

Under the Guidance of the Stars

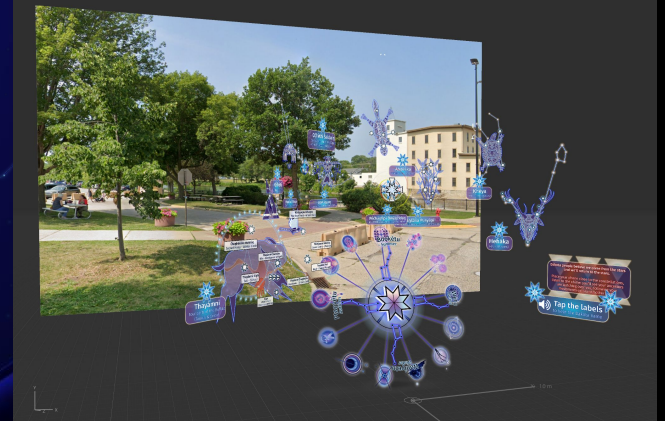


Artist Team:
Marlena Myles & John Sterner

PUBLIC ART @ BRIDGE SQUARE

PROPOSAL • JUNE 2024

NORTHFIELD, MNISOTA





PROPOSED LOCATION

Water Street

Narrative

Illuminates the interconnected worldview between humans, plants, animals and the star world using Dakota teachings

Location

Along Water Street at Bridge Square

Context

These sculptures and interactive features can be a learning resource that connects visitors to the rich Dakota history of the area as well as revealing the many teachings of the natural world

Visitor Interactions

Imagine, Remember, Honor, Reflect, Learn, Marvel

- Indigenous visitors will feel seen
- Teachers will bring students to learn
- All have access to a greater understanding of the lands they stand upon

Experiential Mood

Contemplative, thought-provoking, restful, healing

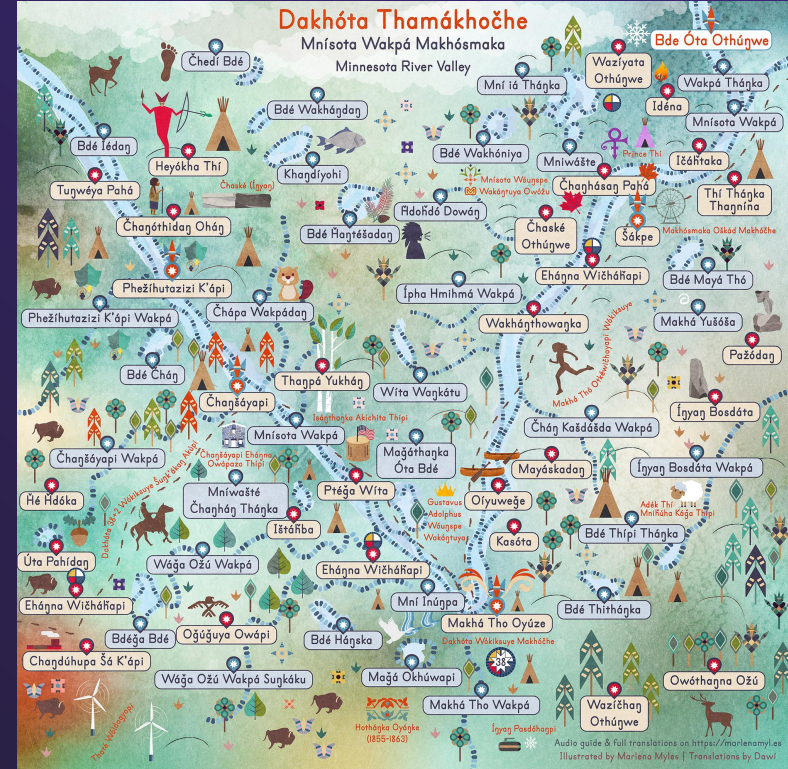
Narrative

Honoring Dakota people

The Bridge Square development is located on the traditional homelands of the Dakota people.

Dakota people believe we are surrounded by our relatives and we should live with the harmony of the natural world. We are cared for by Uŋcí Makhá, Grandmother Earth; guided by Tuŋkánŋšida Ínyan, Grandfather Stone; nourished by the spirits of the water and protected by Škán, the spirit of the sky.

Our connections to these spirits continue to this day.



SHARING WISDOM /
WOÍYAKSAPE EYÁ

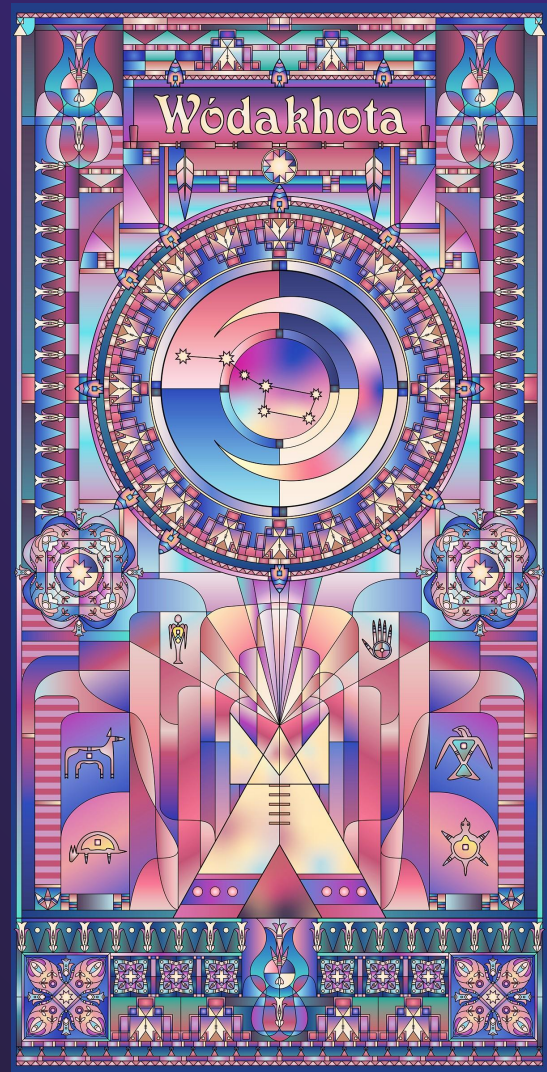
Concepts



Dakota believe our place of origin is at Bdote, the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers.

We call ourselves the Očéti Šakówiŋ, the Seven Council Fires, which are seen above us as the seven stars of the Big Dipper. Our power to exist comes from the stars -- as our spirits enter this world, we travel the Spirit Road, Milky Way, which is reflected on Earth as the Mississippi River. When we pass on from this world, we return to the Spirit World to meet our ancestors.

The star world continues to guide us with the knowledge of when to have ceremonies, when to harvest, how to care for each other as relatives.



Sky/Star/Spirit World
Above



Kapemni
Mirroring



Below
Earth / Material World

DAKOTA STAR MAP

BY MARLENA MYLES



SHARING WISDOM /
WOÍYAKSAPE EYÁ

Concepts



Traditional life revolved around star knowledge, which taught us when to harvest, when to plant, when to hunt, and when to have certain ceremonies. Thus, the months are lunar based and given titles to reflect traditional society reflecting the star world above.



SHARING WISDOM / WOÍYAKSAPE EYÁ

Concepts

Under the Guidance of the Stars

Brings together layered concepts:

- the importance of language
- the geography of stories
- cosmologies and world views
- land protections and rights, relationality and accountability
- a connection to reconciliation

ARTWORK PROPOSAL

Sculpture concepts

FEATURES

Ideally, these sculptures would be created out of corrugated steel and lit from within, with the light aiming downwards. Visitors could stand underneath to see the stars, even in the day time.

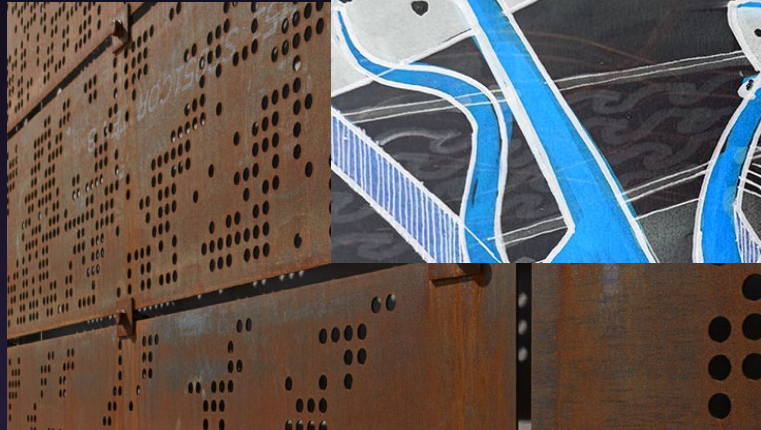
The sculptures would feature etchings of Dakota star constellations, plant medicines and be shaped in a way that connect Dakota homelands, humans with the starworld above.

The nearby water would be honored as well as the bird nation through etchings in the pavement and/or within the sculptures.

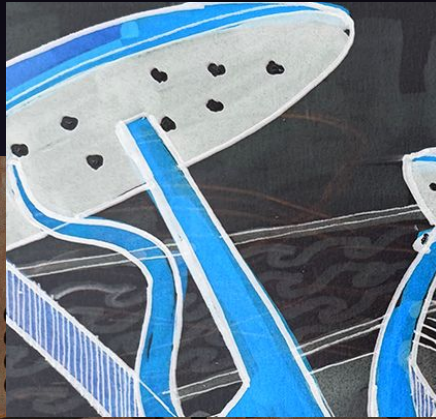


ARTWORK PROPOSAL

Sculpture materials



corten steel



Paving surface
for Water Street
will be a black
granite quarried
in Minnesota.

It was the most durable
and only local option.

When etched it exposes
the quartz which gives it a
beautiful sparkle.



ARTWORK PROPOSAL

Sculpture mockups



ARTWORK PROPOSAL
Sculpture mockups



ARTWORK PROPOSAL

Interactive digital features

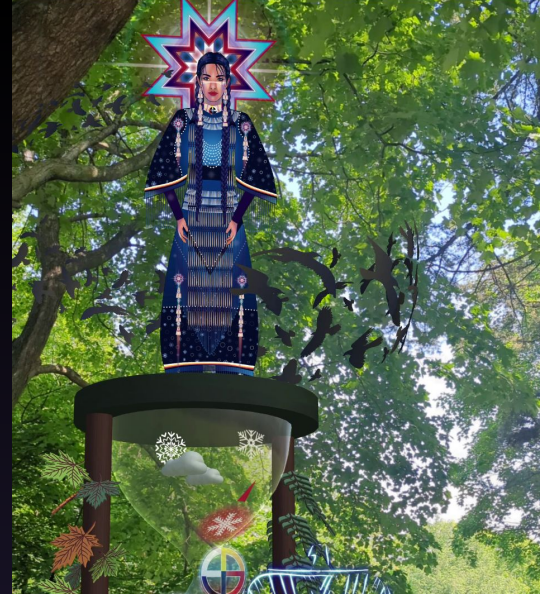
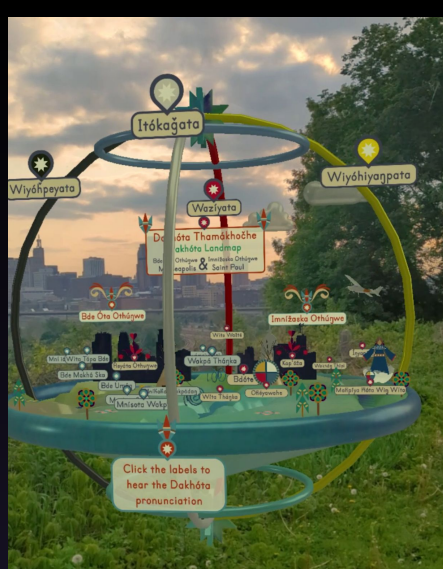


DEDICATED ONLINE LEARNING RESOURCES & ONSITE AUGMENTED REALITY ACTIVATIONS

Marlena Myles' many artworks have been used as Dakota teaching materials; she proposes expanding this opportunity into an online and augmented reality learning experience to complement the sculpture onsite.

Augmented Reality is the perfect metaphor for Native Presence: Dakota peoples histories and stories are here, invisible at the moment to many; yet folks only need to look with new eyes at the deeper powers held here. This technology will bring that ancient knowledge into the present, for future generations to access.

Not all may have the technological requirements for AR, so a website will also have interactive features and useful in all four seasons.





ARTWORK PROPOSAL
Render ideas