

Please Touch  
Museum

# WEST PARK ARTS FEST

June 3, 2017

## YOUR GUIDE TO THE ARTIST INSTALLATIONS

CURATED BY: THERESA ROSE



Smith  
Memorial  
Arch

AVENUE OF  
THE REPUBLIC

tents + festival activities

tents + festival activities

AVENUE OF  
THE REPUBLIC

1

2

3

5

4

**1** *Ring My Bell*  
**EUGENE LEW**  
Lew presents a bell-ringing bicycle tour of West Park and a wheelie competition. Bells and lights are also available to cyclists interested in audible signaling and low light visibility.

**2** *The Totems*  
**CLAES GABRIEL**  
Gabriel has created six totem-like painted stretched canvas forms. Their electric color and meditative-like patterning are a feast for the eyes.

**3** *Three Movements for Edmonia Lewis*  
**TIONA NEKKIA MCCLODDEN**  
McClodden presents a multi-media installation that explores the history of the sculpture *The Death of Cleopatra* by Edmonia Lewis, which exhibited at the 1876 Centennial Exposition. Lewis was the first woman of African-American and Native American heritage to achieve international fame in the fine arts world.

**4** *The Great Massive*  
**TIMOTHY BELKNAP**  
Belknap has created a large comet-like sculpture with moving eyes. Visitors are encouraged to interact with the piece by creating their own welcome flags that can be mounted onto the sculpture. The flags are inspired by the Statue of Liberty, whose torch was first exhibited at the 1876 Centennial Exposition.

**5** *Defenders of the Republic*  
**TAJI RA'OOF NAHL**  
Nahl responds to the historic Smith Memorial Arch with a poignant and interpretative performance and installation. He delves into the historical narratives of the site at the Avenue of the Republic, connecting to his long-standing concept, *Defenders of the Republic*.

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For the 10th anniversary of the West Park Arts Fest, five artists respond to the past and future of this historically significant site, the home of the 1876 Centennial Exposition.

**CLAES GABRIEL** was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti in 1977 and immigrated to the US in 1989. He earned a BFA in painting and sculpture at the Maryland Institute College of Arts in 1999. He has exhibited in Port-au-Prince, Baltimore, DC and Paris. Gabriel's work has been inspired by other worlds, mythical goddesses, creatures from the depths of the sea or beings that reside on other planets. His work challenges the boundaries of the flat canvas, but his materials remain the same: wood, canvas and paint.

**TIMOTHY BELKNAP** is a multi-disciplinary artist based in Philadelphia. He works in performance, video, choreography, and animatronics. His work has been featured on WHYY's *NewsWorks Tonight* and has been exhibited in Philadelphia and NYC. Belknap received his MFA in sculpture from the Tyler School of Art and is a Vox Populi Gallery member. In 2013, he became the Co-Director of the Icebox Project Space where he has curated and collaborated with over 100 artists.

**EUGENE LEW** is primarily engaged in the production, organization, capture, storage and playback of sound/music. The fleeting moment, aggregate independent decision-making and stochastic phenomena are especially fascinating and vital to his practice and existence. He seeks experiences that cannot be captured, but might be witnessed if one is in the right place at the right time. Lew has resided and worked in Philadelphia for 20 years, and is committed to the city and his communities.

**TIONA NEKKIA MCCLODDEN** is a visual artist, filmmaker and curator whose work explores issues at the intersections of race, gender, sexuality and social commentary. McClodden's approach traverses documentary film, experimental video, sculpture and sound installations. McClodden has exhibited and screened work locally, nationally and internationally. In 2016, she was awarded the 2016 Pew Fellowship in the Arts. McClodden lives and works in North Philadelphia.

**TAJI RA'OOF NAHL** is a Philadelphia-based, interdisciplinary artist who delves into social commentary via historical and futurist aesthetic. He uses installation, video, performance art, sculpture and painting to embody the poetic and abstract narrative for his oeuvre. Nahl has exhibited locally and internationally. He also spearheads 2Spiral Art Collective, collaborating with artists to develop art that explores the transformative elements of compassion, freedom, justice and productive activism.

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