



The Seed of Life, 2024 (artist's rendering)

a public art memorial and contemplative space designed to remember the nine victims, first responders, families, and all those affected by the violence of the August 4, 2019 Oregon District shooting

Artists

Terry Welker, FAIA: Team leader, architect, urban designer, public art sculptor

Sierra Leone: Dayton's "Poet Laureate," University of Dayton /The Hub Resident Artist; Governor's Award in the Arts Winner, State of Ohio

Jes McMillan: artist/activist; founder and director of The Mosaic Institute

James Pate: Artist, designer, art educator, Governor's Award in the Arts Winner, State of Ohio

Site

Public plaza adjacent to The Trolley Stop restaurant and bar, Oregon District, Dayton, OH.

Artist Team Statement

We are place-makers and peacemakers. In order to create a place of peace and healing, we must first heal the place. Rather simply placing an object in the existing setting, we've chosen to recreate the entire plaza within the existing site. Understanding that the site is a well-established part of the District, we seek to balance the social and cultural conditions of the space with the need to design a quiet place of reflection. These contrasting conditions can and should coexist as its daily function changes with time of day and night, and the days of the week over the course of the year.

Project Description

POEM

Poet Sierra Leone will write a series of poems dedicated to the victims, first responders, and survivors of the incident. Leone will interview community members to listen as they share how they were affected by the incident and what remembrance and healing means to them. The poem will blossom from a combination of what she hears and her own experiences and impressions of our community. Phrases and words from the poems will be embedded in the mosaic and bench designs.

MOSAIC

Artist Jes McMillan will create the primary design element of the memorial, a large Mosaic.

Connecting the existing concrete and brick ground, the curved bench and planter, and the sidewalk edge of the Plaza, the Mosaic will feature a radial geometry centering on a symbolic shape: a seed.

Created with light blue and green chips of treated porcelain and put in place by volunteers, the Mosaic will also be outlined by embedded stainless steel “bands.”

SCULPTURE

Artists **Terry Welker and James Pate** will create a grouping of nine, 7-9’ tall petal or leaf forms in **stainless steel**. The nine forms, signifying the nine victims, may be seen as emerging from the “seeds” centered in the Mosaic; and form the backdrop of the geometry of the site.

BENCH

Using the existing concrete wall, the team will add a backrest to create a 36-foot-wide curved, comfortable seating area. The backrest will include components of the Mosaic and the Poem and the bench itself will be clad with a teak seating surface.

PLANTINGS

The team will add Blue Fescue Grass as ground cover in the existing plant bed and in a recessed planter on the edge of the design to further ensconce the space.

Renderings





