
Parade of Floats

Artist: Andrew Leicester

October 2005

Along 5th St. between St. John and San Fernando Streets / 200 E. Santa Clara St., San Jose, CA 95112

Council District 3



ABOUT THE PROJECT

As part of the development of the new San Jose Civic Center, the Public Art Program of the City of San José commissioned artist Andrew Leicester to design an artwork to be located on North and South 5th Street that would create gateways and orienting elements for the Civic Center.

Parade of Floats is a procession of 16 sculptural “floats” recalling parades that exist in cultures throughout the world, and which are an expression of a community coming together in celebration. In the Santa Clara Valley, parades traditionally involved community groups, clubs, fraternities, businesses and civic bodies in decorating floats for these processions. Keeping with this tradition, the community was asked to contribute to the identity, vitality, and diversity of the project by submitting descriptions of float ideas. A panel of local artists, historians, and community leaders selected the 16 final themes from over 250 submitted ideas.

The 16 floats’ titles are themes that convey a vision of San Jose’s historic and contemporary identity, as well as community priorities and values:

- Environment
- Families
- Neighborhoods
- Arts & Creativity
- Education
- Trailblazers
- Pueblo
- Agricultural
- Gold Rush
- High Technology
- Innovation
- Diversity
- Overcoming Adversity
- Recreation
- Children
- Future

The pre-cast concrete bases for the floats are shaped as cars or chariots. The sculptures are ceramic tile over concrete and vary in shape and size. Seven of the themes have been developed in the form of columns, approximately 30 feet tall.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Andrew Leicester has been creating large-scale public artworks for over 20 years. His notable projects include *Zanja Madre* in Los Angeles, California, which was featured in Warner Brothers movie *Batman Forever*; the *Cincinnati Gateway*, a 450-foot water course that marks the entrance to Cincinnati, Ohio's Bicentennial Commons Park; and *Ghost Series*, five terra cotta wall murals located in the transit concourse below Pennsylvania Station in New York, New York. Mr. Leicester lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

For more information about the artist: <http://www.andrewleicester.com/index.htm>.

ABOUT THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

The City of San José Public Art Program seeks to build community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enhance the civic landscape. Through active community engagement, public art strives to reflect the City's diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future.

The Public Art Program is part of the City's Office of Cultural Affairs, a division of the Office of Economic Development. The Public Art Program was established by a 1984 municipal ordinance that provides public art through funding from City capital improvement projects and eligible private development.

For further information and photos, please contact the San José Public Art Program.