



Community Planning and Economic Development Department

## News Release

Contact: Rose Lindsay, Communications (W) 612.673.5015; (C) 612.250.8661  
Mary Altman, Public Arts Administrator (W) 612.673.3006

---

*Minneapolis City Goals:* A Safe Place to Call Home □ Jobs & Economic Vitality □ Eco-Focused □ Livable Communities, Healthy Lives □ Many People, One Minneapolis □ A City That Works

# The City of Minneapolis and Partners Are Looking for Emerging Public Artists to Work on the John Biggers' Seed Project

**September 26, 2013 (Minneapolis)** – The City of Minneapolis and partners Obsidian Arts, Chicago Avenue Fire Arts Center, and the University of Minnesota's Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center (UROC) are seeking 10 emerging artists between the ages of 16 and 55 for the John Biggers' Seed Project (Seed). Seed is inspired by the *Celebration of Life* mural and the role the mural played in launching the careers of young artists and organizations and planting artistic "seeds" on the North Side.

The Seed project proposes installing the new public artwork at Interstate 94 at Highway 55. The art will be installed either on the railing on the bridge over I-94 or along Highway 55 as adjacent gateway sculptures. The location was selected as the industrial corridor, currently unfriendly to pedestrians, serves as an important connection between the North Side and downtown. The project aims at building an attractive link between neighborhood and Downtown that improves walk-ability by incorporating the colorful imagery influenced by Biggers' art and the North Side's history. Enamel was selected as the medium for its creative potential and durability.

The 10 selected emerging artists will work with four Master Public Artists to complete the public artwork, and during the process gain skills that will make them more marketable and employable as artists beyond the project. Master Public Artists include Willis Bing Davis of Ohio and Jon Onye Lockard of Michigan as well as Seitu Jones and Tacoumba Aiken both whom worked with John Biggers in the past. The emerging artists will participate in a seven-session seminar in Public Art and African American Art History and Culture. Following, they will collaborate on the design and fabrication of the work to be installed before learning and participating in the porcelain enameling process (which is similar to painting or glazing ceramics, and includes applying multiple layers of color to steel panels and firing the panels multiple times).

This summer, Seed received national recognition through a grant award from the National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Program (NEA). The City of Minneapolis seed project was one of 59 Our Town awards granted for creative placemaking projects that help transform communities into lively, beautiful, and sustainable places with arts at their core.

Interested artists may visit the City of Minneapolis website [www.minneapolismn.gov/dca/](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/dca/) to learn more and/or download an application. Applications are due along with 3-5 artwork images by October 18 at 4:00 pm. Artists must be available to participate in the SEED project from November 2013 to August 2015 (most of the project activities will occur on the weekends and evenings.) Selected emerging artists

will receive a stipend of \$1,500 for the first year and a \$1,000 stipend for attending monthly meetings and completing applications in the second year.

###