



2021 Request For Proposals: Muralist for Condon Shell

THEME: INTERCONNECTEDNESS

CACHE in Medford (the Coalition for Arts Culture and a Healthy Economy) is excited to announce the call for proposals for Artists to create a new mural on the Condon Shell. The theme of *interconnectedness* is a point of departure to create a mural that lifts up the complex relationships between the natural environment, community activities, the history of the City of Medford and the Mystic River. The goal of the new mural is to capture the vitality of the river, creative life of our community, and the energy of people who gather there together.

The Condon Shell is a concrete bandshell constructed in 1956 located at 2501 Mystic Valley Parkway by the Mystic River. The shell is located within a park owned by the Department of Conservation and managed by the City of Medford. The structure consists of a band shell attached to a small building used to house supplies for onsite events. The bandshell is constructed entirely of concrete and was recently renovated and re-coated in 2020. The entire structure is surfaced in a silicate coating. The primary surface of the mural project is the face of the bandshell, but proposals can include the two walls to the right and left of the shell facing the field. Other surfaces of the shell may also be considered.

WHO CAN APPLY

Experienced muralists interested in activating and animating public lands and capturing the energy and the complexity of our community. Strong applications will demonstrate professional and technical capacity to plan, coordinate, and execute a mural project. Collaborative groups are also welcome to apply. Must have experience with lifts, painting large scale murals, and working in public spaces.

INFO SESSION: Monday March 29, 6:00. RSVP and register [here](#).

HOW TO APPLY: Apply online [here](#).

Links for info session and application can also be accessed at <https://cacheinmedford.org/condon-shell-mural/>

DEADLINE TO APPLY: Monday April 12, 11:59 pm

HONORARIUM

3 Finalists will receive a \$500 stipend to develop full proposals

The selected artist will work within a \$28,500 project budget including materials, labor, equipment, and project management.

For questions contact Public Artist Carolyn Lewenberg - carolyn@carolynl.net

PROPOSAL DETAILS:

Key points about the project:

- Projects will be selected by a juried process. Proposals will be reviewed by CACHE Board Members and key stakeholders from the Medford arts community.
- Projects will be evaluated on creative approach to describing the theme, the impact the mural has on the surroundings, how it connects to the Mystic River and community, and the impact it has on events and activating the site.
- The shell may be considered in three parts: The area behind the performers, a central band visible above the performers, and the “sky” of the mural. Consider the whole shell as the canvas. The design for the lowest third must not compete with the activity onstage.
- Stakeholders are drawn to abstract and non-pictorial representations rich in color, texture, pattern, shape, and movement, that relate to the surroundings.
- Per DCR guidelines, the artwork must reflect the park. No religious or political messaging is acceptable.

Logistical considerations

- Artists must arrange for their own materials and other equipment.
- It is the responsibility of the artist to secure their work site and equipment when not in use.
- We are committed to accessibility, and will work with artists who would require accommodations.
- The site will be somewhat active during painting activities - people walking by, riding bikes, dog walking.
- Artists must plan to complete their murals in 3-4 weeks.
- Information about the project will be provided to the City of Medford to field inquiries.
- Artists will be required to carry their own insurance policy, naming CACHE, the City of Medford and DCR as additional insured.
- Artists may not use any materials or processes that are detrimental to the environment or unsafe for the public. Preference will be for materials and processes that will be durable and long lasting.

ANTICIPATED TIMELINE (subject to change at the discretion of CACHE).

- **March 15:** RFP Release
- **March 29, 6:00 pm:** Info session, please RSVP at
- **April 12, 11:59 pm:** Artist's Proposal materials due.
- **Mid April:** Jury meets to select top 3 artists to create renderings for consideration.
- **Late April:** Finalist full proposals are due
- **Late April:** Artists are notified
- **Late May/Early June:** Painting. Painting activities will be limited 3-4 weeks.
- **Completion:** before the end of June

REQUIRED [APPLICATION](#) ATTACHMENTS:

- Resume/CV
- Up to 10 sample works, including an image list describing the sample works - date, location, title
- Proposal vision.
 - Describe your concept for this project: What do you want to create for this project and why? How will it activate the site's landscape and/or social fabric? How will your work respond to the theme of INTERCONNECTEDNESS?
 - Describe your mural practice. What media do you usually work with? What subject matter do you typically portray? What is your inspiration? What is the largest surface you have worked on? What materials and processes would you use for this project?

- Upload a preliminary sketch describing your vision

CONTEXT

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The site of the Condon Shell is the traditional and ancestral homeland of Pawtucket, **Wôpanâak** (Wampanoag) and **Massachusetts** people. The Mystic River is a modified form of the Algonquin name “MissiTuk,” meaning “great tidal river” in reference to the Mystic’s tidal waters. The name Aberjona referred to areas along the Mystic River. This acknowledgement offers recognition and respect to the original caretakers of this land and their descendents today, especially since the Indigenous history of our region has been largely erased for the last 400 years.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MYSTIC RIVER:

In the 17th century and before, Native Americans, and later Colonists, used weirs to catch alewives (river herring) to fertilize their crops. In 1631, the “Blessing of the Bay” launched from the shores of the Mystic River. This was the first ship built by Europeans in Massachusetts. One of the Mystic area’s first European settlers was Massachusetts Bay Colony Governor John Winthrop. He built his summer retreat, the Ten Hills Farm, on the banks of the Mystic in 1637. Tidal mills were built along the Mystic River to harness waterpower to grind grain and spices, saw wood, and process textiles. Built to grind corn and tobacco, Slades Mill was built in 1734 and is among the first built in Massachusetts..

Shipbuilding on the Mystic peaked in the 1840s. By the end of the 19th century, 10 shipyards along the Mystic River built over 500 clipper ships. Known for their incredible speed, clipper ships became popular for international trade. Schooners and sloops transported timber, molasses for rum distilleries, and other products, along the trade route between Medford and the West Indies. Later, railroads and then a system of roadways replaced the River as a transportation route.

ECOLOGICAL NOTES

The river has been much altered from its natural state when its shores were largely salt marsh. Mills, brickyards and tanneries along the river brought material wealth and polluted the river, filled in wetland areas, increased paved areas around the river and altered the natural course of the river. Construction of Interstate 93 between 1956-1963 narrowed and straightened the course of the Mystic River. In 1966, the Amelia Earhart Dam was built. The dam converted surrounding salt marsh into freshwater marsh to allow further development on the coast and regulate the tides upriver. The increase in paved areas along the river contributed to the declining water quality and vulnerability to flooding.

Recent large-scale restoration efforts are underway to improve water quality and take other measures to return biodiversity to the river and improve the desirability of the area. [Restoration efforts to improve conditions for herring to swim upriver](#) to breed is one effort, and critical [wetland remediation efforts](#) are underway throughout the watershed.

The river near the Condon Shell hosts ducks, swans, and a lot of Canada geese. Each spring, starting in mid-May and running through the end of June, there is a run of Alewives and Blueback Herring up the Mystic River and into the Lower Mystic Lake. This creates a tremendous food source for gulls, cormorants, and, most impressively, Black-crowned Night-Herons.

ACTIVITIES AT THE CONDON SHELL

The parkland around the Condon Shell consists of a walking and biking path, large field, and is the site of a seasonal canoe and kayak rental company. The walking path is part of a riverside trail and connects with

Medford Square on one side, and the Medford Community Gardens and trail connector on the other. The Condon Shell is host to many free community programs including the Medford Farmers Market, Mystic River Celebration, Medford Family Network Concert Series, summer movies, and more. It is a public space and open to all and may be reserved for other free public events through the City of Medford. Some ways that stakeholders have described their experiences at the Condon Shell:

- *There is warmth and joy in gathering in this multigenerational place.*
- *There is freedom of enjoyment: kids run around on the paths and play hide and seek; people lay on the grass looking up at the sky, clouds, birds and planes; during concerts everyone is listening to the music in their own way, connecting to other humans through this art form.*
- *I enjoy the river around the Condon Shell regularly with my family and dogs. It's wonderful to be able to go kayaking and canoeing.*

Dimensions:

- Back of shell: 11'-8" across
- Front of shell: 30' across
- Panels on either side of the shell: 10' across, 7'-6" to roof surface
- Foundation wall under the stage: 4'x40'
- Height at front of shell: 27'-6"
- Height at back of shell: 15'-2.5"

