

Coral Gables December 2018 Proposal

Hank Willis Thomas

Hank Willis Thomas continued exploration of identity, history and popular culture will be visualized in Coral Gables in two ways: by using large 3-dimensional speech bubbles installed on posts throughout Miracle Mile, and speech bubble-inspired bench designs in diverse sites throughout the villages of Coral Gables. The culmination of this 2-part installation will invite us to approach our different perspectives on truth with a new sense of understanding.

Each hanging speech bubble sign will contain a line from the poem *the truth is i am you* written by Hank Willis Thomas and Ryan Alexiev translated into the most spoken languages in Coral Gables. The phrases of the poem feature universal statements about the human condition and the translations communicate the essence of each English statement, as opposed to a direct translation.

The benches will seek to enhance public space as a portal to consider who we are, what we value, where we come from, and where we are going as a diverse group of people sharing the same space and social goals. In Coral Gables, the installation will explore the nature of truth and understanding across cultures by drawing upon the area's distinct architectural villages, including the Chinese, French, Dutch South African, and McFarland Homestead, to name a few. This interactive installation will act as a connector by offering a collective space of contemplation.

Pedestrians become part of the piece by walking through the sign populated areas or sitting in the benches. The installation provides a moment of pause in the fast pace lives of community members who will have an opportunity to reflect on the abundance of ways an idea can be common to all and expressed, as well as communicated, to a wide range of people. Made of bright colors and rolled steel, the benches will create spaces not just to reflect upon the vibrancy of the surrounding environment, but also to provide a place of introspection.

Speech Bubble Benches

Previous Installation Examples:



2015, *Ernest and Ruth*, Rolled steel, 83 x 96 x 48 inches, Installation at MetroTech Commons, Brooklyn (left) and the North Carolina Museum of Art (right)

Thomas states, “When viewers occupy the piece, they are encouraged to contemplate what it means to inhabit their own speech and beliefs.”

Proposed Locations:

Triangular Island at the corner of Coral Way and S Le Jeune Rd - Across from City Hall

De Soto Blvd and Almeria Ave - adjacent to Parking for the Venetian Pool

San Vicente Street and Como Street - Dutch South African Village

S. Dixie Highway and Grand Ave - walking distance from MacFarlane Homestead

Triangular Island at the corner of Coral Way and S Le Jeune Rd - Across from City Hall



The original *Ernest and Ruth* design will be reimagined for Coral Gables in a color never seen before. This location will allow for this most recognizable speed bubble shape to be within the eye line of the proposed location for the speech bubble signs, give pedestrians a space of reflection in a high traffic but underutilized space and add a literal frame through which to view city hall.

De Soto Blvd and Almeria Ave - adjacent to Parking for the Venetian Pool



The colorful and playful thought bubble design will offer multiple nooks for families and different viewers to interact while taking a moment to step away from the unique attraction of the Venetian Pool.

San Vicente Street and Como Street - Dutch South African Village



Playing with the architectural features of the Dutch South African Village of Coral Gables, the unusual shape of the rectangular speech bubble creates a unique yet familiar space to sit in contemplating.

S. Dixie Highway and Grand Ave - walking distance from MacFarlane Homestead



The especially joyous and unique exclamation speech bubble design will create an unexpected space of reflection and highlight MacFarlane Homestead as a vibrant part of the diverse community of Coral Gables.

Speech Bubble Signs

Previous Installation Examples:



“The Truth Is...” 2015, Installation at MetroTech Commons, Brooklyn, NY

Proposed Location:

Miracle Mile



The Miracle Mile light poles pose an ideal location for “the truth is i am you” hanging signs. Visitors will be welcomed into the heart of Coral Gables with messages of truths in the most spoken languages of the community. The work is activated by pedestrians who appear as if they are issuing the phrases themselves, either by intentionally standing underneath them or by appearing underneath them to the perspective of other viewers.

the truth is i am you

written by Hank Willis Thomas and Ryan Alexiev

the truth is i love you

the truth is i know you

the truth is i see you

the truth is i hear you

the truth is i fear you

the truth is i feel you

the truth is i believe you

the truth is i become you

the truth is i judge you

the truth is i respect you

the truth is i remember you

the truth is i remind you

the truth is i am you

Proposed Timeline:

April 2018- Site Visit + Arts Advisory Panel and Cultural Development Board meeting

May 22 2018- Proposal to City Commission

June 2018- Notice to Fabricate

August 2018- Sign + benches fabrication done

November 2018- Installation

November 2018- Basel 2018- Exhibition

January 2019- Deinstallation

Hank Willis Thomas			
The Truth Is I Am You			
Coral Gables			
PHASE		EST. TOTAL	ACTUAL TOTAL NOTES
Fabrication			
	Signs- materials & fabrication	\$31,075	22 Signs
	Benches- materials	\$15,836.81	4 bench materials
	Benches- fabrication	\$28,517.50	4 bench fabrication + Signature
Engineer	Stamped drawings	\$4,000	
Install			
	Crating - Signs	\$1,430	
	Shipping- signs	\$2,000	
	Intallation Signs	\$6,050	
	Crating - benches	\$4,752	
	Shipping- benches	\$16,600	
	Installation Benches	\$31,540	
	Travel	\$2,500	
	Artist Fee	\$20,000	
	Contingency	\$28,860	
	Total	\$193,162	