

association for  
**PUBLIC  
ART**

October 2024  
**ANNUAL REPORT**





**The Association for Public Art (aPA)  
commissions and preserves public art  
in Philadelphia, while advancing the  
pivotal role art can play in creating and  
enhancing public space and civic life.**

## Dear aPA Friends,

It is not often that one has the privilege to lead an organization one has admired for decades. After following the extraordinary work of my Association for Public Art colleagues, Penny Balkin Bach and Laura Griffith, I now have the honor to play a meaningful role in this historic organization that contributes so vitally to the contemporary life of our city.

In my first year as aPA's Executive Director I have experienced a tremendous sense of community as you not only welcomed me to Philadelphia, but invited me to learn and participate in its rich, deep arts and culture ecosystem. I am so proud that we have continued aPA's 152 years of impactful work by creating new projects and continuing others. This year we have:

- Commissioned acclaimed Philadelphia-based artist Xenobia Bailey to create *The Radical Black Elite*, a banner inspired by Philadelphia's free Black Community in the 1700s and 1800s;
- Inaugurated our juried art commission, *Art on the Parkway*, with Rachel Hsu's interactive and meditative *The Weight of Our Living* in Maja Park;
- Curated the first-ever exhibition of our archival materials, *Public Art in Philadelphia: A Legacy Shaped by Women*, at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania;
- Preserved and maintained existing public artworks, ensuring they can be enjoyed by future generations including Paul Manship's *Duck Girl* in Rittenhouse Square, Jacques Lipchitz's *The Spirit of Enterprise* on Kelly Drive, and Frank Edwin Elwell's *Dickens and Little Nell* in Clark Park.

As we embark on a strategic planning process that will determine aPA's next phase of work, Philadelphia is also going through extensive change: major park redesigns, a shifting urban landscape, transformations in our cultural institutions, and a look toward city-wide 2026 programming. It is a pivotal time that requires the involvement of our local arts and cultural organizations, and aPA will continue to ensure that our public spaces are vibrant and engaging and reflect our diverse communities and needs.

I look forward to the next year and the exciting projects we have planned, the new partnerships we will forge, and a strong sense of purpose and identity that will carry us into the future.

Thank you for your unwavering support,



Charlotte Cohen  
Executive Director



Photo by IMAGEN FOTOGRAFI

**“It’s beautiful:  
strong yet almost  
illusive. A lovely  
surprise when  
walking on the river  
path. Thank you.”**  
- Viewer

## Maren Hassinger

### *Steel Bodies*

June 12 - November 12, 2023

The aPA brought Maren Hassinger’s *Steel Bodies* to Philadelphia as a temporary exhibition at the historic Ellen Phillips Samuel Memorial on Kelly Drive. *Steel Bodies* was the first contemporary public art exhibition at the memorial and Hassinger’s first outdoor sculpture exhibition in Philadelphia. [Read more here.](#)







“I think it’s really profound that this is her first-ever Philadelphia work.”

- Morgan Lloyd, co-founder of 1838 Black Metropolis



## Xenobia Bailey

*The Radical Black Elite*

Spring - Fall 2024

The Association for Public Art in partnership with the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), commissioned Xenobia Bailey to create the artwork, *The Radical Black Elite*, which was displayed on street pole banners on Locust and 13th Streets. Bailey’s first work in Philadelphia, the artwork includes a mid-1800s daguerreotype of a Black man collaged with the artist’s signature crocheted green, black, and gold embellishments. The artwork is inspired by her research and archival material held at HSP. [Read more here.](#)







**“A sculpture that probes your sole.”**

- Peter Crimmins,  
WHYY

## Rachel Hsu

*The Weight of Our Living*

August 1 - October 27, 2024

The *Weight of Our Living* by Philadelphia-based artist Rachel Hsu was the selected proposal for *Art on the Parkway*, a juried competition co-organized by the aPA and the Parkway Council in partnership with Philadelphia Parks & Recreation. This temporary installation, which invites the public to walk barefoot on rounded stones, is the artist’s first-ever public artwork. It was on view in Maja Park on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway as a signature highlight of The 2024 Oval. [Read more here.](#)



Photo by Constance Mensh



## Community Engagement: Events and Partnerships



**Maren Hassinger: Artist Talk** at Temple Contemporary at the Tyler School of Art and Architecture, Temple University.



**Printed Vessel Workshop** at The Oval with artist Peri Law. A *Steel Bodies* by Maren Hassinger program.



**Vessels in Clay Workshop** at the Ellen Phillips Samuel Memorial in partnership with the Clay Studio. A *Steel Bodies* by Maren Hassinger program.



## Community Engagement: Events and Partnerships



**Drawing Public Art** workshop in partnership with Fleisher Art Memorial. On site at *Iroquois*.



**Coffee with a Conservator** member event with Zach Tatti of Tatti Conservation.



**Public Art, Landmarks, and Transformations Along the Schuylkill and Historic Rittenhouse Square** walking tours in partnership with HSP and the Preservation Alliance.



## Community Engagement: Events and Partnerships



**Xenobia Bailey: Artist Talk** at HSP as part of HSP's 200th Anniversary celebration and the raising of *The Radical Black Elite* banners.

The aPA took part in *(re)FOCUS*, a citywide exhibition in 2024 that honored the 50th anniversary of the original *FOCUS* festival at Moore College of Art and Design in 1974. The aPA's offering, *(Re)FOCUS on Women in Public Art*, was a self-guided tour.

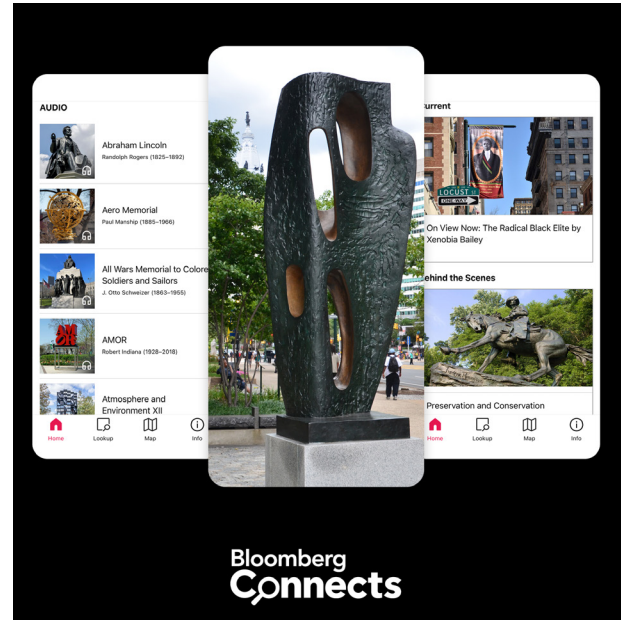


**Rachel Hsu: Artist Talk** at the Asian Arts Initiative (AAI). In conversation with Joyce Chung, AAI curator.



## Museum Without Walls: AUDIO

The aPA has been producing short audio pieces about Philadelphia’s collection of Public Art and historical sites for the **Museum Without Walls: AUDIO** program since 2010. In April, 2024, aPA launched a new guide on **Bloomberg Connects**, a free arts and culture app. The app now hosts aPA’s Museum Without Walls: AUDIO program and has had **1,142 users** in just five months. The aPA joins more than 450 cultural institutions in 24 countries and is one of the first organizations featured in Philadelphia. In the last year aPA has produced audio for Maren Hassinger’s *Steel Bodies* and Xenobia Bailey’s *The Radical Black Elite*.



## Exhibitions

In partnership with HSP as part of its 200th anniversary in 2024, aPA presented **Public Art in Philadelphia: A Legacy Shaped by Women**—an exhibition highlighting the historic accomplishments and recent contributions of women who have worked in the public art field as artists, benefactors, and leaders.

The aPA archives from 1872 to 1972 are housed at HSP. This exhibit was the first public display of aPA’s archival materials and explored both the collection at HSP, as well as contemporary materials housed at aPA.

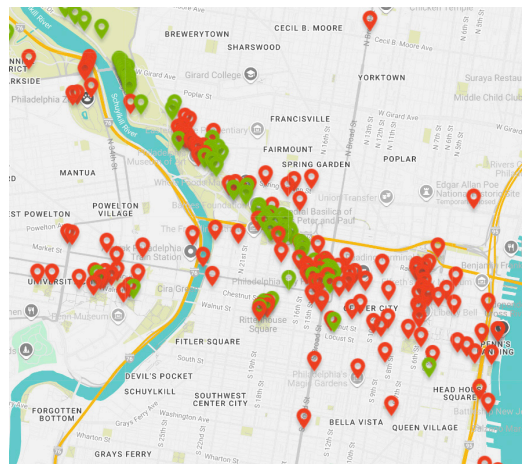




Photo courtesy The City of Philadelphia

## Open Call: Art on the Parkway

2024 was the inaugural year for *Art on the Parkway*, a program co-organized by the Association for Public Art (aPA) and the Parkway Council, in partnership with Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PPR). The program invites Philadelphia-area artists, designers, and other creatives to propose a temporary public art installation on Philadelphia's Benjamin Franklin Parkway as part of The Oval annual summer festival.



## Conservation

In addition to the works conserved through our annual conservation program, this year aPA worked with the Mann Center and the City of Philadelphia to preserve *Law, Prosperity, and Power* by Daniel Chester French. The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia recognized the Association for Public Art's outstanding conservation efforts with its **2023 Board of Directors Award** for exceptional stewardship of historic properties.



Photo by Abbe Forman Photography

## Interactive Map

The Association for Public Art maintains a robust inventory of public art in Philadelphia through an **interactive map** on our website. Each year we add numerous new works throughout the city. This map acts as a valuable resource to students, professionals in the field, as well as residents and tourists.



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Front photo: Constance Mensh

All inside photos are by Ashley Lippolis unless otherwise noted.