



**THE 16<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE TILED STEPS PROJECT**  
Gift Proposal to the San Francisco Arts Commission  
Executive Summary  
September 19, 2005

## Project Summary

- Work of art:** 163-step mosaic stairway located at 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Moraga. Mosaic has been applied to the step risers. The step treads are tiled with rough, nonslip stone tiles with a contrasting stripe for the visually impaired.
- Origin:** Local residents Jessie Audette and Alice Yee Xavier started the project in early 2003, organizing neighbors, obtaining permits and raising the project funds. Audette and Xavier “wanted to create something that will bring people in the foggy Sunset, which doesn’t have much public art, together”.
- Artists:** Colette Crutcher and Aileen Barr. 300 neighbors assisted the artists to create the mosaic, participating in large community workshops in 2004.
- Date dedicated:** August 27, 2005.
- Materials:** 3/8 inch thick, high-fired outdoor tile, with small amounts of glass and mirror. The mosaic consists of both broken tile and handmade tiles in the shapes of fish, animals, birds, leaves, etc.
- Theme:** The mosaic pattern begins with a sun and a moon, then becomes a stream meandering through leaves, plants, and animals, then spirals down into “the ocean”, with various fish and sea creatures; the theme reflects the hillside’s seaward-facing position.
- Project Cost:** \$120,000. \$80,000 was contributed by neighbors, who sponsored handmade name tiles. \$40,000 was contributed by the Mayor’s Neighborhood Beautification Fund, San Francisco Beautiful, and the Union Bank Foundation.
- City Permits:** City and County of San Francisco Department of Public Works Order No. 175, 043 (Major Encroachment Permit), dated October 20, 2004.
- Previous Arts Commission Approval:** In conjunction with the Project’s application for a Major Encroachment Permit, a sample mosaic panel, a conceptual drawing, complete project description, the architect’s design, and the artist’s resumes, were presented to Debra Lehane in early 2004, receiving first the support of the Curatorial Committee, then the Visual Art Committee, then the full Committee (March 8, 2004).
- Construction:** Commercial tile installation, done by professional, unionized tilesetters under the supervisor of an experienced architect (Fennie & Mehl) and general contractor (Nibbi Brothers). A \$5,000 maintenance fund has been established and funds will be provided as needed for eventual repairs. Warranties include a 100 year warranty on the tread tiles and a 10 year warranty for the mortar five years for the artists and mosaic materials.
- Cultural Resonance:** Friendship with the City of Caltagirone, Italy, home to the Scala steps. Mayor of this city presided at the Project’s inauguration. The steps are now a point of pilgrimage for many in the neighborhood and beyond.

