Lighten Up: A Public Art Project

1. Wilson-Gray YMCA Youth & Family Center, 444 Albany Avenue, Hartford, CT 06120
   It Could’ve Been Me
   Rokquielle Rabsatt-Lightner and Roy Scott
   LEDs, clothing, wire, PVC pipe
   A life-sized figure in a hoodie illuminates the YMCA’s wall with a heartbeat-patterned light. This work is a tribute to Trayvon Martin and to the young men like him who struggle against racism and violence here in Hartford.

2. Old North Cemetery, 1832 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06120
   Love and Acceptance
   Shanique Reid
   Electric tea lights, paper bags
   This piece was performed at the opening reception on May 20. The artist encouraged visitors to take rainbow-colored luminaries from a large arrangement, sending a message of love and acceptance to local GLBT youth.

3. Aaron Fein Square, Ridgefield and Greenfield Streets, Hartford, CT 06112
   Heaven’s Flowers
   Alexis Edwards
   LEDs, cloth flowers, plastic tablecloth, velum, wire
   Like white funerary wreaths, the letters “VIP” and “RIP” are alternately illuminated as a reminder that the cemetery and its grounds should be treated with the same respect as the important people buried there.

4. Albany Avenue Library, 1250 Albany Avenue, Hartford, CT 06111
   Paths of Fireflies
   Johanna Plummer
   LEDs
   A quote flickers in Morse code on the Mason and Alice Cogswell grave: “Tracing early Deaf history is a bit like tracing the paths of fireflies. The field is mostly dark, except for scattered moments of illumination.” – H-Dirkson L. Bauman

5. John E. Rogers African American Cultural Center, 1240 Albany Ave, Hartford, CT 06112
   School
   Jan Tichy
   LEDs
   The grandparents of two TAG members attended the Northwest School, which has a rich history and a bright future as the home of the John E. Rogers African American Culture Center.

6. Saint Francis Care Hospital, 114 Woodland Street, Hartford, CT 06105
   Untitled
   Chanel Ross and Shannon Ross
   LEDs, wood, wire, assorted medical supplies
   Created from repurposed and re-imagined medical supplies, these cool-colored sculptures in the St. Francis Care Hospital entrance are intended to soothe incoming patients and their families.

7. Sigourney Square Park, Sigourney and Sargeant Streets, Hartford, CT 06105
   Love Not Hate
   Aislyn Brown and Kimberly Vasquez
   LEDs
   Rainbow-colored LEDs lining the top of the Sigourney Square Park entrance gate glow dimly at first, but slowly brighten to represent positive changes in the park, such as the playground renovations planned for July 2012.

   Lydia Huntley Sigourney
   Estada Laurore
   LEDs, plastic bottles, paper, ribbon, silk flower petals, sand
   Each of these flowery bottles suspended from a tree in Sigourney Square Park contains a ‘message in a bottle’ from Hartford’s past: a poem by Lydia Huntley Sigourney, for whom the park was named.
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As part of the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art’s Artist Residency program, MATRIX 164 artist Jan Tichy partnered with The Amistad Center for Art & Culture’s Teen Advisory Group (TAG) to produce a series of light-based public art works that highlight the teens’ perspectives on social issues and the history and culture of Hartford’s North End.

The works were installed on May 20, 2012 and will remain as long as the batteries and materials are intact. As Tichy explained to the members of TAG, public art is a gift to all of the people who use a public space, and is intended to be enjoyed, explored, and experienced by everyone.

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE:
Jan Tichy

TAG MEMBERS:
Aislyn Brown
Alexis Edwards
Afi Geffrard
Samantha Gorski
Vaneisha Harrison
Estada Laurore
Hannah Phillips
Armani D. Pimenta
Rok Lightner
Shanique Reid
Chanel Ross
Shannon Ross
Roy Scott
Kimberly Vasquez

THE AMISTAD CENTER FOR ART & CULTURE:
Olivia White, Executive Director
Tamara Williams, Volunteer TAG Advisor
Cyndi Dryfe, Volunteer TAG Advisor

WADSWORTH ATHENUEM MUSEUM OF ART:
Johanna Plummer,
Georgette Auerbach Koopman Director of Education
Lauren Cross, Community Programs Coordinator
Nina Goodale-Salazar, Resident Teaching Artist

SPECIAL THANKS TO:
Brenda Miller, Hartford History Center
Jack Hale, Hartford Department of Public Works
Dr. Katharine Harris
Patricia Hickson
Eddie Breitweiser
John Manning
Patrick McGuire

Jan Tichy / MATRIX 164 on view at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, 600 Main Street, Hartford, CT through August 5, 2012

For more information about the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, please visit www.thewadsworth.org.
For more information about the Amistad Center for Art & Culture, please visit www.amistadartandculture.org.

The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art Artist Residency program is funded by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Jan Tichy / MATRIX 164 is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Wadsworth Atheneum’s Contemporary Coalition. TAG is funded by MassMutual, Janet Flagg Rawlins and proceeds from The Amistad Center’s fall benefit gala. Additional support is provided by the DECD Office of the Arts.