

## Bear Canyon Bridge Public Art Lighting Project – FACT SHEET - May 24, 2013



The City of Albuquerque Public Art Program, through the Department of Municipal Development, commissioned lighting artist Linnaea Tillett and her firm, Tillett Lighting Design, to provide a lighting component for the bridge during the bridge engineering phase in 2008.

The artist's vision was for a "Dream of Water and Memory of Sky" effect for the bridge paying homage to the waters of the Bear Canyon Arroyo that run underground through the intense confluence of commercial activity around San Mateo Blvd. and the interstate.

Quoting from the Artist's Statement: "The water is featured as a low level, cool blue lighting and the sky as vertical traces of purples, violets and blues. In the expansive night the overpass will emerge in a stream of cool blue light as a nocturnal landmark across the highway. From within the overpass, immersed inside this watery frame, the cyclist/pedestrian has the opportunity to gaze out across the landscape and along the arroyo's journey from its source high in the Sandias to the Rio Grande and the desert beyond. As night settles, a second layer of light, referencing and celebrating the myriad colors of the setting sun, appears in the dark. Subtle traces of purples, violets, and blues climb the galvanized sides of the overpass; frames of color measuring the Memory of the Sky. Subtle but intentional, the experience from entry to exit, will be a cinematic progression through a spectrum of color symbolic of the variations of color we unknowingly experience each day."

The bridge lighting artwork features over 450, hand-made in America, custom lighting fixtures with unique dichroic glass lenses. The custom fixtures were manufactured in upstate New York by Drama Lighting. Unlike many of the led light installations in town, the color variations for this project are built into the fixtures and are not color-mixed through computer programming. This use of permanent materials as part of the fixture provides for consistency in the artist's vision for the lighting effects and won't be affected by power surges or outages that would require reprogramming.

The lights will respond to the appropriate ambient lighting conditions to turn on and off via a photocell.

The bridge design was by local architect and UNM professor, Geoffrey Adams. Linnaea and Geoffrey worked closely throughout the public art lighting project. While Geoffrey’s design for the “diaphanous skin” of the bridge was to create a “geomorphic line of the horizon as it winds its way through the urban landscape,” the public art lighting project was meant to complement and extend that effect into the night.

The City of Albuquerque Public Art Program contributed \$327,000 in 1% for Art funds to the overall Bear Canyon Bridge project for the public art lighting.

## **TILLET LIGHTING DESIGN, INC.**

Tillett Lighting Design Inc. crafts highly nuanced lighting programs. Founded in 1983, it has a reputation for artistry, technical innovation and functionality.

Founder/Principal Linnaea Tillett holds a doctorate in environmental psychology. Her innovative approach incorporates a thorough understanding of the perceptual, behavioral and psychological effects of light. She has extensive experience in lighting landscape, infrastructure, architecture, public art, luxury interiors, and fine art.

Tillett Lighting Design has collaborated with leading architects and landscape architects—including Maya Lin, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Toshiko Mori, Beyer Blinder Belle, Leeser Architecture, Michael Van Valkenburgh, Olin Studio, Quennell Rothschild — as well as artists Kiki Smith and Paula Hayes.

Ms. Tillett carefully selects each commission. Her staff provides a high level of service and close attention to detail. Comprehensive and up-to-date technical knowledge is seamlessly merged with sophisticated aesthetic values. Careful consideration is paid not only to the visual environment, but to the emotional texture of the space as well.

The firm is certified as a Women-Owned Business Enterprise in New York State.

<http://www.tillettlighting.com/>

Current projects in process include:

- Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Park, New York, NY - Architect, Louis Kahn
- Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Monks Garden, Boston, MA, with Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates
- Waller Creek, Austin, TX, with Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates
- Queen Ann's Square, Newport, RI, with Maya Lin Studio
- Syracuse University Connective Corridor, Syracuse, NY

Linnaea Tillett has written about her experience of working with the Bear Canyon Bridge on her blog at:

[http://www.tillettlighting.com/blog/detail/bear\\_canyon/](http://www.tillettlighting.com/blog/detail/bear_canyon/)