



PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT AWARDED

MARGARET KELLER'S *RIVERBEND* TO BE SITED AT GATEWAY ARCH NATIONAL PARK

Critical Mass for the Visual Arts is pleased to announce that Margaret Keller and her project *Riverbend* has been selected for the Public Works Project, a program of Critical Mass that invites local artists to propose and develop temporary public art projects.

Riverbend is a 90-foot-long reflective, mirror-like artwork which represents the navigable portion of the Missouri River, the longest river in North America. The artwork will be sited on the pavement of the newly renovated Luther Ely Smith Square and will mark the River's history as the primary means of westward expansion at this crucial spot in the shadow of the Gateway Arch. The artwork will be oriented to the actual route of the Missouri River and created by Margaret Keller based on detailed navigation charts from the United States Army Corps of Engineers. As visitors walk along and interact with the artwork, they will experience the aerial shape of the Missouri River at its confluence with the Mississippi River at the east end of the artwork and the shape of the river as it moves westward. Says Keller, "this project will make comprehensible the physical vastness and importance of the Missouri River. It celebrates and makes visible the river's massive role both past and present."

Margaret Keller will fabricate *Riverbend* and install it in Luther Ely Smith Square where it will be accessible to the public for three-months this autumn. Keller has designed *Riverbend* to be brilliant and ever-changing, to appear almost animated as the surrounding atmosphere is reflected in its surface. Reminiscent of the surface of the Gateway Arch itself, *Riverbend* will also capture reflections of visitors and highlight them as a part of the site. Other interactive components of the project will include an opportunity for the public to share their stories about rivers and instructions to find and listen to a podcast with more information about the Missouri River.

Critical Mass launched the Public Works Project in 2016 to provide St. Louis area artists with an opportunity to develop a work of art for the public realm. Unlike other public art opportunities in the region, the artwork proposed is temporary and can be at a site of the artist's choosing, allowing artists to match their artistic ideas with the siting of the work. A past Public Works Project, *Seed the Change* by Jessica Witte was recognized by Americans for the Arts as part of their annual Public Art Review. The 2018 Public Works Project helps to celebrate the reopening of the newly renovated Gateway Arch National Park and the new connections between the riverfront, Arch and Gateway Mall. The Public Works Project is supported by the Regional Arts Commission and many individual donors.

Margaret Keller examines the relationships between nature, contemporary culture and technology through work in related series using installation, drawing, digital media, printmaking, and painting. Currently, her series focus on surveillance, natural disasters and our experience of nature in this digital age. As a 2017 recipient of the Regional Art's Commission Artist's Fellowship Grant, she learned 3D design and printing, with the result a one-person exhibition of 100 surveillance drone sculptures at

Gallery 210 - University of Missouri- St. Louis. Keller graduated with a degree in drawing from the University of Missouri-Columbia and a M.F.A. from Washington University in St. Louis in painting and printmaking; she also has post-graduate study in garden design at London University and in electronic media at Webster University, St. Louis. This is Keller's first site-specific, outdoor, public installation. Images of her previous works are available on request.

Critical Mass for the Visual Arts is a nonprofit visual arts collaborative dedicated to promoting, enhancing and initiating contemporary visual art in the St. Louis region. Since 1995 Critical Mass has provided resources and tools for artists and arts presenting organizations to promote and support their practice.

For more information, please contact:

Meridith McKinley, president of the board, Critical Mass for the Visual Arts
mckinley@viapartnership.com
314-324-3278

Margaret Keller, artist
mkellerpaint@gmail.com
margaretkellerstudio.com
314-210-9479
