

# *Man of Fire*

**ARTIST:** Kim Yasuda

**COMPLETED:** 1998

**SITE:** The Paseo between Market and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets linking Cesar Chavez Plaza and San José State University, San José, CA 95113

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** 3

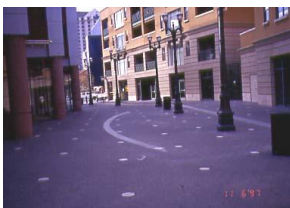
## **ABOUT THE PROJECT**

Man of Fire is commemoration to the great and influential teacher and civic leader Dr. Ernesto Galarza. The artwork references Dr. Galarza's life-long pursuit of bridging academic and civil life. The design of this commemorative work seeks to physically and conceptually connect San Jose State University with Plaza de Cesar Chavez, in the heart of the City's downtown. There artwork is composed of 3 key elements:



### Library Table

The centerpiece is a monumental library/work table, located in the Fairmont Hotel block of the Paseo across Market Street from Plaza de Cesar Chavez. This element references many facets of Dr. Galarza's life work, including academia, poetry, education, labor organizing and family. The surface of the cast-concrete library table contains inlaid bronze farm tools, a cast-bronze field-worker's hat, photo-etched black granite portraits, photo-etched ceramic tiles and bronze text. The table's relief surface is designed to encourage pedestrians to view and touch the inlaid elements.



### Cast Bronze Chair

At the west end of the table, facing Plaza de Cesar Chavez, an empty cast-bronze chair with a wooden seat serves as a metaphor for Dr. Galarza as the field worker who took his scholarly practice into the world. The chair is a functional element, intended to encourage visitors to sit and explore the content of table's surface.

### Ribbons of Terrazzo

The ribbons of terrazzo, 11" wide and of varying length, lace through the Paseo paving in each of the four blocks. Designed to have a subtle physical and visual impact upon the Paseo, these ribbons are intended to draw the pedestrian through the length of the walkway. The terrazzo is inlaid with bronze text, in both English and Spanish, containing personal recollections from Dr. Galarza's family, friends and colleagues about his life and work.



### **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Kim Yasuda's site-specific installations incorporate a range of media to activate both interior exhibition and outdoor public space. Her three-dimensional works investigate the relationship between identity and location within the modern landscape. Her current investigations of the spatial realm center on ways in which creative practices influence social transformation. Her work has been presented in international exhibitions and major arts institutions in the United States. She has been the recipient of visual arts fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, US/Japan Foundation, Howard Foundation, Joan Mitchell Foundation in Sculpture and Anonymous was a Woman Foundation. Her public commissions include projects throughout California, including subway facilities for the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Los Angeles and permanent public installations for the Hollywood Redevelopment Agency. She received her Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Southern California.

**PUBLIC ART PROJECT MANAGER:** Mary Rubin

### **ABOUT THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM**

The City of San José Public Art Program seeks to build community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enhance the civic landscape. Through active community engagement with artists, public art projects strive to reflect the City's ethnic diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future.

The Public Art Program is part of the City of San José Office of Cultural Affairs, a division of the Office of Economic Development. The Public Art Program was established by a 1984 municipal ordinance that provides 2% for art in City capital improvement projects, and 1% for art in eligible private development.

For further information and photos, please contact the City of San José Public Art Program.

Office of Cultural Affairs ~ Public Art Program  
365 S. Market Street, San José, CA 95113  
408.277.5144 ☎ 408.277.3160 📠  
E-mail: [sanjosepublicartprogram@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:sanjosepublicartprogram@sanjoseca.gov)  
[http://www.sanjoseculture.org/pub\\_art](http://www.sanjoseculture.org/pub_art)

