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Reception celebrates 'Pyramid of Light' and Public Art in Reston

RESTON, VA—When the Initiative for Public Art-Reston (IPAR) holds its annual reception on Thursday, Nov. 13, a uniquely successful temporary public art project will be celebrated. The project—beautification of the spillway at Reston's Lake Thoreau—not only creatively bridged generations it also was enthusiastically embraced by the community at large.

Done in partnership with the Reston Association (RA), the site-specific, intentionally temporary public art project, "Pyramid of Light," involved a team that included South Lakes High School art teacher Marco Rando and South Lakes students Margaret Lashley, Sammy Nazam, Gabriella Rando, and Tehmeena Salahin. Working with them was Larry Butler, RA's senior director for parks, recreation and community resources, as well as Bryan Boltik, Bret Nelson, Jay Schmitz, and Eric Whyte, four RA staff who helped with the installation.

Also essential to the project was patron James Pan, a resident of the Lake Thoreau community, who first envisioned a public art project at the spillway and has agreed to underwrite a similar project this school year.

All are recipients of this year's IPAR Certificate of Appreciation that will be presented at the reception, held 6 to 8 p.m. in the elegant resident lounge of The Avant, a luxury high-rise in Reston Town Center.

The colorful Pyramid, an almost 18-foot square kinetic sculpture, sat atop Lake Thoreau's drably utilitarian concrete spillway throughout the summer. Constructed of wood, aircraft-grade wire and more than 100 acrylic Plexiglas panels painted with bright tie-dye colors that moved in the wind, the sculpture's temporary stay was briefly extended at the request of the community, which is looking forward to a new beautification work during 2015.

A working artist from a family of artists, Rando, who has been a longtime supporter of IPAR and public art, encouraged by the success of this project is working to make it a part of the high school STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) curriculum.

IPAR, which received the Arts Council of Fairfax County's 2012 Arts Impact Award, was founded when a group of Reston civic and community organizations and leaders joined together to develop a vision and plan for cultivating a new generation of public artworks throughout that community. The result was the adoption of a Public Art Master Plan for Reston--the first in the country for a non-incorporated community--in December 2008.

Among the public art projects completed since that adoption, are: "Emerge," the Glade Drive Underpass mosaic created by artist Valerie Theberge in conjunction with students from Hunters Woods Elementary School for the Arts & Science and done in partnership with Reston Association (RA) and the Reston Community Center (RCC); "Flux," the interactive and mosaic-clad fountain, also a Theberge work, at Dogwood Pool, created through a partnership with the RA and RCC; and "Reston Rondo," a sculpture by Mary Ann Mears installed in Hyatt Park, done in partnership with the Hyatt Regency Reston, Reston Town Center Association and Reston Community Center (RCC).

In addition to the "Pyramid of Light," temporary public art projects, also the result of collaborations, were: the sculpture exhibition in Town Square Park in Reston Town Center, "gaps," done in conjunction with the Greater Reston Arts Center (GRACE) and the Washington Sculptors Group, and "Out of Place," a performance and temporary installation at Lake Anne Village Center by Ronit Eisenbach and Sharon Mansur, which was a partnership with RCC, Reston Museum, and Friends of Lake Anne.

IPAR also is looking forward to an equally active future. In 2015, it will be partnering with GRACE on a major temporary sculptural installation by internationally known artist, Patrick Dougherty, in Town Square Park. IPAR's public art film series, presented in conjunction with RCC, also will continue.

The reception will include: hors d'oeuvres and desserts catered by South Lakes High School culinary students, supervised by Instructor Cynthia Stowers; music by the South Lakes High School String Quartet, composed of Ian Champney, Jake Hutzler, Darya Kharabi, and Jenny Reid; wine; and a live auction led by Phil Tobey.

Tickets start at \$50 per person and go up to \$5,000 to be a member of the IPAR Founders' Circle. Special \$25 tickets also are available for "Contemporary Friends" (young professionals age 20 to 35). Funds raised will support future public art projects in Reston.

Details about all ticket levels and benefits are available on the IPAR website at www.publicartreston.org. Tickets may be purchased on PayPal or by sending a check to Initiative for Public Art - Reston, 12001 Market Street, Suite 103, Reston, VA 20190.

For ticket and other information, including becoming a corporate sponsor, contact Anne Delaney, IPAR executive director, at 703-467-9797.