

CIVIC ART

at Woodcrest Library



NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY

Westmont, Los Angeles

The Civic Art as Infrastructure Project, also known as the Creative Graffiti Abatement Project, was implemented by the **Los Angeles County Arts Commission** in four neighborhoods of South Los Angeles. The series of artworks were designed around the idea that better engagement in the development of artworks would promote community value for civic spaces and deter vandalism at county properties. Artists **Swift Lee Office** worked closely with community partners and art & public engagement consultant **Sara Daleiden** to build community engagement and a permanent public artwork at Woodcrest Library in Westmont, Los Angeles.



Major goals of the project included:

- Shifting perceptions about the sites
- Increasing community activity
- Reducing graffiti vandalism
- Building a sense of community ownership
- Building capacity for future arts and culture activities





BUILDING CIVIC SPACE

Community events and engagement sessions were consistently held at Woodcrest Library; they were a critical component and stimulus of the civic art production process.



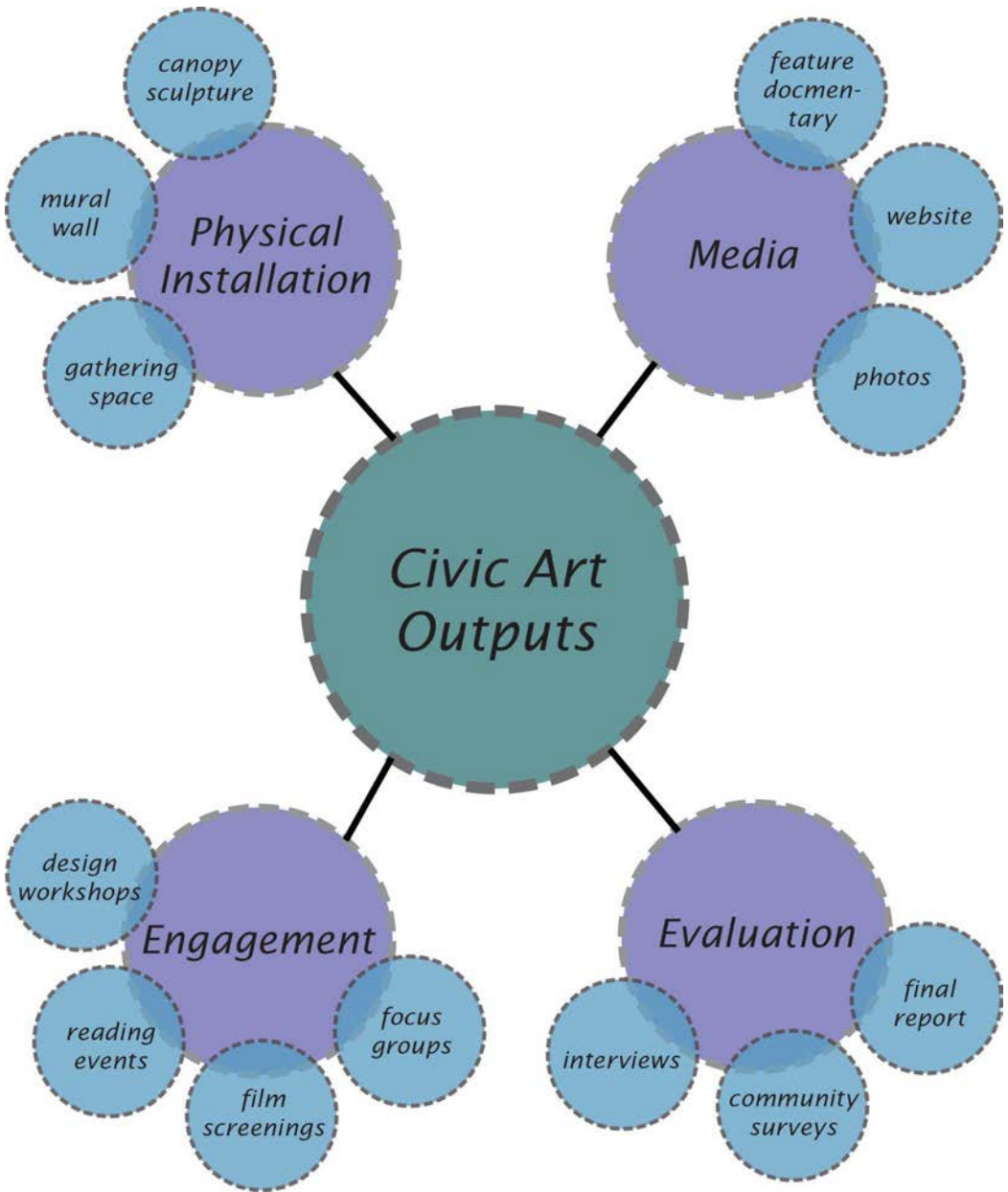
PROJECT PARTNERS







PROJECT OUTPUTS



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The design process began with a *Trash for Teaching* workshop, which invited neighbors to design canopies for the plaza using recycled materials. Many designs included natural elements, such as trees, flowers and a turtle pond. Local residents emphasized their desire to use the plaza as a place to sit, read, play and gather.

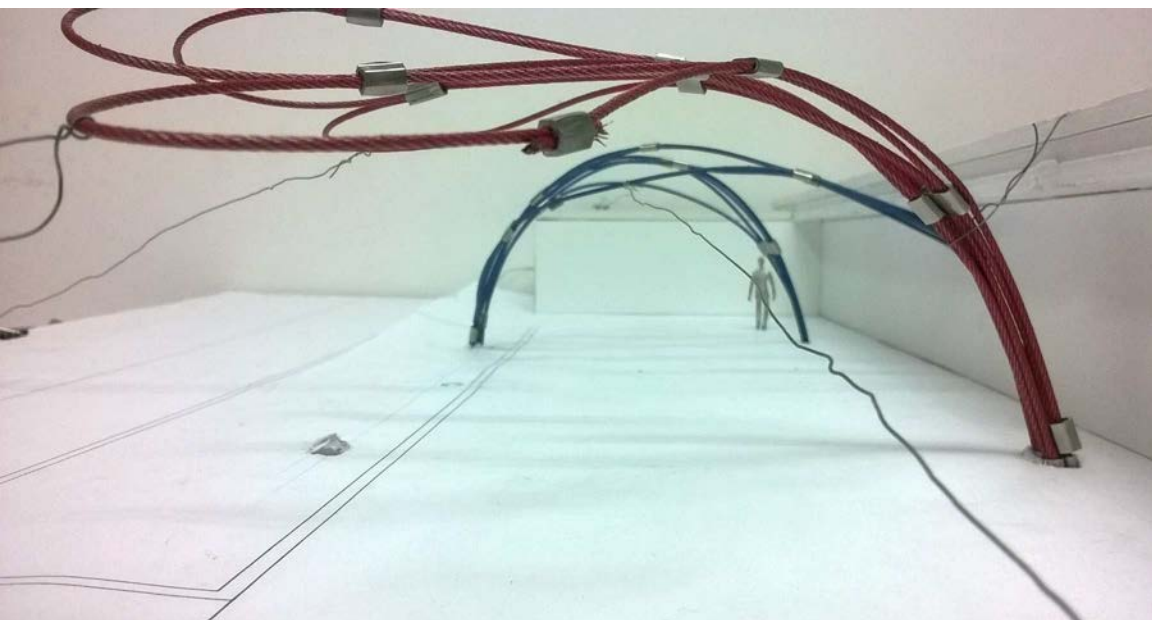
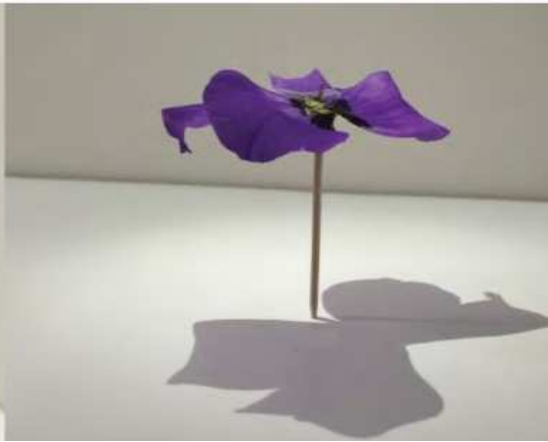
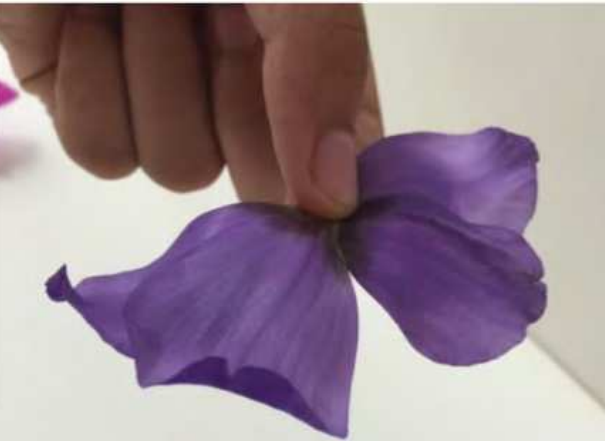






CONCEPT

Inspired by community connections to the local environment, the concept for the artwork drew inspiration from microscopic images of butterfly wings and sculptural shade elements.



EXPERIMENTATION

Several color schemes, materials, patterns and textures were investigated for the mural wall and canopy installation.

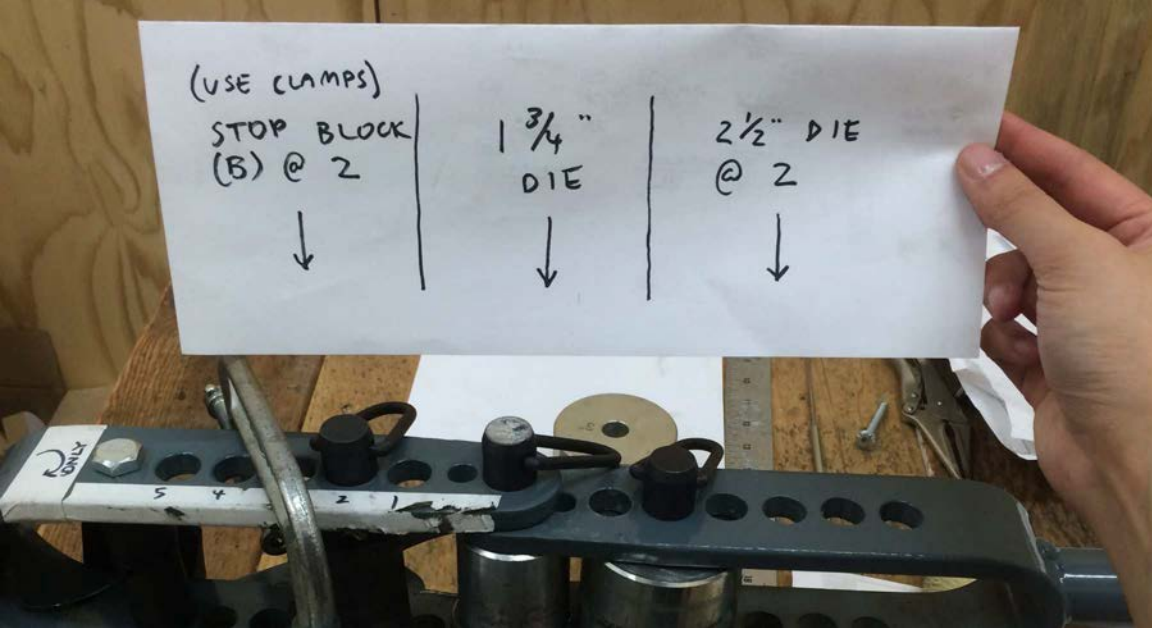






FABRICATION

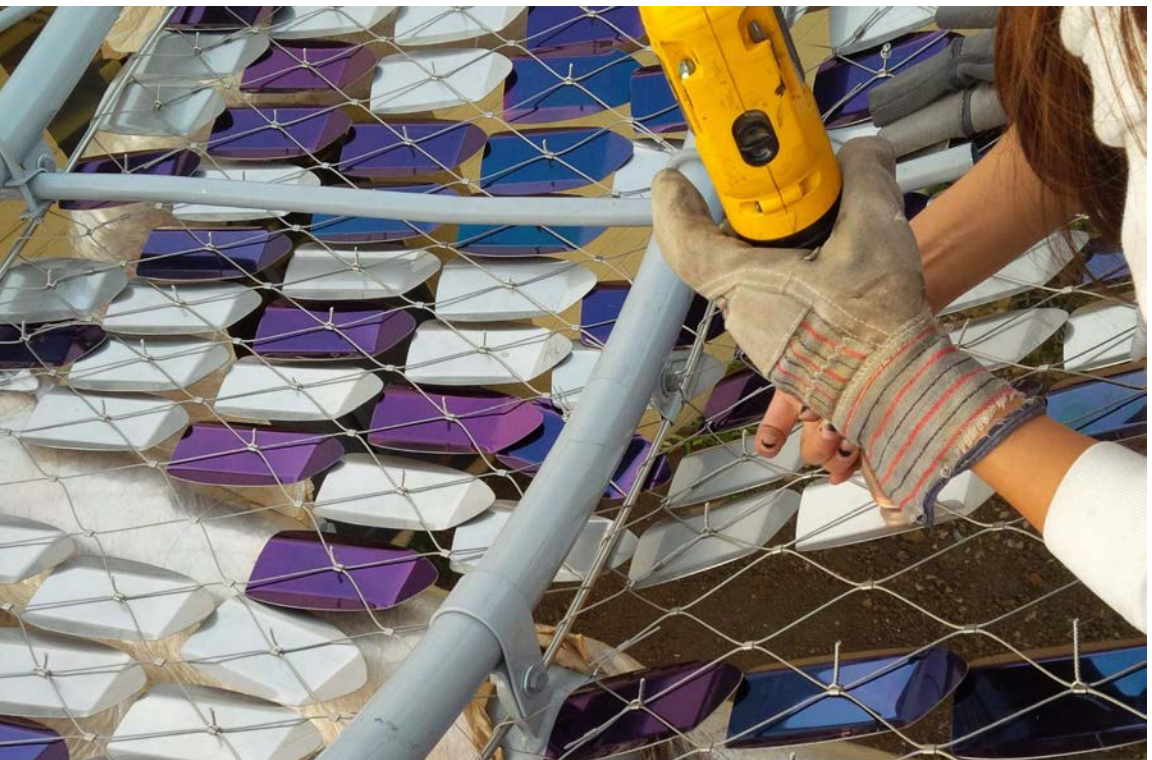
For the canopy, rolled steel pipe columns were custom built by Paramount Roll and over 2000 iridescent stainless steel panels were crafted at Swift Lee Office. Aluminum panels were laser cut for the 3D relief elements of the mural wall.



INSTALLATION











ART AS INFRASTRUCTURE

Like libraries themselves, artwork is part of civic infrastructure. The artwork, spaces and the programs offered in these spaces are part of the infrastructure that builds and supports relationships between community members.



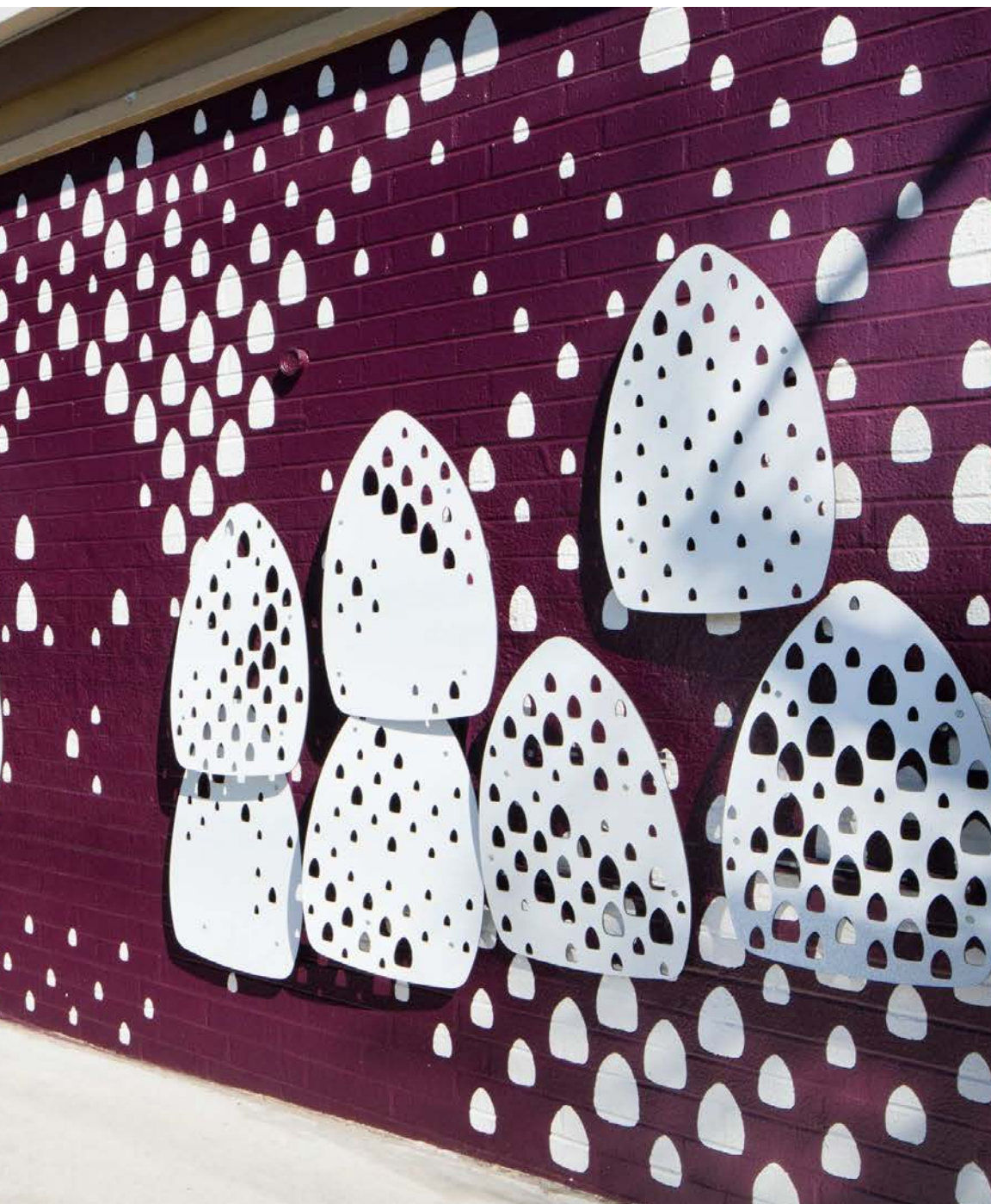
CONTINUED USE

Activities and plans are being developed by the Woodcrest Library staff to incorporate the artworks thematic elements and further transform the plaza into a lively community space. The corresponding mixed media mural on Normandie Avenue connects passersby to activities happening in the plaza. The civic artwork and engagement strategies implemented at Woodcrest Library builds capacity for new ideas, cultural programming and future art.













Principal Artists: Gloria Lee and Nathan Swift, Swift Lee Office
Clara Lee, Mandy Situ, Francisco Pila, Ives Brown

Art and Public Engagement Consultant: Sara Daleiden, s(o)ul

Commissioned by the Los Angeles County Arts Commission Civic
Art Program Open Space Creative Graffiti Abatement Project

Engagement Support: Trash 4 Teaching

Fabrication & Installation Support: Paramount Roll, MDI,

Los Angeles Conservation Corps & Louise Griffin

Civic Art Project Managers: Erin Harkey & Pauline Kanako Kamiyama

Photography: Swift Lee office, Elon Schoenholz, Marc Escribano

Book Design: Tracee Johnson

