



PROJECT PROFILE

Monument Lab

Structural Engineering Consultation for Sculpture Installation | Philadelphia, PA



CLIENT

Philadelphia Mural Arts Advocates

BACKGROUND

Monument Lab was a public art and history project, produced by Mural Arts Philadelphia and a team led by curators Paul M. Farber and Ken Lum, which took place citywide in fall 2017. This three-month installation of temporary monuments included sculptures and other works by twenty artists from Philadelphia and around the world.

Located at ten sites, including the five Center City public squares and additional neighborhood parks, the exhibition also included temporary research labs at each site to engage the public in a discussion of Philadelphia’s past and future monuments.

As the structural engineering consultant for ten sculptures in the Monument Lab project, WJE worked with individual artists to develop site-specific installations in a wide range of materials, including steel, aluminum, salvaged masonry, wood, and glass fiber-reinforced concrete. Services included on-site meetings with city, federal, and nonprofit park stakeholders as well as the coordination of design details with fabricators and installers.



SOLUTION

As an alternative to each individual artist retaining his or her own engineering consultant, Mural Arts engaged WJE as the project-wide structural engineer to work with artists and their fabricators and installers. WJE’s approach was tailored to the unique challenges of each sculpture and site and to the level of detail required for successful fabrication and installation. In some cases, WJE reviewed detailed designs produced by the artists’ studios and their subcontractors, while in others, WJE developed detailed design drawings in-house. WJE’s structural engineers also assisted Mural Arts in communicating with Philadelphia’s building department to ensure that the city’s requirements were met for the design and installation of these unique structures.

Photos by Steve Weinik, Mural Arts Philadelphia: *Two Me* by Mel Chin, *All Power to All People* by Hank Willis Thomas; *On the Threshold (Salvaged Stoops, Philadelphia)* by Kaitlin Pomerantz; *In Perpetuity* by Duane Linklater; *THE TIMES* by Tyree Guyton; and *If They Should Ask* by Sharon Hayes

