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Five International Curators to Complete 25 Proposed Public Art Installations presented with the National Cherry Blossom Festival

WASHINGTON, DC (DECEMBER 28, 2011) –Mayor Vincent C. Gray and the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (DCCA) have identified the five curators chosen to complete 25 ground-breaking public art installations, totaling \$500,000 in grants, for the 5x5 Public Art Project presented with the National Cherry Blossom Festival. The installations will be unveiled and showcased during the Festival’s Centennial Celebration, March 20 - April 27, 2012. 5x5 is the new temporary art project that will result in 25 public art exhibitions and be installed concurrently throughout the District of Columbia to activate and enliven publicly accessible spaces and add an ephemeral layer of creativity and artistic expression to neighborhoods across the District. The Festival’s Centennial Celebration commemorates the 100-year anniversary of the gift of trees from Tokyo to Washington, DC and will showcase unprecedented arts and culture. The groundbreaking 5x5 Public Art Project offers a unique cultural experience for over one million people expected to take part in the nation’s greatest springtime celebration.

A five-member selection committee carefully chose five curators from more than 90 submissions. All media and art forms were considered, including, but not limited to visual art, performance, light, digital, projection, and event-based work.

“We considered submissions from curators locally, nationally and worldwide and, ultimately, these five curators demonstrated an impressive body of work,” said Lionell Thomas, Executive Director for the DC Commission on The Arts and Humanities.

The five selected curators named below must select five artists each to create five bodies of public work. These five curators will lead the 5x5 implementation process and will manage and oversee each artist’s

concept, budget and schedules. The installations can be of any duration, but they can not exceed four months.

Amy Lipton; New York, NY

Amy Lipton is the east coast curator and co-director of ecoartspace, a bi-coastal non-profit organization that creates opportunities for addressing environmental issues through the arts since 1999. She has curated numerous exhibitions for museums, galleries, sculpture parks and environmental centers, and has written for books and publications. She organizes and participates on panel discussions and lectures frequently on art and the environment. Amy's 5x5 project is titled "*BiodiverCITY.*" She has chosen five artists whose works address biodiversity both in scientific and cultural terms.

Justine Topfer; San Francisco, CA

Justine Topfer of Out Of The Box Projects is an international curator and writer based in San Francisco with a particular interest in public art. For six years she has been working collaboratively in Australia and internationally with a broad spectrum of contemporary artists, art organizations, and institutes of higher education. Justine's project name for 5x5 is "*Betwixt & Between,*" a reference used to denote a liminal state; one which we pass through oblivious, as we rush toward the next thing. Justine asked her group of selected international artists to create five public interventions which breathe new life into the ordinary, reinvigorating the fabric of the urban environment.

Richard Hollinshead; Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, UK

Richard Hollinshead is Director of Grit & Pearl, an artist, designer and curator, and holds a BA, MA and PhD by Practice with a specialism in contemporary projects for heritage landscapes. Richard's 5x5 project is titled "*Magnificent Distance.*" It is based around Washington, DC's best known epithets, *City of Magnificent Distances*, drawing inspiration from exploration of the rich territory that exists between that ideal and "*reflect the character and identity of the city [Washington, DC.]*"

Laura Roulet; Washington, DC

As 5x5's sole local curator, Laura Roulet is an independent curator and writer, specializing in contemporary and Latin American art. She has organized exhibitions in Puerto Rico at el Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, la Galería Nacional, and in Washington, DC at the Art Museum of the Americas, the Mexican Cultural Institute, Edison Place Gallery, Hillyer Art Space, Project 4, Fusebox, and the DC Art Center. Laura's 5x5 exhibition is titled "*Activate => Participate,*" and has chosen to work almost entirely with local artists to create communal, multi-sensory experiences for diverse audiences. All fall under the conceptual umbrella of "relational aesthetics," where a temporary community is formed through the shared experience of an ephemeral art event.

Steve Rowell; Culver City, CA

Curator Steve Rowell is an artist, curator, and researcher working in and between Los Angeles and Washington, DC. His spatial practice involves the overlapping aspects and perceptions of technology, culture, and infrastructure on, beneath, and above the landscape – contextualizing the built and the natural environment, appropriating the methods and tools of the geographer and cartographer. Steve's 5x5 project is called "*Suspension of Disbelief,*" selecting five artists who will investigate the fringes of the monumental core: airspaces, zones of exclusion, perimeters, liminal landscapes, waterways, shorelines,

perceived non-places, and lesser-known or overlooked (sometimes even conspicuously absent) memorials, around the National Mall and along the federal periphery.

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ABOUT THE DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities provides grants, professional opportunities, education enrichment, and other programs and services to individuals and nonprofit organizations in all communities within the District of Columbia. The Arts Commission is supported primarily by District government funds and in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities' DC Creates! Public Art Program purchases, commissions, and installs artworks for public sites throughout the District of Columbia. The DC Creates! Public Art mission is to maintain a quality public collection of diverse media and to create a dynamic, vibrant, nurturing community through art and design.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

The National Cherry Blossom Festival is the nation's greatest springtime celebration. The 2012 Festival, March 20 – April 27, includes five spectacular weeks of events featuring diverse and creative programming promoting traditional and contemporary arts and culture, natural beauty, and community spirit. The 2012 Festival commemorates the 100th anniversary of the gift of the cherry blossom trees and the enduring friendship between the United States and Japan.

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