

TampaPublicArt



Project Title:	Ode to the Tampa Laborer
Artists:	Jim Hirschfield (American, born 1951) Sonya Ishii (American, born 1952)
Subject/Object or theme:	Seating Elements at selected stations in Ybor City and Channelside
Year Completed:	2002
Materials:	bronze, stainless steel, and terrazzo
Commissioning Agency:	City of Tampa
Architect/Design Professional:	The Jan Abell Kenneth Garcia Partnership
Location:	3 streetcar stations in Ybor City and 3 in Channelside

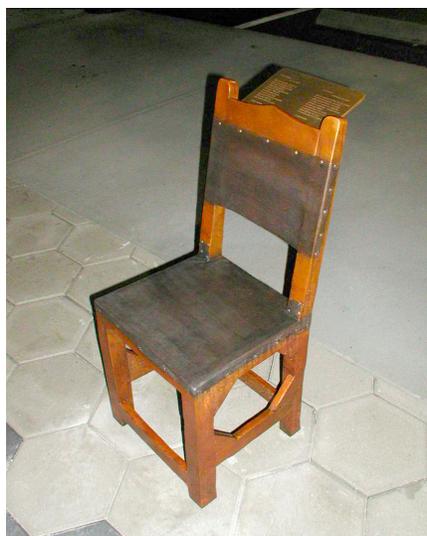
Project Description

The Historic Electric Streetcar Project is a collaborative project involving multiple interest groups that include the Streetcar Committee, HARTline, Inc., and the City of Tampa. The objective of the Public Art component was to create, preferably through a functional element, a unique and individual identity for each site and station, yet also serve as a visual linkage for the entire project.

Artist Concept

This functional art will celebrate the lives of the workers that helped create the vibrant City of Tampa. The origins of our inspiration for Tampa's Electric Streetcar Stations can be found in Tampa's unique history and the cigar and agriculture industry that played a vital role in the city's development. Like so many American cities, Tampa's uniqueness and character arises out of its immigrant populations. Its development echoes many other American Cities' early histories where entrepreneurs invested capital, and immigrants provided the work force; together they fueled the American dream.

Contemplating a strategy for art development and its placement, we studied the history of the area. We were captured with the "unrest" of the workers and the poignancy of the



Lector. The Lector, paid directly by the cigar factory workers, read from the daily newspapers, dime store novels

and the classics. Not only did this help to pass the long monotonous hours involved in making cigars; inadvertently the cigar worker became well informed and educated. We decided to replicate the cigar factory worker chair, something very personal to the worker, in bronze, to serve as functional seating at selected stations. To recall the lector, selections of poetry, written in Spanish, Italian, and English, by Bay area poets, Silvia Curbelo and Peter Meinke are engraved on each of the chairs.

For Channelside, where the labor force was predominately centered on the docks and the shipping industry, stevedores once used to load the ships, have been reconfigured into stainless and wood seating. Terrazzo orange crates will also recall the importance of the citrus industry, and function as seating elements. Poetry and quotes are also present on the stevedores, with some in German to reference the immigrant groups that spoke multiple languages including German, Romanian, Lithuanian, and Yiddish.

The mission of the City of Tampa, Public Art Program is to promote the involvement of artists in projects throughout the city that enhance the physical environment and celebrate Tampa's unique character and identity.