



MUSEUM
WITHOUT WALLS™ AUDIO

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**Fairmount Park Art Association Announces
Museum Without Walls™: AUDIO Program to Launch in June 2010**
*Untold histories of 35 outdoor sculptures revealed through new, innovative and
accessible multi-platform audio program for Philadelphia's public art*

PHILADELPHIA – In June 2010, the [Fairmount Park Art Association](http://www.fairmountparkart.org) will launch **Museum Without Walls™: AUDIO**, a multi-platform, interactive audio experience for Philadelphia's preeminent collection of public art and outdoor sculpture. This innovative program invites passersby to stop, look, listen and experience public art in a new light, through professionally produced three-minute interpretive audio segments revealing the untold histories of **35 outdoor sculptures** along the Benjamin Franklin Parkway and Kelly Drive, along the Schuylkill River. The diverse narratives are told by over 100 authentic voices with personal connections to the artwork. Accessible through multiple platforms, Museum Without Walls™: AUDIO will be available to the public for free on the street by cell phone, audio download, or streaming audio on the official program website.

The "authentic voice" narrative structure of Museum Without Walls™: AUDIO offers a fresh approach for talking about public art and reaching new audiences. Each narrative compliments the viewer's experience of outdoor sculpture with a program that is as unique as the artwork it describes, featuring different voices, themes, and production styles, produced by award-winning public radio producers and journalists. Programs explore personal and cultural connections to the art, while offering insight into the artists and their processes, what the sculptures represent, the history surrounding the works, and why the pieces were commissioned and installed at specific sites in Philadelphia.

Philadelphia has more outdoor sculpture than any other American city, yet this exceptional collection too often goes unnoticed by residents and visitors. "Museum Without Walls™: AUDIO is ultimately about discovery," says **Penny Balkin Bach**, Executive Director of the Fairmount Park Art Association. "The program is a gateway to a larger cultural experience – someone might walk by a sculpture hundreds of times, without ever stopping to think much about it. There is a distinctive story, civic effort, and creative expression behind every public sculpture in Philadelphia. We've worked with an outstanding team of professionals to develop a unique program to tell these stories – one that we hope will be a model for public art in other cities across the country."

As the nation's first private, nonprofit organization dedicated to integrating public art and urban planning, the Fairmount Park Art Association, founded in 1872, commissions, conserves and interprets outdoor sculpture throughout Philadelphia. Public art in Philadelphia has been initiated by a wide range of individuals, organizations, and agencies. The Fairmount Park Art Association was directly involved in the acquisition and conservation of many of the 35 works featured in the first phase of Museum Without Walls™: AUDIO. The Art Association plans to expand the program in the future to include more of the city's public art.

"The Museum Without Walls™: AUDIO program will provide a high quality way for more people – from tourists to residents – from art enthusiasts to recreational users – to access information and experience outdoor sculpture in an innovative, engaging, fun and meaningful way," says **Meryl Levitz**, President and CEO of the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation.

UNTOLD HISTORIES

Works in Museum Without Walls™: AUDIO include the sculpture ***Jesus Breaking Bread***, which is located in front of the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul at 18th and Race Streets. The sculpture's audio program features the voices of three people who are each intimately, yet distinctly, connected to the piece. Listeners can hear **Martha Erlebacher**, the wife of the now-deceased sculptor and an artist herself, recall the personal challenge **Walter Erlebacher** set to humanize the figure. **Monsignor John Miller**, who oversaw the commission of the sculpture for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, discusses the artist's confrontation with historic interpretation, and **Sister Mary Scullion**, who runs the renowned program for the homeless in Philadelphia, Project H.O.M.E., and who also attended the sculpture dedication as a student, talks about the importance of placing the figure outside of the church.

In the audio program for the sculpture ***Iroquois***, listeners will hear a first-person account from **Mark di Suvero**, the artist himself, who discusses the abstract sculpture and its open shapes that invite public interaction and viewing from multiple angles. "I think that in order to experience [*Iroquois*] ... you have to walk in through the piece, you have to have it all the way around you and at that moment, you can feel what that sculpture can do," says di Suvero. **Lowell McKegey**, di Suvero's construction manager and longtime friend, compares the sculpture to music and encourages listeners to appreciate it in the same way.

Penny Balkin Bach says, "Some of these incredibly interesting histories are new even to us at the Art Association, which is really exciting. Through this project, we have been able to capture stories from people who would not otherwise be telling them, because they were never asked."

CONTRIBUTORS

The Museum Without Walls™: AUDIO project team is an assembly of accomplished historians, radio journalists, production teams, and collaborating organizations. Contributors include Consulting Historian **Michael Zuckerman**, who teaches within the Department of History at the University of Pennsylvania, and Humanities Consultant **Amanda Dargan**, Education Director at City Lore in New York City. The

project has been developed in collaboration with **Fairmount Park**, one of the nation's oldest and largest park systems, with the support of the Park's historic preservation staff.

All of the audio programs were created by experienced producers using professional-quality recording and editing equipment, and mixed by an audio engineer for optimum sound quality. Segment producers include Peabody-award winning public radio producers and media artists **Ann Heppermann** and **Kara Oehler**; **Jonathan Menjivar**, Associate Producer with National Public Radio's *Fresh Air with Terry Gross*; radio producer and reporter **Lu Olkowski**; and freelance journalist **Ben Calhoun**, among others.

EXPERIENCE MUSEUM WITHOUT WALLS™: AUDIO

Audiences will have the opportunity to access the audio programs through a number of platforms. There will be permanent outdoor signage featuring dialing instructions for accessing the program by cell phone. A free Museum Without Walls™: AUDIO guide of selected artworks will be available at the Fairmount Park Welcome Center in LOVE Park and local visitor centers and cultural institutions. The official Museum Without Walls™: AUDIO website will offer a free download of the map, online audio slideshows for all 35 audio programs, and high-quality stereo downloads of each program for use on personal iPods and MP3 players. The website will also promote user-generated content, inviting Philadelphia visitors and residents to send in their own stories and submit personal photos of favorite public art works.

WHAT IS PUBLIC ART?

The Art Association is quick to point out that public art is not an art "form." Its size can be huge or small. It can tower fifty feet high or call attention to the paving beneath one's feet. Its shape can be abstract or realistic (or both), and it may be cast, carved, built, assembled, or painted. It can be site-specific or stand in contrast to its surroundings. What distinguishes public art is the unique association of how it is made, where it is, and what it means. Public art can express community values, transform a landscape, heighten the public's awareness, or question assumptions. This art is for everyone, anytime.

Philadelphia's public art treasures include work by some of the most influential sculptors from America and Europe throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. The artworks featured in Museum Without Walls™: AUDIO represent a variety of artistic styles, materials, and time periods. Among the 35 sculptures lining the city streets and parks included in the first phase of the program are ***Iroquois***, the monumental steel sculpture by **Mark di Suvero** (1983-1999, red painted steel), the massive abstract ***Three-way Piece Number One: Points*** by **Henry Moore** (1964, bronze, on granite base), and ***Kopernik***, **Dudley Talcott's** ode to modern astronomy (1972, stainless steel, on red granite base). There is also ***All Wars Memorial to Colored Soldiers and Sailors*** (1934, bronze and granite), **J. Otto Schweizer's** memorial to the state's African American military men, **Emmanuel Fremiet's** memorial to the French heroine ***Joan of Arc*** (1890, gilded bronze, on granite base), and ***Jesus Breaking Bread*** by **Walter Erlebacher** (1976, bronze, on bronze plinth and marble base), commissioned for the 41st International Eucharistic Congress.

ABOUT THE FAIRMOUNT PARK ART ASSOCIATION

The Fairmount Park Art Association is the nation's first private, nonprofit organization dedicated to integrating public art and urban planning. Founded in 1872 by concerned citizens who believed that art could play a role in a growing city, the Art Association initially focused on enhancing Philadelphia's

Fairmount Park with sculpture. The organization's work soon expanded beyond the park to the city as a whole, and today the Art Association commissions, conserves, and interprets public art in neighborhoods throughout Philadelphia. The Fairmount Park Art Association works closely with the City's Public Art Office, Fairmount Park, and other organizations and agencies responsible for placing and caring for outdoor sculpture in Philadelphia. Visit www.fpa.org for more information about the Art Association, a public art map with descriptions of over 100 works of outdoor sculpture, and tips for learning about public art in Philadelphia and other cities.

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To request audio samples, photos, interviews and more information, please contact:

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