

DESTINATION CRENSHAW

About the Destination Crenshaw Art Commissions

Destination Crenshaw is commissioning Black Los Angeles artists of various media, including mural, sculpture, illustration, performance, and culturally stamped infrastructure for permanent and temporary installations in the corridor. As California's largest Black artists jobs program, the value of this initiative will provide additional access to resources, mentorship, and professional development opportunities for participating artists.

The below commissioned artworks will be on view when Destination Crenshaw opens February 24, 2024.

Sankofa Park

Sculptures by Charles Dickson, Maren Hassinger, Artis Lane, and Kehinde Wiley will be installed at Sankofa Park, the northernmost public gathering place that Destination Crenshaw is creating where Crenshaw Boulevard meets Leimert Boulevard.



The sculpture ***Car Culture*** by **Charles Dickson** expresses the confluence of spirit, place, and intention in Black life in Los Angeles, where cars rather than the Sankofa bird symbolize mobility. Cars have been fundamental to Crenshaw's communal economic stability and street life, and ***Car Culture*** incorporates elements of the cars that might be seen when the low riders gather in Leimert Park. The sculpture's main body is a trio of elongated figures resembling West African Senufo sculptures, which are traditionally used as ritual objects connecting the living and spirit worlds. Adapting this idea, Dickson uses fiber

optic cables to connect these figures—larger-than-life portals to the past—with their crowns, which are fashioned from the fronts and ends of cars. Atop these car parts rests a fanciful engine, a symbol of our capacity to engineer our futures by sustaining a relationship with the vitality of the past.



Maren Hassinger often works with unconventional materials such as plastic bags, tree limbs, and leaves, inviting viewers to engage with the stories she tells through material and form. Her contribution to Destination Crenshaw, ***An Object of Curiosity, Radiating Love***, is a large pink fiberglass orb, 6 feet in diameter, which glows softly when viewers approach. It is the most conceptually abstract of all Destination Crenshaw's permanent commissions, yet it may

also be the most accessible because of the visceral impact of its interaction with people, which enables them to feel they are communicating with the artwork. Encountered in Sankofa Park's communal space, the sculpture is a symbol of the love that members of the community need if they are to be in service to one another, resisting gentrification and erasure.



Artis Lane considers the figure of the Black man to represent universal humanity, which experiences struggles and achievements as it undergoes a transformation into awareness. For the Sankofa Park site, the artist uses her *Emerging into Spirit* concept to engage with the Crenshaw neighborhood as a site of discovery, communion, opportunity, and growth. *Emerging First Man* is a larger-than-life bronze figure that bears on its surface the casting materials from the foundry where it was made, symbolizing a physical and

spiritual birth into an understanding of purpose and possibility. It is conceived as a beacon of hope, reminding the community that we are all in the act of becoming, with our human experiences moved by divine intentions that enable us to be our best selves.



Kehinde Wiley's sculpture *Female Warrior* is of a young, West African woman, rising up from the streets of Crenshaw Boulevard and Leimert Park. She will stand as a corrective, artistic intervention and a code switch. She is positioned like the Sankofa figure, moving forward and embracing the past as a function of a much broader and inclusive worldview to strengthen the ongoing legacy of the neighborhood. This is Wiley's first large public sculpture featuring a woman on horseback. Wiley empowers her to stand as an

indictment of the ways in which African women have traditionally been viewed.

Metro K Line Tunnel Lid



Gerard Basil Stripling will create a Cor-ten steel sculpture in the form of the word CRENSHAW spelled in capital letters inset with African-inspired symbols, located near the north end of the Destination Crenshaw site. More than 37 feet long and 6 feet high, the sculpture will be a rich, deep red, with color-changing LED lights incorporated in the face of each letter for nighttime illumination. It will occupy a landscaped median strip on Crenshaw Boulevard, opposite the largest of the project's public gathering

places, Sankofa Park.

50th Street



Alison Saar honors the past, present, and futures of Crenshaw with ***Bearing Witness***, an installation of two 13-foot-tall bronze figures, one female and one male, facing one another at a crossroads of the Boulevard. In a continuation of her use of “Black hair” as a potent visual language, the artist has fashioned the enormous coiffures of the two figures out of everyday objects culled from local thrift stores. Cast in bronze, these objects represent the art, music, and literature that make Crenshaw a destination. Carrying these symbols of

the community in their hair, the two figures become an architecture of human labor and innovation and, like the *poteau-mitans* of Haitian voodoo, are conduits for the spirits to descend and interact with the faithful.

54th Street



Throughout his career, **Melvin Edwards** has been interested in chain links as a material that can tell stories about connection and community. In works installed throughout the United States, as well as in Cuba, Brazil, and Senegal, he has used chain as a stand-alone element, expressing collective unity, resistance, and the fortitude not only to endure but to thrive. ***Column***, rising to a height of more than 36 feet, is his largest chain work to date. Its surface of burnished stainless steel reflects the community in which it stands

and with it the residents’ generative legacy of cooperation and innovation. The verticality of the chain represents how our stories build upon another, how we stand on the shoulders of those who came before us, and how our collective engagement becomes the structure for our own success.

I AM Park



After moving her home and studio to the Crenshaw neighborhood, a place she visited as a child when she was growing up in Riverside, **Brenna Youngblood** revisited an existing sculpture, *MIA*, to express the creativity, vitality, and innovation that emerge from the opportunity to grow into the fullness of themselves. Fashioned to resemble large play blocks or a jungle gym, the sculpture reorders the letters *MIA* into ***I AM***, asserting one’s own power to name and to know. The concept also recalls the 1968 sanitation

workers’ strike in Memphis, the place of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s last campaign, where protestors marched with placards declaring I AM A MAN: a rallying cry of the Civil Rights struggle and other resistance movements in which people have demanded to be seen as human beings with agency.

Commissioned Murals



Patrick Henry Johnson will paint an homage to L.A.'s most well-known and influential Black Architect called *Paul Revere Williams, The Pawn Who Became King*. Seventy-five-feet long in total, the work will be a tribute to Williams, who is best known for having designed the Beverly Hills Hotel, the Theme Building, the space age restaurant at LAX, as well as the Stanley Mosk Courthouse.

Mural: ***Paul Revere Williams, The Pawn Who Became King***

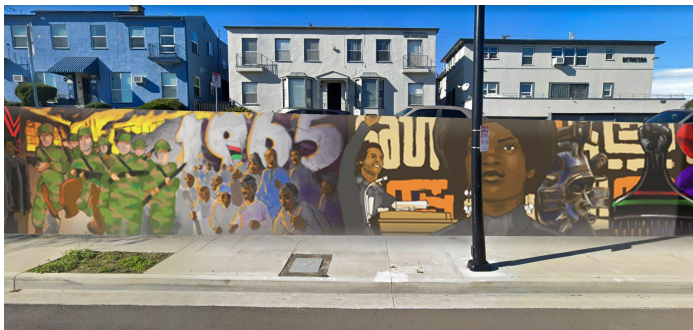
Location: 5870 Crenshaw Boulevard



Anthony "Toons One" Martin will paint the mural *Hey Young World*. Vibrantly colored and designed in a dynamic, collage-like composition, the mural will feature photorealistic images of the faces of Black children and the words *The world is yours!* rendered in graffiti-style lettering.

Mural: ***Hey Young World***

Location: 5700 Crenshaw Boulevard



More than twenty years after the creation of their iconic mural *Our Mighty Contribution*, **RTN Crew** returns to the 787-foot-long Crenshaw Wall with a new design titled *The Saga Continues*. Telling a compelling story of African American history in Los Angeles, the mural's journey begins in Africa and concludes with an uplifting message of hope for the future. Among the mural's many vignettes are depictions of the Great Migration, the Watts Rebellion of

1965 and LA Uprising of 1992, the birth of the trailblazing music and dance show *Soul Train*, and the West Coast's cultural contribution to the world of Hip Hop.

Mural: ***The Saga Continues*** (detail)

Location: 4911–5107 Crenshaw Boulevard

MEDIA CONTACTS

Lisa Richardson, RISE PR | lisa@riseprfirm.com | (323) 447-2421

Anna Gross, Polskin Arts | anna.gross@finnpartners.com | (989) 751-1748