

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

CALL TO ARTISTS

Chattanooga, TN



BESSIE SMITH & BLUE GOOSE HOLLOW ARTISTIC MARKER:

Call Issued: Monday, July 20, 2020

Submittal Deadline: Friday, August 28, 2020, by 4:00 p.m., EST

Proposal Honorarium: \$1,000

Artistic Marker Budget: \$42,000

OVERVIEW:

The Bessie Tribute Public Art Committee seeks qualifications from **Black artists** to design, fabricate and install a sculptural marker and tribute to Bessie Smith at the Blue Goose Hollow trailhead in Chattanooga, TN. The Committee would like to recognize and celebrate Black history in Chattanooga by highlighting American Blues Singer and famed Chattanooga, Bessie Smith. The committee also seeks to commemorate Bessie's life in historic Blue Goose Hollow, a neighborhood once home to over 1,400 people and erased with the demolition of over 1,100 buildings during urban renewal. While the marker should provide and interpret historically accurate details it should also reflect the spirit and character of Black Chattanooga and Bessie herself. For more information about the Bessie Smith Cultural Center visit: <http://www.bessiesmithcc.org/>



PROJECT BACKGROUND:

Blue Goose Hollow is a relatively new trailhead access point in the Tennessee Riverpark (completed in 2016). Consisting of fourteen miles of paved, scenic, urban greenway that follows the curve of the Tennessee River, the Riverpark connects downtown Chattanooga to Chickamauga Dam to the north and Lookout Mountain to the south. Used by cyclists, joggers, skaters and walkers, the popularly named "Riverwalk" connects neighborhoods and business districts within Chattanooga and Hamilton County via numerous trailheads.

In 2017, the artwork, "Resurgence: A Statement of Celebration" by Albert Paley was completed and installed as an iconic gateway entry to the Riverwalk, bringing color and energy to the newly completed trailhead park. The pair of sculptures are a material representation of Blue Goose Hollow's industrial past with a symbolic and dynamic reach towards the future, creating an iconic presence on Chattanooga's west side. The sculptures are abstract in nature, and while they give prominence to the Blue Goose Hollow trailhead, they do not provide interpretive context for the rich Black history that has since been erased from the site.

As a pioneer for the genre, Bessie was known as "Empress of the Blues". Her influence on the direction of American music and her contribution to the success of Black performing artists is significant. She was born in Chattanooga in 1894 and was one of the most gifted blues performers of her time. As a Grammy Lifetime Achievement recipient and one of the most iconic Black women of the 20th century, Bessie deserves a lasting tribute in her hometown and specifically in the location of her childhood neighborhood, Blue Goose Hollow.

Lead Project partners include: Bessie Smith Cultural Center, Public Art Chattanooga, ArtsBuild, Hunter Museum of American Art, Chattanooga Neighborhoods Arts Partnership, and RISE Chattanooga with support from the Lyndhurst Foundation.

PROJECT SITE:

Since the completion of the Blue Goose Hollow trailhead, the neighboring development, Cameron Harbor, has experienced rapid growth and expanded enough to warrant the extension of MLK Blvd. directly into the park. This creates a number of opportunities for the prominent siting of the Bessie Smith & Blue Goose Hollow artistic marker either in the park itself (Site Option 1) or adjacent to the park entrance at MLK Blvd and Riverfront Parkway (MLK Site Option 2). Artists may also choose an alternative site with a strong rationale tied to the proposed final design. See site diagrams below and additional site images provided at the following link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vrHPhkDr7szpK7AiedMEpSx4aiou0me5?usp=sharing>



SITE HISTORY:

Artists should research both Bessie Smith and Blue Goose Hollow and include historically accurate information within the interpretive elements of the marker including but not limited to the following topics:

- How Bessie Smith Influenced a Century of Popular Music:
<https://www.npr.org/2019/08/05/747738120/how-bessie-smith-influenced-a-century-of-popular-music>
- Bessie Smith's home and birthplace in the Blue Goose Hollow neighborhood
- How Blue Goose Hollow got its name
- Housing and industry tied to the Roane Iron Company near Blue Goose Hollow
- Blue Goose Hollow's actual location as it relates to historic Cameron Hill
- Any shops, schools and churches that were essential to life in Blue Goose Hollow
- Blue Goose Hollow's connection to historic 9th street (now MLK Blvd.), the once thriving regional Black business and entertainment district
- Chattanooga's Urban Renewal in the 1950's and its impact on the Blue Goose Hollow neighborhood
- Overall impacts of Chattanooga housing policy and red-lining on the Black community
- Encourage continued exploration of Chattanooga's Black history through other points of interest along MLK Blvd. including the Bessie Smith Cultural Center, historic sites and public artworks

ARTWORK VISION:

The committee seeks an artist-designed marker and interpretive project that goes above and beyond the traditional historic marker/plaque to both animate and commemorate Bessie's life and historic Blue Goose Hollow through creative flair. While the marker should provide historically accurate details it should also reflect the spirit and character of Black Chattanooga and Bessie herself.

ARTWORK / DESIGN GOALS:

The selected artist/team should consider the following goals in their design of the artistic marker:

- Draw pedestrians and viewers to the marker through form, color, light, sound and/or other creative elements;
- reflect the distinct character of Bessie Smith and culture of the historic Blue Goose Hollow neighborhood;
- consider the pedestrian experience at the park and/or sidewalk level;
- serve as a connection point between Blue Goose Hollow and the extended experience of the MLK Corridor;
- consider existing traffic conditions and safety implications of artwork in overall design;
- consider opportunities to engage the community in the project;

ARTWORK / DESIGN GOALS: (continued)

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

- Fit well within the context of the site (in terms of scale and design or theme);
- consideration of all audiences (pedestrians, cyclists, passing motorists, Riverwalk, Riverfront Parkway, MLK Blvd. residents and businesses, etc.);
- materials and finishes for artwork shall be of the highest quality and should be designed and fabricated for durability as well as for relatively low maintenance; and
- public safety should be considered for both daytime and evening use

ARTWORK / DESIGN PARAMETERS:

The artwork must not obstruct pedestrian right of ways and must generally meet the safety standards of the City of Chattanooga. As this is an intensively used public space, artwork elements must be constructed of materials that are highly resistant to theft and vandalism as well as appropriate for Chattanooga's four season climate. The artwork should be designed for permanent installation.

ARTWORK BUDGET:

Proposal Stipend: \$1,000

Up to (3) semi-finalists may be selected to develop site specific proposals. Each will receive a fixed stipend for their concept design and any associated time, travel or expense.

Artistic Marker: \$42,000

The Artistic Marker budget includes all expenses associated with the design, fabrication and installation of an artist-designed historical marker including but not limited to: artist's fee, travel and lodging, costs related to design, materials, site prep, artwork foundation, artist led workshops or events, equipment for installation, site security, insurance, permits, production staff or assistants, site repair and other relevant costs related to the creation and installation of the artwork.

ARTWORK DELIVERABLES

1. Preliminary and Final Concept Designs
2. Preliminary and Final Interpretive Text
3. Budget and Production Schedule
4. Collaborate with Bessie Tribute Committee and partners to engage the community as needed throughout the process
5. Final artwork design and technical details
6. Documentation of 50% Fabrication
7. Two in person site visits: one for artwork installation and one community event and/or dedication ceremony (if possible given COVID-19 restraints)
8. Artwork installation including site prep and repair

9. Documentation of installation, final acceptance and final inspection.
10. Artwork Maintenance Manual

ARTIST SELECTION & ELIGIBILITY:

The Bessie Tribute Public Art Committee seeks qualifications from **Black artists**. This is a national competition open to professional artists and teams; all members of the team must be over 18 years old, practicing professionals. The artist member shall be the lead designer although multi-disciplinary teams are encouraged to apply. Artists may need to consider collaborating with other creative professionals to meet the objectives of the project including: historians, storytellers, fabricators, interpretive and/or graphic designers, and writers.

Artists are asked to submit a resume, past work samples and a letter of interest detailing their artistic qualifications and approach to the project. **See submission requirements detailed below.** Multiple artists may be considered to enter into a concept design phase which will incorporate and respond to community history and input. The Bessie Smith Tribute Public Art Committee will serve as the selection panel and will select the most qualified artist for the project with approval from the Chattanooga Public Art Commission.

ARTIST SELECTION PANEL:

The Bessie Tribute Public Art Committee will serve as the selection panel, members include: Elijah Cameron (Bessie Smith Cultural Center), Isaac Duncan (local artist), Nandini Makrandi (Hunter Museum of American Art), James McKissic (ArtsBuild), Lillie Wills (arts advocate), Dr. Clark White (local historian), Shane Morrow (R.I.S.E. Chattanooga), Ricardo Morris (Chattanooga Neighborhoods Arts Partnership), Vernisha Savoy (Chattanooga Public Art Commission), Sara Tolbert (local artist), Justin McBath (Noir Nooga).

Advisory Members: Katelyn Kirnie (Public Art Chattanooga), Lindsey Willke (Chattanooga Design Studio), Paula Wilkes (Bessie Smith Cultural Center), Erskine Oglesby (Chattanooga City Councilman), Kathleen Nolte (Lyndhurst Foundation)

ARTIST EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Demonstrates artistic excellence, innovation and originality as represented in past work and supporting materials.
2. Demonstrates capacity for working in media and with concepts that are appropriate to the project goals and site.
3. Artist's proven ability to collaborate with other creative professionals
4. Demonstrates interest and capability in creating public artwork in collaboration with the Bessie Smith Cultural Center, Public Art Chattanooga, and other project partners.
5. Demonstrates experience in successfully completing works of similar scope, scale, budget and complexity, or ability to articulate how he or she would be able to bring the necessary artistic and technical skills to this project.

6. Demonstrates interest in and understanding of the project.
7. Is available to perform the scope of the work in a timely and professional manner.
8. Builds the diversity of the City's public art collection.
9. If applicable, demonstrates a cohesive team.

Selection will be determined based on an objective evaluation of the criteria listed above combined with the Artwork Selection Panels' subjective evaluation of the artist's past work samples.

TENTATIVE PROJECT TIMELINE:

July 20, 2020:	Call to Artists Issued by lead partners
August 21, 2020:	Deadline for Questions & Informational Zoom Webinar
August 28, 2020:	Submission Deadline
September, 2020	(3) Semi-finalists selected to develop conceptual proposals
October 2020:	Semi-finalists Zoom Webinar: Featuring local black historians, site overview & community introductions
Oct - November 2020:	Concept designs developed
December 2021:	Concept designs presented to selection panel & community
January 2021:	Enter Contract with selected finalist
January 2021:	Finalize design
Feb - March 2021:	Fabrication
April 15, 2021:	Bessie's 127th Birthday!
Spring/Summer 2021:	Installation & Dedication

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Application packages may be submitted electronically or by mail.

If the submission is in hard copy format, it must include **two copies** of all printed materials.

Materials should be single-sided and must include the following:

1. Completed and signed **application form** (included at the end of this document).
2. Current Résumé for each team member (two-page limit).
3. Proposal Narrative or Letter of Interest addressing your approach to the project and any qualifications specific to the project. This document should be no longer than two pages (single-spaced, 1-inch margins, 12 pt. font).
4. List of professional references for the lead artist (at least three): Please include name, address, phone number, and email address for each individual. If submitting as a team, please include at least one reference for each team member.
5. Relevant past work samples: Teams may submit **a maximum of ten** images:

JPEG file at 100 DPI (minimum 800 x 600; maximum 1600 x 1200) for review by the selection panel.

6. Files must be PC Compatible and loaded on a USB flash drive. All flash drives must be labeled with the applicant's name. DO NOT SEND A DISC.
7. Every image file must be titled first with the artist's name followed by the number of the image in the order to be viewed [for example: Smith_01; Smith_02]. The numbers must correspond to the annotated image list.
8. Annotated Image List: Please include the artist/team name as a heading, and a brief description of each image, including title, original medium and project budget.
9. Completed budget worksheet.
10. Please do not submit paper materials in plastic covers, binders, or folders. Use only paper clips to bind your materials.
11. Please write your name on the outside of the envelope.

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

If you plan to submit your submission electronically:

1. Email bluegoosehollow@gmail.com with a link to a Google Drive or Dropbox Folder labeled with the artist's full name and containing all the required images and documents listed above and labeled appropriately.
2. If you have any questions about submitting electronically, please call 423- 643-7830 or email bluegoosehollow@gmail.com

CALL TO ARTISTS TERMS

- The Bessie Smith Cultural Center accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage of artist submission materials.
- The Bessie Smith Cultural Center accepts no responsibility for costs incurred by the artist in responding to this Call to Artists.
- Selected artists/teams will be required to meet contract terms and scopes.
- It is further understood that all budgets include travel costs. **No additional and/or contingency funds will be available.**
- Respondents to this Call to Artists agree to abide by the terms and conditions of this Call and if applicable, the City of Chattanooga.
- Eventual design proposals and their copyrights will belong to the artists. The Bessie Smith Cultural Center reserves the right to use images of the designs and information from the written proposals for review and project promotional purposes.
- No submitted materials will be returned.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPOSERS

Sealed Proposals must be submitted in the format specified in this document, by **no later than 4:00 p.m., e.s.t., on August 28, 2020**, to the attention of:

Bessie Smith Cultural Center
Attn: Paula Wilkes
200 E M L King Blvd,
Chattanooga, TN 37403
[\(423\) 266-8658](tel:(423)266-8658)

E-mailed proposals are not accepted. Incomplete proposals are not accepted.

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION/QUESTIONS

All questions, and requests for information or clarification must be submitted in writing as specified here, and will be accepted **until 8:00 am, est, on August 21, 2020**, and shall be sent to:

Preferred method: email to bluegoosehollow@gmail.com with Subject line reading: **QUESTION: Bessie Smith & Blue Goose Hollow Artistic Marker**

Questions will be answered during a public webinar and information session for potential applicants on August 21, 2020.

Artwork Budget Summary Form

The summary below is the all-inclusive artwork budget. Details must be shown here or attached describing a preliminary breakdown of all predicted line item expenses, along with any other details, that will lead to a clear understanding of what will be included in the future artwork budget.

Item	Cost
Artist Fee	
Travel / Lodging	
Workshop / Presentations	
Materials	
Fabrication	
Installation	
Permits / Fees	
Site Prep / Foundation	
Equipment Rental	
Finish Work / Clear Coat / Site Repair	
Sub-contractors / Assistants / Interns	
Contingency	
Total	42,000

APPLICATION FORM | BESSIE SMITH & BLUE GOOSE HOLLOW ARTISTIC MARKER

Please complete this form and include it with all of the required submission materials.

Artist's Name: _____

Mailing Address:

City: _____ State/Country: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Cell/Mobile (optional): _____

Email address: _____

Website (optional): _____

Submitted Materials Status (if applicable):

_____ I would like for my submission to be retained for future commission opportunities.

Please do not submit original artwork. Submission materials will not be returned.

I understand and agree to all of the terms of this RFQ / Call to Artists.

Signature and Date: _____