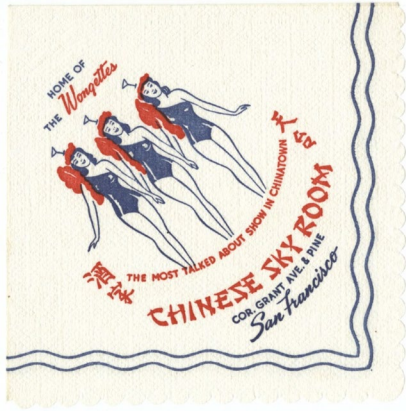
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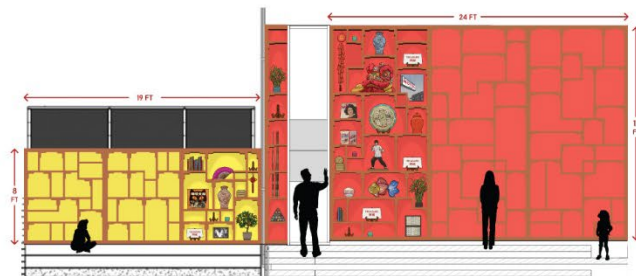
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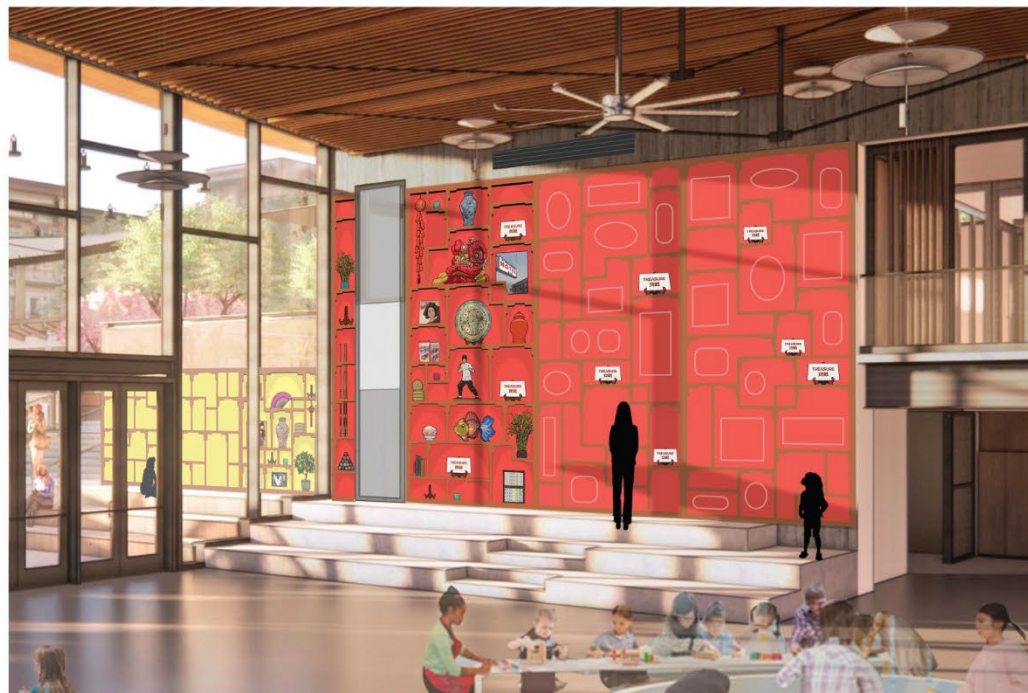


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WHAT'S NEXT?

Portsmouth Square Public Art Anticipated Upcoming Schedule

VAC Approval of Artists/Proposals	August 20
Arts Commission Approval	September 5
Artists Under Contract	October 2025



Michael Arcega, *Auspicious Clouds | Heavy Fog*, 2018, Broadway at Stockton Street. Photo by the Artist; Courtesy of the San Francisco Arts Commission