

Art World

Bloomberg Philanthropies Is Giving Parkland, Florida, \$1 Million to Create Public Art That Addresses Gun Violence

Parkland is partnering on the project with the nearby city of Coral Springs.

Eileen Kinsella, November 20, 2018



Former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg in August 2018. Photo courtesy of Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Bloomberg Philanthropies, the platform for former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg's charitable activity, announced today that it is giving \$1 million to the Florida cities of Parkland and Coral Springs for a public art project related to gun violence.

Nine months ago, Parkland's Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School was the site of a mass shooting that left 17 people dead and sparked renewed calls for tighter gun control laws. The Bloomberg grant is part of its "Public Art Challenge" for 2018. The project, titled "Inspiring Community After Gun Violence: The Power of Art," is focused on bringing the community together in "collective healing and reflection" in the aftermath of the shooting, according to a statement.

In addition to artist talks and workshops at the Coral Springs Museum of Art, five art installations will be created with input from residents and placed throughout the city. Members of the local police department, cultural affairs division, licensed art

therapists, and Marjory Stoneman Douglas students will act as community advisory participants.

The project is “a powerful example of the ways public art can bring communities together and draw attention to important issues,” Bloomberg said in a statement, adding that he hopes it brings “some solace to people who have lost loved ones to gun violence, including all the families in Parkland.

Starting on February 14, the anniversary of the shooting, the project will draw from the Coral Springs Museum “Healing with Art” program, established in the wake of the shooting as a response to help address the trauma suffered by students, teachers, and parents. Five artists were selected by the community advisory committee. They include David Best, Kate Gilmore, Carl Juste, Steven and William Ladd, and R&R Studios (overseen by artists Rosario Marquardt and Roberto Behar).

This past February, Bloomberg Philanthropies invited mayors of US cities with a minimum of 30,000 residents to submit proposals for temporary public art projects that address civic issues and demonstrate an ability create public-private collaborations. More than 200 cities applied and 14 finalists were announced in early July. Additional winning cities will be named in the coming weeks.