

**“WATERSHEDS” PROSPECTUS**  
**McColl Center for Visual Art Environmental Artist-in-Residence**

**DEADLINE:** Monday, August 9, 2010, by 5 PM

**RESIDENCY PERIOD:** September 7 - November 22, 2010

**DISCIPLINES**

Open to local, national and international artists who work with the environment, land, and other natural elements, as well as those artists who use other media and would like to apply it in a beneficial way to the environment are encouraged to apply.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE**

McColl Center for Visual Art’s Environmental Artist in Residence (E-AIR) will foster a series of art projects that enrich our experiences, build awareness, understanding and give ecological advantage to our watersheds.

This program is founded on the principle that artists and design professionals, in collaboration with other disciplines, as well as scientists and habitat specialists, can create remarkable biodegradable works of art that help restore damaged areas and encourage sustainability and stewardship of our watersheds.

The E-AIR residency is focused on fostering four primary goals: using art, science, education and community to create positive impacts on the natural environment through scientifically relevant, meaningful and beneficial art.

The model for this residency comes from the Intersections Watershed Sculpture installation created by 2009 Artist-in-Residence Daniel McCormick. ([www.creatingathread.blogspot.com](http://www.creatingathread.blogspot.com) and [www.danielmccormick.blogspot.com](http://www.danielmccormick.blogspot.com))

**ENVIRONMENTAL ART**

This program will foster a series of ecological art projects that enrich our experiences, and build awareness, understanding and appreciation of our watersheds. Projects will be strategically sited along Charlotte blueways, greenways and other areas accessible to the public. This is an opportunity for artists to advance their art practice in a new genre, by using technologies of urban ecology that they can apply to other sites, other urban and rural environments, and in their own communities.

Through research, the artist will be informed and work with specialists to investigate ecological issues. The artist will create manageable installations that will give advantage to ecological systems, and work towards restoring their equilibrium. These works, sculptures, installations, and other art should initially give aesthetic weight to the restoration process, but through natural succession into the land or environment, the art becomes part of a restoration process. These art installations may evolve into a more ephemeral state as the restoration process is established, and the artist presence becomes less and less apparent.

Prospective artists should consider:

- a. The watershed as ‘the big idea’.
- b. Creating art that allows people to think about the greater Catawba River watershed, its context, and the larger scale of the watersheds on which we depend.

- c. The ephemeral nature of water as a finite and crucial resource.
- d. The opportunity to build public understanding of the watershed and our relationship with it.
- e. The opportunity to use art to engage the community and inspire and educate others through strategically placed ecological elements.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Artists will have access to area professionals and experts on best management practices (BMPs) as project concepts are developed. Projects should be designed to include these recommendations so that they give advantage to natural systems. Artists are encouraged to use sites and materials in unexpected ways to explore current ideas and issues about the watershed.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Engaging and interacting with the community is an important focus for the Environmental Artist-in-Residence. Selected artists should approach the design of their projects with creative strategies for community engagement.

### **WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

Artists should be comfortable working outdoors and with the land and natural elements, rather than just creating art that is placed on the land. Through the residency the artist should give to the community, leaving their art in the community rather than packing it up and taking it home.

The artist may collaborate with various specialists and others who work on the site in order to define the goal of the work they will create, so that it is beneficial to the watershed and contributes scientifically relevant, meaningful and beneficial environmental art. Additionally, the artist will build relationships with volunteers and engage them in the art-making process. Artists should be comfortable working with site manager, management level personnel responsible for the site, as well as, field workers, scientists, field engineers and technical experts.

The residency presents an opportunity for artists and design professionals to have beneficial impacts on the natural environment while making a contribution to a thriving and active urban community through creation of art, civic engagement, education and outreach.

### **TYPICAL SITES:**

The sites chosen for this call represent significant opportunity for artists to create installations that work with the watershed rather than just placed on it. Artists are encouraged to use sites and materials in unexpected ways to explore current ideas and issues about the environment. The scope of projects will be wide-ranging and should include art with a foundation in science that engages community through education and outreach.

### **SITE #1: Freedom Park**

- This is a high traffic section of one of Charlotte's most popular and prized parks. Freedom Park.
- The sites include eroded trail cuts and creek banks as well as riparian buffer areas overgrown with non-natives that adjacent to the Carolina Thread Trail.
- Sites are near The Charlotte Nature Museum, which has a well-organized outreach network and programs that attract volunteers and students.
- Art opportunities include art/science focused projects around:
  - Erosion
  - Water runoff issues

- Neighborhood access
- Invasive species
- Riparian buffers
- Creek bank stabilization

### **SITE 2: Upper Little Sugar Creek**

- This site is in a redeveloped area of Uptown Charlotte. It is adjacent to a city street, and borders a private K-12 school.
- Project site is a retention pond that drains into Upper Little Sugar Creek
- Erosion is silting-in pond
- Pond is on City property—maintained by Trinity Episcopal School
- Trinity School has “adopted” this creek for the city’s Adopt-a-Creek clean-up program
- *Relief Charlotte* volunteer creek planting day in 11/2010
- School is interested in watershed ecology as well as water quality testing & improvement projects

Click the following link for the Extended Site Analysis:

[http://www.mccollcenter.org/documents/Expanded\\_Site\\_Analysis.pdf](http://www.mccollcenter.org/documents/Expanded_Site_Analysis.pdf)

### **SITE ALLOCATION**

Artists may request a particular area or site but final site allocation will be determined upon site visits and discussion between the artists and residency team. After doing research on the sites, the artist may elect to provide their own projects. Additional sites may be considered dependent on final program scope.

### **WHO SHOULD APPLY?**

This call for expression of interest includes emerging, mature or senior artists. Artists who work with the environment, land, and other natural elements, such as earthworks, as well as those artists who use other media that can be applied in a beneficial way to the environment, are encouraged to apply. This does not preclude responses by artists whose chosen media is not environmental or land art. Artists who use other media such as: new media, social media to build community, interactive arts, fiberarts mixed media are also encouraged to apply.

Click here for the application: [http://www.mccollcenter.org/documents/EAIR\\_Application\\_2010.pdf](http://www.mccollcenter.org/documents/EAIR_Application_2010.pdf)

### **CONTACT**

For more information contact Ce Scott, Creative Director at [cscott@mccollcenter.org](mailto:cscott@mccollcenter.org)

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

### **Charlotte Mecklenburg Parks and Recreation Department**

<http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/Park+and+Rec/Home.htm>

### **Storm water Publications**

<http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/StormWater/Educational+Resources/Media+and+Publications.htm>

### **What is storm water pollution?**

<http://www.charmeck.org/NR/rdonlyres/ehuspr4ur6f77eqp2zxgfsgekqgavzmvhehjio6r3bnvplpuxrsbceueiov47vxc7j4c6d63jyulnjsalsz256zj6b/waterpollutionfactsheet.pdf>

### **A citizens Guide to storm water pollution a booklet**

<http://www.charmeck.org/NR/rdonlyres/e7baqce64mwotfaxd2jrjnag7n3tsqlthm3f5b5yv24dt4igdkxpy2x25kus6hhrwb7ncqvtrlvyhvehxieiqyfp3a/SWSbooklet07bcompressed.pdf>

### **Water & Land Resources**

<http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/LUESA/Water+and+Land+Resources/Home.htm>

### **Division of Soil and Water**

<http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/>

### **Urban Cost Share Program**

<http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/LUESA/Water+and+Land+Resources/Conservation/UCSP.htm>

### **Homeowner Info**

<http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/GWS/Homeowner+Info/home.htm>

### **What can be legally put down a storm drain?**

<http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/StormWater/Storm+Drain/Home.htm>

### **Restore Flood Plans**

<http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/StormWater/Educational+Resources/Why+floodplains+are+beneficial.htm>

### **Soil Testing**

[www.mecklenburgconservation.com](http://www.mecklenburgconservation.com)

### **Hazardous Material Recycling**

[www.wipeoutwaste.com](http://www.wipeoutwaste.com)

### **Original MCVA AIR project in fall of 2009:**

[www.creatingathread.blogspot.com](http://www.creatingathread.blogspot.com) and [www.danielmccormick.blogspot.com](http://www.danielmccormick.blogspot.com)

## **FAQs**

### **How are you defining environmental art?**

The artist will be informed and work with teams to investigate an ecological problem with manageable installations that will give advantage to ecological systems, and work towards restoring their equilibrium. These works should initially give aesthetic weight to the restoration process, but through natural succession into the land or environment, the art becomes part of a restoration process. In other words, scientifically relevant, meaningful, and beneficial art that has a positive impact on a particular site.

### **How is the Environmental Artist Residency different from your other residencies at the McColl Center for Visual Art?**

The residency presents an opportunity for artists to have beneficial impacts on the natural environment through creation of art, civic engagement, education and outreach.

### **How can I learn more about the sites I can work on in the Charlotte area?**

Before beginning the project, the artist will get site information and consult the person(s) in charge of maintaining the property as well as specialists including but not limited to hydrologists, horticulturalists, storm water engineers, native plant specialists and others who can inform the artist of the issues and requirements involved with working on the site.

### **Who will I be working with to get access and information about the site for my installation?**

Artists must be comfortable working with the site manager, the management level personnel responsible for the site, as well as the land steward, field workers in addition to scientists, field engineers, technical experts, citizen volunteers and school groups.

### **What kind of installation conditions should I expect?**

Artists should be comfortable working outdoors and with the natural elements and engaging different field experts in order to understand the issues the site presents. Artists will also need to involve volunteers from the Charlotte community at-large.

### **What expectations for my installation should I have?**

Artist should focus on working with the land, creating an art installation that gives advantage to the environment, rather than just working solely in a studio creating work that is placed on the land.

### **What expectations does the Center and community of Charlotte have for the Environmental Artist-in-Residence?**

During the residency the artist should expect to make a contribution to the community with their work as well as involve various communities and volunteers in Charlotte beyond the art community. The Center's Environmental Artist-in-Residence needs to be prepared to leave their art—without maintenance issues—in the community, rather than packing it up and taking it home with them.