

Presentation of the Bernal Heights Branch Library Artwork (Phase One)

To: San Francisco Library Commission
From: Bernal Library Artwork Project (BLAP) Committee

After an extensive process of neighborhood engagement, including a call for artists and two community meetings attended by nearly a hundred stakeholders, the Bernal Library Art Project is pleased to present the San Francisco Library Commission with phase one (Front and Moultrie side) designs for the library artwork. These artwork designs were presented to the community starting on June 10, 2011 and are currently posted throughout the neighborhood including in the Bernal Branch Library, the exterior of the Good Life Grocery store, and on our project website at <http://bernalibraryartproject.blogspot.com>.

Designs will be publically reviewed at two Library Commission meetings on June 16th and July 21. During June and July, the BLAP will be garnering community input and support while working with San Francisco Art Commission staff to seek final artwork approval from the Art Commission on August 1, 2011. Phase one project implementation is anticipated to begin late summer 2011. Designs for phase two of the project (the backside of the library) are being created by the same artist teams and implementation for the backside artwork is anticipated to happen in the summer of 2012. The public presentation, review and approval for the phase two artwork will emulate the phase one process.

Artwork Descriptions

Front Facade Artwork Details

Artistic Team: Precita Eyes Muralists (Susan Cervantes, Suaro Cervantes, Elaine Chu, Dan Machiarini, and Marina Perez Wong)

Medium: Painted Ceramic Tile and Bronze Relief

Description of Content

The new artwork is inspired by the elements in the existing mural.

The concept for the new art work starts from the center representing an open book with pages flowing out and transforming into the four elements. On the left is fire represented by clouds

and sunset colors, and earth represented by golden hills. On the far right is air represented by clouds and sky forms, and water represented by waves.

In the center of the book, the flow of elements are woven into a circle representing the unity of ideas. The book element will be in bronze relief approximately 3" or 4" deep and 12' long attached 2 to 3 inches from the wall. Color will be heated in patina fashion to the bronze and applied where indicated in the color scheme reflecting transparency.

The rest of the art work will be executed in form fitted painted ceramic tile, glazed, fired, set and grouted to finish.

Moultrie Side Artwork Details

Artist: Reuben Rude

Medium: Painted Ceramic Tile

Description of Content

The design starts with a tree, which represents life and growth. The tree as a symbol also refers to ancestry and family. The individual elements of the tree have great symbolism: The roots represent the foundation, the source, the beginning. The trunk is solid, permanent, the center. The branches represent divergence, as well as an obvious reference to the library itself.

Above the tree branches, in the place of the foliage, there is a collage of images from the original mural. These images carry the weight of their original meanings, as well as what they have evolved to represent to many in the Bernal community. They also have an iconic quality, due to their existence in the public eye for the past almost forty years.

In the background there is an abstract grid of color, mostly a purely aesthetic element, that ties the images to the architecture, and will relate to the colors in the Cortland side artwork.

The aesthetic look of this piece is a combination of styles, present, past and future, that work together to create a cohesive look and feel. The artwork will represent the shape and scale of the original mural images, but with slight update in color and style. The tree trunk and branches use a more line heavy, graphic feel that evokes modern urban art. And the background grid can be viewed as futuristic, pixelated, or as a vintage, a modernist grid.

BLAP Committee

The Bernal Library Art Project is lead by a ten person committee composed of Bernal Heights residents, business owners, and community members who have been invested in the project since its inception. Committee members include Beth Roy, Larry Cruz, Brandon Powell, Monique Jaquez, Giulio Sorro, Dan Martinez, Terry Milne and Darcy Lee. Gia Grant is the project manager and Joyce McKinney is an on-going volunteer for the committee. Three local artistic teams— Collete Crutcher, Precita Eyes Muralists, and Reuben Rude— were selected from the call for artist process and are collaborating on design development based on input from the two community meetings as well as project implementation.

History and Background of the Bernal Library Art Project:

- The Bernal Heights Library building was constructed as a WPA project in the early 1940's.
- The interior of the library was completely renovated in 2009.
- The existing mural façade of the library was painted in the early 1980's as a youth project and its future has been an ongoing community controversy since 2002.
- A neighborhood mediation process was initiated by Supervisor David Campos in 2009 and lead by Bernal resident Beth Roy to resolve the controversy and open a community dialogue.
- A group of neighborhood stakeholders representing all sides of the controversy met for several months to discuss the existing mural and community issues of race, class, gentrification, culture and aesthetics.
- The successful mediation process lead to consensus around creating new artwork that included the following agreements:
 - To update representation of today's Bernal community
 - To honor elements of the existing mural that hold special meaning to Bernal residents
 - To create new artwork that harmonizes with the architectural features of the building