

PROJECT DATA

Please answer questions in space provided. Applicants should feel free to use photocopies of the application forms if needed. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided.

Project Name ARTScorpsLA Location Los Angeles, CA
 Owner ARTScorpsLA, Inc.
 Project Use(s) Site Development/Landscaping, Public Art & Cultural Education
 Project Size 2 acres, 1/4 acre & 2,000 sq' Total Development Cost \$212,000
 Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate) \$ 200000
 Date Initiated May 1992 Percent Completed, December 1, 1998 80%
 Project Completion Date (if appropriate) On going

Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates

Application submitted by:
 Name Tricia Ward Title Founder and Director
 Organization ARTScorpsLA
 Address 936 Mei Ling Way Los Angeles, CA 90012
 Telephone (213) 617-3877 Fax (213) 617-3878
 E-mail aclaacla@earthlink.net

Key Participants (Attach an additional sheet if needed)

Organization	Key Person	Telephone
Public Agencies <u>Los Angeles Metro. Transp. Authority</u>	<u>Alan Nakagawa</u>	<u>(213) 922-2726</u>

Architect/Designer <u>John Maroney/Tricia Ward</u>	<u>(323) 223-3879</u>
Developer <u>ARTScorpsLA</u> <u>Tricia Ward</u>	<u>(213) 617-3877</u>
Professional Consultant <u>N/A</u>	
<u>Claudia McDonnell</u>	<u>(626) 578-0374</u>
Other <u>Margaret Crawford</u>	<u>(310) 574-1123</u>
<u>Aaron Zaima</u>	<u>(213) 749-4979</u>
Community Group <u>Cindy Diama</u>	<u>(213) 891-2209</u>
<u>Sal Osequero</u>	<u>(323) 258 6565</u>

Please indicate how you learned of the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence. (Circle all that apply).

Direct Mailing
 Magazine
 Previous RBA entrant or Selection Committee member
 Other (please specify)

Announcement (please specify)

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Project Name ARTScorpsLA

Location Los Angeles, CA

1. Give a brief overview of the project, including major project goals.

Artist/activist Tricia Ward envisioned the endless parcels of blighted abandoned land within the inner city as reclaimed and transformed vital public art places that could diminish the sense of despair in the inner city; consequently ARTScorpsLA (ACLA) was founded. Los Angeles provides the least amount of open green space for its residents than any other city in America. Towards this issue Ward conceived a public art project where the young people of a community could design and create a community-gathering place. ACLA's initial two acre unauthorized garbage dump, in a predominately Latino neighborhood in Los Angeles was secured in 1992. She chose the site for *La Tierra de la Culebra / The Land of the Serpent* as it had a quality of ancient ruin, and was conducive to the idea of rebirth. A serpent was selected as a universal symbol of fertility to become the sculptural centerpiece for this youth-created community Artpark encompassing historical architectural landscape components; such as an amphitheatre, incised ziggurat, pond, stage, benches and wooden mural panels all within a lush urban forest. A collective of young community volunteers was engaged to clear the site of accumulated mountains of trash/weeds, and design and build a 500 foot sculptural *Culebra* from reclaimed stones, tiles, earth and household artifacts which were excavated from the site. *Culebra* was destined to become an ongoing project and serves as a community cultural touchstone through these highly successful improvements to both the physical and social landscape.

Within four years ACLA began establishing on abandoned land another youth-built Artpark, *Spiraling Orchard*. ACLA was approached by a neighborhood coalition in Koreatown to initiate and steward their Artpark. We developed a citywide mural project, *Walls of Reclamation* to address the unsightly graffiti abatement that scares the city streets. We located a historical abandoned building in the landmark Chinatown Plaza. We have rehabilitated the interior and have developed plans and secured funding for an artistic historical renovation of the facade. This structure now serves as ACLA's headquarters, studio, office, workshop and meeting space for our diverse communities to come together. All in all ARTScorpsLA is humble, strong, proud and growing.

2. Why does the project merit the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*? (You may wish to consider such factors as: effect on the urban environment; innovative or unique approaches to any aspect of project development; new and creative approaches to urban issues; design quality.)

Recognition by the Rudy Bruner Award for ACLA's innovative approach to urban revitalization would promote the concept of community building through the arts on a national level so that communities across the country would look at their geography, cultural traditions, and creative use of community assets to provide economic development from within a neighborhood.

Our concept of the environment references the pre-industrial era in which the "Village" contained seeds of both its own prosperity and destruction. Social, ecological, educational, agricultural, political, economic, and spiritual facets were an interdependent nexus that found its most profound expression in the community's artistic life. The key to our work is the parallel model of each individual's internal ecosystem and the planetary environment. The same care environmentalism espouses for our water, air, soil, and flora must be cultivated in our internal, human environment and finally, the two must be seen as an inseparable unit. This project has challenged, and investigated an analysis of public policy in relation to urban land use, setting in motion a move toward using private land for more public functions and explores the concepts of park and art as one entity.

La Tierra de la Culebra has quickly become a paradigm for community governed artparks. *Culebra* is a symbol of community pride...a Mecca for artistic growth, personal expression, education, job training and neighborhood cooperation. More importantly, its transformed the hopes of young people for a better life into real programs with community responsibility, paid jobs, college tuition assistance and genuine opportunities to make a better life for themselves, their families and their neighborhood.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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1. What local issues did this project address? How has it affected the local community?

ACLA's Culebra and other sites are located in densely populated, low-income residential neighborhoods with predominantly multi-family structures, with two to three generations sharing an apartment. The unemployment rate is on average 28% and the high school drop out rate on average 64%. Over 50% of the youth live below the poverty line and there are virtually no activities to engage them in their out of school hours. These neighborhoods are challenged by a lack of economic and employment opportunities, a sense of community pride and unity, gang and drug activity is pervasive and there is low fluency in English. La Tierra de la Culebra and ARTScorpsLA have transformed the hopes of young people for a better life into real programs with community responsibility, paid jobs, college tuition assistance and genuine opportunities to make a better life for themselves, their families and their neighborhood. For example, Sal was a high school dropout with one foot in a gang when we were building La Culebra. Now, he is a youth counselor, is attending college and has a son in our program.

2. Describe the design concept, materials used, and visual impact of the project. How was the design shaped and influenced by its intended use? Its urban context?

In 1992, shortly after the civil unrest that fractured Los Angeles, Tricia Ward was asked to initiate a series of community arts workshops. Recognizing the eminent need for voice in the community of young people she chose instead to create a "gathering place" with the youth. Multiple histories were used to reveal the overarching artistic, architectural and cultural symbols found throughout the world to be reinterpreted by the people of this day and age at this place in time. Ms. Ward met regularly with young people; school officials and local politicians to assure that the needs addressed by the project were in accord with the neighborhood. Believing that art is capable of spiritually healing the lives of individuals and communities, the creation of a universal fertility symbol representative of the youth's future and hope could generate awareness of their own power within their environment. The central sculptural landscapes and art focus at Culebra is a serpentine earth/stone/concrete/tile sculpture. It is 500 feet long defining intimate and more public spaces, including theatrical/educational amphitheater, an Incised Ziggurat sculpture, fish pond, mosaic benches, stone and concrete stairs, stoned terraces, wooden stage, storage shed and mural panels. The 2 acres are lush with an urban forest, flower and vegetable gardens. In the middle of a densely populated inner city neighborhood has grown a beautiful sacred space celebrating cultural traditions of its community members.

3. Describe the underlying values of the project. What, if any, significant tradeoffs were required to implement the project?

ACLA's values and objectives are realized through large-scale sculptural and landscape projects, which require cooperation, creative initiative and problem solving skills. Specifically, ACLA strives to:

- *Have a long-term impact on the quality of life by facilitating highly innovative uses of land;
- *Foster direct short and long-term community involvement, sense of ownership, empowerment, and commitment pride;
- *Develop creativity, environmental awareness, interpersonal, leadership and trade skills that will prepare local teens for paid jobs;
- *Strengthen family ties and community cultural self-esteem

The predominately Latino young people have been introduced to their cultural histories, traditions and art forms. Atzlan teachers and artists participated in the instruction of ancient dancing, drumming and storytelling. This integration of an edge culture and involvement with troubled youth has set our organization on the fringe of social acceptability and has made it difficult to gain the city's support.

4. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation, where appropriate.

The development process of this project is organic starting with a temporal site and forming in its wake the steadfast organization ARTScorpsLA. What was once the development of place became the recognition of the need to grow out and embrace the concerns of the community. What the community needed to step into the role of governing their own institution at La Culebra they also needed in order to establish themselves in their own life. These "life-skills" became the directive of the organization to impart and cultivate through a Youth Leadership Council, art workshops, employment opportunities, scholarships, in addition to caring for a place to voice opinion, share culture and have social impact. The next level of developing a program that can be flexible to the changing focus of the community and large enough to handle more enduring projects is being approached through the enlisting of professional assistance from others familiar in organizational functioning.

5. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources, and square foot costs where applicable.

Artists are accustomed to working with limited funds and resources; the passion for the project was initially funded by Tricia Ward's savings account. Within the first three years, Culebra was funded by: City of LA General Services, City Council, Operation Clean sweep, LA Shares, Youth Arts and Cultural Affairs Department, Sears Foundation, and Cal-Trans Mitigation with \$25,000 cash and \$35,000 in-kind technical assistance, construction and plant materials. The federal Summer Youth Employment provided \$32,000 to hire 27 youth. The Getty Multicultural Intern program has provided funds to hire local college students as mentors for the past six years. California Arts Council has funded Tricia Ward and a partnership with LA Conservation Corps has provided in-kind volunteers for six years. Awards from the County Commission on the Arts, the NEA and GTE have been received. Grants have been obtained outside the traditional arts sources, including National Service Americorps, Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency and Community Development Agency, Urban Resources Partnership. Also, a broad spectrum of foundations, which are known to support the involvement of the arts in community revitalization, include and are not limited to: California Community Foundation, Getty Trust Fund and Footlighters Foundation. Our experience with creative ways of developing broad-based support has allowed us to replicate two additional projects and a building as headquarters.

6. Describe what is unique about the project. Is the model adaptable to other urban settings?

The uniqueness of these projects ARTScorpsLA put together lies in the artistic vision behind each one. The desire to build and create new places to impact the surroundings of urban living is a strong motivating force that infects all that come in contact with the project. Including youth and encouraging community at the start and on going through all the developing stages of the project is something that is very unique to urban development programs. Tricia Ward included all ages, races and people in the discussions of decision and incorporated the responses. The creation of La Culebra as an experiment in establishing a locale for voice platform via the arts would adapt to any locale because it is inclusive with the public and encourages participation on many levels. It is a testament to the creative nature of human beings when they come together for a common cause. ARTScorpsLA program has other successful community built public art projects in Los Angeles.

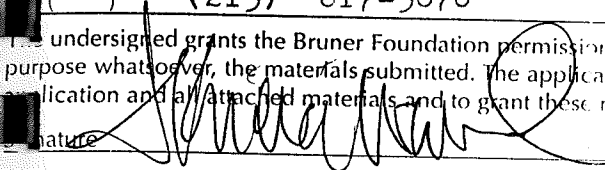
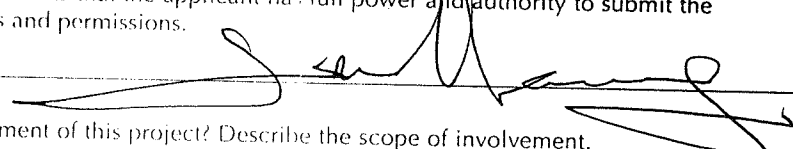
DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by the person who took primary responsibility for project financing or is a representative of the group which

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1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project? Describe the scope of involvement.

The broadbased coordination of such a collaborative effort as Culebra involved the unique combination of expertise: the artistic vision of Tricia Ward with a vast experience in arts disciplines, coupled with John Maroney's expertise in architecture, this vision of the physical possibilities were attainable through these talents. The background research of the demographics of the neighborhood and the topographical history was done primarily by Tricia Ward as was the teaching of cultural history woven with the skills of landscaping, sculpturing and design development. Maroney tackled the layout drawings and designs as well as supervising construction phases of sculptural elements. As the organization ARTScorpsLA came into being, the recruitment and training of the staff and volunteers has remained a joint effort. Development of the organizational structure and the fundraising efforts was spearheaded by Tricia Ward. She also teaches Graduate Public Art Studies at the University of Southern California as a participatory class, utilizing the practical applications of this structure to engage and reveal to her students the breadth of what is required to develop a public art project and organization. The original staff came to ACLA as interns from the USC program, remaining with the project for years. We are currently in a strategic planning process with outside advisors, a case study program and a broad based fundraising agenda.

2. What, if any, modifications were made to the original proposal as the project was developed? What tradeoffs or compromises were required during the development of the project?

Initially, the singular project of Culebra was meant to be temporary. The needs of the community are what proved it to be on going. Modifications went from the process of developing the space as our programming to the creation of arts and educational programs that give instruction in cultural and environmental arts, theatre, crafts, gardening and recreational activities to further benefit the community. The major tradeoff felt is the development of the sites competing with the development of the people. We do this partly by providing a resource of quality life experiences and role models, as well as varied and meaningful work opportunities, ample cultural and recreational activities, access to a self-governing administrative body (the Youth Council), and by honoring their communicated requests, preferences, and goals through a flexible organizational structure. The lack of funds to compensate volunteers and professionals, the purchase of quality of materials, and adequate tools created endless compromises.

3. What, if any, innovative means of financing the project were used?

The development and implementation of scholarship and honorariums for dedicated individuals who put in their time and vested interest was an innovative answer to the payroll. It also proved as a motivator for the youth to return to school. Constant and endless search for foundations supporting the arts in rehabilitating urban locations of plight proved that our mission of building more green spaces with the community was shared by others.

4. How did the financial benefits and economic impacts of this project differ from other projects? How does the project's quality relate to the financial goals?

In particular, the employment opportunity and scholarship awards helped to support not only the organization, but also fed into the economics of the community directly. The presence of ARTScorpsLA in a neighborhood improves the urban landscape, raises the intrinsic realty value, employs the neighborhood and builds self-reliance and independence. The quality of the project is the continuity of presence at the locations of artparks. The attendance to the needs of the site and community is directly related to our financial goals, they are one and the same. What comes into ARTScorpsLA goes out to the community, if we succeed everyone benefits. We can offer more in the way of social services that goes beyond a 'band-aid' approach of redevelopment through continuation of an expanding program.

5. What was the most difficult task in the development of this project? What was the least successful aspect? With hindsight, would you do anything differently?

Overwhelmed by the magnitude of the political and social ills that pervade our culture, we've spread ourselves too thin trying to address influencing issues affecting our youth today. ARTScorpsLA defines its community as any neighborhood that does not have the resources to provide its young people with a realistic opportunity to realize their full potential. The city is lacking in the ability to service their needs. What we would do differently is secure complete funding to develop sites before going in and doing the outreach. For example, assessing outreach, assessing community needs and providing forums. In hindsight, Tricia Ward should not have undertaken such an enormous project without an experienced administrator and fundraiser, yet now that experience has broaden her knowledge and breadth of understanding nonprofits. Additionally, the most difficult task was convincing people outside the art world that artists were capable of accomplishing such a major undertaking.

6. What about this project would be instructive to other developers?

These projects demonstrate the necessity to involve and build community within the defines of the project at hand. Building consensus from within a community allowing the input of people to determine their needs is essential to the success of the project. Developing trust of visionary artists as committed citizens who are dedicated to approaching any opportunity in a new way can make the most difficult undertaking attainable.

7. If five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you to that fact?

A new paradigm of self-sufficiency in low-income neighborhoods had developed producers and creators. This paradigm had gone beyond the obvious of educating as service learning, job training, community development and alternatives to the pressures of the streets. All the community Artpark laboratories would be self-governed, reflective of independent community assets, bridging communities across all geographic and ethnic boundries. The creation of community councils that will influence the urban ecology of the entire city through their building of art, advocacy and outreach. That all ACLA sites would function as field study laboratories for college/university undergraduate and graduate students studying: Public Art Studies & Fine Arts, Architectural & Landscape, Sociology and Social Reform work/Community building, Theatre, Urban/Cultural Planning, History, Geography, Film, Business Management, Education/Child Development, Public Policy, Religious Studies, and providing practical experience for applications of research, theory and analysis. Most importantly there would be active, self-governed community artparks through out the city and beyond.

PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by staff representative(s) of public agency(ies) who were directly involved in the financing, design review, or public approvals that affected this project.

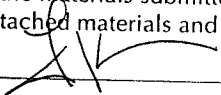
Name Alan Nakagawa Title Senior Public Arts Officer

Organization LA County Metro Trans Authority, Art Telephone (213) 922-2726

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1. What role did your organization play in the development of this project?

1. I represented the MTA's Metro Art Program, during the design phase (1992-96) of the Pasadena Blue Line, a light rail system of thirteen stations between Downtown Los Angeles and East Pasadena. ArtsCorpLA was a young community arts organization whose mission paralleled that of our Pasadena Blue Line team. Their site was several blocks away from one of our light rail stations in Highland Park. We were supporters of their overall mission: to better the community. I later served as a Board Member from 1995-97

2. Describe what requirements were made of this project by your agency (e.g., zoning, public participation, public benefits, impact statements).

2. As a public agency focused on improving the mobility and lives of all County of Los Angeles communities, enhancing the education of the youth in this area was a high priority. The MTA, through our Safety Awareness Program, served the same youth population as ArtsCorpLA. The public benefit and long term impacts of ArtsCorpLA's commitment to the community will be long felt.

3. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment? Describe how, if at all, these intentions changed over the course of the project. What tradeoffs and compromises were required? How did you participate in making them? With hindsight, what would you do differently?

3. The ArtsCorpLA team's philosophical basis is to rebuild the environment through youth involvement and education. Their acclaimed project, La Tierra dela Culebra is a testimony to this commitment. The resurrection of an abandoned lot in a residential area of Highland Park give proof that the artistic spirit can be a catalyst for urban development and community investment. The MTA participated at several of their functions, recommended youth to their program, and was available for several consultations. We provided resources pertaining to the arts, arts administrations, and local government information.

4. Describe any data you have that document the impact that this project has had on its surroundings and the people in the project area. Attach supplementary materials as appropriate. What have you observed of the project's impact?

4. Supplemental materials can be made available through the organization. I have personally witnessed two fundamental changes due to ArtsCorpLA.

a) Youth have a sense of place now that they did not have before. They have a place to congregate without apprehension. They have professional adult mentors and access to artists from their community. They have been given a structure to participate in, shape, and contribute.

b) They have shifted the "center" in their neighborhood. The site is located between a freeway on/off ramp and the street in Highland Park that has the most traffic. This expansion of pedestrian and vehicle traffic due to a cultural center is being duplicated in other parts of the City.

5. What about this project would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities?

5. There is much talk right now about partnering and non-traditional funding/ support sources. ArtsCorpLA, by its inter-disciplinary nature, had an inception with these strategies long before it became the trend. It's structure to have youth advisory committees and youth board members serves as a good model for this type of responsive initiative.

6. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

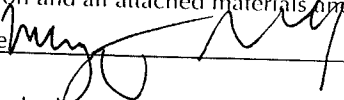
6. Alumni would be active members of the organization. Funding would be (65% or more) generated through some kind of sales or revenue base. There would be a sign on the freeway directing to La Tierra de la Culebra.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

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Name Margaret Crawford Title Chair, History and Theory Program
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Fax () _____ E-mail _____

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1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

1. I am a professor of urban studies and theory. I discovered La Tierra de Culebra several years ago, after students in my Public Art class at USC analyzed the project as an outstanding demonstration of the "public" dimension of public art. Since then I have become a supporter, a board member, and an advisor to the Culebra. The Culebra and the multiple roles it plays in its neighborhood and the city have inspired my current research on alternative public spaces in Los Angeles. Over the last three years, I have interviewed Trisha ward, various young ArtscorpsLA volunteers, and have closely observed Culebra activities. This has become the core of a book I am writing, Public Space from the Bottom Up, which has received support from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts and the James Marsden Fitch Foundation. Although more an observer than a participant, I have become a member of the extended Culebra community.

2. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment?

2. This is a difficult question to answer because, since the beginning, the Culebra, as a place and an organization, has evolved in an almost organic way in response to both local needs and to outside opportunities. Rather than "blueprint planning" it has operated by means of "tactics" or "metis." These are principles that value flexibility, collaboration, and quick adjustment to changing circumstances and are based on local knowledge.

3. Describe the impact that this project has actually had on its surroundings and on the people in the project area. Include any data or supplementary materials that support your conclusions.

3. The project benefits the urban environment in multiple ways. It has become an important local institution. A green oasis in an otherwise densely populated area, it is a neighborhood park in a city that no longer builds neighborhood parks and has one of the smallest percentages of parkland in the country. The Culebra is a magical place. The spiraling stone serpent, stone terracing, paths and walls, olive trees and other landscaping create a complex and fascinating space that can be endlessly explored and used for many different purposes. Neighborhood volunteers participate in building and running the park and the activities that take place there. For them, it is a refuge and a gathering point. In a neighborhood plagued by gangs, it is more than just neutral territory--it is an alternative. To people from all over the city, the Culebra provides an identity and focus for the surrounding area; a means, in an atomized city, of engaging with an unfamiliar neighborhood. Its openness encourages visitors; its celebrations, participants; its activities, volunteers. By inverting traditional cultural hierarchies, this starts to break down the barriers of class and ethnicity that divide Los Angeles.

4. What tradeoffs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them?

4. As mentioned above, one of the Culebra's strengths is its flexibility to respond to different circumstances. In many ways, it is structured to operate as continuously developing process instead of proposing an ideal final product that might be compromised. whether physical setting, organization, or social

5. What was the least successful aspect of the project? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

6. What can others learn from this project?

6. I believe that the Culebra presents a new model for a neighborhood public place. Simultaneously park, public art site, social service agency, art center, community organization, and youth center, it challenges the bureaucratic and institutional boundaries that often reduce the effectiveness of these places and activities. The Culebra demonstrates an increasingly common paradox of contemporary public life: sometimes private institutions are more public than ostensibly public ones. The Culebra is one of the most open and accessible public spaces I have found in Los Angeles. It is also one of the most effective. Built on a vacant lot with minimal funding, it offers a surprisingly wide range of activities and experiences. In addition, unlike most public places, which are only indirectly responsible to the publics they serve, the Culebra is directly participatory. The way Arts Corps LA operates is also instructive. It has an open and flexible structure. It depends on participation to function. Unlike many non-profit organizations, it is not territorial, but collaborates with a continually changing network of other non-profits, agencies, and institutions. Since the Culebra is so responsive to circumstances, following its example would never duplicate it, but would produce another place equally grounded in its physical and social context.

7. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

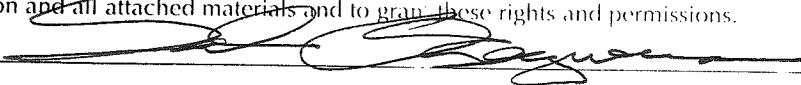
7. Another difficult question. Although it is tempting to set goals—for example, in five years, the Culebra would be self-governing and self-sustaining—I'm not convinced that this is necessarily appropriate. Places exist in both space and time and, in five years, the Culebra could develop in both dimensions in ways that are difficult to predict.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

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Name Sal Oseguero Title Youth Counselor/Supervisor
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1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

I was a youth corralled by Tricia Ward in the beginning when we cleaned up the trash in the vacant lot and decided what to build there. I was 15 then and lived down the block. I wandered in and out a lot. Later, I became co-director of the Youth Leadership Counsel and worked at the Culebra performing duties such as teacher, art workshop instructor, tutor gardener, maintenance and events coordinator.

2. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment?

At first, I thought we were just making the neighborhood look better -- getting rid of an eye sore. But, while working together and caring for something we share: The Culebra gave us something to work for in our selves. I didn't understand at first, even fought against it, but Tricia kept saying that it was more. Now, my son goes there and gets to share in something I helped build.

3. Describe the impact that this project has actually had on its surroundings and on the people in the project area. Include any data or supplementary materials that support your conclusions.

The Culebra taught us to implement initiative. It encouraged teamwork. Even though personal or individual initiative was at the front, each person had his or her own reasons for being there, we knew we were working for the same goal. This is the true impact the experience of building La Culebra had on me. Through the scholarships I received and the encouragement, I went back to school and am in college now. I have a good job in the field of youth counseling all stemming from my experience with ARTScorpsLA.

4. What tradeoffs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them?

The biggest tradeoff in the neighborhood of Highland Park was in dealing with the issue of safety. There was one neighbor who wanted a fence around the park to satisfy his idea of safety. We wanted the park open and the best way, I can think of to make the place safe is to know the names of the people who are around there. The city put up a fence. So, they got their sense of safety and a group of us from the neighborhood along with others through ARTScorpsLA got to participate in a city wide art exhibition at a prison in downtown LA. We still got to have our say.

5. What was the least successful aspect of the project? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

Probably, the least successful aspect of this project at Culebra is the lack of consistence presence of ARTScorpsLA. We had so many different obligations pulling at us from school and family and work that it was difficult to do all we had wanted. More funding would have alleviated the overwhelming need. We spread ourselves too thin.

6. What can others learn from this project?

Others can learn to become more philosophical, to see this place as a way of life. Doing and being there 24 hours a day. You don't turn it on at 8:00 and off at 5:00.

7. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

The single tip-off that I would need to see to know Culebra was successful would be more community involvement. Going by the park and seeing people there. There would be even more networking, the place working with others and extending itself more. And other people would acknowledge the place as a symbol, a tradition and an entity of the community.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

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Signature 

1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

1.

My role at Spiraling Orchard and with ARTScorpsLA has changed a number of times. I have been a volunteer, and employee and an intern with the Getty Internship Program. Although my title has changed over the years, my roles have remained the same. This wide range of roles has included: Mentor, landscaper, role model, artist, gardener and workshop leader. These roles have given me the opportunity to work with the organization on many levels and with a wide range of individuals.

2. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment?

2.

Spiraling Orchard is intended to provide a resource to a community in which they are lacking. Neglected by the city, the Temple Beaudry District has been left to survive on its own. Programs in this community are generally not for the purpose of developing or improving. They are for enforcing and regulating. Spiraling Orchard attempts to reverse this trend by offering resources and opportunities that promote development and empowerment. It is a chance to give the people a sense of investment and power over their own environment.

3. Describe the impact that this project has actually had on its surroundings and on the people in the project area. Include any data or supplementary materials that support your conclusions.

3.

On a surface level, Spiraling Orchard has improved the aesthetics of a neglected community. Murals, flowers and art have provided an alternative to covered up graffiti and littered streets. On a deeper level, Spiraling Orchard has given children and families a place to experience life. Children do not have to stay inside or play in the streets because that is their only choice. Spiraling Orchard has exposed these people to new people, philosophies and opportunities that supplement their lives.

4. What tradeoffs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them?

4.

Compromises were made during the development at this project, but this is not a bad thing. Compromise ensures that all parties benefit from the action. Compromise is also necessary when dealing with separate individuals. Different people will always have different ideas/plans. While I may not agree with putting a basket ball court on the park, if the community agrees on this idea, it must be considered.

5. What was the least successful aspect of the project? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

5.

Due to a small staff, we have had periods of time where the site has been neglected. School schedules, other organizational responsibilities, and weather have all made it hard to keep a consistent relationship with the community. More staff may have helped us deal with ARTScorpsLA's other obligations without sacrificing any rapport that had been developed.

6. What can others learn from this project?

6.

Others can learn that our inner city communities should not be swept under the rug. Certain populations or "types" of people should not be written off for their appearance or background. These communities can be empowered when they are given the opportunity to do so. ARTScorpsLA has proven this over the years. Spiraling Orchard and other ARTScorpsLA projects are proof that small organizations can make significant impacts on people's lives.

7. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

7.

The characteristic that will convince me that Spiraling Orchard and ARTScorpsLA were successful is simply their existence. Since the community is the driving force and motivation behind these projects, the project's existence alone would be proof of community empowerment. It would mean that members of the community from young to old have taken time and effort to change their lives as well as the lives of those around them.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

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Signature Claudia McDonnell

1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

I am a Public Art Studies graduate student in Tricia Ward's Public Art in the community class through the University of Southern California. This was the first class that totally immersed myself and the other students in a specific art project for a local community. All of the classes prior to this one had been engaging, but they focused on the analytical tools we as administrators must use in the future, and not actually practicing those methods. I have always loved murals, so I participated in the Los Angeles City Hall mural project. I worked at the kickoff event to commensurate the mural's beginning.

2. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment?

There was an emphasis to try to include everyone in the city in some capacity. Different community groups and schools were the primary source for information and to enlist help. The kickoff event co-sponsored by LA's Best exceeded my expectations in every way. I had not seen children get so excited over activities related to art. It was very satisfying to see them get excited about creating their own art on the mouse pads and wood tiles. Perhaps they will now think art can be fun and will be excited about it for the rest of their lives.

3. Describe the impact that this project has actually had on its surroundings and on the people in the project area. Include any data or supplementary materials that support your conclusions.

The people working in the buildings surrounding the City Hall Project have seen the mural and the signs posted inviting others to come paint on the wall. There have calls of inquires and a luncheon workshop is planned to include these members of the downtown community.

4. What tradeoffs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them?

I never realized how much planning was required for a mural project of this scope. The government intervention was staggering. Even though I worked on the government side for a short time, I never knew what exactly was involved in the fabrication portion of an art project. I was only familiar with the two commission approvals needed, and I never knew how much pre-planning every mural image took. It seemed at some times the deep pockets of friends of the city or the city itself might get in the way, however, Tricia and her assistants knew their main goal of a mural surrounding city hall was well liked at the very top of government and their mission would soon pick up steam.

5. What was the least successful aspect of the project? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

I was involved for a short time, my only regret was that my other commitments kept me from further involvement.

6. What can others learn from this project?

What I learned was an invaluable experience actually working in the community with an art work versus simply reading about public art. It is hopeful and inspiring to know that one person can start to change a whole neighborhood one person (and artwork) at a time.

7. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

The dissembling of the construction wall around City Hall that has the mural painted on it would go back into the communities that actually worked on it. Also, that the many people who have participated in this project go on to seek out or start other projects on their own.

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

Name Cindy Diana Title Payroll Clerk..
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Signature Cindy Diana

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play? For example, was there a public review process in which you took part?

As a single mother living in a high-crime and gang infested neighborhood I feared the streets. Most mothers do. I, like most other mothers, did not want my children hanging out on the street. But it was impossible to keep my children from hanging out on the street when they reached their teenhood because all of their friends were doing it--that includes tagging, getting into fights, ditching from school, smoking, drugs, and other dangerous things. Most teenagers will do anything to get out of the tiny, tiny apartment that does not offer very much stimulation but only ongoing family problems. My three children discovered the Culebra first and introduced me to the place. Through the years I have gone with them at night to play and hang out with other neighborhood children without fear of the gangs. This place is a safe refuge from the gangs as they respect the youths efforts to achieve something for themselves and their community. My time is less consumed now that my children have grown and I have been volunteering for the past few years, encouraging other mothers to do the same.

2. From the community's point of view, what were the major issue concerning this project?

The neighborhood does not offer many alternatives to the gangs and with ARTScorpsLA's efforts to keep the kids off the street, away from the gangs and build their knowledge they can do something with their lives other than intimidate, commit crimes and go to jail. Without a constructive activity for my children to learn and grow through, I fear where they might be today. It has taught them many skills, but most of all their own personal self worth. Each of them has been given the opportunity to earn money through the job training employment program and two of them are receiving scholarships for college. I have worked hard to save money to encourage their entry into college, but with this incentive they will surely pursue college. It is difficult to encourage neighbors in immigrant communities, but I am always talking to people about this program and explaining how they need to participate in order to help it survive.

3. What tradeoffs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them? With hindsight, what, if anything, would you do differently?

I look back on the tremendous amount of time and energy Tricia Ward and John Maroney have given to my children and the community as a whole, they seem to work 24 hours a day and are always available to fix someone elses problem. I now realize I should have made time a long time ago to help strengthen the community of parents and grandparents raising their children in these difficult social conditions. I am currently working on putting together a council of single mothers to give support to one another and show each other our inner power through community work.

4. How has this project made the community a better place to live? Why should it win this Award? Please be as specific as possible.

First, it has altered the physical appearance of the neighborhood by changing an eyesore trash heap into a beautiful green space, with art panels and artistic constructions throughout the park. Culebra has provided constructive learning experiences for the young people of all ages and shown the teenagers that they can help teach the younger children to be respectful of their surroundings and elders. It has shown us that we can take what we have and make a great statement about our lives and our people, while improving our minds and economic development. Community supported projects like this are critical to a large city with desparate neighborhoods who are all in need of revitalization. This project can show other neighborhoods around the country that we can be in charge of our lives. This is why I think that ARTScorpLA should win this award.

5. If a community group came to you for advice in carrying out a similar project, what would you tell them?

- 1. First I would tell them to become involved from the beginning.*
- 2. Make contact with all the various community members and find out their needs and how they can help meet them.*
- 3. In talking to the community find out what talents and or skills they have that can be shared with everyone in the community.*
- 4. Find as many other organizations with different services to expand on the idea of this kind of a place being a one stop service center.*

6. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

- 1. The list of people who have benefitted and grown through this program would be back in the neighborhood helping new young people make something of themselves.*
- 2. The community had learned to raise money to pay themselves and keep the programs and the park going.*
- 3. The Culebra became a model for other inner-city neighborhoods across the country and those who started this project were asked to go around the country and talk, teach and assist them in building up their communities.*