



CTA Hires World-Renowned Artist to Create Artwork for Bus Turnaround

Source: [Chicago Transit Authority \(CTA\)](#) Sep 16, 2016

As part of Mayor Rahm Emanuel's commitment to expand public art at CTA stations and terminals, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) recently announced the hire of world-renowned artist Shinique Smith to commission a new, one-a-of-kind artwork for the Austin Avenue bus turnaround – the CTA's first permanent public art installation at a bus facility. "Much like rail stations, CTA bus turnarounds are often located in highly-trafficked areas and serve as gateways to the surrounding community," said CTA President Dorval R. Carter, Jr. "The addition of new public artwork at our Austin and Chicago bus turnaround will create a more inviting transit space for hundreds of bus riders each day and enhance the surrounding community by sharing a part of its story through new original artwork created by a world-renowned artist." Under the leadership of Mayor Emanuel, CTA's collection of public art has nearly doubled since 2011 – with now more than 60 works of art across all eight rail lines. It includes mosaics, art glass and sculptures created by nationally and internationally acclaimed artists, many of whom are local.

This collection of art will further expand over the next few years to include nearly a dozen new works of art, including the one announced today along with commissioned works as part of the recently completed Your New Blue station projects and the upcoming Wilson Station Reconstruction and 95th Street Terminal Improvements projects. Smith was one of nearly 350 artists who submitted qualifications in response to CTA's Call for Artists issued in December 2015 for the bus turnaround, which serves the #66 Chicago bus route, one of CTA's busiest routes, and nearly 1,000 people each weekday. After reviewing all submissions, an evaluation committee selected Smith based on her artistic merit, qualifications, professional recognition and her written statement of interest. CTA will hold a public meeting at a future date to provide community members with an opportunity to meet the artist and provide feedback on the type of artwork that will be created.

Smith, who is based in New York, is best known for using discarded everyday personal items and transforming them by incorporating elements of graffiti, Japanese calligraphy and abstraction to create complex and vibrant visuals that rejuvenate a space. Her work has been exhibited at prestigious venues including The Studio Museum of Harlem; The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Brooklyn Museum of Art; Denver Art Museum; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; The Bronx Museum of the Arts; The Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery (Washington DC); and The New Museum (New York) among others. Funding is provided by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and will cover the entire project budget, which is not to exceed \$200,000, and includes costs associated with artist fees, fabrication, shipping/delivery and a project contingency fund.