

# Olé, a piece in two movements: Aton (entry), and Floribunda (fireplace)

Artist: Clark Wiegman

January 2006

Rose Garden Branch Library / 1580 Naglee Ave., San Jose, CA 95126 / Council District 6

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

Artist Clark Wiegman collaborated with the community, design team, and library in the development of *Olé*. The artist's work often is characterized by "weaving together natural and constructed worlds" that speak about the location in which it is situated, and this is very evident in *Olé*.

According to the artist, "*Olé* is a movement through space, a gesture drawn from the ring describing the matador's cape as it dodges the bull's horns. More specifically, the piece refers to a rose bred by a neighborhood denizen dedicated to San Jose." The piece is comprised of two parts, or movements as the artist calls, them: *Aton* and *Floribunda*.

*Aton* by definition is the disk of the sun, regarded as a deity in ancient Egyptian mythology. For the artwork, a 5' diameter aluminum disc frames glass roses that shoot out from the surface like solar flares. Each rose is attached to a pipe stem threaded through hieroglyphic punctures cut in the surface of the disc. The stems continue through the disc and braid into a 12 foot long 'stream' trailing through the lobby space. Roses, leaves and thorns adorn this 'stem stream'. The inspiration for *Aton* is from two sources and the meanings prompted by their overlay are multifaceted. Framed by the disc, the rose may represent passion & friendship (red & yellow), solar flares (blossoms framed by the disc), streams of thought (intertwined stems), problems & challenges (thorns), and, perhaps, as the mystic poet Rumi might ascribe—an inner luminosity essential to the rose itself.

The second movement of *Olé* is *Floribunda* (a popular rose cultivar group) located on fireplace chimney. This element is a metal piece with water jet cut hieroglyphics mounted on the chimney with a stream of glass roses randomly placed from mantle to ceiling. For this artwork, Clark pays homage to the local community through layers of references highlighted by the roses for which the library and neighborhood are named. The blown glass and aluminum artwork explores the natural world in the context of the world of knowledge and reason – historic and contemporary.



Top: View of Aton; Bottom: View of Floribunda

#### **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Clark Wiegman and his Artifact Studios are based in Seattle, Washington. He has been awarded numerous public art commissions in the Pacific Northwest and throughout the United States. In addition to his public art practice, he has also created art installations and temporary works that have been featured in numerous group shows. More about Wiegman's work may be found at [www.artifactory.org/](http://www.artifactory.org/)

#### **ABOUT THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM**

The City of San José Public Art Program seeks to build community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enhance the civic landscape. Through active community engagement, public art strives to reflect the City's diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future.

The Public Art Program is part of the City's Office of Cultural Affairs, a division of the Office of Economic Development. The Public Art Program was established by a 1984 municipal ordinance that provides public art through funding from City capital improvement projects and eligible private development.

For further information and photos, please contact the San José Public Art Program.