

FAIRMOUNT PARK ART ASSOCIATION

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*******PRESS RELEASE*******

TWO PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC ART PROJECTS AMONG “THE COUNTRY’S BEST”

Philadelphia, PA—Two public art projects commissioned by the Fairmount Park Art Association have been selected for the Americans for the Arts Public Art Network’s *2004 Year in Review*, a guide to the country’s best new public art projects. The Art Association’s projects *I have a story to tell you...* (2003) by Pepón Osorio and *Embodying Thoreau: dwelling, sitting, watching* (2003) by Ed Levine are included in the *Year in Review*, which highlights the most successful, innovative, and exciting public art projects in the United States. Glenn Harper, editor of *Sculpture Magazine*, and noted artist Ellen Driscoll selected 39 projects from 189 national submissions.

“Communities across the country are developing innovative ways to involve artists in the design of public space,” said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. “The *Year in Review* recognizes the Fairmount Park Art Association for commissioning two of the premiere projects in the United States for 2004.”

I have a story to tell you... and *Embodying Thoreau: dwelling, sitting, watching* were commissioned through the Fairmount Park Art Association’s award-winning program *New•Land•Marks: public art, community, and the meaning of place*, which brings together artists and communities to plan and create new works of public art for Philadelphia. “We are thrilled to have the talents and creativity of artists and communities participating in the *New•Land•Marks* program recognized at the national level,” said Penny Balkin Bach, Executive Director of the Fairmount Park Art Association.

For *I have a story to tell you...* (2003), artist Pepón Osorio worked with clients and staff from Congreso de Latinos Unidos to transform the organization’s North Philadelphia headquarters (216 West

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Somerset Street) into a “community photograph album. Congreso is the leading provider of social services to Philadelphia’s Latino community.

To develop *Embodying Thoreau: dwelling, sitting, watching*, artist Ed Levine worked with the Pennypack Environmental Center Advisory Council. Inspired by famed author Henry David Thoreau, Levine created a series of wooden structures “between sculpture and architecture” that explore various aspects of humanity's relationship to nature for the Pennypack Environmental Center, a 100-acre site in the northeast territory of Fairmount Park (entrance at 8600A Verree Road). The Advisory Council is a volunteer organization that supports the Center’s operation and growth.

The two public art commissions have been made possible through the generous support of the William Penn Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and the Independence Foundation. More information about the projects and the *New•Land•Marks* program is available at the Art Association’s web site: www.fpaa.org.

The Public Art Network (PAN) is a program of the Americans for the Arts that provides services to the diverse field of public art and develops strategies and tools to improve communities through public art. PAN’s key constituents are public art professionals, visual artists, design professionals, arts organizations, and communities.

The *Year in Review* selections will be presented at the national conference “Public Arts: Civic Catalyst” in Washington, DC in July. For more information about the event, visit www.pARTicipateWeb.org. The selections are also included in an online presentation, slide set, and CD, which will be available on the Americans’ for the Arts’ web site in the fall at www.AmericansForTheArts.org. For more information, e-mail pan@artusa.org.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America. With offices in Washington, DC and New York City, it has a record of more than 40 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in, and appreciate all forms of the Arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

Chartered in 1872, the Fairmount Park Art Association is the nation’s first private, non-profit organization dedicated to integrating public art and urban planning. The Art Association works to promote the appreciation of public art through programs and advocacy efforts that commission, interpret, and preserve public art in Philadelphia. More information is available at www.fpaa.org.

For photographs or more information about the projects, please call 215.546.7550.