

Desert Shards

Public Art Project Fact Sheet



City of Tempe
Cultural Services
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Photo: Craig Smith

Title: Desert Shards

Location: Bus stop in front of the Tempe Historical Museum and the Tempe Library Complex on the southwest corner of Rural Road and Southern Avenue.

Artist: Linda Haworth

Completion: 2001

Medium: Laser cut steel, paint, etched granite and concrete.

Description: Four 4 by 8-foot steel panels show images from the night desert sky. One screen, two panels painted purple, shows yucca moths pollinating yucca plants in the moonlight. The other screen, painted orange, shows night blooming cereus cacti. The granite cubes designed for seating space have sandblasted quotes about the desert by authors from 1904 to 2001. Images of ancient pottery and other desert botanical influenced images are sandblasted into the granite. Nearby, the artist asked that mesquite trees for shade and desert verbena ground cover be added. 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 made available through the Tempe Transit Tax.

Artist biography: Linda Haworth was born in Patagonia, and raised just north in Tucson. She studied art at the University of Arizona and later received a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Ceramics from Northern Arizona University in 1982. She has worked full time in public art, clay, pottery and sculpture for 28 years. Linda Haworth has completed four public art installations in Tucson and two bus stops in Tempe. Linda lives and works in Hillsboro, Ore. She has completed two light rail stations for the city of Portland. She installed cast glass sculpture for a Seattle Public Library and the city of Hillsboro's Civic Center.

Artist statement: Linda worked with the community to determine people's desires for a successful transit shelter. She focused on increasing the shade with angles of the roof, screens cut out with desert botanical imagery (which gives incredible shadow art that shifts with the angle of the sun) and additions of closer, lower and more human scale mesquite trees. She artfully incorporated the concept of shade with desert imagery featuring botanical subject matter such as night blooming cereus, horned toad lizards and yucca moths.