THE PHILADELPHIA REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
PERCENT FOR ART PROGRAM

Generative Luminance, 2014

Clothespin, 1976

Night Ferry (Part of Commotion festival), 2012
About the Program
Philadelphia was the first city in the United States to adopt programs for acquiring and commissioning works of contemporary public art for new development in urban renewal areas. The Reconstruction Authority pioneered the Percent for Art Program in March 1959, becoming the first program in the United States to make the commissioning of fine arts an integral part of the urban renewal process.

In the first half century since the inception of the Reconstruction Authority’s Fine Arts Program, nearly 400 works of public art have been installed in all areas of Philadelphia. Works of public art can be found in such diverse developments as high-rise commercial and residential towers, housing, shopping plazas, industrial plants, hotels and universities. These works of art represent some of the best works of contemporary artists of regional, national and international reputation.

In the last fifty years the City of Philadelphia developed one of the largest public art collections in the world. Public art exists in many forms: as a statue in a plaza, as an entryway, a wayfinding mechanism, a piece hung in an atrium or applied to a façade. Public art can also take less conventional forms, like community, arts and culture-based public programs. The Percent for Art program encourages Redevelopers to conceive of innovative applications for public art, and to create work that engages the public and challenges them to think about their surroundings in new and exciting ways.

The Percent for Art Program is guided by the Program Director and the Public Art Committee, a group of artists and arts professionals who help to guide all aspects of the public art selection process. The Committee includes representatives of Philadelphia’s finest artistic and cultural institutions, including Philadelphia Green at the Philadelphia Horticultural Society, Wallace Roberts & Todd (WRT), the University of the Arts and MGA Partners Architects, among representatives from other institutions throughout Philadelphia. The Committee is a resource for Redevelopers and an opportunity to have your project guided by leading Philadelphia arts professionals.

The Program Director and Committee are here to help you to commission a great work of art that will enhance your development and beautify the surrounding area.

“It’s amazing what a small percentage of a project’s budget spent on art can do to raise the aesthetic level of a project, which translates into character, ambience, stable tenants and higher rents.”

-Joe Nootbaar, principal of JMA Ventures, San Francisco, California
Some projects commissioned through the Percent for Art Program include:

Claes Oldenburg’s *Clothespin* at 15th & Market Streets

Dennis Oppenheim’s *Wave Forms* at 34th & Market Streets

Athena Tacha’s *Connections* at 18th & Hamilton Streets

Ming Fay’s *Goldilocks at Tivoli* at 20th & Hamilton Streets
There are three ways to participate in the Percent for Art Program:

**A Percent for Art Commission**
A Redeveloper may elect to work with the PRA’s Percent for Art Program and Public Art Committee to commission an original site-specific work of fine art for their development. The process involves at least three meetings with the Committee and site visits with selected artists. All Percent for Art projects must be developed with and approved by the Committee.

**A Contribution to the Fine Art Development Fund**
A Redeveloper may elect to dedicate their Percent for Art contribution to the Public Art Development Fund, which is used periodically to organize and sponsor competitions for innovative works of public art. The Public Art Fund may be used to fund significant works of art that can be located anywhere in the City and not related to a particular development location. Redevelopers with construction budgets of less than $1,000,000 are required to contribute to the Fund. Redevelopers of projects with larger construction budgets may also elect to contribute to the Fund. The 1% contribution shall fulfill the Redeveloper’s Public Art requirement. Those Redevelopers who have dedicated their Percent for Art contribution to the Fund shall be recognized as a contributor to the project.

**An Alternate Plan**
A Redeveloper may propose an alternate method for fulfilling the Percent for Art requirement. Alternate plans may include leasing storefront space to non-profit arts groups, doing an off-site project (must be done independently and may not be affiliated with any other arts group), sponsoring an exhibition of temporary work, commissioning a series of smaller works of art, etc. The process may involve between three and five meetings depending upon the nature of the Alternate Plan. All Alternate Plans must be developed with and approved by the Committee. A recent Alternate Plan project is 250 Miles Crossing Philadelphia by Esther Polak and Ivar vanBekkum www.250miles.net

Works of art commissioned through the Percent for Art Program may be permanent, semi-permanent or temporary, depending on the location of the site and the nature of the project. Redevelopers are encouraged to think of the type and amount of maintenance they can provide for their work of art, since different types of work and technologies require different commitment levels.

“When you’re a developer, you’re leaving a legacy behind… when you renovate or design new projects, it affects the land in the community for generations”

-Jordan Schnitzer, president of Harsch Investment Properties in Portland, Oregon
Public art projects from across the country may inspire your Percent for Art Project:

As an artist-designed façade:

- Spencer Finch’s *Façade*
- Johns Hopkins Medical Center
- Baltimore, Maryland
- Budget = $40/sq ft + Artist Fee

As a temporary installation:

- Thought Barn’s *CO2LED*
- Arlington, Virginia
- (3-month long installation)
- Budget = $50,000

As an off-site work of art:

- Brian Goggin’s *The Language of the Birds*
- San Francisco, CA
- Budget = $250,000
Public art projects from across the country may inspire your Percent for Art Project:

As a sunscreen:
Ned Kahn’s *Fragmented Sea*
Mesa Art Center, Mesa, AZ

As a new way of seeing something familiar:
Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller’s *Words Drawn in Water*
Audio tour of Washington DC Mall

As an city-wide event:
Luke Jerram’s *Play Me I’m Yours*
Pianos available for public use
Or you may find inspiration for projects around Philadelphia:

As an interactive element:
Janet Echelman’s water and light proposal for Dilworth Plaza
_Upcoming_

As an event:
Cai Guo-Qiang’s *Fallen Blossoms*
Exploration project
Philadelphia Museum of Art

As a site element:
Demakersvan’s *Lace Fence*
Philadelphia University Design Center
2009

**Benefits of Commissioning a work of art:**
- An iconic piece of art can be used in marketing and branding a development
- Buildings with artwork are often more memorable than those without art
- Art is an amenity for a building’s users and the surrounding community
- Art can transform space, enhance urban life, and add beauty to public space
The Redevelopment Authority’s Art Committee includes:

Margot Berg, City of Philadelphia’s Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy
Ignacio Bunster, Wallace Roberts & Todd (WRT)
Aaron Cohen, Citizen & Company
Laura Deutch, Philly CAM
Germaine Ingram
Christine Marsal, MGA Partners Architects
Ann Peltz, the Center for Emerging Visual Artists
John Phillips, the University of the Arts
Nancy O’Donnell, Philadelphia Green, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
Denise Smyler, Ahmad, Zaffarese & Smyler, LLC

For more information about the Percent for Art Program or to discuss your project, please contact

Julia Guerrero
Director, Percent for Art Program
Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority
1234 Market Street, 16th floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215.209.8619

julia.guerrero@pra.phila.gov