



For Immediate Release

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ART TAKES SHAPE IN HISTORIC DOWNTOWN BUDA

By Maggie Gillespie, Main Street Manager

The City of Buda and the Inspired Minds Art Center (IMAC) were recently presented with a gift in the form of a sculpture by lifetime Buda artist, Steven Harris. The sculpture was dedicated to the City of Buda for the city's support of the arts and artists in the Buda Community and to IMAC for providing the community an avenue to the arts and an opportunity to experience the creative process. Named Elysian, the sculpture is constructed of welded steel, cement, and ceramic and represents a symbol of inspiration for artists of all ages. Elysian was officially dedicated during the inaugural Plein Air Fest in historic downtown Buda and accepted by the City Council in September.



Elysian
By Artist Steven Harris

"I have been a resident of Buda for over 40 years." Steven Harris said, "In that time, I've witnessed impressive growth in the city [and] in the emerging art scene highlighted by the addition of art galleries, art supply store, artist collectives and most notably, the Inspired Minds Art Center. A lot of thought, planning and approval goes into the look and design of a city's downtown area. Despite all the growth and change, this City Council and the ones before it have done a fantastic job of maintaining the look and feel of a classic small town with a lot of character. My hope is that the sculpture motivates or inspires people to find a creative outlet that benefits their soul."

Steven Harris grew up in Buda and spent most of his childhood in art studios, art shows and going to gatherings at

other artist's homes. His father, Frasier Harris, is also a lifelong professional artist, so art was a part of Steven's everyday life. Artist yards always had artwork on display so when Steven grew up and had his own yard, he too filled it with his work. When he met co-owner of the Inspired Minds Art Center, Sinead Whiteside, and learned of the new art center concept she was proposing, the idea of Elysian was born. It started with an initial figure constructed of clay and cut into segments of about 12" long. Hundreds of pieces of rod were then cut into 1-3" pieces and individually bent to match the contours of the clay model. Once the body was fully assembled, wire mesh was attached on the backside and the finishing touches were made to Elysian. When asked about having his art on display in downtown, Steven said "The sculpture being installed at one of the most visible points in town is an absolute honor."

Sinead Whiteside, co-owner of the Inspired Minds Art Center added, "Steve Harris is a major inspiration for opening Inspired Minds Art Center. Back when the art center was just an idea, he told us that he wanted a place to belong to where he could be a part of a community of artists. My business partner, Susan Guerra and I have created that place with the help of so many people. Steve sculpted Elysian as a thank you gift for all of the effort that has been put into opening the center and as a symbol of inspiration, but he has also perfectly captured and personified Inspired Minds Art Center." She continued, "The stance of Elysian, with arms outstretched and face towards the heavens, reflects the art center's mission to be welcoming, open-minded, malleable, accepting, and a place to connect creatively with oneself and with the entire community. We thank Steve Harris so deeply for this reminder to all of us to always stay open to inspiration because beautiful things are bound to come from it!"

Murals

Along with the dedication of Elysian, a set of murals were also dedicated to Inspired Minds Art Center on behalf of the Buda Area Artists Collective (BAAC). The murals house the upper story windows of the former City Council Chambers

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BUDA TX
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and to serve to darken the windows for performances by the Hill Country Theatre Group in the building. The collection, coined “Stained Glass Visions” is composed of eight 3’ x 6’ panels, donated by Eastside Lumber and Decking. Each painting was created by local artists that donated their time and talent to bring these beautiful, creative, fun works for art to the Buda community. Artists for this project included Joy Bliss, Amanda Rainey, Linda Chido, Gena McGill, Sinead Whiteside, Cristina White-Jones, Jessica Mason, and Ronald Gross. The paintings will remain through 2021 at which point, they will be auctioned and funds will be donated for scholarships to the IMAC summer arts program.



Stained Glass Visions
Buda Area Artists Collective

The dedications come as a resurgence of the arts has come to life in Buda. “Buda has deep roots in the arts,” said Maggie Gillespie, Buda Main Street Program Manager. “In recent years, we’ve seen the artist community come together to connect and create and it has inspired us to include artists in our strategic planning. We want to highlight the arts and potentially create a cultural arts district where artists of all walks of life can be celebrated.”

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About the Inspired Minds Art Center:

Inspired Minds Arts Center, locally owned and operated, supports both local artists and the community by joining them together to inspire a dialogue of creativity, passion, fine art, and a celebration of culture.

About the Buda Artist Collective:

The Buda Area Artists Collective is an inclusive group of artists who gather to Nurture, Promote, Encourage and Share within Hays County, Texas. They seek to experience more art in the everyday, and their aim is to participate in the connection of the Arts and their Community.