

The University of Texas at Austin Public Art Master Plan

**Peter Walker and Partners
Landscape Architecture**

Landmarks

The Public Art Program of the University of Texas at Austin



LANDMARKS
THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

PWP LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Completed 2008

Public Art Master Plan

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Public Art Master Plan

BACKGROUND

The most iconic and memorable campuses transcend the functional needs of their facilities with a spatial order that invokes harmony and inspires contemplation in both architecture and open spaces.

At the academic heart of the UT campus are spaces designed in the early 1900s by Paul Cret that are highly integrated, balanced, and well defined. The demands and ambitions of modernity, however, have resulted in expansion that deviates from these early ideals. In particular, as the car became more integrated into the life and operation of the campus, roads and driveways began to dominate the spatial organization. In order to regain the intent of the original Cret master plan, Cesar Pelli and Associates drafted a campus master plan in 1999 that outlined the vision for the campus moving into the next century. This master plan built upon the highly successful spaces of the historical academic core and proposed future development in the spirit of the original Cret plan.

The public art program, LANDMARKS, sets guidelines for the placement and selection of outdoor public art on campus and complements the Cret and Pelli plans by drawing upon the historical spatial order of the UT campus. When the placement of art is carefully considered within the framework of these plans, it will enhance the aesthetic character of the campus by creating landmarks that convey the university's ideals and identity.

PURPOSE

The intent of the Master Plan for Public Art is to inform the selection and to guide the placement of public art on the main campus. Proposed future projects must proceed with care and deliberation in evaluating the historic, architectural, landscape, curatorial, cultural, and aesthetic aspects, especially as the campus landscape evolves with architectural changes and installations of public art.

It is important to add that any acquisition and installation of public art on campus will be reviewed and approved by many entities throughout the university. A formal process has been established to verify that works are of the highest quality, that their placement conforms to the Campus and Public Art Master Plans, and that they have university-wide support.

This text portion of the Master Plan for Public Art corresponds to three maps that visually convey its principal ideas. One defines the locations of existing works of art on the campus and makes a few recommendations for relocations and deaccessions. A second defines the spatial organization of the main campus according to zones and recommends opportunities to site different types of works of art within them. The third map provides a detail of two sections and suggests a range of typologies that may be considered during the selection process.

While the maps attempt to provide a comprehensive inventory of possible locations for works of public art, they do not suggest that works should be sited in each plotted point on the map. In selecting the best locations, it will be important to consider the nature of the work, the proposed site, and to remain flexible and sensitive as the landscape evolves. In general, the placement should avoid crowding, support visual harmony, and respect the integrity of the campus master plans. The maps serve as a reference for overall

density, architectural and open space character, and the potential for sequence of experiences. They inform the process of art selection and placement by suggesting the broader collection and the potential to strengthen the overall campus experience.

PUBLIC ART PLACEMENT

The Public Art Master Plan identifies sites on campus for outdoor public art. In addition to considering the spatial organization of the overall campus design, the placement of art is considered in reference to the landscape setting for the work. The size and character of a work of art should reflect and enhance the size and character of its landscape setting. Working within these parameters, the art site plan identifies areas for the placement of both monumental scale and intimate scale.

Public art of a monumental scale makes a large gesture, is easily visible, and creates landmarks that often become collectively meaningful and architecturally prominent. Public art of an intimate scale tends to relate directly to the individual or pedestrian experience. While both can create campus landmarks, intimately scaled public art accomplishes this in a more personal manner. Intimate works can enhance a sense of discovery or add depth to the pedestrian experience.

In addition, the plan also recommends sites for serial works of art. Conceived as one work, serial pieces can relate to commonly found landscapes within a campus setting: for example, corridor-like settings that are experienced through procession or open spaces that could accommodate several pieces and be viewed from multiple perspectives or in sequence.

Whether monumental or intimate in scale, the placement of art on a campus setting is affected by the architectural order and landscape character of the campus. Careful consideration must be given to the existing architectural characteristics, spatial traits, and condition of the individual art site as well as the overall campus design.

For a visual understanding of the opportunities that have been identified, please see the maps for the Public Art Master Plan.

ART IN LANDSCAPE

In contrast to sculpture placed in a gallery or museum setting, the outdoor placement of art in the environment activates both the work of art and the setting in new ways. The placement of sculpture in different landscape settings, such as a level open lawn area versus at the peak of a hill, not only imbues the art with new meaning but also changes the understanding of the site. The following examples demonstrate how art, when placed in either significant or intimately scaled landscape settings, can contribute to the shared memory and iconography of a college campus.

Gateway

A work of art placed at visually prominent and geographically significant entries to campus can reinforce and strengthen the hierarchical prominence of the main campus entries. Works of art at



gateways should be considered as part of an overall plan that takes into account both the architectural and landscape context as well as gateway signage needs.

Landmark/Campus Identity

The location of art can activate a site in ways that render a place more memorable. Art can help create a landmark and sense of memory and contribute to the collective identity of the campus among its students, faculty, and staff. It can be expressive of the “localness” of a place, reminding viewers from around the world that this place is unique.

Serial Project

A college campus is often experienced by students and faculty traversing the campus on foot. This pattern is acknowledged by the inclusion of serial art projects that can be placed along corridors and walkways as well as along significant spatial sequences.

Infrastructure

Since a college campus operates as a mini-city, the integration of a work of art that is also functional can serve the infrastructural needs of a campus and enhance its aesthetic character. For example, storm water management has been utilized artistically to express seasonal change and provide local interest during rain events.

Site Furniture/Outdoor Classrooms

The possibility for art to engage our sense of touch and to provide places for bodies to sit, rest, lean, and wait may enliven the campus environment. For example, art can fulfill the function of seating and provide spaces for gathering and study.

Sound/Music/Non-visual Works

Art that engages our nonvisual senses could be incorporated into the campus setting through works of art that include a sound, music, or other interactive elements.

Ephemeral/Temporary

Lasting only a short time, ephemeral pieces could be selected for sites that are not suitable for permanent works of art, such as landscape areas used during commencement. This would include natural spaces—Waller Creek for example—that should be maintained as predominantly wooded areas.

No Art—Preserved Open Space

Preserved open space should act as an equal partner to sites designated for artwork on the UT campus. Works of art are most appreciated by a visual field free of competing pieces. Open spaces can establish a rhythm and create a sense of discovery between works of public art.

ART AND DIVERSITY ON THE UT CAMPUS

There is a general perception that the figurative bronze sculptures on campus convey difficult and sometimes contentious messages about diversity in the university, both in terms of the individuals commemorated and the locations of the statues within the built environment. In particular, the Confederate statues on the South Mall are a source of controversy; their subject matter and their location are often invoked when issues of racial diversity and tolerance arise.

This tradition of figurative bronze sculpture was followed when the Martin Luther King statue was added to the East Mall in 1999; it is located axially within the Cret Plan and oriented toward East Austin. Additional works to recognize Cesar Chavez and Barbara Jordan have either been recently installed or are in various stages of development.

These new statues are more populist both in scale and location than the King statue or the monumental statues on the South Mall. In other words, they do not share the same large physical scale, and their proposed locations are more remote from the central campus axes defined by the Cret Plan. Location is a critical consideration for figurative commemoration; sculpture must be sited within a place of honor to fully convey the importance of the honored individuals.

It has become a trend to address issues of diversity on campus through figurative sculpture. There are, however, many ways to express the myriad beliefs and values held by university communities. Future commemorative projects should be mindful of the traditions that gave rise to the production of bronze figural sculpture, and they should seek forms of artistic expression that are as diverse and relevant as the ideals they wish to convey. As the campus grows significantly beyond the original geometries of the Cret Plan, it provides an even wider canvas and a broader potential for these varied forms of expression.

ART PLACEMENT AND THE UT CAMPUS PLAN

The Public Art Master Plan was informed and influenced by the 1933 Paul Cret plan and the 1999 Cesar Pelli master plan. Drawing upon these sources, the campus was divided into zones that reflect its historical, architectural, and landscape characters. Art placement is considered in relation to these zones, which are described below and color-coded on the corresponding map.

The 40 Acres

The most historic part of the UT campus, the 40 acres, is bound by 24th Street to the north, Guadalupe to the west, 21st Street to the south, and Speedway to the east. The organization of this area was initially developed by the Paul Cret master plan, which emphasized Beaux-Arts inspired formal relationships between architecture and open space and asserted symmetry, order, and axial relationships. The results of this organization are buildings that frame the edges of malls or form enclosures for interior courtyards. The placement of art within this area should consider the formal and axial organization of the area’s architecture and open spaces.



The Campus Malls

The four malls that extend outward from the 40 acres establish the formal axial relationships of the campus landscape. They are the most ceremonial elements of the campus design, and their strong architectural edges establish view corridors that form the symbolic and literal link between the campus and beyond.

The East Mall and the West Mall together form the strongest axis through the campus. The axis begins with the Union Fountain, contains the main campus plaza, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, and the East Mall Fountain, crosses Waller Creek, and terminates with the LBJ Fountain. Topography plays a significant role in the design of the mall, with landmarks such as the LBJ Fountain and the Main Tower visually anchoring the mall's corridor.

The South Mall is the primary ceremonial approach to the campus due to its beginning at the base of an incline. It forms a visual connection between the tower of the Main Building and the dome of the Texas State Capital Building. The Pelli Master Plan identified methods to strengthen the impact of this mall, such as eliminating stray directional signage located within the mall's main axis and relocating parking.

The North Mall is currently the least defined mall due to patchy architectural edges and the lack of an entry or formal terminus. It was originally conceived as a less ceremonial counterpart to the South Mall—though still both axial and formal in nature—and the Pelli plan suggests methods to realize the mall's original design intentions. Today, this part of campus is undergoing the expansion of science facilities, and the placement of art should consider the area's evolving nature.

The placement of art on UT's four malls should consider the role of the malls as connectors from the heart of the campus to the nearby city edge. With this function in mind, art placement that strengthens the architectural edge of the mall corridor or provides a visual landmark to define its length would be beneficial. It is not recommended that sculpture be located on axis, but rather that significant pieces will help define the edges of the spatial axis.

The Speedway Mall

The Speedway Mall will become the primary north/south pedestrian spine of the campus, linking the science facilities along Dean Keeton Boulevard at the north to the Blanton Museum of Art at the south. Speedway will become a place of social interaction for students and faculty in transit to other areas on campus and will provide spaces to gather along the mall. This active pedestrian core will provide many opportunities for public art of varying sizes, scales, and types.

The Academic Zone

The Academic Zone surrounding the 40 acres contains many of the important academic institutions of the university, including residence halls and the Perry-Castañeda Library. Within a framework of

vehicular roadways are large academic facilities situated among mostly pedestrian-scaled landscape areas connected by a network of pathways. The area contains a mixture of architectural styles. Carefully considered art placement in this area will help define loosely articulated landscape settings and contribute to place-making on an intimate scale.

The Waller Creek Corridor

The Waller Creek Corridor is an urban riparian area that runs through the campus from north to south. After years of neglect, the city of Austin and the university have begun a bank stabilization project to minimize erosion and undercutting. As the condition of the creek improves, opportunities will become available not only for public engagement with the creek but also for sites to place art.

The Texas Memorial Stadium and the Erwin Center Area

The southeastern section of the campus is dominated by two monumental pieces of architecture: the Texas Memorial Stadium and the Frank Erwin Center. These facilities host large public events that draw huge crowds from campus and the region. Due to the area's large architecture and parking facilities, the scale and use of this area of campus calls for public art of monumental scale.

The Lyndon B. Johnson Library Area

This area of campus is home to the LBJ library and other libraries that attract researchers from around the world. The LBJ library zone contains monumental architecture, vast parking and large park-like open spaces. Art placement in this area should recognize and respect this architectural site within Texas and presidential history.

The Facilities Complex and Disch-Falk Field Area

This eastern area of campus embodies many traits of the adjacent residential neighborhood, which contains one- to two-story office and commercial buildings placed within a residentially scaled street network. The Pelli Master Plan calls for the future development of a new East Quadrangle in this area, fashioned after the order and harmony of the 40 Acres.

As the university continues to fully realize the Pelli plan, opportunities exist to strengthen the connection between this eastern area and the main campus. Public art can play a role in this link. Currently, this area is bisected from the main campus by the I-35 freeway. Art that is carefully placed along Clyde Littlefield Drive and Manor Road, via the I-35 underpass, could aid in creating a stronger visual connection to this eastern edge of campus.

The Fine Arts and Law Area

The placement of art in the College of Fine Arts and College of Law area will benefit from the scholarly expertise of the art college and contribute to the learning that takes place there. For this



reason, the landscape settings surrounding the College of Fine Arts should be designated as the College of Fine Arts Sculpture Park. The park-like, rolling landscape of the college provides suitable settings for the placement of both intimately scaled and serial works of art.

Blanton Museum

The landscape setting surrounding the Blanton Museum offers a unique opportunity for the placement of outdoor sculpture, including temporary works. Designated as the Blanton Museum of Art Sculpture Park, the site currently houses two permanent pieces: Richard Long's Summer Circle and Meg Webster's Conical Depression. The Blanton will select works of art that support its curatorial program and will oversee installations in this area.

The Alumni Center

Statues along the paved courtyards of the Alumni Center honor individual alumnus and celebrate many of the university's traditions. These works offer a point of pride for some visitors to the center, while others have challenged their artistic merit. The dense installation of these statues and the distinctive style they convey recommend this area to be designated as the Alumni Center Sculpture Park.

INSTALLATION CONSIDERATIONS

The way in which a work of art is installed plays a critical role in the overall experience of the piece and its setting. To ensure the highest quality presentation of public art, it is important to consider the durability, maintenance needs, and appropriateness of each installation. Construction details such as mounting and anchoring hardware, support structures, and other physical connections should be thoughtfully designed and implemented with care.

For outdoor works, special attention should be given to landscape design, particularly the topography surrounding the work of art. Long-term outdoor installations should be made to withstand natural elements such as UV exposure, wind, rain, and other forces. All de-installations should be followed by restoration and repair to the area from which the art was removed. These strategies to maintain the integrity and appearance of installations are recommended as part of a comprehensive maintenance plan.

SIGNAGE

Signage for the Public Art Program should be consistent and recognizable across the campus setting. It should be discreet and minimal so as to not obstruct nor interfere with the work of art. It should be constructed of durable materials that are able to withstand outside elements and grounds maintenance activity.

Content and Typestyle

Plaques should convey the artist's name and biographical information; the work of art's title, date, and material; any background and/or curatorial information; and donor recognition. Although signage for LANDMARKS should be distinct and unique from other signage programs on campus, the design of the signs and letter type should be informed by the university's 2005 Campus Signage and Wayfinding Guidelines.

Material

The use of durable materials will ensure that art signage will be long lasting. Some of the most suitable signage materials are metals because of their strength and resistance to wear; stainless steel, cast iron, bronze, or nickel bronze are suitable materials. Metal signs should be mounted to a base, such as concrete or stone. Based on the sign material, letter type can either be cast integrally to the metal (in the case of bronze) or cut out of the metal by a water-jet process (in the case of stainless steel).

Placement

The placement of signage should adhere to consistent guidelines in order to achieve uniformity across the campus setting. It is recommended, therefore, that signage be mounted flush in the ground, either in a paving surface or lawn area, in a proximity and location deemed appropriate to the work of art.

Code Requirements

The placement of signage in the landscape is required to adhere to The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS). Any sign mounted flush in a paving surface must not horizontally protrude from the ground more than a 1/4" in order to comply with code. The university's Accessibility Coordinator should be consulted concerning signage design and placement. In addition, consultation with a code and accessibility consultant may be prudent to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local codes.





To request an expanded version of this map with additional information please contact landmarks@austin.utexas.edu

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■ EXISTING OUTDOOR SCULPTURE





- CAMPUS LANDSCAPE ZONES**
- THE 40 ACRES
 - CAMPUS MALLS
 - FUTURE SPEEDWAY PEDESTRIAN MALL
 - ACADEMIC ZONE
 - WALLER CREEK CORRIDOR
 - FINE ARTS AND LAW AREA
 - TEXAS MEMORIAL STADIUM AND ERWIN CENTER AREA
 - LYNDON B. JOHNSON LIBRARY AREA
 - FACILITIES COMPLEX AND DISCH-FALK FIELD AREA

- ↑ MAJOR VEHICULAR ENTRANCE
- ↑ MAJOR PEDESTRIAN ENTRANCE
- EXISTING OUTDOOR SCULPTURE
- PROPOSED ART: Large Gesture
- PROPOSED ART: Small Gesture
- ▲ PROPOSED ART: Serial Work
- PRIORITY AREAS: Large Gesture
- SCULPTURE PARK



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© 1995 Lloyd Hamrol, Western Washington University
Monumental Scale - Landmark Examples



© 1997 Robert Graham, New York



Unknown, Italy
Intimate Scale - Serial Example



Unknown, Japan
Intimate Scale/Small Gesture -
Identity Example



© 1987 Kinji Akagawa, Minneapolis MN
Identity/Seating Example



© Richard Long
Intimate/Small Gesture -
Identity Example



© 2005 Kenneth Snelson, Grand Rapids MI



© 2001 Kiki Smith
Intimate Scale - Identity Example



© 2005 Steve Tobin, New York
Monumental Scale/Large
Gesture - Landmark Example



© 2005 Robert Therion, New York
Monumental Scale/Large
Gesture - Landmark Examples

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NOTE: ART PHOTOGRAPHS ARE INTENDED TO BE EXAMPLES, NOT SELECTIONS.



© 2005 Richard Serra, Basel
Monumental Scale/Large
Gesture - Gateway Example



© 1992 Kiki Smith
Intimate Scale/Small Gesture -
Landmark Examples



1984 Peter Walker, Harvard University



© 1997 Michael Van Valkenburgh, NYC
Intimate Scale/Small Gesture -
Infrastructure Example



The University of Texas at Austin
No Art - Preserved Open Space
Example



The University of Texas at Austin
Existing Martin Luther King Jr.
Memorial



© Deborah Butterfield
Intimate Scale - Identity
Example



© 1975 Jackie Winsor, Minneapolis MN
Intimate Scale/Small Gesture -
Landmark Example

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EXAMPLES OF ART INTEGRATED WITH LANDSCAPE:



© 2006 Anish Kapoor, Rockefeller Center
Monumental outdoor sculpture can articulate major entrances



2005 Jorge Yázpik, UNAM
A serial work of outdoor sculpture at an intimate scale that engages the pedestrian and creates a sense of campus identity



Unknown
Monumental outdoor sculpture that creates a landmark and a gathering place



© 1987 George Trakas, Western Washington University
The integration of art and an informal path; the integration of public art and campus infrastructure

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EXAMPLES OF ART INTEGRATED WITH LANDSCAPE:



© 2006 Jaume Plensa, Chicago
An interactive work of art that becomes a landmark and creates a sense of identity



© 1996 Acconci, Saitowitz, and Stauffacher, San Francisco
A serial work of outdoor sculpture functions as seating and as a way finding device; the integration of public art and infrastructure



© 2005 Stephen Siegal, Saratoga CA
A temporary, ephemeral installation can enliven and draw interest to underutilized spaces on campus, such as the Waller Creek corridor



The University of Texas at Austin
Preserved open space; open space should act as an equal partner to public art on the UT campus

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