

Artist: Cliff Garten Studio

Title: *Two Clouds*

Completed: Winter 2005

Location: Tully Branch Library, 880 Tully Road
Council District 7, Terry Gregory, Councilmember
SNI: Rockspring/Tully/Senter/Santee/Kennedy



From the artist's project proposal:

*History is an angel being blown backwards in the future
And the angel wants to go back to fix things that have been broken
But there is a storm blowing paradise
Blowing the angel backwards into the future
And this storm we call progress
-Walter Benjamin, Illuminations*

ABOUT THE PROJECT

As part of the City's on going commitment to the arts, the San José Public Art Program commissioned artist Cliff Garten to collaborate with the community in the development of artwork for Tully Branch Library. The artist created two cloud-like sculptures positioned over the foyer and the Internet cafe. One "cloud" is cast aluminum branches reminiscent of orchard trees in blossom that also alludes to a technological network. The second "cloud" is created from hundreds of cast aluminum apricots and doll-sized human figures that form a topography evocative of the hills surrounding the city. The repetitive patterns of the figures and fruit define atmospheric volumes forming a ceiling, or cloud, above. The landscape appears to move and shift as the viewer changes location in the library. The juxtaposition of agricultural and technological references addresses the ambiguity of an agricultural past and technological future.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Cliff Garten is a nationally recognized artist, and is a recipient of numerous public art commissions and awards including two Individual Artist Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts. The American Society of Landscape Architects has cited many of his works for design excellence. He has a Masters of Fine Arts from Rhode Island School of Design and a Masters of Landscape Architecture from Harvard University's GSD. His studio is located in Southern California. In addition to Tully Branch Library, Cliff's recent work includes a major Veteran's Memorial for the City of Walnut Creek. For more information about the artist, visit www.cliffgartenstudio.com.

There is a latent potential in every public place and situation to become more than the specific functions it appears to perform. Public and Private experiences are never distinct, but exchange places throughout the day. My search for a place where desire intersects with our everyday activity is the search for sculptural forms, which engage us in the poetry of our own actions. The line between poetry and function is a dance, where what is useful and obvious is made more apparent and beautiful because a typical situation is transformed through artistic investigation and process. Sculpture defines our interaction and movement by creating energy between things, generating interest in public activity, reframing our private lives and creating a sense of place within public and private realms.

-Cliff Garten, Artist

Project Team

Architect: Anderson Brule Architects, San Jose
Art Fabricators: Metal Letter, Salt Lake City, UT
Engineers: Patrell Engineering Group Inc., Glendora CA
Client department: San Jose Public Library
Public Art Project Manager: JenJoy Roybal

Tully Branch Library Public Art Task Force

Ali Spivak, Brian Uhler, Helen, Bliven, Lisa MrDutt, Vlado MrDutt, Queta Herrera Pamela Price, Janie Lebar, James LeBar, Ed Voss, Ann Aey, Carolyn Sedbury, Scott Miller, Martin Noguez

The artwork was completed with funding provided by a \$212 million branch improvement bond measure approved by voters in November 2000.

About the Public Art Program

The City of San José Public Art Program reflects community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enhance the civic landscape. Through active community engagement with artists, projects reflect the City's ethnic diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future.

The Public Art Program is a division of San José's Office of Cultural Affairs. The San José Arts Commission oversees the Public Art Program, established by a 1984 municipal ordinance that provides 2% for art in City capital improvement projects, and 1% for art in eligible private development.

**For further information and photos, please contact JenJoy Roybal: 408.277.5144 x17, or jenjoy.roybal@sanjoseca.gov

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