

WHISPERS OF WASTE

BY ZULU HERU

**BIG
ART** *loop*

⌋ BUILDING 180





WHISPERS OF WASTE

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Whispers of Waste is a 13'H×5'W×5'D sculpture by San Francisco based artist Zulu Heru, proposed for a one-year installation at India Basin Waterfront Park.

Made from reclaimed scrap metal and stone, the sculpture reflects Zulu Heru's practice of transforming salvaged and forgotten materials into monuments of ancestral power, memory, and Black liberation.

Inspired by ancestral mask traditions of the Senufo people of the Ivory Coast, where masks function as vessels of protection and connection across generations, *Whispers of Waste* speaks to the discovery of quiet affirmation within uncertainty—a serendipitous whisper drawn from the “waste” itself.



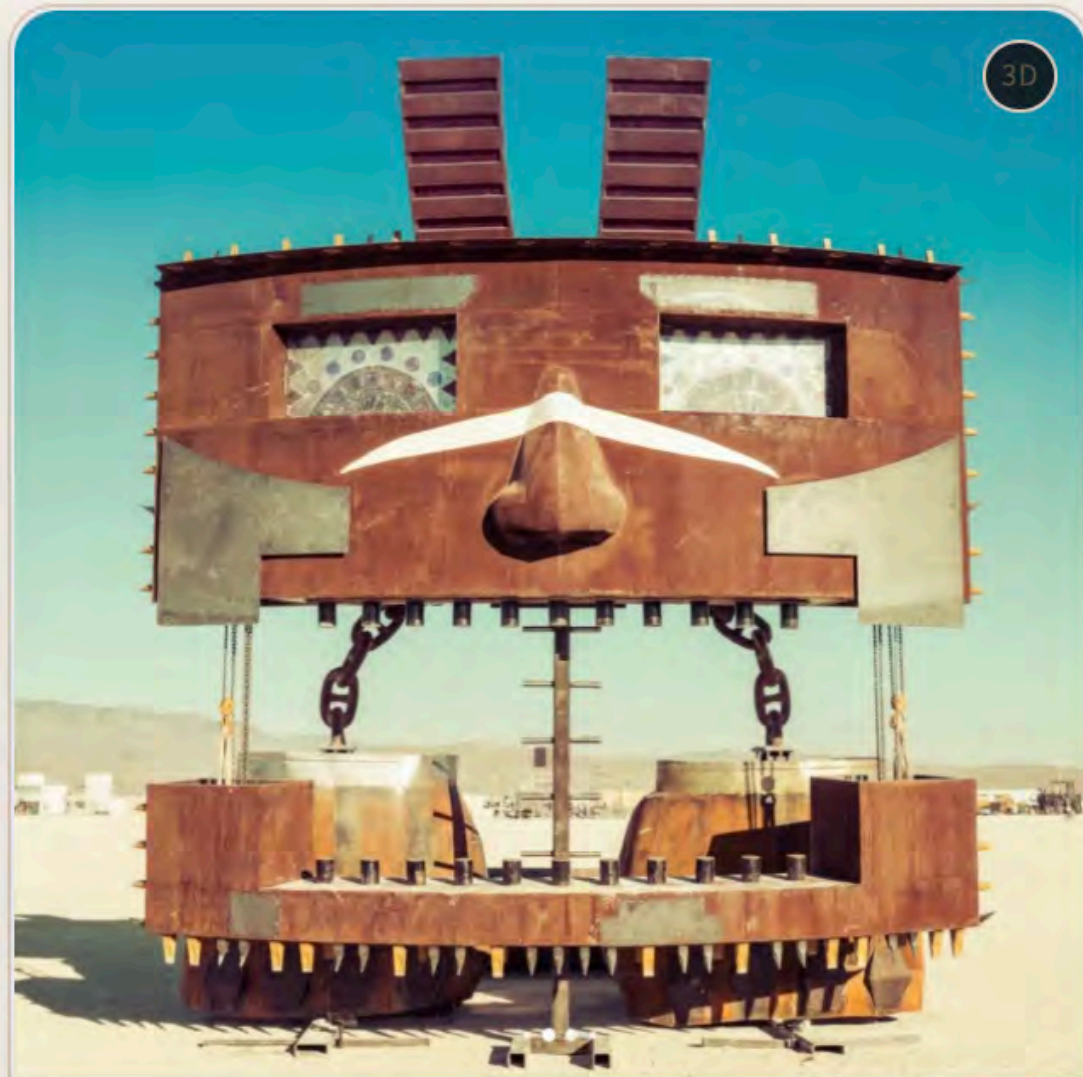
ABOUT ZULU HERU

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Zulu Heru is a local, Bayview-Hunters Point San Francisco-based sculptor who reclaims the cultural remnants of the African diaspora, transforming salvaged materials into powerful vessels of ancestral presence. Influenced by his studies at Howard University, his work challenges colonial framings of African art, elevating objects such as the African mask as spiritual, political, and fine art forms.

A former U.S. Army commissioned officer with over a decade of metal fabrication experience, Zulu brings deep technical fluency to his practice. As an operating engineer and professional art handler, he has helped install more than 100 monumental works nationwide. His sculptures function as both monuments and talismans—bridging ancestry, resilience, and renewal.

ZULU HERU'S PAST WORKS



FARMER THE RIGGER

Featured Piece • 20 ft

Steel Industrial Parts Stained Glass

2023



SHEEP COLLECTIVE

• 36 in

Scrap Metal Industrial Parts Steel Wool Cement

2021



TANKS IN TRAFFIC

• 36 in

Scrap Metal Industrial Parts Steel Wool Cement

2023



PAN

• 3 × 24 in

Steel Wall

2021

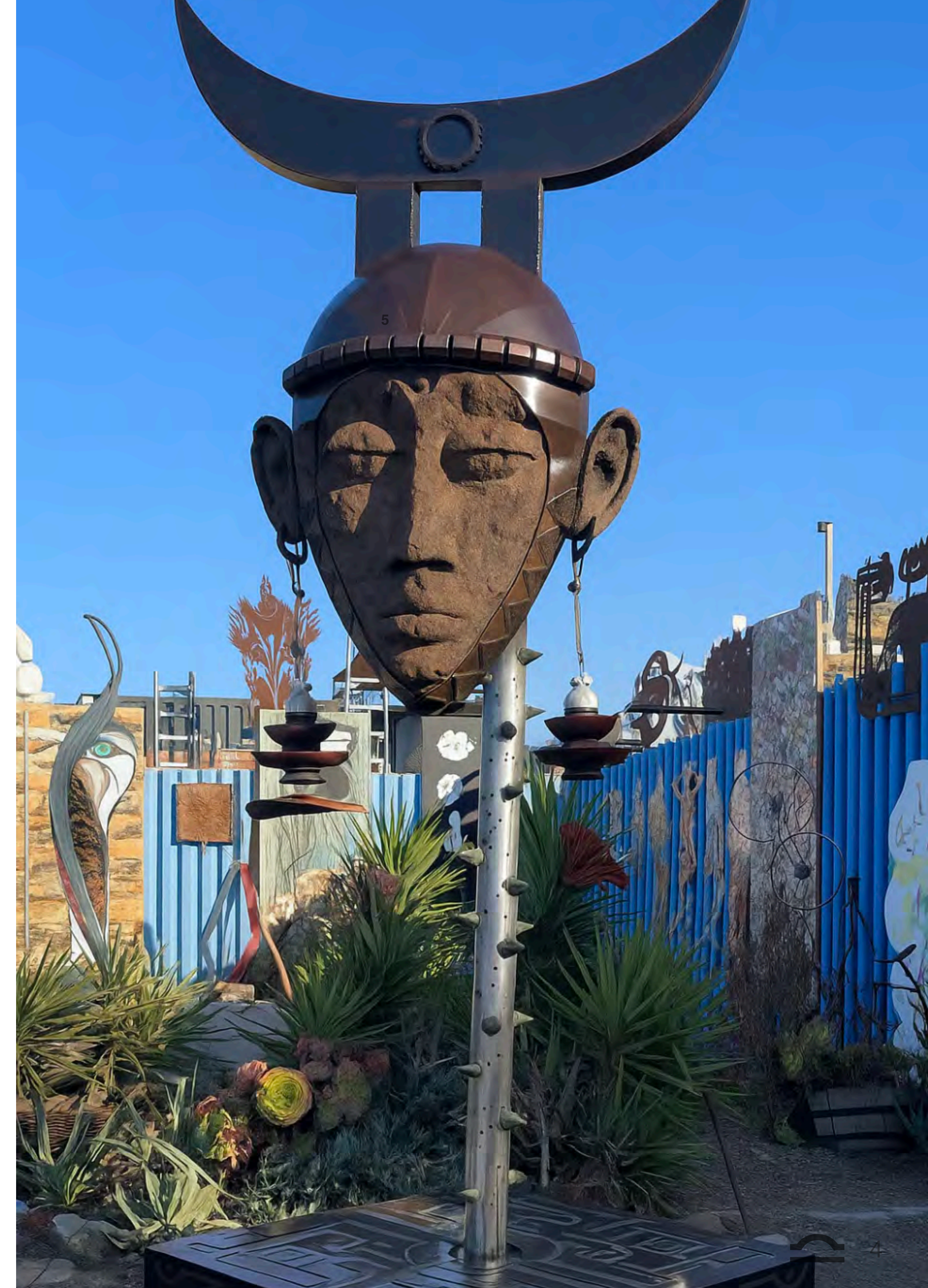
PIECE STATEMENT

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Whispers of Waste draws from the mask traditions of the Senufo people of Côte d'Ivoire, where masks act as protective intermediaries between the physical and spiritual realms.

Installing the sculpture at India Basin Waterfront Park will be especially meaningful, as the site is defined by transition, resilience, and environmental renewal. The work will function as a symbolic guardian within the waterfront landscape, with its vertical, human-scaled form anchoring the open site and reflecting the community's relationship to land, water, and history.

Through cultural symbolism, local fabrication, and site-responsive design, *Whispers of Waste* will become a contemplative landmark connecting community, environment, and time.



PLACEMENT

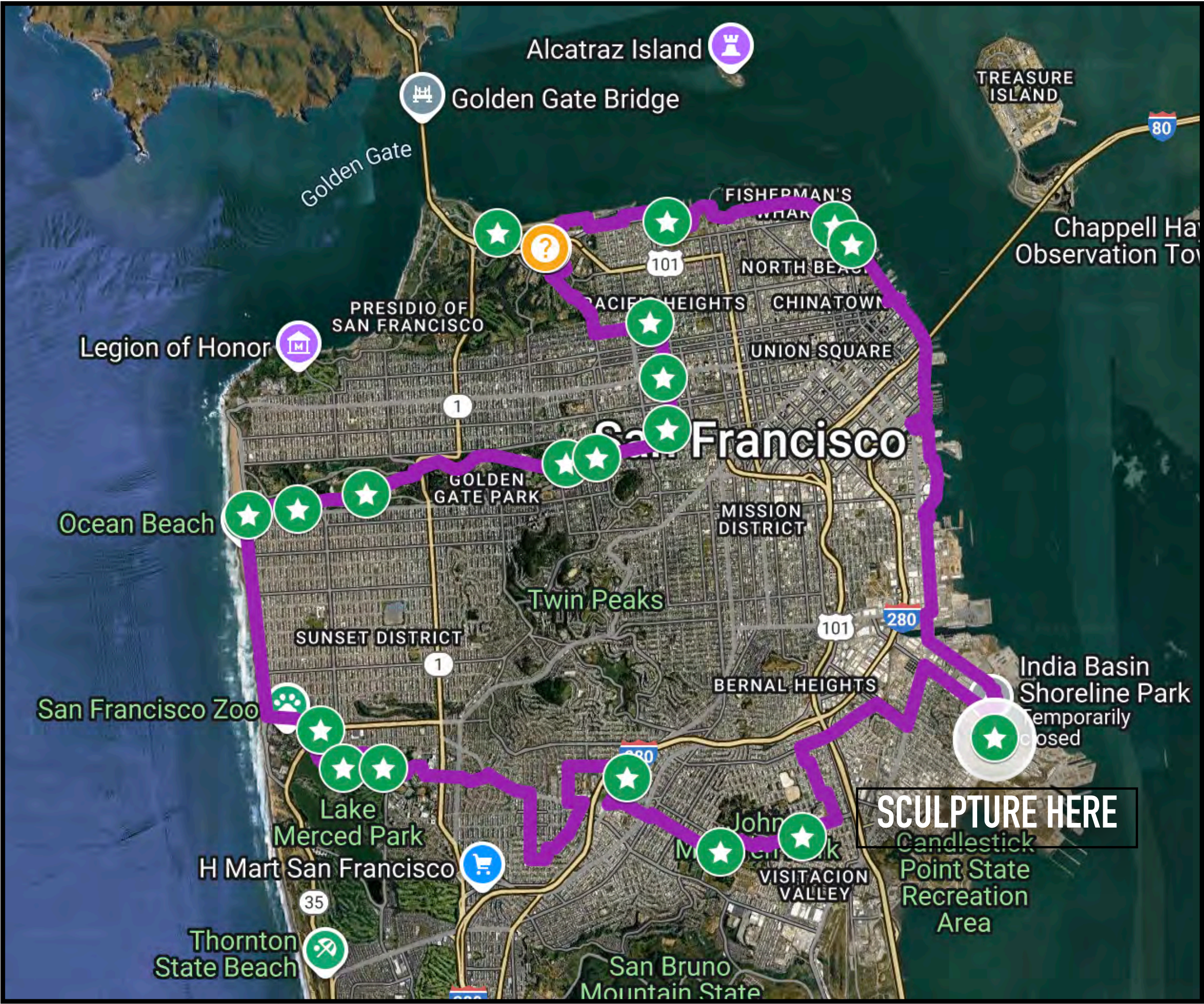
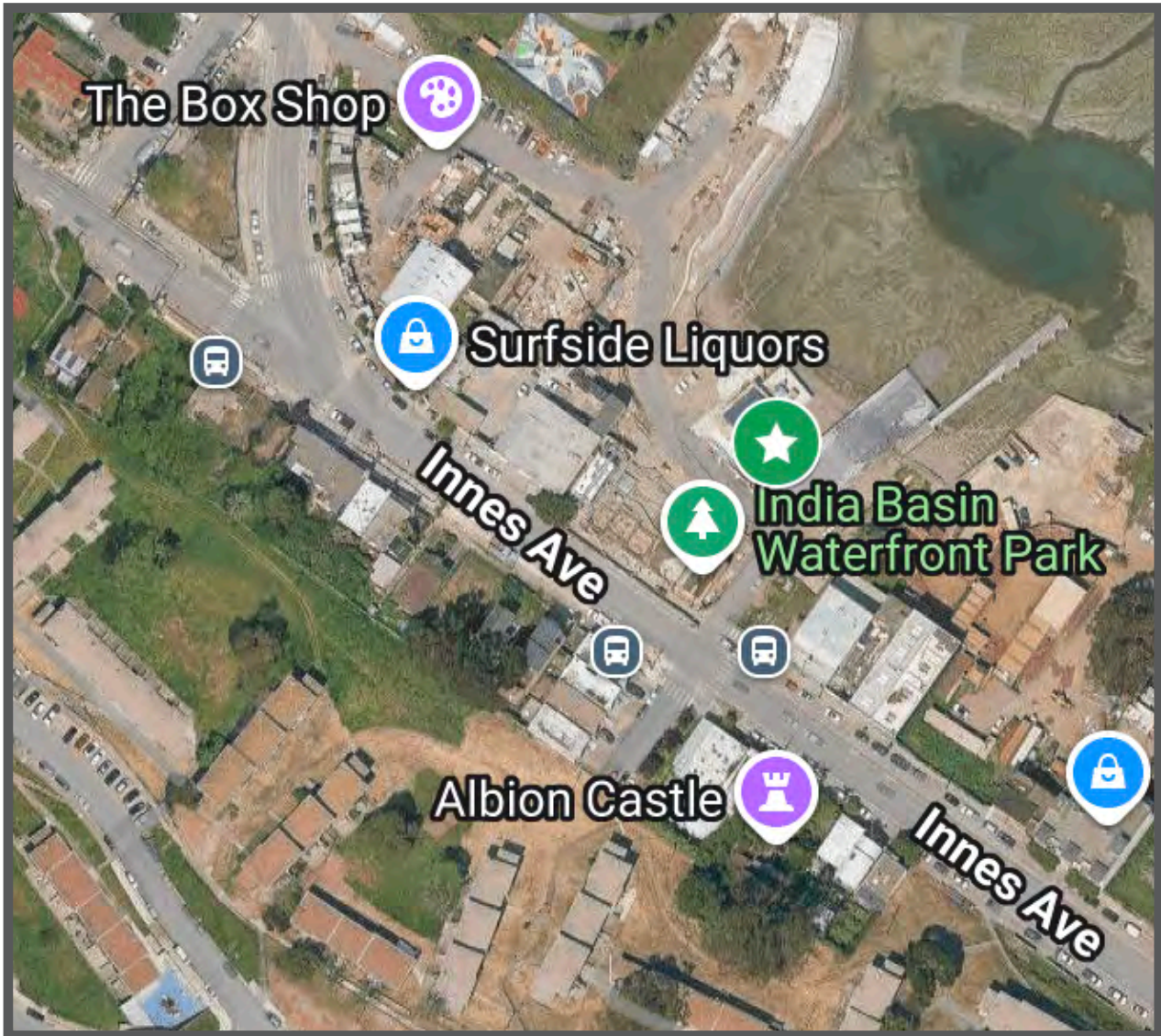
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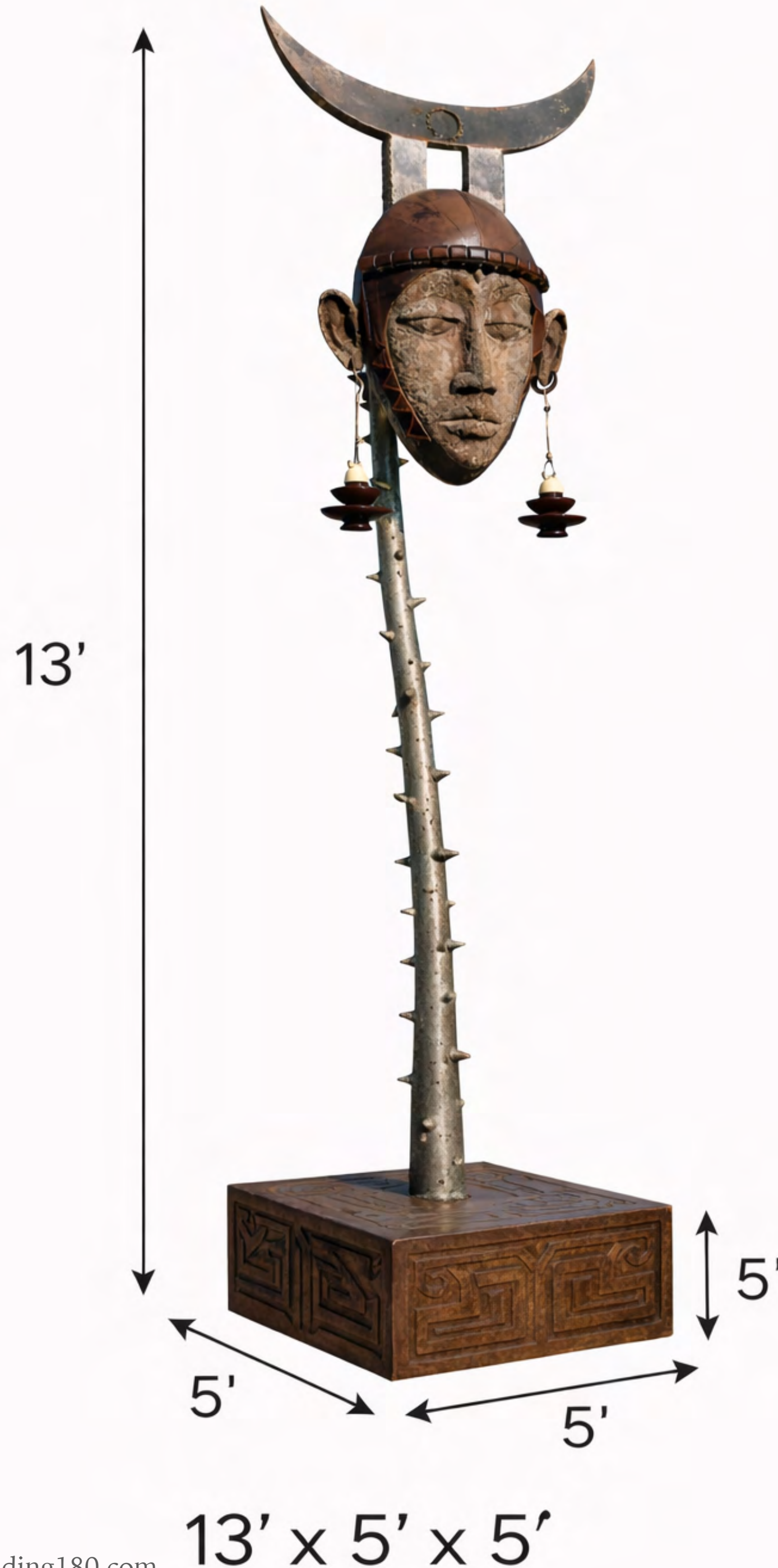
India Basin Waterfront Park

Working with SF Rec & Park we found a location that is both scenic, central to the park, and out of the way of the areas that often hold markets and events. We hope to place *Whispers of Waste* on the wooden deck seen here in India Basin Waterfront Park at the cross streets of Innes Avenue & Griffith Street.



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SCULPTURAL SPECIFICATIONS

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Dimensions: The sculpture is 13' H x 5' W x 5' D and will be anchored with a 5' x 5' x 1' concrete block counterweight.

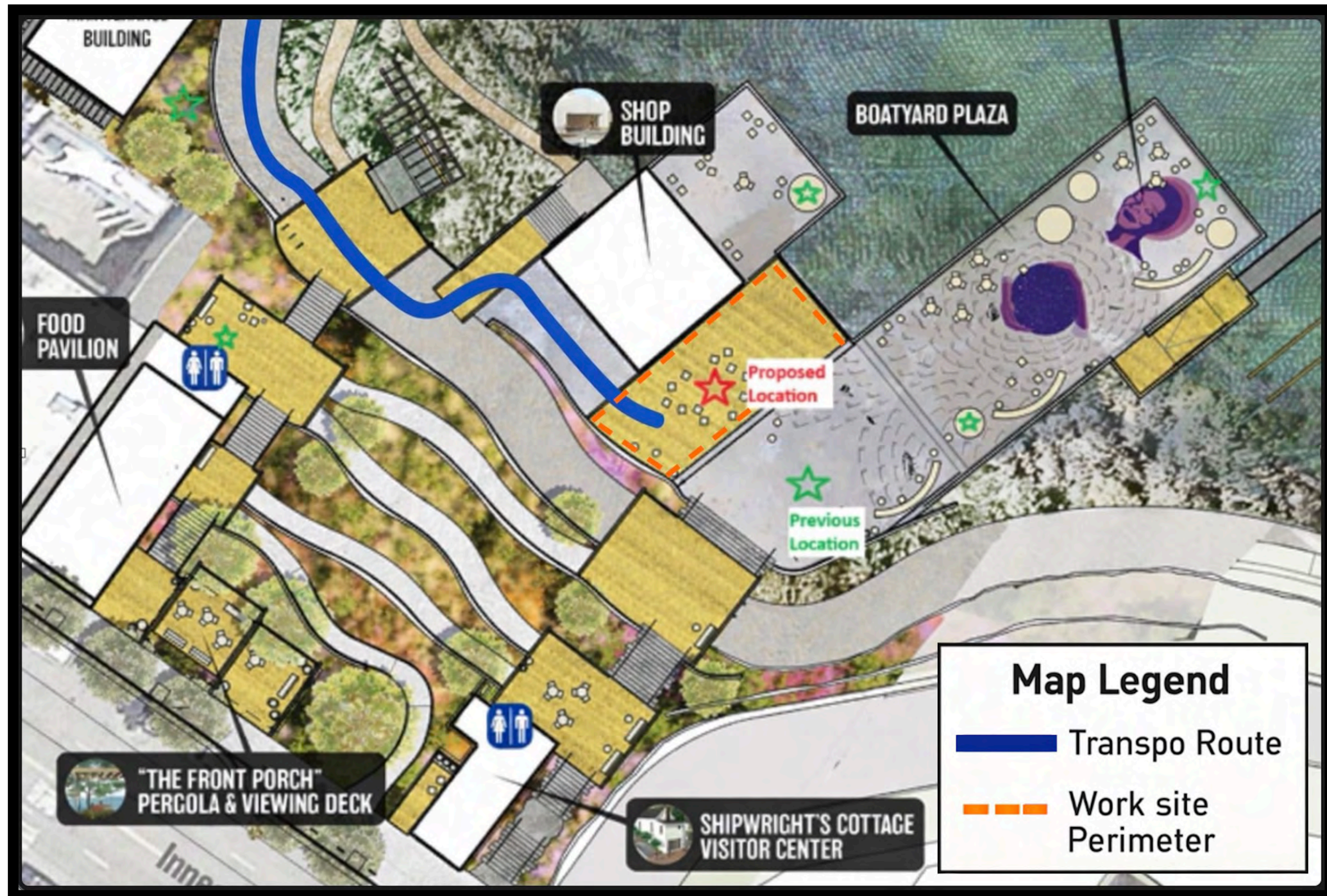
Weight: 5,000 lbs

Materials: Scrap Metal, Industrial Parts, Cement.

The structural components consist of a curved steel pipe that will support a sculptural head piece, and a tube steel base that will be weighted down against overturning by a concrete block counterweight.

On-Site Installation: The install will consist of a 3 person crew with the assistance of a forklift. Install usually takes about 2-3 hours.

SITE PLAN



COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SURVEY

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Building 180 collaborated with the India Basin Waterfront Park's Equitable Development Leadership Committee to circulate a public art interest survey through digital platforms, the park's website, a newsletter post, and community distribution lists. The following are the key take aways from that survey and how they relate to *Whispers of Waste*.

Cultural Representation

- Afrocentric, lineage-based symbolism
- Created by an African American artist drawing from diasporic traditions

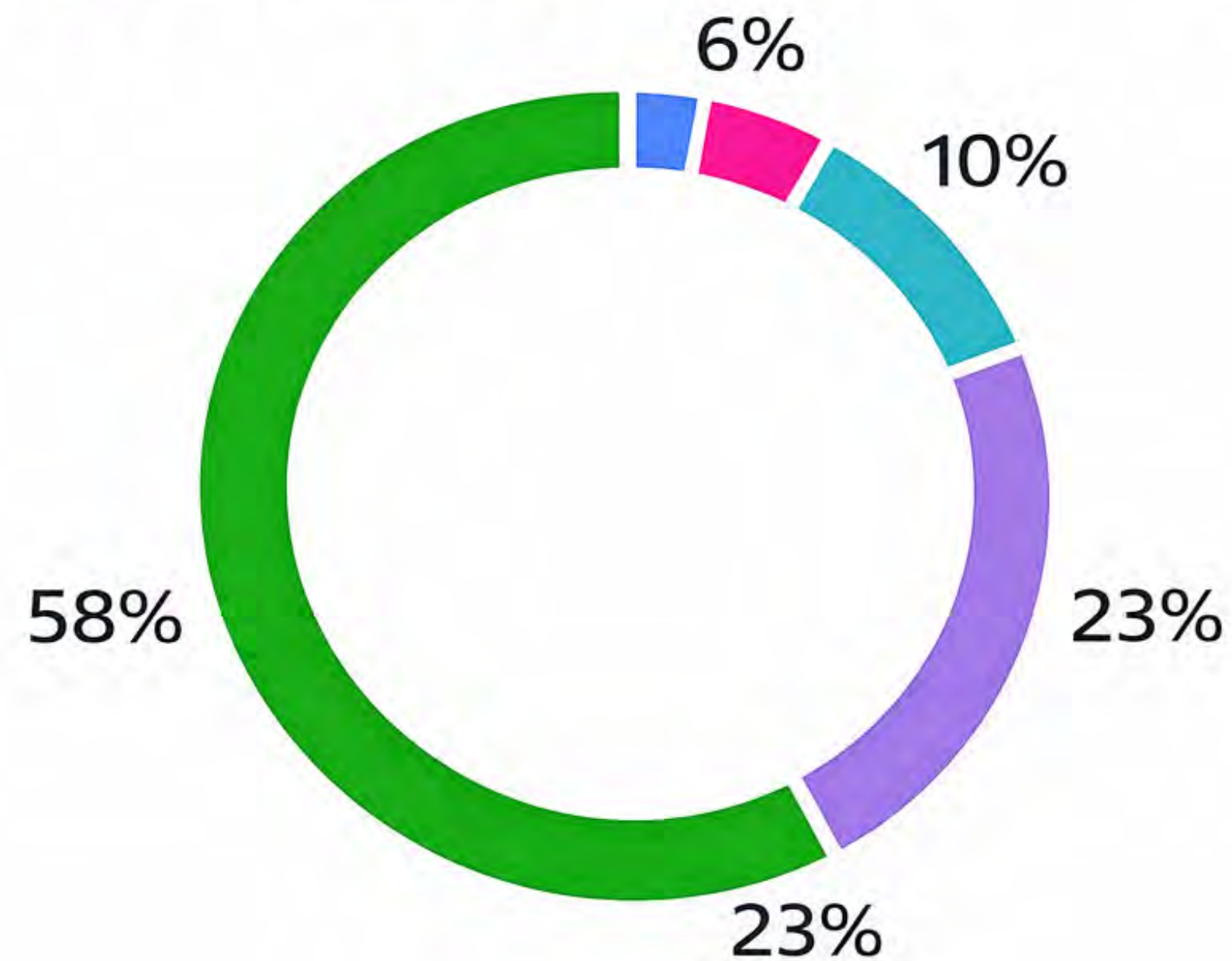
Support for Local Artists

- San Francisco based artist
- Fabricated locally in Bayview at The Box Shop SF



2. How do you feel about placing a large-scale sculpture at India Basin?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| ● 1 (Strongly don't like the idea) | 1 |
| ● 2 (Don't like the idea) | 2 |
| ● 3 (Neutral) | 3 |
| ● 4 (Support the idea) | 7 |
| ● 5 (Strongly support the idea) | 18 |



COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SURVEY

Environmental Responsibility

- Made from reclaimed materials
- No lighting or reflective elements; wildlife-safe

Thoughtful/Meditative Art

- Symbolic mask functions as guardian and witness
- Quiet, contemplative presence (not decorative or flashy)

Site-Responsive Design

- Human-scaled vertical form anchors the open waterfront
- Materials and form integrate naturally with India Basin landscape

Placemaking & Identity

- Reflects Bayview–Hunters Point resilience and history
- Functions as a meaningful, long-term neighborhood marker



WORDS OF SUPPORT

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“Because of this close relationship, Whispers of Waste holds particular significance for our organization. We are especially excited to see a work that was built within our walls—and shaped through our community—return to be displayed in the neighborhood we call home. The placement of this sculpture at India Basin represents a meaningful full-circle moment: a locally made artwork sited in a public space that reflects and serves the surrounding community.”

-Charles Gadekan, Founder & Proprietor, The Box Shop

“SF Black Wall Street Foundation is dedicated to advancing Black economic empowerment, cultural preservation, and community connection in San Francisco. We value projects that uplift Black creatives and reflect local cultural histories in shared public spaces. Whispers of Waste aligns strongly with these values.”

-Tinish Hollins, Co-Founder/Co-Director of SF Black Wall Street Foundation

“Whispers of Waste is a large-scale sculptural work fabricated locally in San Francisco and designed for public enjoyment. We believe the installation would contribute a meaningful cultural and visual enhancement to India Basin, enriching the experience for park users, neighborhood residents, and visitors.”

- Larry Berry II, India Basin Campus Manager



THANK YOU!

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