

Hewson Hohokam Center

Art in Private Development Fact Sheet



City of Tempe
Cultural Services
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www.tempe.gov/arts

Artwork

Hohokam Reflections



Photo: Craig Smith

Development

Hewson Hohokam Center

Address

1480 S. Hohokam Drive

Artists

Southwest Public Art Group: Niki Glen & Helen Helwig

Completion

1998

Material

Hand-made Tiles and Stone

Description: Three curved walls by artists Niki Glen and Helen Helwig were created to frame and enhance the building's entryway. The surface of the walls displays beautiful tile and river rock mosaics surrounded by cultured stone and colored, textured Dryvit. The colors, textures and shapes of the handmade clay tiles were inspired by the ancient Indian cultures of the area, the native plants of the Sonoran Desert and the Rio Salado riparian system, as well as the architectural and landscaping elements of the site. Many symbolic references to night and day, the stars and the sun and constellations and the importance of water, the earth and many plants and vegetables as well as the river for the lives of Native Americans living in the desert were alluded to in this piece. The title of the piece refers to both the ancient Hohokam culture and the mirror effect of the glass entrance as it reflects the sculptures. The overall composition represents the layers within the earth and connects the past with the present. The artist- designed entryway creates a warm and friendly environment to be enjoyed as people enter or walk past.

Funding: This project was funded by the individual developer as a requirement of Tempe's Art in Private Development Ordinance.

Artists' biography: Southwest Public Art Group (SWPAG) specializes in high-quality public, corporate and individual art commissions that both delight the eye and enhance community life. Professional artists Helen Helwig and Niki Glen work together to create high quality public art. Helwig brings more than 25 years of experience in clay design and fabrication, and Glen has directed more than 50 community public art projects. Both artists have directed many large-scale public art installations. Recent projects have included installations at a hospital, a public library, a new office complex entryway and a bus shelter. Current projects underway include two freeway underpasses, a neighborhood sidewalk mosaic and a memorial at a community college. Helwig is an award-winning clay artist who develops innovative glaze techniques and Glen is an outstanding designer and muralist.

Artists' statement: The artists focus upon mixed media mosaics and emphasize textures, relief and unified color schemes. The artists have found collaboration to be a powerful tool in the creative process and have worked with other artists, architects, engineers, city officials and landscape architects on a variety of public art projects. Often the artists develop a sculptural structure or work with a new construction to showcase the mosaics. As a result the artists have often designed block, stone or metal forms as an integral part of the artwork. Each piece is site specific and the colors often relate to or are inspired by the colors of the surrounding environment. Helwig and Glen welcome and encourage public participation in many pieces. SWPAG is also committed to art that uplifts and educates the community.

Tempe's Art in Private Development program is managed by city of Tempe Cultural Services staff with input from the Tempe Municipal Arts Commission, a 15-member, mayor-appointed advisory board.