

# Transit Shelter Public Art Project Fact Sheet



City of Tempe  
Cultural Services  
3340 South Rural Road  
Tempe, AZ 85282  
480-350-5287  
480-350-5161 FAX  
www.tempe.gov/arts



Photo: Craig Smith

**Title:** Transit Shelter

**Location:** Southeast corner of Apache Boulevard and Rural Road

**Artists:** Virginia Senior and Jeff Oesterle

**Completion:** 1995 and 2000

**Medium:** Metal and concrete

**Description:** The Transit Shelter features a lively fusion of shapes and textures and consists of one large canopy shelter which resides on two center columns of a quarter-inch steel plate, gracefully tapering up to the paired 2-foot by 4-foot steel tubes which are bent into a smooth and gentle arc. The canopy consists of five perforated, triangular steel panels which provide protection from the sun while concrete and custom tile unite to create three individual bench seats. Two leaning rails provide additional support for those needing to rest against it or when seating benches are occupied. Tempe's goal with its Artist Designed Transit Shelters is to encourage people to use the public transportation by making it attractive, innovative and functional.

**Funding:** The project was funded through city of Tempe Capital Improvement Project Percent for Art funds with additional funding from the Arizona Commission on the Arts and the Federal Transit Administration.

**Artist biography:** Virginia Senior received her degree in architecture from Arizona State University in 1985. Since then, she has worked in architectural firms in Los Angeles and Boston. In 1992 she relocated to Phoenix to form the award-winning *Senior/Oesterle Architecture + Art* with partners Jeff Oesterle and Rebecca Senior. Virginia Senior has a solid architectural foundation in the public sector, especially in the areas of transportation and housing. Completed projects include Dudley Station, Transitway South Station and Jamaica Plain Housing. Virginia Senior is the daughter of a silversmith and excels within many artistic disciplines including: architecture, furniture design, sculpture, jewelry and graphic design.

**Artist statement:** In thinking about what a transit shelter represents, that is exactly what is called for: a beacon, an obelisk, a marker that calls itself out. A bus stop serves as a destination and a departure point simultaneously. Traffic whizzes by, allowing only the briefest glance from the motorist. Art at 45 (miles per hour) requires simple forms understandable in a blink. But for the transit rider, it must also hold interest on a closer inspection. We chose to pick up on Tempe's wave of modernism as opposed to historicism. Throughout the transit shelter we have used clean, simple forms. On our own artistic level, simple forms used repetitively is a satisfying direction to explore. Simple does not mean boring, rather every piece has a purpose and each is integral to creating the whole design.