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Highland Hospital Small-Scale Artwork Commission Program

Artists’ Proposal

Description of Interest

Artwork in a hospital has the ability to touch us profoundly in vulnerable moments. It can serve as a focal point for the eye and mind to rest upon when patients and family may feel confused or uncomfortable, offering a welcome emotional diversion. Art can also help patients and staff better commune. Our proposal centers on our enthusiasm for responding to these attributes in order to create a unique visual form that can serve as a positive galvanizing presence for the Highland Hospital community. We see this project as an opportunity to produce works that celebrate the diversity of the populace served by Highland Hospital while providing a secure and familiar sense of home and place to patients, visitors, and staff. We believe our collaborative working methodology is perfectly suited for this project as it embraces a multidimensional perspective that results in contemplative works that can impart a welcome and comforting sense of residence. Mostly, we would like to create new works that help deinstitutionalize the space to console and engage patients, staff, and family by providing a positive and reflective environment that will help decrease anxiety and contribute to the overall quality of care and wellbeing that the hospital provides.

Proposal Concept

We propose to create a series of layered photographs that continue a creative methodology we have developed and have been using to document and define communities throughout the Bay Area for the past two years. This project would involve making multiple exposures on film, which we would then digitally rework to create an appealing layered documentation of the diverse people, landmarks, symbols, and landscapes (both natural and man-made) that Highland Hospital campuses serve. We would focus our attention on photographing the Hospital architecture, in particular the historic original building at Highland, and the various communities throughout Alameda County. We would then construct the final series of digital prints from an amalgamation of this image base. The goal of this artwork is to portray familiar community surroundings to establish a sense of closeness, security, comfort, and connection which research proves can help reduce the feelings of isolation or discomfort often associated with hospitalization.

Artistic Style

Utilizing numerous layered photographs we would create a multidimensional perspective of time, place, and community. The resulting pieces will be visually rich, multifaceted compositions that celebrate the diversity of people, natural environments, familiar architecture, and communities throughout Alameda County. Our representational style of work addresses well this culturally and regionally diverse population and would promote reflection and focused distraction for patients and staff. It is well documented that contemplative work of this nature can be effective for patients and caregivers alike, stimulating conversation amongst patients and staff to help promote trust and connection as they explore the narrative potential of the works.

Materials

The completed artwork will be archival pigment prints made with Epson UltraChrome K3 ink technology on premium rag paper. These materials have the highest standards in the industry with longevity ratings exceeding 100 years. Manufacturer documentation can be easily provided.

Number of Artworks, Size, and Budget

Our work is produced in a continuous strip, which is then broken up into related panels. The panels may be exhibited independently or grouped together to accentuate their fluid nature. This form is especially advantageous because it allows for flexibility in presentation groupings to accommodate available exhibition space. We anticipate producing 6 panels with a retail value of $2000 each for a total budget of $12,000. Dimensions of these panels can range from 20 to 40 inches.

Models

We do not anticipate using models, although we do foresee that people will be present within the artwork. This figurative element is intended to lend a lively sense of human presence and community to the work but the individuals will not be specifically recognizable.

Similarity of Proposal to Past Artwork

Our artwork would be both formally and aesthetically similar to the style of artwork in our application slides. The imagery however would be different in that it would reflect an amalgamation of landscapes from throughout Alameda County, highlighting more of the natural elements, people of the area, notable landmarks, and common structures and spaces that visually define this diverse area. We would take special care to be sensitive to the healing environment of the Hospital, favoring soothing colors and softening imagery to impart a positive sense of community and its connection to the natural surroundings. The following examples of our work contain elements that we would like to utilize in the proposed artwork:

Example 1 (Strolling to the Tower Diptych): has a general figurative component. The intent in including figures is to impart a sense of inclusion in the day-to-day activities of the community.

Example 2 (Four-Dragon Diptych): reflects recognizable landmarks and symbols that help define community and impart a sense of familiarity for the viewer. We would like to see this type of site-specific iconography in the artwork drawn from locations countywide.

Example 3 (Winter Trees): has a natural focus that we want to emphasize in the proposed works. We particularly are drawn to trees and water as visual metaphors for growth, healing, and regenerative spirit.

These examples also demonstrate the flexible design of our presentations.

Relevant Experience

It is noteworthy that our work has a regional emphasis and that we have spent the better part of the past two years focusing our effort on documenting the communities of the Bay Area. We see this project as a natural extension of this exploration. Our work provides a leisurely, observational sense of the familiar with a great deal of visual depth. It also provides imagery of houses and structures that represent shelter and protection. Research shows that this type of imagery is comforting to people who have been removed from their familiar surroundings. We have a proven track record of producing art of high caliber, our work is included in public and private collections, and we have exhibited our work extensively. We also have eight years of experience volunteering with Kaiser Hospice.

Examples of Past Artwork

All artists were asked to refer to examples of their past artwork that are similar to the new artwork they will create for Highland. Refer to the artist’s written proposal for a description of how the new artwork will be related to the images below.