hosts or spirits of classes and students past and an entry experience that links past and present help to celebrate creativity and the links between the visual and performing arts and to enliven this Art Center that was renovated from a 1930’s era public school building. Collaboratively conceived and produced by 3 artists, Jim Hirschfield, Sonya Ishii and Norie Sato, the artwork sets the tone and creates a unique counterpoint to the historic building renovation. Several elements comprise the total artwork. These include an exterior sculpture for two sides of a new theatre fly tower and artwork for the lobby which includes a striking backlit glass wall which connects the 3 floors of the building through a dramatic glass stairway. Other artworks in the lobby include glass doors to a classroom/reception room and glass cladding for the interior of the concessions area with closable doors. The 3 artists also produced the theater’s curtain which echoes the harlequin pattern of the exterior sculpture on the building’s flytower. The theatre’s vomitoria provides a unique theatre entry/exit experience with projected patterns of light. An exterior front plaza paving pattern incorporating solar powered paver lights create a magical environment for patrons leaving the center offering yet another transformative art experience, while benches for an outdoor classroom are based on the traditional drawing horse used in art schools. The artwork illuminates the change of this facility from school to art center and evokes through images the building’s past history and emphasizes both its historical importance and future importance as a focal point for the community.
THE ARTIST TEAM

Norie Sato is an artist living in Seattle, whose artwork has included both a studio practice and art for public places over the past 30 plus years. She has created individual, collaborative, design team public art projects as well as creating various public art plans. She works from site and context-driven ideas first, and then finds the appropriate form and materials, striving to add meaning and human touch to the built environment. Her public art work has been recognized 5 times by the Public Art Network’s Year in Review. In 2010, she was named an Honorary Member of the Seattle chapter of the American Institute of Architects. She is a former council member of the Public Art Network.

Aside from her work for the Cary Arts Center, she recently produced a 300 ft. long glass façade for the San Francisco International Airport, artwork for University of Iowa and Iowa State University, and the new Port of Portland Headquarters. She has made work for the Arabian Library and McDowell Mountain Ranch Aquatic Center, both in Scottsdale AZ, and Miami International Airport. She was lead artist for Sound Transit’s Seattle Central Link Light Rail and has worked on transit systems in Portland, Salt Lake City and Tempe, Arizona.

Jim Hirschfield and Sonya Ishii have been collaborating on public artworks for over twenty years. As individual artists working together, they not only find their work and ideas complementary, they also find the process of collaboration an energizing one. They believe the collaborative process is a dynamic one where individuals, working together, push the breadth and range of art possibilities. They have both worked on a number and variety of projects ranging from public art plans to design team collaborations. Together they have received over 40 public art commissions, from Anchorage, Alaska to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, from Orono, Maine to San Jose, California. Their designs range from freestanding sculptures to architectonic spaces; from a pedestrian bridge at the North Carolina Zoological Park to a Mediation Room at Doernbecher Children’s Hospital in Portland Oregon.

Jim and Sonya have worked in collaboration with over 20 architecture, landscape architecture, and engineering design firms. These include both large international firms as well as smaller local firms. They have also received numerous awards. These include recognition awards from Americans for the Arts and the Cultural Olympiad, as well as fellowships and from the National Endowments for the Arts, the North Carolina Arts Council, the Graham Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation.

Jim Hirschfield has a B.F.A. from the Kansas City Art Institute and a M.F.A. from the University of Oregon. Sonya Ishii, who studied architecture at the University of Washington, also has a B.F.A. from the University of Oregon. Jim and Sonya live in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

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