

EastEnd smART

Art In Motion to dedicate second shelter

By Kim Thomas

“A static hero is a public liability. Progress grows out of motion.”

— Richard E. Byrd

Keeping in mind Lexington’s efforts to spruce up for the World Equestrian Games, Art in Motion (AIM), the grassroots organization that brings art to bus shelters on Lexington’s corridors, is moving right along. Scott Diamond, Chairman of the Board of AIM, is looking forward to the completion of AIM’s second shelter’s dedication on August 2, and points out that the new East End smART shelter will be surrounded by an outdoor art gallery. “This outdoor gallery space celebrates the connection between art and transit, function and inspiration. The mission of this exhibit space is to display artwork that celebrates the rich history and culture of the East End while embracing change in the neighborhood and exploring its future. The art shown here will speak to the East End’s unique sense of place while exploring its connection to the wider community and the world. This gallery is dedicated to the people of the East End.”

The new shelter and outdoor art gallery will be dedicated on Sunday, August 2, at 3pm, and includes a sculpture by Garry Bibbs. Bibbs is an Associate Professor of Art, Head of Sculpture Department and Director of Art Studio Graduate Studies at the University of Kentucky. He explains he wanted to participate in this project, “mainly because the Third & Elm and Midland areas are being historically restored, and I want to be a part of this process. Third and Elm Street is the Lyric Theatre area, and close to Deweese Street. All of these areas are where great Lexington African-Americans once lived and performed history-making achievements. Although this project is small in scale and scope, I find it as a project that can play a key role in rebirthing this important historical area.” His concept is based on images and forms with a musical theme. “With this in mind, I versioned a very colorful, 16-foot metal sculpture with active, abstract forms coming together to depict two dancers gestured in a musical rhyme.”

Bibbs’ sculpture is named **Lyrical Movement**. He explains, “Lyrical Movement” is the title (a Lyric means relating to poetry that often has a musical quality and expresses personal emotions of thoughts. A Movement is an act of changing location or position; a collective effort by a large number of people to try to achieve something, especially as political or social reform). These meanings help to define the objectives of the sculpture and how it captures the spirit of this historical area. Music and dance have always played a big part of the African-American heritage. Both were used then and today to tell stories, give direction and restore a sense of hope and faith for a better day.”

Celebrating the East End through art

Diamond, an adjunct professor at UK, explains, “The shelter that is itself art will host murals by neighborhood and

local artists. We hope to have the first commissioned murals up by next spring.” A project like this could only be realized through the vast partnership, and Diamond says, “Bibbs, a renowned African-American sculptor and UK Fine Arts faculty member, designed the sculpture and the initial murals were designed by Joseph Tiu at no cost, as a donation to our project and to feature colorful graphics. AIM, in partnership



“Third & Elm and Midland areas are being historically restored, and I want to be a part of this process.” — Professor Garry Bibbs, artist

with First District Councilperson Andrea James, formed a committee to review the shelter design and sculpture design during the preliminary stage. That group included East End neighborhood representatives Thomas Tolliver and Joan Brannon, Roots and Heritage festival committee representative Scherer Boyd and the Urban League's David Cozart."

AIM has also formed a committee to help develop the first 'call for artists' to commission the initial art murals and to help find a local program to serve as curator for the East End art gallery in perpetuity (because AIM is a volunteer organization.) Diamond says, "AIM will coordinate the art panels for the first year, but is hoping to find a local group to sponsor additional artist competitions so that the gallery can exhibit new artwork every 6 months or so." This committee included local artists Joan Brannon, Justin Fox and Pat Gerhard, Martin-Luther King Neighborhood Association President Sherry Maddock, as well as Lexington Art League Director Allison Kaiser. LexArt's Jim Clark has also provided advice and assistance.

Diamond explains how many people working together helped this vision become a reality. "Andrea James and LexTran general manager Rocky Burke and his staff have also been instrumental in helping this project happen. Andrea and I have been developing this project and raising money for almost a year and a half. In developing this project, Andrea and (Lexington attorney and founder of Art in Motion) Yvette Hurt looked to the feedback received during the East End Neighborhood Association's Visioning Session held as part of the East End small area plan development. If you check those comments on the EastEndLex website, you'll find that residents asked for more public art and better public transit infrastructure. This project fulfills both. EOP is the design firm that designed the shelter and has coordinated construction of all aspects. EOP is doing this project below cost, and they have donated in excess of \$3,000 worth of their time and the project is just starting construction."

The East End smART shelter project was also funded by the Neighborhood Development Bond Fund (bonds are issued by Urban County Council). In addition, LexTran paid for the pad and retaining wall. According to Diamond, "LexTran pledged to this project the amount that would have been spent to place a prefab shelter and pad at this bus stop, and the contractor is doing this job at cost, i.e., no customary mark-up for profit. The rest of the funding for shelter, sculpture and design is coming from privately raised funds and a Knight Foundation grant, but a number of Committee members (who reviewed shelter/sculpture plans and have been helping prepare the call for artists) also donated their time."



All funds donated or allocated to Art in Motion are held in an account at the Bluegrass Community Foundation and has 501(c)(3) standing so that cash donations are deductible. BGCF pays vendors on AIM's behalf.

The East End smART Shelter is the second artistic bus shelter that Art in Motion has completed, and one other is in



Drawing of Professor Bibbs' sculpture, "Lyrical Movement."

the planning stage. The first AIM bus shelter, "Bottlestop," is made primarily of Ale-8 bottles is on Versailles Road; the newest shelter is to be called "ArtStop." It will hold space for the East End Neighborhood to display art murals that will change from time to time.

AIM also two more bus shelters in process, one in the Aylesford neighborhood near UK, and near the social services agencies' campus off Red Mile Road. When asked how many bus shelters are planned, Diamond enthusiastically replied, "We have no intention of stopping until every bus stop in Lexington has a shelter!" ■

The new shelter and outdoor art gallery will be dedicated on Sunday, August 2, at 3pm.

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Kim's first cover story for Ace Weekly was about riding the bus in late June of 2007 (go to aceweekly.com archives). She says, "In that piece, I wrote about 'my' bus stop, where the plain,

What you can do

Phil Holoubek, developer of Main and Rose and Nunn Lofts, has pledged the first honorarium — \$200 for one of the panels. AIM is seeking funding for future mural honorariums (\$200 per mural to be paid to artist)

Any individual or organization interested in sponsoring this artwork can contact www.art-in-motion.us or contact Council Member Andrea James' Urban County Council office.

AIM hopes to have the first commissioned murals up by next spring.

The artists will keep their original artwork; Art-in-Motion will simply reproduce it on a panel. ■

puritanical wooden bench I used to rest my Croc-clad but weary feet had been destroyed by an errant driver, and people were using an overturned grocery cart for makeshift seating. That next Monday, as I walked to the bus stop, imagine my surprise to see a shiny new bus shelter, with not just a seat, but shade and shelter as well, in place of my erstwhile bench. In speaking with Scott Diamond, I learned that a number of shelters went up shortly thereafter."

