

## *Waterscape*

**ARTISTS:** Anna Valentina Murch & Douglas Hollis

**SITE:** San Jose City Hall

**ADDRESS:** 200 East Santa Clara Street, San José, CA 95113

**COMPLETION:** August 2005

**MATERIALS:** Granite, stainless steel, water



### **ABOUT THE ARTWORK**

As part of the development of the new San José Civic Center, the Public Art Program of the City of San José commissioned artists Anna Valentina Murch and Douglas Hollis to design an artwork for the plaza of the New City Hall. The artists' design is a water sculpture inspired by the natural geological and artesian conditions underlying the San José region. Equally important is the intent to create a symbol for the future, one that celebrates innovation and change as an ephemeral experience.

The specific design of *Waterscape* is composed of two topographic fields of monumental granite slabs. The fields slope from Santa Clara Street toward the New City Hall plaza. Water flowing down the surface of the field laps onto the plaza in subtle ripples. Water also flows over the vertical stone on the fountain edges, disappearing beneath the plaza, creating walls of water that define the perimeter along Santa Clara Street. The water within the field is programmed to respond to changes in time of day, temperature, season and/or availability of water to create different visual, sonic and atmospheric qualities.

Within the field are groupings of stone boulder surrounded by concealed water jet nozzles that will bubble and swirl around these boulders as if they are emerging or submerging from the water flow much like boulders in a river. Additional boulders are set into the plaza providing a variety of seating opportunities next to water feature.

Telescoping linear "vaness" of stainless steel extend from the field and plaza 20-28 feet into the air. These vanes deliver different qualities of fog through the air above the plaza to cool it on warm days, and catch and refract prismatic light. The vanes move subtly, and form a delicate three-dimensional transparent screen, contributing a layer of texture and a transitional scale between the pedestrian and monumentality of the building.

*Waterscape* is activated by a series of programmed events that people move through and around, explore and discover; a series of time-based movements engaging the sidewalk on Santa Clara Street and flowing inward to the plaza. Programming of the artwork considers sonic and active qualities of the water, the velocity of water, water jet activity, and the fog vanes. The piece is illuminated at night for a distinctive evening identity.

### **ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

Anna Valentina Murch and Doug Hollis have been working in the field of public art for more than 20 years. Ms. Murch is well regarded for her aesthetic vision and her community interaction. Her site-responsive work uses transparency, reflection, sound and time as visual phenomena. Mr. Hollis has extensive expertise in creating large-scale artworks that are site-specific to their physical and social environment. Mr. Hollis often works with simple tools, utilizing natural phenomena such as sound, wind, or water. Both Ms. Murch and Mr. Hollis live in San Francisco.

### **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 a division of San José's Office of Cultural Affairs. The San José Arts Commission oversees the Public Art Program, 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 San José Public Art Program.

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