

July 18, 2012

Civic Art Collection Staff Report

To: Honorable Members of the Visual arts Committee
From: Carol Marie Daniels, Project Manager
Re: De-accession of Johanna Poethig's *Flying Dragon-Snake-Monkey-Bird* sited at Father Alfred Boeddeker Recreation Center, Tenderloin

SUMMARY

After review following programmatic guidelines, SFAC staff recommends that the artwork be de-accessioned from the Civic Art Collection, and subject to destruction for the following reasons:

De-accession

- 1) No suitable site for the work is available, or significant changes in the use or character of design of the site affect the integrity of the work.
- 2) The work interferes with the operations of the client agency.

Destruction

- 1) The Commission deems it necessary in order for the City and County to exercise its responsibilities in regard to public works and improvements, or in furtherance of the City's operations, or for any other good cause

Artwork Description



Johann Poethig

(American, 1956 -)

Flying Dragon-Snake-Monkey Bird, 1988

hand-cut ceramic tile mosaic

11 ft. x 41 ft.

Collection of the City and County of San Francisco

Accession # 1988.41

The artwork consists of an 11 foot by 41 foot hand cut ceramic tile mosaic mural. The mural is designed as an imaginary creature that evolved from a dragon into a snake then a bird, with a monkey riding on its back.

The mural is the result of after-school art classes taught by Johanna Poethig in 1988. 15 children from the Tenderloin neighborhood aged 5-12 conceived of a design concept for an imaginary creature. The project took 9 months to complete and the artists' commission was \$15,000. The artist cut and shaped the ceramic tiles and involved the students in the coloration and glazing of the tiles. The artwork was accessioned into the Civic Art Collection in 1988.



Johanna Poethig poses with students from her after school art classes who designed the mural.



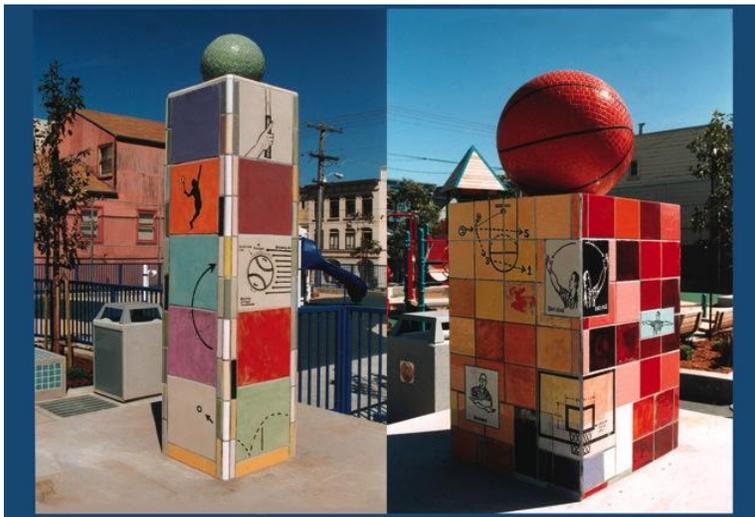
Artist Background

Johann Poethig is a visual, public and performance artist who has exhibited internationally and has been actively creating public art works, murals, paintings, sculpture and multimedia installations for over 25 years.

She was born in Morristown, New Jersey, USA in 1956 and moved with her parents to Manila when she was four months old. Poethig grew up in the Philippines, through high school, and speaks Tagalog fluently. Her parents were missionaries, doing social work and Poethig was infused with a social consciousness early on. She moved to Chicago at age 15 and entered the University of California Santa Cruz at 17, a year's leave for a trip around the world, and finally graduation at 21. She received her MFA at Mills College in Oakland, California

Poethig has worked in collaboration with other artists, architects, urban planners, design teams, arts commissions, specific communities and cultural groups. Poethig's public art works intervene in the urban landscape, in neighborhoods, on freeways, in parks, hospitals, schools, homeless shelters, cultural centers, advertising venues and public buildings. She has received numerous commissions and awards for this work. Her paintings, sculpture and installations reflect her interest in satire, symbols, human nature, society and our consumerist culture. She has produced and participated in performance events that mix feminism, global politics, costume, props, cabaret, experimental music and video. Poethig is on the faculty of the Visual and Public Art (VPA) department at California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB)

Other works by Poethig in the Civic Art Collection:



Playball, 2003

Tile and glass mosaic on concrete
Commissioned by the San Francisco
Art Commission for the Recreation
and Parks Department
Location: 25th Avenue between
California and Clement
T2009.9.9.a-d

Other works by Poethig in the Civic Art Collection



Roots and Veins, 2009

(with Julio Morales)

sandblasted glass, paint and plaster

Commissioned by the San Francisco Arts Commission for Juvenile Hall

Located at: at 375 Woodside Avenue

Accession # T2009.9.9.a-d

Other works by Poethig in the Civic Art Collection



Shapes of Life, 1999

ceramic tile

Commissioned by the San Francisco Arts

Commission for the Mental Health

Rehabilitation Facility, San Francisco

General Hospital, 887 Potrero Avenue at 21st

Street



Untitled, 1995
ceramic tile
Commissioned by the San Francisco Arts Commission for the
Recreation and Parks Department
Location: 570 Ellis St.
Accession# 1995.9

Father Alfred E. Boeddeker Recreation Center Clubhouse

Boeddeker Park is the largest open space in the Tenderloin – San Francisco’s most dense and diverse neighborhood. The 1 acre park in the heart of the Tenderloin is currently undesirable and unsafe for the people in the community. A new community driven design plan will make the park more safe and inviting for all. The clubhouse will be demolished and replaced with a new building with better visibility. The Trust for Public Land (TPL), a national non-profit organization with over 38 years of park building experience is partnering with SF Recreation and Parks Department to re-design and develop the park. TPL raised over \$6 million for the renovation. The park will be closed from August 2012 to February 2014.

Staff Recommendation

Johanna Poethig’s *Flying Dragon-Snake-Monkey-Bird* is an excellent example of a successful children’s art program, resulting in an artwork that is beloved by the community and a constant reminder of achievement for the area youth. In shimmering yellows, reds and blues the dragon winds upward along the stairs with a green and lavender monkey on its back. Reddish flames billow out through the dragon’s teeth, while small birds fly out of the flames.

The artwork is in excellent condition and the Arts Commission hoped to relocate the mural to Hamilton Recreation Center (whose staff welcomed the new artwork) but due to its method of installation at Boeddeker Park it is not feasible to deinstall and relocate it. Such a process will be time consuming, labor intensive and cost prohibitive, with costs in excess of the appraised value of the artwork itself. While not the sole determiner in the disposition of an artwork, this point is noted.

The San Francisco Department of Recreation and Parks has made a formal request via letter from the General Manager, Philip A. Ginsburg, to de-accession and demolish Johanna Poethig’s mosaic mural located at the Father Albert Boeddeker Park in the Tenderloin District, to make way for the building of a new clubhouse

Given these factors, and after careful review following procedures set forth in our programmatic guidelines, SFAC staff recommends that Johanna Poethig’s *Flying Dragon-Snake-Monkey-Bird*, 1988 be de-accessioned from the collection, and subject to potential destruction should the artist, or another party approved by the artist, not be willing or able to provide for its relocation.

Motion: Motion to recommend to the Full Commission, at the request of San Francisco Recreation and Parks, the de-accession from the Civic Art Collection of Johanna Poethig's *Flying Dragon-Snake-Monkey-Bird*, 1988 (Accession #1988.41) located at Father Alfred Boeddeker Recreation Center Clubhouse 295 Eddy Street.

Motion: Motion to approve, at the request of San Francisco Recreation and Parks, the destruction of Johanna Poethig's *Flying Dragon-Snake-Monkey-Bird*, 1988 (Accession # 1988.41) following the expiration of a 90 day notice period in which the artist or a party authorized by the artist is given opportunity to remove and relocate the artwork.

