LANDMARKS
PRESS RELEASE

LANDMARKS, THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN, EARNS FIFTH NATIONAL AWARD FROM AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS

José Parlá's "Amistad América" Among the Best Public Art of 2018

AUSTIN, Texas—Americans for the Arts (AFTA) today honored José Parlá's *Amistad América* among 50 outstanding public art projects created in 2018. Commissioned by Landmarks, the 4,000-square-foot mural was recognized through AFTA's Public Art Network *Year in Review;* the only national program that recognizes the most compelling public art annually. 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.

Located in The University of Texas at Austin's Robert B. Rowling Hall, *Amistad América* is artist José Parlá's most ambitious project to date, displaying unprecedented scale and metaphoric complexity. The mural contains Parlá's typical layering techniques including variegated collage, dense pigments and calligraphic strokes. It renders the city of Austin through the artist's eyes while situating it within the larger geopolitics of the Americas.

"*Amistad América* represents the fifth Landmarks commission to receive the Public Art Network's *Year in Review* award," said Andrée Bober, founding director of Landmarks. "We are honored to have this project recognized among the country's most compelling public art and we salute José Parlá's unique artistic vision. His mural captures the spirit of Texas and the Americas on a monumental scale, and it has been widely embraced by our community."

"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 the 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 observed 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.

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About Landmarks
Established in 2008, Landmarks is the award-winning public art program of The University of Texas at Austin. Founding director Andrée Bober leads the development of the collection and oversees a vibrant range of programs that support scholarship and learning. Its collection of more than forty modern and contemporary works includes commissions from some of the most admired and promising artists of our time. Landmarks inspires thought and growth by making great art free and accessible to all. For more information, visit www.landmarks.utexas.edu.

About Americans for the Arts
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.

Image
Detail of *Amistad América,* José Parlá, 2018. Commission, Landmarks, The University of Texas at Austin. *Photo by Paul Bardagjy*