

Public Art Proposal
for the
Southgate Street School

By
TJ Dixon

Table of Contents	Page
Letter of Interest.....	3
Artist’s Resume.....	4
Artist’s Statement.....	5
Narrative Description of Project.....	6
Physical Description.....	6
Location.....	6
Note about the model.....	7
Attachment Requirements.....	7
Safety, Liability & Accessibility.....	7
Maintenance.....	7
Estimated Project Budget.....	8
Site Specific Photographs.....	9 - 10

Letter of Interest

My interest in the Southgate Street School was cultivated through a public art class at Northern Kentucky University where I am pursuing a degree in art. Interviews with two individuals who attended the Southgate Street School, discussions with Dr. Brian Hackett who has researched the school, and my personal research into the school's history brought this building and its former occupants to life.

I discovered this school was a source of great pride among the African-American community. The dedicated teachers held students to high standards, instilling a sense they could achieve anything...could be anything...if they applied themselves to the task. The students, according to their self-description, were actively engaged in learning, with their classmates, and with their community. They enjoyed attending school.

I propose a small bronze sculpture to honor the learning that occurred here, to commemorate those who passed through these doors, and to remind visitors of the building's historical significance.

I do not seek to interpret the African-American experience during this time...nor could I...but, I do seek to capture the simple joy of a child engaged in learning, and sometimes torn between studies and playtime.

The sculpture would consist of an open textbook, a composition book, and an apple arranged on the concrete cap of the wall by the front stairs...as if a child briefly abandoned his or her studies to participate in a quick game of catch or jump rope. A dog-eared page in the book keeps the child's place and there is a sense the student will soon return. (There are options for the surface appearance of these pages. See *Narrative Description of the Project* and the *Estimated Project Budget* for additional information.) Whether the apple is for the child's lunch or to appease a teacher for a late assignment is for the viewer to decide. There is an alternative if attachment to the concrete cap is problematic. See *Narrative Description of the Project* and the *Estimated Project Budget* for additional information.)

The sculpture, measuring no more than 12.5"W X 12.5"L X 4"H would be cast in bronze. Gradual weathering from the elements will create a patina on the sculpture's surface, lending a sense that the school and its former students are now part of history.

I envision this piece as a celebration to the city for its commitment to educate all residents, to the African-American community leaders whose financial support was crucial, to the parents and teachers who made learning a priority, and to the students who graduated to become actively contributing members of the community.

Resume of TJ Dixon

Employment History

I retired from the Internal Revenue Service in 2013 following a distinguished 37-year career where I received multiple quality and performance awards, including the highly coveted Commissioner's Award. My career spanned positions in tax law, personnel management, public affairs, and strategic communication planning. I was the face of the IRS for more than 30 years working closely with media in Ohio and West Virginia. I ended my career as a strategic communications planner where I managed communication teams and designed and implemented communication plans on issues with a national scope.

Education

BFA in Theater, West Virginia University, 1972

Journalism and Public Relations, University of South Carolina, 1985

Marketing, University of Texas, 1988

Integrated Marketing Communications, Northwestern University, 1992

Drawing, Manifest Drawing Center, Cincinnati, Ohio, 2016

Blacksmithing, John C. Campbell School, Brasstown, North Carolina, 2017

Enrolled since 2015 as a Studio Arts major, Northern Kentucky University

Exhibitions

My work was juried into the Northern Kentucky University Student Exhibition in 2016 and 2017.

Professional Affiliations & Community Involvement

Member, Northern Kentucky University Ceramics and Sculpture Society

Member, Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild

Member, Clay Alliance

Contributor, Miami Valley Empty Bowls

Contributor, Northern Kentucky University Empty Bowls

Artist's Statement

“Simple beauty is frequently overlooked when we value only the complex.”

Narrative description of the project

Physical description

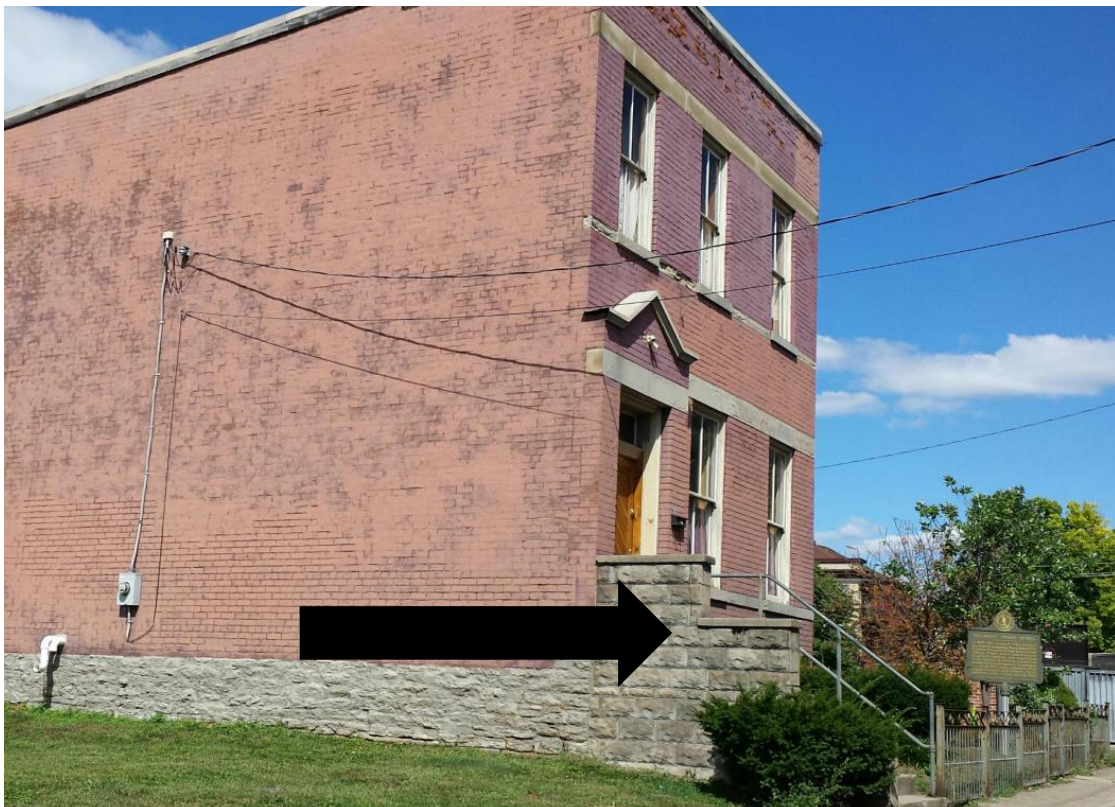
The sculpture will be molded in wax and cast in bronze using the lost wax casting method, which captures intricate detail (much more than the clay model submitted with this proposal). There are three options for the surface appearance of the book's pages: 1) Use an imprint as on the clay model (the proposed budget is based on this less expensive method); 2) inscribe the pages with a quote selected by the client, which could be a dedication to the students, historical quote, etc.; or 3) a 3-D printing of pages from the coursebook inside the museum.

All foundry work will be performed by Casting Arts and Technology, Cincinnati, Ohio. The casting process uses "gates" for pouring bronze into the mold. At least one of the gates would be left on the piece as a means of securely attaching the sculpture.

The sculptural piece will be life size, measuring approximately 12.5"W X 12.5"L X 4"H. It will feature an open textbook, a composition book commonly used in school, and an apple.

Location

I propose attaching the sculpture to the concrete cap of the wall flanking the building's front stairs where it will be visible to those entering the former school/current museum.



If attachment to the exterior wall cap is problematic due to historical concerns, there are other options, such as fabricating and attaching it to a pedestal or bronze bench. These will of course increase the budget.

Note about the model

The model submitted with this proposal was created in clay, a less expensive and faster to produce material. This model does not capture the fine detail that I will be able to produce with bronze. The material also lacks bronze's durability. While finishing this model, the clay apple unexpectedly rolled off my work surface and shattered. Like "all the King's horses and all the King's men," I was not able to successfully put the apple back together again...and there was not enough time to make another. My sincere apologies that this model does not meet my normal standards of excellence.

Attachment requirements

The "gates" used in pouring the bronze will create rods which are integral to the piece. Most of these rods will be removed during the chasing process, but at least one will remain on the bottom of the sculpture as a means of securely attaching the piece to the concrete wall cap. Attachment to the wall cap will require drilling through the concrete cap to accommodate the rod(s) and applying an epoxy cement to hold the sculpture permanently in place.

Safety, Liability & Accessibility

The sculpture will not be located within a walkway and should not create a tripping or falling hazard. I do not anticipate sharp surfaces that would create a cutting or impaling injury. This sculpture will not impede building accessibility to differently abled people.

Maintenance

The sculpture material is highly durable and will have no specific maintenance requirements other than general cleaning to remove accumulated dirt and environmental pollution. The surface of the sculpture will gradually acquire a patina with age. Although bronze is fairly damage resistant, harm could occur from vandalism or other unforeseen circumstances. Neither the artist or Northern Kentucky University assume any responsibility for cleaning or repairs after the sculpture is successfully installed. An art conservator, Northern Kentucky University Ceramics and Sculpture Department or I can be asked to submit a bid for such issues, if they arise.

Estimated Project Budget for Southgate School

Materials and Fabrication		
• Foundry fee for pouring bronze, chasing & polishing	850	
• Technical support	900	
• Supplies	----	
1. Wax @ 4 per lb	40	
2. Consumables	100	
3. Rubber for mold Poly Tec 74-20	300	
• Specialized tools	100	
<i>Subtotal for Materials and Fabrication</i>		2290
Contingency		500
Total Estimated Project Cost		<u>\$2790</u>

Client options that will affect cost:

- Inscribe the pages with a quote selected by the client, which could be a dedication to the students, historical quote, etc. or a 3-D printing of pages from the coursebook inside the museum. Either of these will have a minimal impact of the final cost; and
- Fabricate and attach the piece to a pedestal or bronze bench. Either of these will significantly affect the budget.

I will gladly check and submit costs for either or both of these options based on client interest.

Site Specific Photographs



