

Explanatory Document – Patricia’s Green Temporary Sculpture Exhibitions – Visual Arts Committee Meeting July 21, 2021

A public competition was conducted to solicit proposals for a sculpture to be displayed for a period of one year in Patricia’s Green located in Hayes Valley. Patricia’s Green has become a popular venue for the display of temporary public art dating back to the inaugural exhibition of a temple sculpture by artist David Best in 2005. Since that time, a new sculpture has been installed practically every year. This program represents a successful partnership with the Hayes Valley community, which through their lobbying and advocacy efforts, has been able to procure an annual allocation of (IPIC) developer impact fees that enable the Arts Commission to select a different work every year.

The Patricia’s Green Selection Panel was comprised of the following individuals:

Arts Commissioner Abby Schnair

Melorra Green, Co-Director, African American Art and Cultural Complex

Babs Early, Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association

William Bulkley, Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association

After reviewing the work of 12 candidates, the Selection Panel recommended moving forward with two exhibitions, one to commence in fall 2021 and the next, in fall 2022. The first installation by David Normal is entitled *Cathenge*. It consists of six white illuminated cat sculptures standing 13’ high, which shall be placed upon an elevated platform pedestal. The cat sculptures also include a subtle purring sound element that will require further review from the Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association. If approved by the Visual Arts Committee and the full Commission at its August meeting and by the Recreation and Park Commission, the art installation will be installed in early to mid- October and will remain in place for a year.

In October, 2022, pending Arts Commission and Recreation and Park Commission approval, the Selection Panel also recommended approval of the placement of a sculpture by Dana King entitled *Chrysalis*, a sculpture of a draped female figure which will be fabricated to a scale of 20’ using a 3D printing methodology and a protective epoxy coating.

Resumes for both artists are included as attachments to this report.

David Normal

- Artist's Statement:

Tall, Elegant, Mystical Cat Statues. These are the "Catoliths", six in number, that comprise "Cathenge" an interactive art installation by David Normal first presented at Burning Man 2019, and now proposed for display at Patricia's Green, Hayes Valley.

The premise of Cathenge supposes an "ancient alien" mythos wherein cats came from outer space and settled upon Earth, established the antediluvian civilization of "Catlantis", and created humankind. The Catolith Cat Statues stand as a tribute to these alien cat gods of the ancient past. The Catoliths are like the "Monoliths" of Arthur C. Clarke's "2001: A Space Odyssey" in that they evolve human consciousness. This is expressed not only in the graceful geometry of the Catoliths, but through the interactivity of the installation.

When touched the Catoliths express purring harmonic frequencies of sound and light. Within the circle of Cathenge people will hear an endlessly varying tapestry of reverberating tones and harmonics that is complimented by the colorful changes in light pulsing up and down the spines of the Catoliths illuminating the 3D printed sculptures from within.

Each Catolith represents a different Chakra (aspect of the soul), and the curious may explore the identity and history of each one by using their cellphone to scan a QR code that takes them to the Cathenge website (<http://cathenge.net>) where words and images describe in detail the "Cathenge Mythos". For example; scanning the QR code associated with the Catolith named, "Lunata" (the 6th Chakra representing the 3rd eye and equating to "Ajna" in Yogic terms), would lead the user to explore the mysteries of how ancient space cats built the Great Pyramids, Stonehenge, and other enigmatic monuments using only the purring power of "Holofelinity" (universal cat consciousness) to move the mighty stones into place and align them with the greater cosmos.

Of course the supernatural powers of "Holofelinity" are a mysterious lost art, and Cathenge would be installed at Patricia's Green by more prosaic means. The 3D printed cats are printed from a thick durable weather resistant type of plastic (PETG). The statues are sturdily mounted on heavy concrete plinths and supported from within by a steel tube that comprises the spine of the cat. All electrical will be routed safely and discreetly.

Cathenge is the kind of work that has many layers to it. The casual passerby can "grok" it in an instant, understand the premise of a cat temple inspired by Stonehenge and Ancient Egypt and keep on moving. The moment my crew and I finished installing Cathenge at Burning Man somehow a group of children came running in squealing with gleeful enthusiasm for the Catoliths and preceded to play with the interactivity to their immense delight - so I anticipate that it will be a big hit with all children who encounter it. Some people find real value in the harmonic sounds and deep resonant vibration of the statues and will enjoy meditating with them and perhaps receive healing benefits. Others will be more intellectually curious and will access the website to discover the myriad convolutions and perplexities of the history of the ancient space cats.

Cathenge is devoted to the worship of cats, one of humanity's closest and most loyal allies on Earth. Cats continue to grow in popularity around the world, and so it is that this is a

piece with a wide appeal that is most suitable for public display. Also, its mystical aesthetic is congruent with metaphysical ideas of great antiquity experiencing a popular revival in present times. Moreover, it is a piece that uses the latest in digital technologies - 3D printing, interactive light and sound - in its production. For all of these reasons, and more, I feel it is very much suited to be displayed in the heart of San Francisco at Patricia's Green continuing the tradition of presenting exceptional pieces of Burning Man art at that location.

David Normal
Stinson Beach,
March 15th, 2020

David Normal Resume
Selected Projects - Art Career 2010 - 2019

2019 - "Cathenge" Cat Temple installation for Burning Man 2019, Black Rock City
(<http://cathenge.net>)
2018 - "Maleficarum" Video Installation at East Jesus, Slab City, Niland, California
2018 - "Succubus" painting installation for "I,Robot" (festival theme) at Man Pavilion,
Burning Man 2018
2018 - "Pulp and Circumstance" digital collage exhibit, Moshi Moshi Japanese Restaurant,
San Francisco
2017 - "Ghost Ship Fire Memorial" for Burning Man 2017, Black Rock City
2017 - "Laboratory of Hallucinations" live painting performance at Autonomous Mutant
Festival, Lassen National Forest
2015 - "Crossroads of Curiosity" lightbox murals installation at British Library Piazza,
London (<http://crossroadsofcuriosity.org>)
2014 - "Crossroads of Curiosity" lightbox murals installation at Man Pavilion, Burning Man,
Black Rock City
2013 - "Illuminations" lightbox installation at Rubulad, NYC
2013 - "Crazyology" solo pop-up exhibit at 1000 Van Ness Atrium, San Francisco
2012 - "Illuminations" lightbox installation at (former) Stasi HQ, Berlin
2011 - "Illuminations" paintings and lightbox installation at Sanchez Gallery, Los Angeles
2010 - "Illuminations" installation of large format prints at Center Camp Cafe', Black Rock
City

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CATHENGE
at
PATRICIA'S GREEN



