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***Durham SmART Program Corcoran Garage Art Banner Wrap Honored Today
at Americans for the Arts Annual Convention in Minneapolis
The First Public Art Installation of the Durham SmART Program
is Selected for National Recognition***

Durham, NC - June 14, 2019—Americans for the Arts today honored ***“Durham in Continuum” - Durham SmART Corcoran Garage Art Banner Wrap*** which was selected and recognized as part of the Americans for the Arts 2019 Public Art Network (PAN) Year in Review. ***“Durham in Continuum”*** is among 50 outstanding public art projects created in 2018 that have been selected to be recognized through the [Public Art Network Year in Review](#) program, the only national program that specifically recognizes the most compelling public art. Chosen by public art experts, the roster of selected projects was unveiled this morning at Americans for the Arts’ Annual Convention in Minneapolis. This is the 18th year that Americans for the Arts has recognized public art works.



“Durham in Continuum” – 1st public art work of Durham SmART Vision Plan

The beautiful and vibrant Corcoran Garage Art Wrap- ***“Durham in Continuum”*** - creates a monumental signature gateway for the Blackwell/Corcoran/Foster Streets SmART Corridor in downtown Durham, NC. This is the first public art work of the Durham SmART Vision Plan. The art banner wrap was designed by nationally recognized public artist Olalekan (LEk) Jeyifous. LEK’s design is a colorful and joyous interpretation of the architectural, historic and iconic elements of the SmART corridor and focuses on activating and transforming the visual experience between the American Tobacco and City Center Districts. When completed in August 2018, ***“Durham in Continuum”*** instantly added color, life and a visual icon to a previously distressed intersection. Corcoran Garage is a City-owned parking facility built in 1964. More information: www.smartdurham.org.

“This striking, colorful work of art, Durham in Continuum, has transformed a concrete parking garage from an eyesore into an icon. Who ever thought the Corcoran St. garage could be beautiful? But now it is.” – said Steve Schewel, Mayor – City of Durham

“Olalekan Jeyifous’ stunning artwork has brought even more vibrancy to Durham’s arts scene. The installation is quickly becoming a destination site in downtown. I am extremely proud of the Durham Arts Council and the NC Arts Council for leading the partnership that made this important project a great success!” said NC Senator Michael J. Woodard.

Artist Olalekan Jeyifous (LEK) said – “For ‘Durham in Continuum’ I was inspired not only by the city’s architecture, but through several truly illuminating public engagements, was also able to learn about its rich cultural heritage, contributions to the Civil Rights Movement and the community’s strong sense of civic pride. The hand holding a lantern, signifying Civil Rights Leaders like Louis Austin and Pauli Murray, the facade of the historic Mechanics & Farmers Bank Building which was an icon of Black Wall Street, and the “Bull-City” hand sign which speaks directly to the younger generation, are depicted in the artwork and reflect the city’s unique history and on-going evolution.”

The Durham SmART Initiative is part of the North Carolina Arts Council’s statewide SmART Program which supports the transformation of downtowns through arts driven economic development. The Durham Arts Council is the project’s lead local agency, with the North Carolina Arts Council providing major support for creative placemaking along the rapidly-transforming Blackwell, Corcoran, Foster Street corridor to develop a vibrant arts and entertainment district. Jean P. Greer is the Public Art and Design Consultant. Major funders and partners also include the National Endowment for the Arts “Our Town” grant, the City of Durham, Durham County, Capitol Broadcasting Company, Duke University, Downtown Durham, Inc., Nasher Museum of Art, Discover Durham, and Durham Area Designers. Local vendors Steel City Services, LLC, and Mosca Design were key partners in fabrication and installation of the custom steel suspension system and 12 façade mesh banners. The SmART Initiative Resource Team of local, regional and state partners worked with internationally acclaimed designer Mikyoung Kim along with downtown stakeholders to create the SmART Vision Plan - a multi-year, \$10 million public art and urban design strategy - unveiled in June 2015. www.smartdurham.org.

“The best of public art can challenge, delight, educate, and illuminate. Most of all, public art creates a sense of civic vitality in the cities, towns, and communities we inhabit and visit,” said **Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts**. “As these Public Art Network *Year in Review* selections illustrate, public art has the power to enhance our lives on a scale that little else can. I congratulate the artists and commissioning groups for these community treasures, and I look forward to honoring more great works in the years to come.”

The projects selected for *Year in Review* can be viewed [on this page](#) and will be displayed throughout Annual Convention. Two independent public art experts—artist Seitu Jones of Saint Paul, Minnesota, and Aaron Ott, Curator of Public Art at Albright Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York—discussed the trends they uncovered while examining hundreds of submissions in selecting this year’s choices for the most exemplary, innovative permanent or temporary public art works created or debuted in 2018.

The complete presentation, which includes photos and descriptions of all 50 projects, will be available for purchase through [Americans for the Arts’ store](#).

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C., and New York City, it has a record of more than 55 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts.

Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

MORE INFORMATION AND IMAGES NEXT PAGE:

Banner Installation Completed on July 27, 2018



Banner Dedication on August 15, 2018

About Durham Arts Council, Inc.

The Durham Arts Council (DAC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and leading local arts agency in North Carolina dedicated to supporting the arts in Durham and the entire Triangle Region. For 65 years DAC has served the community as a catalyst in the cultural development of Durham - it leads, inspires, and promotes excellence in and access to the creation, experience and active support of the arts for all the people of our community. Today DAC serves more than 400,000 visitors and program participants, 2,000+ artists, and 300+ arts organizations each year through classes, artist residencies, exhibits, festivals, grant programs, technical support and information, arts advocacy, creative economy and creative place-making initiatives. For more information visit www.durhamarts.org.

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