

Suikang Zhao
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Letter of Interest

I am interested in a commission for the City of Madison. I am Chinese artist, and have lived in US since 1986. The experience of living in different social environments gives me a unique opportunity to see things differently. My artwork tries to open a dialogue through multi-perspective of viewpoint, by using overlapping texts and images, I strive to reconstruct the parallel exposition of today's cultural fabrication and social structure through both the harmony and dissonance within a shared space.

I regard the function of public art opens the dialogue to the public which museum and gallery space can't replace. Public art redefines the meaning and function of art. The creative process extends the dialogue before and after the object is completed. The artwork is no longer only an isolated artifact that is passively observed by viewer in a controlled space, but rather, a vehicle of environment that generates constant active communication with the public.

Over 20 years' working experience in the field of public art, I have gained a broad experience of working with design team which includes architect, landscape architect, various city agencies, local stakeholders and community—many of my public projects are community involved. I have handled almost every possible scenario of the business, from structure engineering to fabrication, from safety issue and ADA guideline to maintenance consideration of material. My clients include private corporation, local and federal government. The location of my artworks from space limited transit system to regulated DOT authority, From outdoor public space to interior confinement of juvenile facility.

To me, the process of making art in public realm is a process of organic creativity in life, differ to exclusive artist studio work, the context of public realm and the limitation of particular site is the key of being creative, in fact, it is the limitations that force artwork to be inventive.

My public artworks are all site-specific. My design approach reflects both cultural and social environment of the site and my artworks are organic integration of the existing architectural space. The experience of working with the community and various design team member has been insightful and rewarding. I believe public art should involve people who are going to utilize the space, as this is my ultimate goal for me to apply such existing project like Ottawa Art Gallery Expansion

Resume: Suikang Zhao

Public Works of Art:

- The Gatevine** completed 2016
A permanent wall sculpture extends on 800ft-long retaining wall on West Ave. Norwalk, CT. The artwork used the words collected from residents. Material: hot-dip galvanize steel / powder coat. 10'x 800' x1' Budget: \$100,000.00
- Skin of Languages** completed 2014
A permanent wall sculpture with layers of languages at Nuskin new Headquarter, Provo, Utah. Material: 3form Varia Ecoresin with highres image and lunar diachronic film inlay. Scale: 10'x60'x1'
- Taokonick** completed 2013
A series of permanent artworks in different locations for Engine 38 firehouse, Tacony, PA. The artworks capture the grittiness and romance of firefighting with historical detail, and reverence to the community. Budget: \$70,000.00.
- We have a dream** completed 2011
Three permanent artworks that work with residents at Johnson County Juvenile Detention Center, Kansas.
1, working with residents, a 96' relief on retaining wall by entrance, 2, glass security window with writings from residents, 3, glass installation at entrance, and other 4 rooms. Budget: \$160,000
- Wisdom of Rainbow & Knowledge Exile** completed 2009
Two permanent projects for the *Marriott Library*, University of Utah. **Wisdom of Rainbow** is in Atrium space. Scale: 40' H x 75' x 75' / Material: 3-Form highres diachronic panels. **Knowledge Exile** 50 books objects are placed in & outside of library / Material: cast bronze, stone, glass and cast resin. Budget: \$145,000.00
- Winds of Aphrodite** completed 2008
Kansas City Convention Center—Bartle Hall North Dock project. Collaborated with Crawford architect KC. Architectural artwork locate at 12th Street & Broadway / Scale: 50' H x300' W x 100' D / Budget: \$1,000,000.00
- Three permanent art works at three Phoenix Light Rail stations:** completed 2008
Three permanent outdoors sculptures for Central Phoenix/East Valley Light Rail Stations. Budget: \$400,000.00
- Hands:** two cast bronze hand sculptures / scale: 22' H x5' x5' each, Dorsey Station.
Weaving Texts, two forged steel panels & powder coating / scale: 9' H x13' W x 6" D each, Smith-Martin Station
Text Columns, two cast Fortom MG columns, glass and LDC light /scale: 20' H x 20" D each, McClintock Station
- Script of Vine-a trilogy of prelude and fugue** completed 2007
A permanent site-specific public art project for the University of Oregon's Health and Counseling Center—Eugene, OR. The artworks consist of three parts and are in three different sites throughout the facility. The artwork used the words collected from students and staff / Material: forged steel /powder coating / Budget: \$76,000.00
- Dreams of Sky** completed 2005
A permanent site-specific public art project for *City of New Haven, Office of Cultural Affairs*. Location: Celentano School, 400 Canner Street, New Haven, CT. /Material: forged steel & powder coating / Budget: \$50,000.00
- Portland Pamphlets** completed 1999
A permanent site-specific public art project for City of Portland. Location: Portland City Development Center. Location: 1900 SW Fourth Avenue, Oregon. Material: glass and LED light. Budget: \$53,000.00
- Floating Poetry and Burning Green** completed 1996
Two outdoor / site-specific projects at the estate of *Djerassi Foundation*, Woodside, CA. The theme of **Floating Poetry** specifically deals with the memory of life and death. The artwork is comprised of 68 floating objects that are installed along two miles of the estate's creek. These objects are made of resin in different dimensions. **Burning Green** is rubber hand sculptures that is placed on huge burned redwood tree. The hand sculptures are etched written poetry both in Chinese and English that is associated with my feelings and thoughts of that particular time.
- Projects in Progress:**
Pawtucket, RI, a permanent bridge sculpture on I-95/George Street overpass. Budget: \$100,000

Awards:

- 2005** *International Competition of Environmental Art Award*
1998 *STart Award*, Seattle
1997 *The Pollock-Krasner Foundation*
1997 *Fellowship New York Foundation for the Art*
1995 *Media Production Award, Individual Artist* / New York State Council on the Arts
1995 *The Richard Kelly Grant*, NY
1994 *Project Award* / Islip Art Museum, NY
1994 *Scholarship award* / Film and Video Arts, NY
1994 *Fellowship Award* / Art Matters, NY
1990 *The Paula Rhodes Memorial Award*, NY

Solo Exhibitions:

- 1997 *Revelations Zhao, Suikang* / Neuberger Museum of Art, NY
1995 *Zhao Suikang* / RCCA The Arts Center, NY
1995 *"Neighborhood"* / Jamaica Arts Center, NY
1988 *Suikang Zhao's Recent works* / Wenninger Graphics, MA
1985 *Master Gallery* / Fu-Dan University, Shanghai, P.R.C.

Group Exhibitions (selected):

- 2010 "State of the Dao in Contemporary Chinese Art", Lehman College Art Gallery, NYC
2009 "Xun Dao: Searching for Spirituality in Contemporary Chinese Art", Frederieke Taylor Gallery, NY
2008 *"Fugue"*, Miranda Fine Arts, NY
2006 *"Imagine Site NYC"*, Curated by Lyle Rexer / Fashion Institute of Technology Museum, NY
2005 *"At Home"* / Abrons Arts Center—Henry Street Settlement, NYC
2004 *"Do a Book"* / Plum Blossoms Gallery, NY
2002 *"Relations"* / M.Y Art Prospects, NY
1998 *Kunming New York Montreal* / art contemporain carnet de voyage, Observatoire4 Galerie d'art, Montreal, Canada
1994 *The Carriage House Project* / Islip Art Museum, NY
1993 *Artist in Market Place* / Bronx Museum, NY
1992 *Four Artists from China* / American Museum of Natural History, NY
1990 *China, June 4, 1989-an Art Exhibition* / PS.1 Museum, NY
1986 *The First Shanghai Youth Fine Arts Exhibition*, Shanghai Fine Arts Museum, China

Selected Bibliography:

- CTpost *"Artist's steel vine sculpture is outgrowth of Norwalk's cultural roots"*, By Christina Hennessy, August 5, 2016
Time *"Winning design chosen for George Street bridge art"*, by Jonathan Bissonnette, Dec 16, 2015
The Valley Breeze *"Winning artist presents 'living' design for George Street bridge"*, by Ethan Shorey, Dec. 15, 2015
The Hour *"NYC artist visits NCC to discuss artistic vision for city"*, *"Multicultural art installation slated for West Avenue"* By ROBIN SATTLER, Nov 6, and Nov. 19, 2014
Norwalk Daily Voice *"Artist Selected To Create Huge 'Gateway To Norwalk' Project"*, by Cassandra Huerta, Nov. 14, 2014
Pillycom *"Anger at Mayor Nutter spices up dedication of a Tacony firehouse"*, By Miriam Hill, Jan. 10, 2013
BWW News *"Percent for Art Program to Unveil Suikang Zhao's Project at New Fire Station, 1/8"*, Jan. 14, 2013
New York Times *"Views of Mao's China, and What It Became"* By Benjamin Genocchio, April 8 2010
Kansas City Business Journal *"Bartle Hall North Dock"*, by Tammy Worth, Apr 12, 2009
The Kansas City Star *"Bartle Hall Loading Dock Goes from Drab to Dramatic"* by Kevin Collison, Nov. 5, 2008
The Arizona Republic *"Light-rail 'Hands' designed to connect us as people"* by William Hermann - Dec. 16, 2008
Oregon Daily Emerald *"A Universal Language"* by Jill Aho July 25, 2007, from cover page on
Register Guard *"Art Notes—Artist working on steel sculpture at UO"* Arts Section, Aug. 9, 2007
Inside Oregon *"For the University of Oregon Community"* Aug.6, 2007
Sunday Morning Post *"Take it or Leaf it..."* Review page 7 / September 26, 2004
Oriental Art *"No Reconciliation: The Art of Convergence in the Art of Zhao Sui-Kang"* By Patricia Karetzky, 2001
The Oregonian *"Conceptual Restraints"* by D.K. Row Dec. 17, 1999
ETC Montreal No.45 *"Espace dilate et lieux de convergence"* by Christianne Dandenault 1999
The New York Times, *"ART; Works From China, Many Political but Conveyed With Wit"*, by William Zimmer Sunday Art, Nov. 22, 1998
The New York Times, *Shows reflect Multitude of Different Styles* by Vivian Raynor, Feb.16, 1997
Asian-Pacific Arts News, *Exhibition Review* by Jonathan Goodman, p.57 Feb. 1996
News Days, *"Turning Hate into a Work of Art"*, by Tina Morales, Oct.13, 1995 p. A37
The New York Times, *"Carriage House Installations"*, by Helen A. Harrison, Art pp. 9, 18, 24, 1994
ArtNews, *"Emigre' Artists: Rocky Landings"*, Carol Lutfy, pp. 49-50, Nov. 1993
China Avant-garde, *"Zhao Suikang"* Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany, 1993

Education:

- 1990 MFA degree received at the School of Visual Arts—New York City, US
1983 BA degree received at Shanghai Teachers' College, Shanghai, China

Teaching:

- 1996-present Associate Professor, Fine Arts Department, FIT, State University of New York

Image List

Suikang Zhao

Notes:

All the images I submitted here are permanent public civic projects, which have tremendous community and team work behind the artwork. Also, most of my public art works are big scale, site-specific and multiple locations throughout the site. Very often, I can only mention one of projects, or small glimpse of the project.

C_worksample01_zhao.jpg (video link: <https://vimeo.com/214541639>)

Gatevine 2016

Material: Torched and forged steel with powder coat. Size: 10'x 800' x 6"

A permanent public sculpture extends across 800ft of retaining wall on West Ave. Norwalk, CT. The artwork connects with the foliage growing on top of the concrete wall. The image of "vines" is created from multiple words and phrases in various languages collected from Norwalk residents. The location and the extended length of the artwork pushes the boundary of space in time with awareness of time elements in visual art.

Working closely with DOT and Norwalk City Redevelopment Agent. The project had extensive community outreach effort. I went to various different organizations every month for whole year before making the artwork.

C_worksample02_zhao.jpg

We Have a Dream 2011

Material: dichroic glass, aluminum holding and aircraft cable. Size: 25' x 50' x 50' (entrance +)

We have a dream is one of three parts of a permanent public art piece for Johnson County Juvenile Detention Center, Kansas. The sculpture addresses the new philosophy and approach that Juvenile facility should function as an across road and emphasize a positive future. *We have a dream* is located at the entrance of the facility, then continues to the control center and resident area. The artwork uses rings and disks of diachronic glass, reflecting the moving sunlight through a skylight and 360 degrees of surrounding clearstory. The glass color project creates various rainbow colors, moving and imprinting the color pattern across the wall and floor throughout the space.

Work closely with architect and office of Johnson County, particular legal department. Projects were developed with suggestion and need of the facility, idea of location and "function" of the artworks were developed with architect. Two of other projects were involved with over 100 residents in the facility. One is a 90 feet of relief sculpture on retaining wall. I run series of sculpture classes every three weeks in the facility for 10 months. I worked with English teacher to collecting the writings from residents for a security structure window curtain wall. This is LEED platinum building project, a lot of more details were further considered.

C_worksample03_zhao.jpg

Wisdom of Rainbow 2010

Material: 3-Form highres Dichroic panels, stainless hardware. Size: 40' x 75' x 75'

Wisdom of Rainbow was one of two projects created for Marriot Library, University of Utah. The texts used in the artwork are from Native American wisdom in the form of different

languages. The text is about human and nature. The artwork changes color throughout the day and achieves Baroque form of modern simplicity.

[Working closely with people from University facility, library staff and related parties. The project has a challenging retirement in the autumn space: a sculpture can't be freestanding, nor can't be hung from ceiling.](#)

C_worksample04_zhao.jpg

Knowledge Exile 2009

Materials: cast bronze, copper, glass, stone, cast resin

Size: various, over 80 objects.

Knowledge Exile was one of two projects created for Marriott Library, University of Utah. The idea of placing “precious” books outside of library shelf is the effort of setting knowledge free. The cast bronze book objects are mostly modelled from library's rare book collection, while other material of the books is imaginative. Total number of book objects are over 80. They are placed inside and outside of the library.

[Working closely with people from University facility, staff from rare book collection and library printing press studio. Utilized much available resource from the library.](#)

C_worksample05_zhao.jpg

C_worksample06_zhao.jpg

Winds of Aphrodite 2009

Materials: Aluminum, galvanized steel and LED light. Size: 50' x 300' x 100'

A permanent artwork for Kansas City Convention Center—Bartle Hall North Dock. Reflecting to the present urban surrounding area, the artwork is designed to morph a 70's masculine architectural aesthetics to a delicate veil of fabric. The artwork not only utilizes the moving sunlight to change its appearance throughout the day, but also turns the activity inside of loading dock, which was an issue to cover, into part of mosaic of moving image.

[Working with staff from city and Kansas Convention Center, I collaborate this project with Crawford Architects. I had a desk at Crawford Architects during the designing stage. Architect and I worked side by side, I designed the shape and skin while They provided the frame structure.](#)

C_worksample07_zhao.jpg

Hands 2008

Materials: cast bronze and light. Size: 22' x 30' x 11'

A permanent outdoors sculptures for Central Phoenix/East Valley Light Rail Transit Stations. The sculpture's texture is created by interwoven words from different languages. The inspiration comes from the form of desert plants. The sculpture is function as an entrance of Apache station. [Hand sculpture is one of pieces I made for Phoenix Light Rail project. *Hands* it is a main theme of “connection” for all four Apache stations. I worked with two leading artists, four station artists \(most of them from North West\). Each artist creates four pieces for each station. During the design stage, we presented to 30 members-committee \(composed by local stakeholders and community\) as whole group concept. I also worked closely with phoenix light rail agent,](#)

architects Architecton and Otak, Landscape architect A. Dye Design for this project. Collaboration was fruitful, if without everyone's effort, it is almost impossible to create such giant sculpture in transit system environment.

C_worksample08_zhao.jpg

Script of Vine-a trilogy of prelude and fugue 2007

Materials: forged steel panels & powder coating. Size: Three sites

A permanent site-specific public art project for the University of Oregon's Health and Counseling Center, Eugene, OR. The artworks consist of three parts located in three different sites throughout the facility. The artwork is composed of writing elements that was submitted by students and staff at the facility. The artwork integrates the existing architecture and reflects the function of life and growth of the site.

[Working closely with stuff from Health and Counseling Center. This is LEED platinum building project; a lot of more details were further considered.](#)

C_worksample09_zhao.jpg

Dreams of Sky 2005

Material: torched and forged steel, power coat / sunshine gold

Size: 20' high by 18'diameter

An architect integrated public art project. The sculpture is a dome shape and floating structure and weaves a set of nine words translated into thirty different languages that represents the teaching principles of Celentano School - believe, determine, discover, dream, endure, explore, inspire, learn and persevere.

[This is also community involved and architect integrated artwork.](#)

C_worksample10_zhao.jpg

Portland Pamphlets 2000

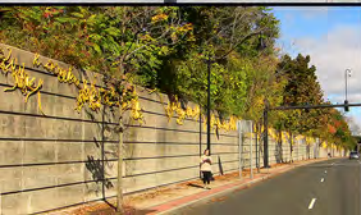
Material: glass and LED light. Size: 12' 6"X21'x5"

A permanently lighted glass sculpture covers the lobby wall space of the building. The piece is composed of glass and LED light. Layers of text are printed on pieces of glass that open in the form of pamphlets. The texts of many different languages overlap one another, with each maintaining its original script and writing format. Sixty-three individuals contributed texts in twenty-two different languages, all of which addressed the experience of being from or living in Portland, Oregon. A catalogue at the site provides more detailed information about the participants, an English translation of the texts, and details about the process of making the work. The central idea of *Portland Pamphlets* is that a work of art has to grow from the existing context of history, environment and community. It becomes a coherent part of physical and social reality.

[This was extensively community involved project. I worked closely with city of Portland and Portland Regional Arts & Culture Council. I had an office at RAAC during the time I worked there.](#)



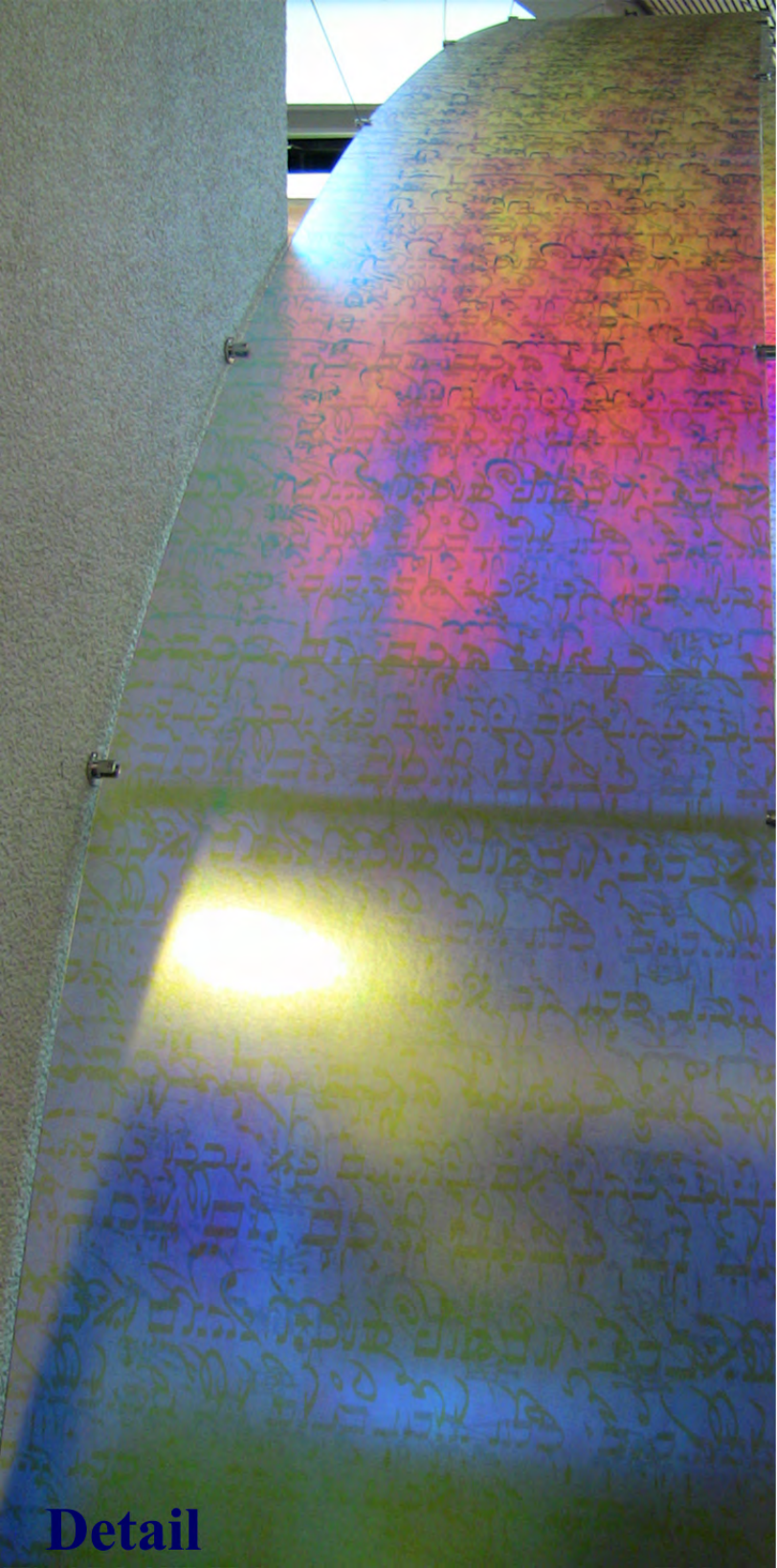
Detail



Gatevine 2017--street view



We Have Dream



Detail



