

Tempe Public Art Project Fact Sheet



City of Tempe
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Photo: Craig Smith

Title: Temple

Location: Scudder Park, South Lakeshore Drive, ½ mile north of Guadalupe Road

Artist: Barbara Grygutis

Completion: 1988

Medium: The walkway, plaza and steps are constructed with rose-colored sandstone. The sculptural forms are fabricated with concrete and covered with cobalt blue, high-fired stoneware tile.

Description: "Temple" transforms the site into a public plaza and is a site-specific, environmentally sensitive work of art for this neighborhood park. The east and west sides of the park are linked by an earthen bridge, the dominant sculptural element. The sides of the mound are punctuated by a series of steps, cut from the same sandstone as the bridge, which rise from the floor of the park. Along the south, the bridge fans to create the public plaza which is designed to have many of the qualities of an island and functions well for both individual and group use. The west end of the bridge is flanked by blue vertical forms that create a gateway and a sense of entrance to the space. These forms are repeated and further articulated in the plaza area. Special culverts in the mound allow water levels to be maintained on either side, as the site serves as a collection basin for water run-off and is also flood irrigated. The cool, cobalt blue of the ceramic material brings a vibrant color to the park and makes a visual link to the blue Arizona sky. Mesquite trees surround the plaza for shade.

Funding: The project was funded through city of Tempe Capital Improvement Project Percent for Art funds.

Artist biography: Barbara Grygutis holds BFA and MFA degrees from the University of Arizona. She has created works of art for public spaces since 1971, and has completed 50 commissions of public art throughout the country. These large-scale, site-specific environmental sculptures of tile, stone, earth and steel are, according to the artist, "...thematically based and create visual statements about the communities for which they are created. Among the sculptural elements the viewer can experience the interplay between art and nature." Grygutis has been involved in numerous public art projects in Arizona. She was involved in establishing an Art in Public Places Master Plan for downtown Tucson's Development Corporation.

Artist statement: "Temple" was designed to form a unique public space in the heart of Scudder Park. The space that I created serves as a place to congregate, to contemplate, to perform. The space will lend itself to spontaneous and planned, formal and informal performances.