



City of Austin
Art in Public Places - Cultural Arts Division
Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office



For Immediate Release: March 3, 2009
Contact: Megan Crigger, Art in Public Places Administrator, (512) 974-9312

Art in Public Places
Announces Public Art
for the
Trail of Tejano Legends



© Connie Arismendi, *Una Canción de Fe Y Familia*, 2008
Photography: David Omer

Austin, TX— The City of Austin **Art in Public Places** (AIPP) program announces three new permanent public artworks by artist, **Connie Arismendi**, commissioned for the ***Trail of Tejano Legends***. The City of Austin will host a public art dedication and inauguration for the *Trail of Tejano Legends* on **Saturday, March 14, 2008, 10:00 a.m.**, at the Mexican American Cultural Center, 600 River Street. The event is free to the public and will include performances by Manuel Donley, Johnny Degollado, and the Nash Hernandez Orchestra. Food and drink will be available from local vendors.

AIPP commissioned artist, **Connie Arismendi**, through competitive selection to create permanent public artworks for the *Roy Montelongo Scenic Overlook*, *Nash Hernandez Sr. Road*, and *Perez and Ramos Plaza* along the *Trail of Tejano Legends*. Working primarily with aqua jet cut aluminum sheet metal, Arismendi's sculptural works entitled, ***Una Canción de Fe Y Familia***, ***Tenderly***, and ***¡Estamos en Tejas!***, capture the character of each musician and honor their significant cultural contribution. The artist also introduces recurring motifs, a decorative treble clef design and references to a record, CD or spotlight, as integrated and unifying design elements at the individual sites. The public artworks reveal a story of Austin's Tejano musical legends and provide a visual identity for the Trail that enhances the understanding and experience of the Trail for residents and visitors of Austin.

The ***Trail of Tejano Legends*** is an Austin City Council led initiative to re-name five east side facilities/areas, three of which were designated to receive public art, in commemoration of the lives and contributions of significant musicians in Austin's Tejano and Hispanic communities. This effort is the culmination of the work of former Council Member Raul Alvarez and the Austin Latino Music Association, Art in Public Places Program, the Parks and Recreation Department and the Hispanic community, to commemorate Austin's Latino music legends from the 40s and 50s. Sites include the *Perez and Ramos Plaza* (formerly Zocalo at the Mexican American Cultural Center), *Nash Hernandez Sr. Road* (formerly Festival Beach Road), *Manuel "Cowboy" Donley Park*

(formerly Fiesta Gardens East Meeting Hall), *Johnny Degollado Pavilion* (formerly Fiesta Gardens Pavilion), and the *Roy Montelongo Scenic Overlook* (formerly Town Lake Scenic Overlook).

© Connie Arismendi, *Tenderly*, 2008; Photography: David Omer



Una Canción de Fe Y Familia (A Song of Faith and Family), at the *Perez and Ramos Plaza* at the Mexican American Cultural Center, honors the deep musical tradition and cultural contribution of the Perez and Ramos families, represented by the brothers Ruben and Ernest Perez, and Alfonso and Ruben Ramos. Arismendi portrays the Perez brothers playing the saxophone and the Ramos brothers engaged in song. The performers each led their own orchestra or band, and are joined by two curvilinear “stage structures” to symbolize the link between the two families. The vertical supports represent curtains on the side of the stage and a curving cut metal pattern based on a modified treble clef sits at the top and holds the names of these great families.

Tenderly, located along *Nash Hernandez Sr. Road* in Festival Beach Park, acknowledges the musical contribution of the legendary orchestra leader and trumpeter, and his enduring love for his wife. A cut metal silhouette of Nash Hernandez stands atop a 4 foot tall base that includes two lyrics from “Tenderly,” Nash’s final song of each performance that he would dedicate to his wife Minnie. A 6 ft diameter ring forms a “spotlight” in back of the figure, and swirling treble clefs surround the column to create a dramatic Big Band setting.

¡Estamos en Tejas!, at the *Roy Montelongo Scenic Overlook*, provides shade and a welcoming environment for visitors to reflect on Roy Montelongo’s musical accomplishments. A significant enhancement to the Trail, Arismendi’s shade structure is comprised of concentric circles of metal that reference a spinning record in honor of Montelongo’s more than 20 recorded albums. The shade canopy is 18 ft. in diameter and emblazoned with the Trail’s treble clef motif that casts shadows across the footpath throughout the day. The support column features three 4 ft. medallions that depict a portrait of Montelongo, his love of music and family, and his long standing radio program *¡Estamos en Tejas!*



© Connie Arismendi, *¡Estamos en Tejas!*, 2008; Photography: David Omer

Connie Arismendi is a nationally recognized sculptor and installation artist living and working in Austin, TX. She received a BFA from The University of Texas and an MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her artwork is shaped by the profound emotional and intellectual concepts of family, memory, and spirituality. Recently honored by the Art in the Embassies program; her paintings are in the Permanent Collection for the Embassy of the United States, Belmopan, Belize. Her work is in major private and public collections in the United States and Mexico, and has been featured in numerous publications. Arismendi has been awarded public art commissions in Austin, Fort Worth and Chicago.

For more information on the *Trail of Tejano Legends* or the Art in Public Places program visit, www.cityofaustin.org/aipp or contact Megan Crigger, Administrator, at 974-9312.

The City of Austin’s Art in Public Places acquires and maintains works of art for City facilities and parks through commissions, donations and loans for the cultural enrichment of Austin’s community. AIPP is part of the Cultural Arts Division within the City of Austin’s Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office.

###