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Media Contact: Coma Te, San Francisco Arts Commission
coma.te@sfgov.org

PRESS RELEASE

Statement Regarding Conservation Work on Van Ness Lighting Sculpture by Artist Jorge Pardo



Untitled by Jorge Pardo, 2022, Van Ness BRT Project. Photo: Ethan Kaplan Photography

SAN FRANCISCO, June 18, 2024 – Twenty-six spheres from the light sculpture by artist Jorge Pardo on Van Ness Avenue were taken down over the weekend of June 15 and 16, 2024 as part of planned conservation and maintenance work.

The Arts Commission worked closely with the artist's studio, SFMTA, Caltrans, Public Works and its fine art handling contractor to safely remove the spheres and protect the light poles, which will remain in place.

The spheres are scheduled to be reinstalled later this summer once conservation work has been completed.

Located on Van Ness Avenue between Geary and O'Farrell streets, Pardo's untitled sculptural lighting installation consists of two sets of 13 acrylic and fiberglass spheres and stainless-steel poles of varying heights, with the tallest pole reaching approx. 20 feet (6.1 m) tall. The sculptures line the northbound and southbound transit boarding platforms and feature warm and cool color palettes, respectively.

Following Arts Commission approval of its final design in February 2019, the light sculpture was installed and unveiled in early 2022 as part of the Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, which officially opened for service on April 1, 2022.

The project budget of \$850,000 was approved by the Arts Commission on October 2, 2017, and funded through the 2%-for-Art-Program, which allocates two percent of gross construction costs of transportation improvement projects to the commissioning and integration of public art.

For this project, the artist transformed the everyday lamppost into a whimsical and vibrant light sculpture. Intended to serve as a beacon and landmark for transit riders, the sculpture's shape and form will conjure different and ever-changing meanings for current and future generations

Cuban American artist Jorge Pardo lives and works in Mérida, Mexico. An internationally acclaimed contemporary artist and 2010 MacArthur Fellow, Pardo is best known for artworks that explore the intersection of contemporary painting, design, sculpture, and architecture. Employing a broad palette of vibrant colors, eclectic patterns, and natural and industrial materials, Pardo's works range from murals to home furnishings to collages to larger-than-life fabrications. He often transforms familiar objects into artworks with multiple meanings and purposes, such as a set of lamps displayed as both sources of illumination and as freestanding sculptures. Working on small and monumental scales, Pardo treats public space as his canvas, engaging viewers with works that produce great visual delight while questioning distinctions between fine art and design.

About The San Francisco Arts Commission

The San Francisco Arts Commission (SFAC) is the City agency that champions the arts as essential to daily life by investing in a vibrant arts community, enlivening the urban environment and shaping innovative cultural policy. Our programs include: Civic Art Collection, Civic Design Review, Community Investments, Public Art, SFAC Galleries, and Art Vendor Licensing. To learn more, visit sfartscommission.org.

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