

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 6, 2023



Ten New Sculptures Being Installed in Downtown Augusta, GA

Augusta, GA – The City of Augusta and The Greater Augusta Arts Council are pleased to announce that a new group of ten sculptures are being installed next week (January 9-13, 2023) as part of the Sculpture Trail. The Augusta Sculpture Trail is a walkable and promotable art trail to attract local and regional visitors to the Downtown Augusta area, supporting Augusta’s economic and cultural prosperity.

The public works of art are being placed at intervals that make for a fun and easy outdoor walking trail. The top ten sculptures were selected from submissions and the pieces will remain a part of the Sculpture Trail for two years.

2023 Augusta Sculpture Trail Sculptures locations are:

1. (NEW) Duet's Dance Herons in Conversation by Lee Bell - at Augusta Common & Broad Street
2. (NEW) Endeavour by Chris Plaisted - at Augusta Common & Broad Street
3. (NEW) What's in the Queue by Gregory Johnson - at Augusta Common & Reynolds Street
4. Popsicles by Craig Gray - at Augusta Common & Reynolds Street
5. (NEW) Without Limits by Gus & Lina Ocamposilva - at Eighth St. & Riverwalk
6. Unstoppable by Gus & Lina Ocamposilva - at Eighth St. & Riverwalk
7. Maestro and Forever Young - at Founder's Overlook on upper level of Riverwalk (temporary location)
8. (NEW) Rise by James E. Weitzel - on lower level of Riverwalk
9. (NEW) Oraiste agus Liath by Aisling McDonald - on lower level of Riverwalk
10. (NEW) Hurrying Home by Charles Brouwer - on upper level of Riverwalk
11. (NEW) Book Bench - A Novel Idea by Craig Gray- at Sixth St. & Riverwalk
12. Sun Lion - at 5th Street Pedestrian Bridge entrance to the Marina
13. (NEW) Soccer Dude by Gonz Jove - on Fifth Street Bridge
14. (NEW) Ruthless by Flaminio Antonio - on Fifth Street Bridge

Four of the sculptures from the initial Sculpture Trail have been donated to the City’s Public Art Collection and included as a permanent addition to the Trail. Those are *Maestro and Forever Young* by Larry Schueckler, *Unstoppable* by Gus and Lina Ocamposilva, *Popsicles* by Craig Berube Gray and *Sun Lion* by D’jean Jawrunner. Sculptures that have been purchased from the just completed cycle of the Augusta Sculpture Trail that were located on Broad Street have been temporarily relocated in expectation of road redevelopment along Broad Street in the next two years.

An update to the Augusta Sculpture Trail digital walking tour is being produced by Otocast. It can be accessed from any mobile device. This tool will help visitors learn specifics about each work of art while they explore the Augusta Sculpture Trail, and includes audio of each artist, talking about their works of art.

A Sculpture Trail Ribbon Cutting Celebration will be held in the Spring, when weather conditions are more favorable.

Find out more about the sculpture trail on www.AugustaSculptureTrail.com.

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Attachments for media – Map of sculpture locations and schedule of installments

Greater Augusta Arts Council :: 1301 Greene St. :: Augusta, GA 30901
The mission of the Greater Augusta Arts Council is to enrich the quality of life for citizens and visitors of Augusta’s River Region by advancing vibrant cultural arts.

About the New Sculptures

Duet's Dance Herons in Conversation by Lee Bell - at Augusta Common & Broad Street

Lee Bell's subject matter has remained rooted in themes of nature, feminine beauty and animals. Her sculptures are created with the intent of bringing a figure to life that is both whimsical and elegant simultaneously. A successful piece exudes something of a life force in an apparent though ephemeral personality. The paradox in the work is that the up-cycled material is commonly disposed of in ways that effect the very creatures she is creating. Lee creates her work in an intuitive manner of conversation between up-cycled / recycled materials and a strong affinity for all things in nature.

Endeavour by Chris Plaisted - at Augusta Common & Broad Street

Endeavor is a new direction for Chris Plaisted since the abstract steel sculpture is based on an actual object. The HMS Endeavour, also known as HM Bark Endeavour, was a British Royal Navy research vessel that Lieutenant James Cook commanded to Australia and New Zealand on his first voyage of discovery from 1769 to 1771. The Endeavour was a flat-bottomed ship, which made her well-suited to sailing in shallow waters and allowed her to be beached for loading and unloading of cargo and for basic repairs without requiring a dry dock.

What's in the Queue by Gregory Johnson - at Augusta Common & Reynolds Street

Gregory Johnson's current work focuses on simple, elegant geometric shapes. He likes to sculpt lyrical shapes that suggest things that we see and are familiar with but cannot touch or quantify, like the warmth of the sun, or the energy of a crashing wave. Inspired by curves depicted in life and nature, he likes how they meander and cross over each other. Curves are more happily found in nature than straight lines. By using curves he is sculpting feelings instead of people. He believes this is more challenging and more fun. His emphasis on the circle as a thematic symbol is something artists have been dealing with since the Renaissance. A circle portrays presence in everyday life. A circle in its beauty is a spiritual shape with no beginning, middle or end. In A Midsummer Night's Dream, William Shakespeare wrote "The object of art is to give life shape."

Without Limits by Gus and Lina Ocamposilva - at Eighth St. & Riverwalk

With their sculpture "Without Limits" Gus and Lina Ocamposilva want to honor the perseverance of the human spirit and the relationship between two people who are able to achieve equilibrium, magic and show the perfection of the human being through movement. The Ocamposilva's remark, "throughout the years we have worked in various media; steel, stainless steel, resin, aluminum... We have also incorporated LED lights into our pieces. Exploring all these different types of media has given us the opportunity to express ourselves in multiple ways through our art, from tabletop size sculptures to 20 ft height sculptures that have been bought by different Cities and Private entities. Although we are always adding different textures, colors and accents to our artworks these unique features allow us to give our pieces a signature look."

They have 42 permanent Public Art projects commissioned by different cities and private collectors throughout the states. They have shown more than 70 monumental sculptures in juried Public Art exhibitions in many major cities. Augusta, Georgia is the proud owner of their sculpture "Unstoppable".

Rise by James E. Weitzel - on lower level of Riverwalk

James Weitzel's current series of sculptures are Wings in various sizes all made of sculpted copper, with steel, wood, and sometimes leather additions. They evoke thoughts of Angels along with bird references. Wings recall many different things to everyone but for him they have an angelic quality, this idea of flight and our desires to lift ourselves above the sphere of earth. Who does not remember dreams of flying and that sense of ultimate freedom?

Oraiste agus Liath by Aisling McDonald - on lower level of Riverwalk

This sculpture is an attempt to reconnect with Aisling McDonald's Irish heritage in multiple ways. The title of the piece translates from Irish as "Orange and Gray". The colors of the piece are inspired by the Flag of Ireland, known as the Tri-Color, which is divided into three equal vertical sections of green, white, and orange. The Green represents the republic of Ireland, also known as the Free State. The Orange represents Northern Ireland which is still under British Occupation. The White of the flag symbolizes peace between the two political parties. To this day, there is consistent unrest and violence, so peace is not yet a reality, it is a gray area. The two forms are reflective of architecture that is found throughout Ireland including the cusped ogee windows, Gothic archways, and the standing stones. Here, both the positive and negative spaces that are created are equally important and come together to complete the central ellipse.

As an immigrant, Aisling has often felt lost and disconnected to those around her, searching for a sense of place and belonging. Growing up in Ireland, she saw the power that large public works have on the surrounding community, such as the Standing Stones of the Neolithic era, gothic architecture, and the political murals of today. These works inspire many myths and legends, provide spiritual contemplation,

commemorate historic events, express complex feelings and beliefs, and define a sense of place. They create and define the community they surround. Her focus is on creating outdoor sculpture so that her work may become part of a community environment and provide that sense of place and belonging to others.

Hurrying Home by Charles Brouwer - on upper level of Riverwalk

"Hurrying Home" is one of Charles Brouwer's "Homebody" sculptures. "Home" is a powerful part of human experience. Sometimes we leave home and sometimes all we can think of is going home. Charles said, "I enjoy the challenge of making art for public art exhibitions and I take it seriously. Artwork in communal settings needs to be about things that we all feel are important – things like beauty, truth, and goodness."

Charles uses black locust wood for his outdoor sculptures. It is America's hardest and most naturally long lasting and weather resistant wood, and it is locally available in the Blue Ridge Mountains where he lives and works. He likes using wood because it is the most ordinary and common of all building materials – it's friendly, warm, and natural. His common materials, methods of working, and universal themes help him feel grounded and connected to the general public. Constructing his sculptures also suggests that he intends to be constructive through his art as he participates in the whole human project, in the here and now, on planet Earth.

Book Bench - A Novel Idea by Craig Gray - at Sixth St. & Riverwalk

Inspired by the joy of reading, this artwork is stacks of carved granite books with titles selected by the community.

Craig Gray's goals are connecting community, building cultural relationships, and constructing guideposts of life through art. Ultimately he is weaving a story through sculpture with the objective of warming the creative soul and bringing joyfulness to the heart. He uses rugged materials, incorporating recognizable symbols, embracing aspects of locality to bridge generations of people from diverse walks of life.

Soccer Dude by Gonz Jove - on Fifth Street Bridge

Soccer Dude was created as a representation of Gonz Jove's love of soccer. As a player, soccer took him to another world, just as art does for him today. This soccer player is one of a three players that were painted as a mural in a gymnasium at the State University in Bolivia.

Gonz Jove states, "I see Art as expressions of the world we live in. It creates a visual language that transcends time and creates dialogues of social, cultural, and controversial issues that develop a shared social conscience. My function, as the artist, is to communicate these stories with the license of art. The wonder and universal beauty of humanity is a common theme in much of my work. I'm a strong believer that everyone is connected and that the universe exists within us all."

Ruthless by Flaminio Antonio - on Fifth Street Bridge

This sculpture is composed of hundreds of second-hand pieces of iron and steel that Flaminio Antonio uses to try and restore its beauty and usefulness. This sculpture holds the power to encourage the creativity of the observer and helps them momentarily to forget their worries while also changing the way that we see the things that we throw away. This is something of enormous value for him because art in all its forms has a great therapeutic impact.

Flaminio Antonio remarks, "I'm a passionate artist that values used metal pieces and recycles them by creating a sculpture with multiple items that once were thought of being worthless, are now given a second chance. Most of my life has been dedicated to the fabrication of sculptures made with scrap metal, a material that offers a variety of options with shapes and textures that I try to get the most of on every sculpture. I truly believe that there is a part of me on every sculpture. This labor for me is not only a lifestyle but life itself, a passion inside of me that I don't want to leave behind."