

# TODJI KURTZMAN SCULPTURE

## Boones Ferry Park Public Art Proposal

To Honor

### THE ESSENCE OF THE RIVER

# THE MAGIC LEAKY CANOE

A Public Art Sculpture and Children's Story Inspired by  
Tuck'ush A Winch Katchia, Wasco Medicine Chief, Aka Ken Smith



#### **Proposed Sculpture & Plinth Design**

Medium: Bronze

Size: 5' x 4' x 7'

Bronze is the most durable and low maintenance public art medium with a potential 4000 year longevity.

This sculpture could become an heirloom public artwork with an allegorical story, based on the history of the site for the benefit of countless future generations:

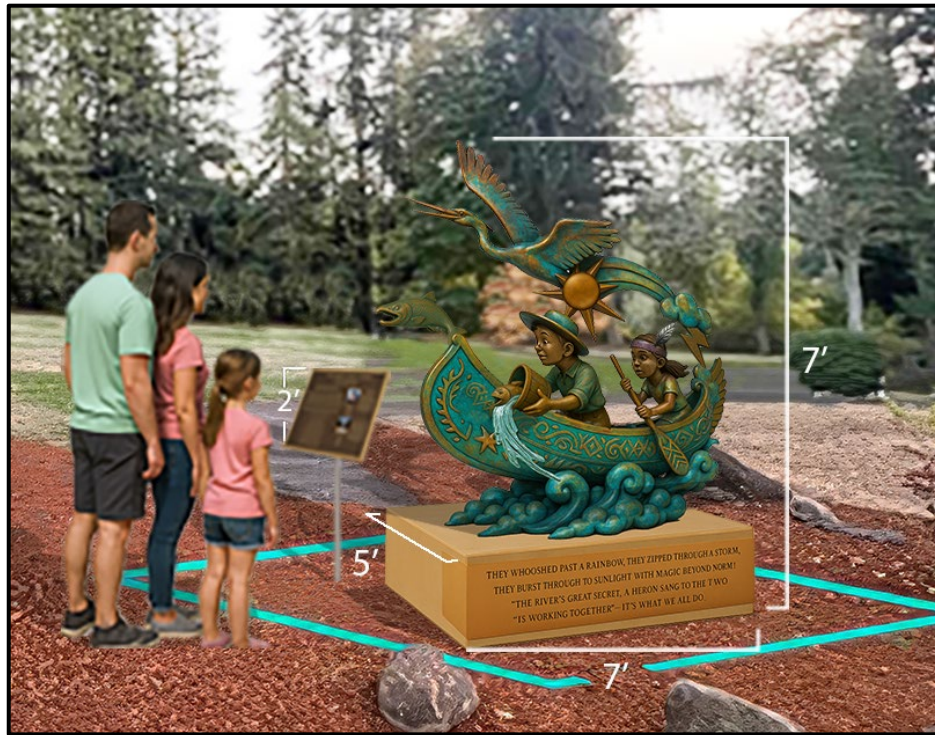
**The Magic Leaky Canoe**  
**Teaches Us to Bail and Paddle Together and That is the Magic!**



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## Scale at Site



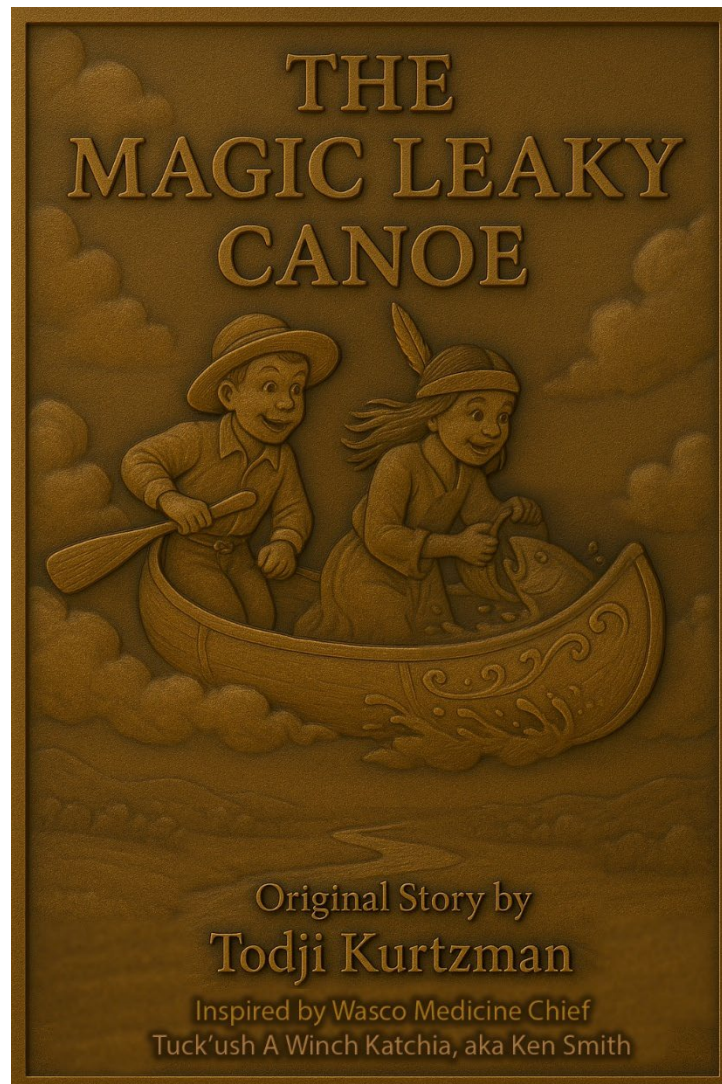
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## **The Magic Leaky Canoe Storybook**

I've designed the sculpture and storybook illustrations to evoke the feeling of a nineteenth century children's storybook. The RFP finalists were informed that site #1 has ten times the foot traffic because families pass this area on their way to the playground; so I have designed this project to appeal to both children and adults. Visitors can take a picture of the QR code on the plaque to instantly see this six page children's story on their cell phones.



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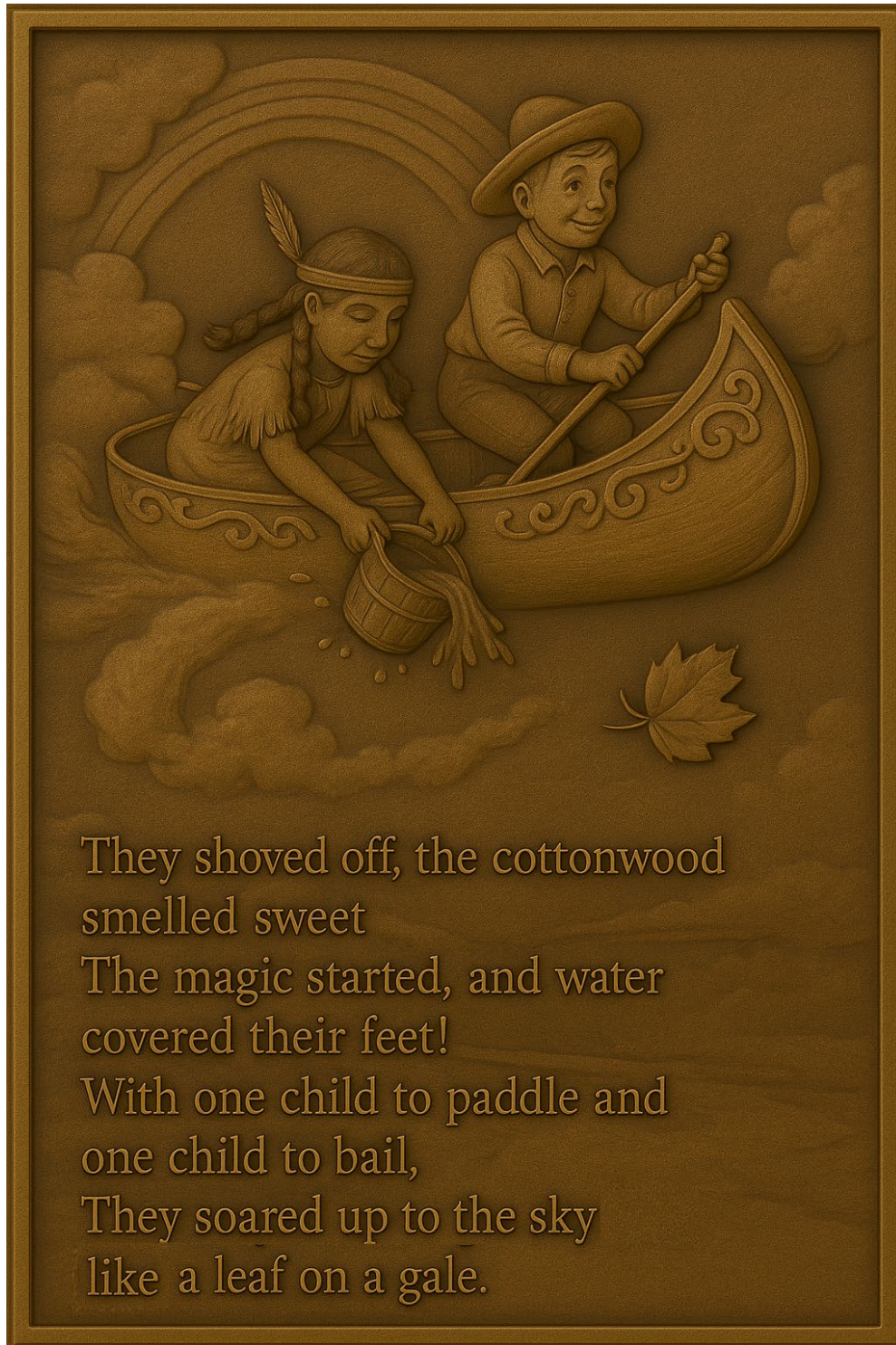


By the bend of the river,  
where cottonwoods grew,  
Sat a glowing old magic canoe.  
“Too leaky,” said the Pioneer boy.  
“Too magic,” said the Native girl  
with joy.

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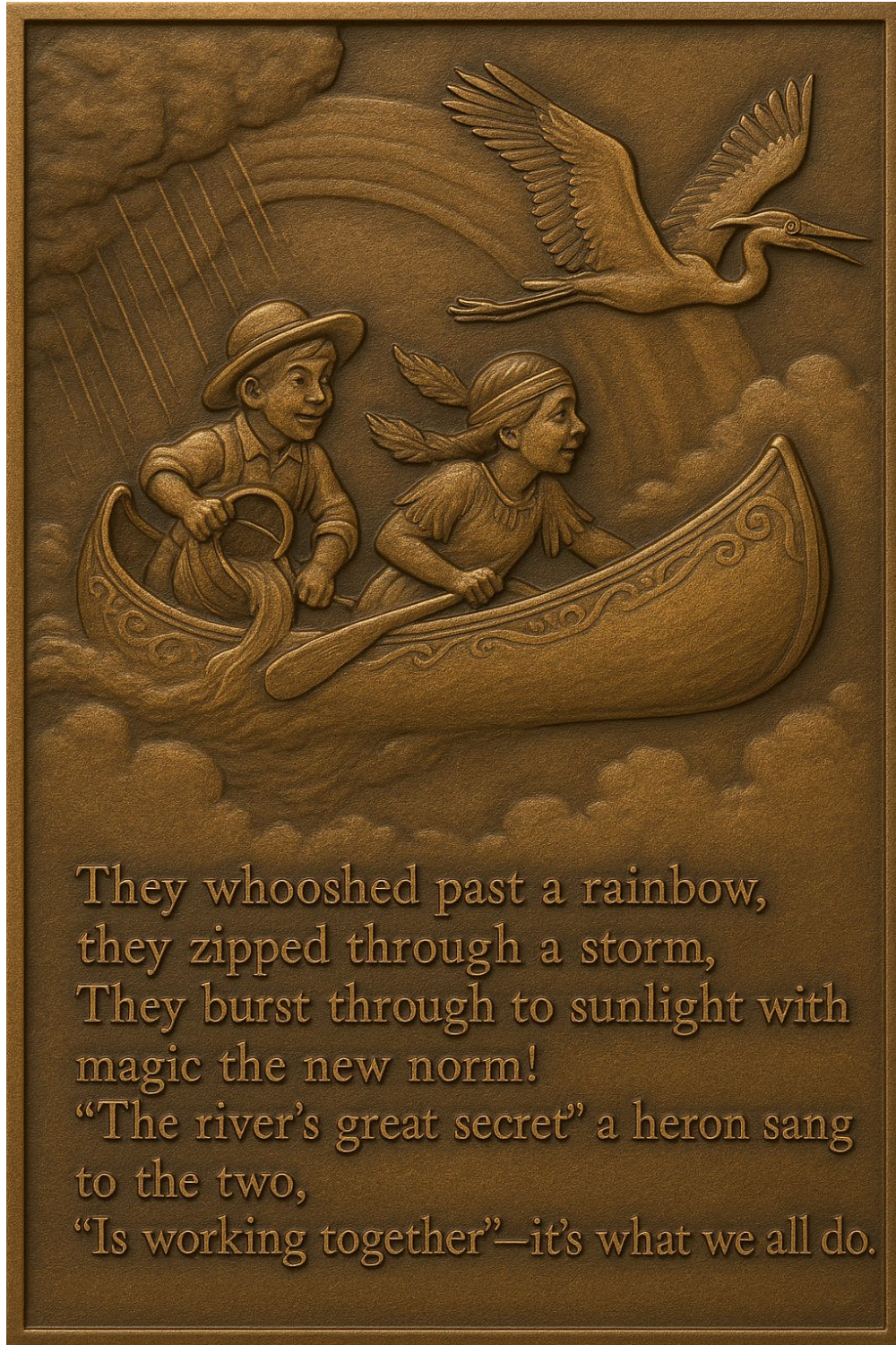


They shoved off, the cottonwood  
smelled sweet  
The magic started, and water  
covered their feet!  
With one child to paddle and  
one child to bail,  
They soared up to the sky  
like a leaf on a gale.

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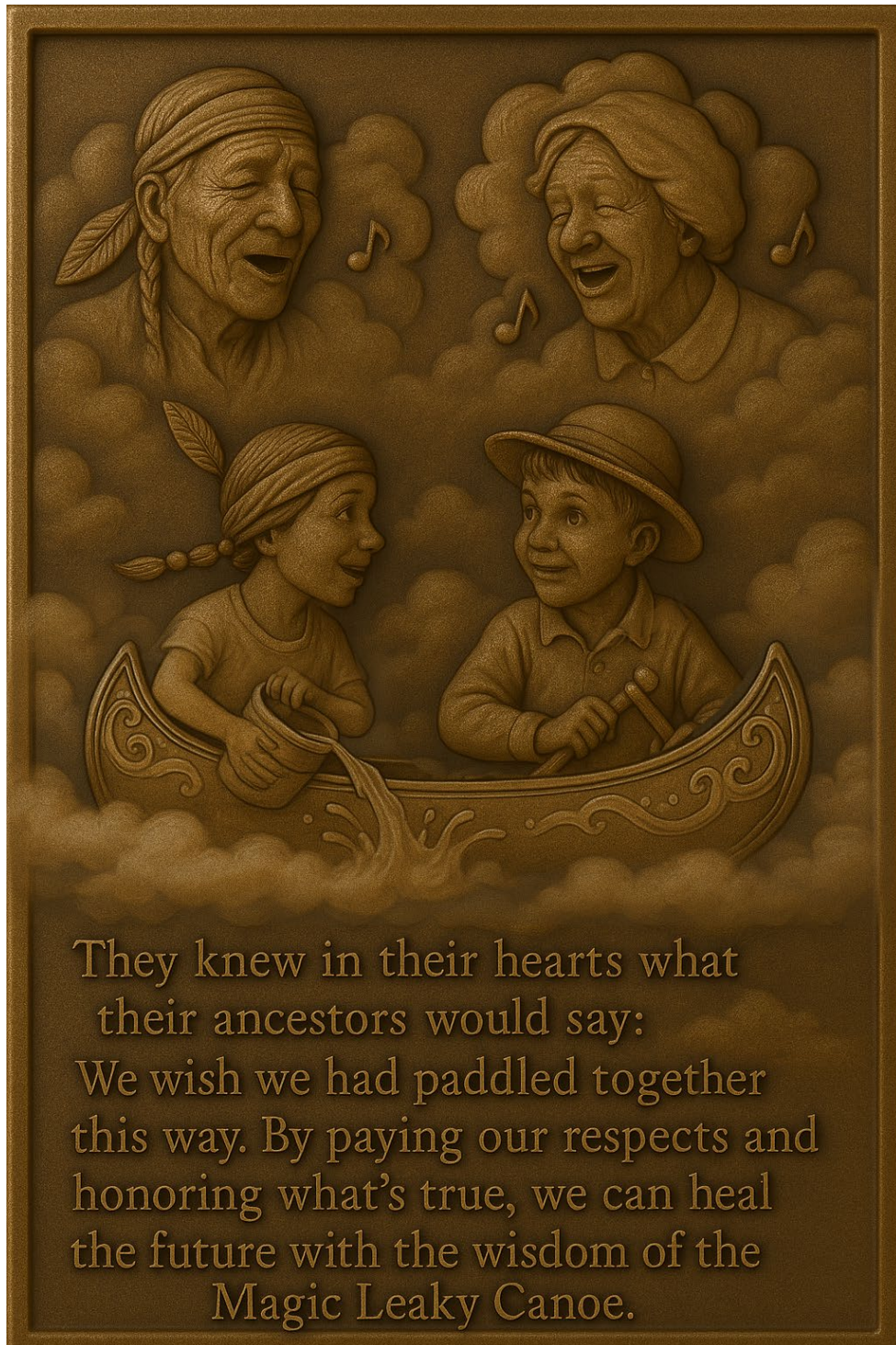
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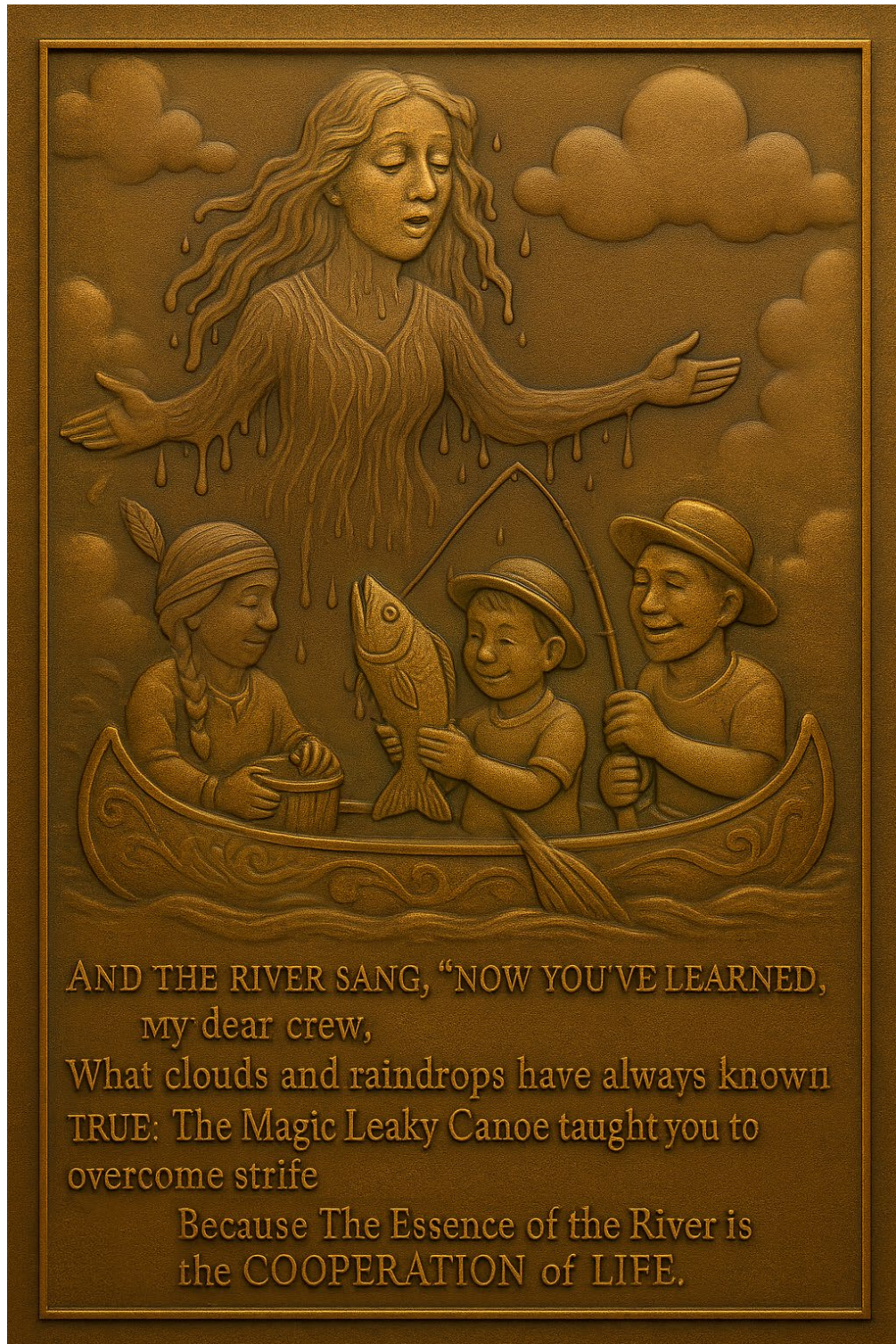
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## PLAQUE

This bronze plaque will be placed adjacent to the sculpture. Please zoom in to read the text. The plaque text and biographies of these two honored participating community members are also in the following pages.



## THE MAGIC LEAKY CANOE

Sculpture and Children's Story  
Honoring the Essence of the River by  
TODJI KURTZMAN

### IN HONOR OF ANCESTRAL NATIVE AMERICAN FERRIES

Indigenous peoples from the Kalapuya, Clackamas, Tualatin, Molalla, Chinook, and countless tribes, have ferried across this river, likely in this exact location over countless millennium. Their carved cedar canoes were part of a sophisticated system of river crossings that are an important part of Oregon history. We can ask the elders and use our imaginations to understand how they would have functioned. We pay our respects to the Native American ancestors, their ferry systems, and their descendants who are our family, friends and neighbors.

### THE MAGIC LEAKY CANOE

By the bend of the river, where cottonwoods grew,  
Sat a glowing old magic canoe.  
"Too leaky," said the Pioneer boy,  
"Too magic," said the Native girl with joy.

They shoved off, the cottonwood smelled sweet,  
The magic swished, and water covered their feet!  
With one child to paddle and one child to bail,  
They soared up to the sky like a leaf on a gale.

They whooshed past a rainbow, they zipped through a storm,  
They burst into sunlight with magic the new norm!  
"The river's great secret," a heron sang to the two,  
"Is working together"—it's what we all do!

They knew in their hearts what their ancestors would say:  
We wish we had paddled together this way.  
By paying our respects and honoring what's true,  
We can heal the future with the wisdom of the Magic Leaky Canoe.

And the river sang, "Now you've learned, my dear crew,  
What clouds and raindrops have always known true:  
The Magic Leaky Canoe taught you to overcome strife,  
Because the Essence of the River Is the Cooperation of Life."



Scan the QR  
code to see a  
video interview  
of Ken and his  
wife Heidi  
speaking about  
Native American  
canoes and local  
history.

### NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE

Ken Smith, Tuck'ush A Winch Katchia, a Wasco medicine chief, was 91 at the time of this video interview. Ken is one of the last speakers of seven local Indigenous dialects that he learned directly from his grandfather who was born in 1834 and lived until 1950! His love and wisdom has been shared widely, and he offers words of affirmation to remind us to paddle and bail in cooperation to create a better future because we are all in this Magic Leaky Canoe together.



Scan the QR  
code to see a  
video interview  
with Janet  
speaking about  
the Boone  
family and  
Oregon pioneer  
history.

### PIONEER COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE

Janet Boone McGarrigle is a 4th direct descended great-granddaughter of Daniel Boone, who grew up near Boones Ferry Park and rode the last ferry when she was 10, and was present for the christening of the Boones Bridge on I5 with the governor in 1954. She has dedicated her life to keeping Boone family history alive both locally and nationally. She offers words of affirmation to remind us to paddle and bail in cooperation to create a better future because we are all in this Magic Leaky Canoe together.

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# TODJI KURTZMAN SCULPTURE

## Artist Statement & Inspiration

Todji Kurtzman Sculpture LLC brings my 30 years of professional fine art sculpting experience, which includes the design and production of 18 bronze monuments since 2007. I've always been inclined towards storytelling, and this project brought out a skill set from my previous career in clay-animation and stop-motion film. I moved to Portland in 1998 when I was hired by Will Vinton Animation Studio (the predecessor of Laika Studio) to animate for two prime time television series featuring well known celebrities. I had been working at MTV in NYC at the time and Will Vinton hired me because my short stop-motion film had been the official selection at the world's top film festivals: Cannes and Sundance, with additional screenings at the Smithsonian Institution and HBO amongst television broadcast on 5 continents.

In the process of researching the history of Boones Ferry Park, my background in animated storytelling re-sprouted, and I created a children's story of "The Magic Leaky Canoe", where the leak teaches people to bail and paddle together, and that is the magic!

The story was inspired by my friend and neighbor Ken Smith, a 91 year old Wasco Medicine Chief, who I often heard joke: "We are all in this leaky canoe together." And this turns out to be more than a joke. Native American dugout cedar canoes required bailing and paddling together, which was the Native American ancestral ferry practice for river and ocean going canoes, rain or shine. Ken has been generous to share ancestral knowledge of the local Native American ferry system with us for this project in a 45 minute video interview that I already recorded.

I see this as an opportunity to recognize Boones Ferry Park as both an ancestral Pioneer ferry site started by the Boone family, and also an ancient Native American ferry landing, with a bronze sculpture to commemorate the depth and importance of this community heritage at this historical site.

We can raise each other's dignity in the present by paying our respects to the Native American ferry system of the past, their descendants in the present, and we can serve countless future generations with a commemorative bronze sculpture that carries a simple allegory of timeless wisdom for children and adults: *Bail and Paddle Together*.

For me, the *Essence of the River* is life, and the essence of *Life* is the interconnected web of cooperation between all of mother nature's people, fauna and flora. The Wasco name for the Columbia River is N'chiwana, which means *River of Life*. This is my inspiration for this project.



# TODJI KURTZMAN SCULPTURE

## Inspiration, Ecology and Symbology

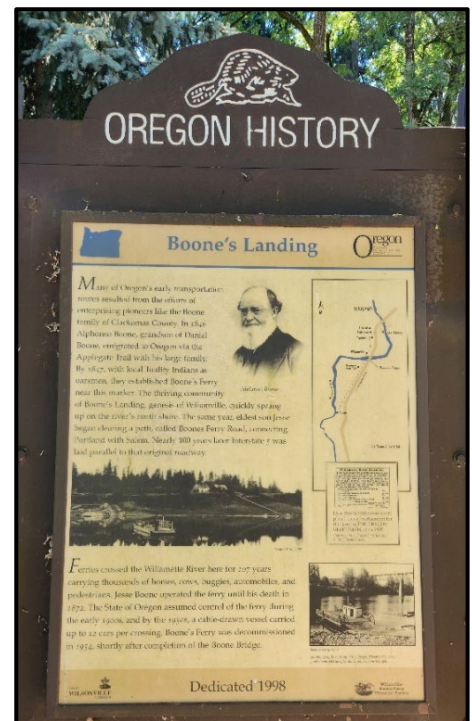
Salmon bring billions of tons of nitrogen and nutrients back to the forest ecosystems from the ocean when they return upriver to spawn and die. Their nutrients are distributed by predators and scavengers which in turn fertilize the flora, which feeds the fauna in the age-old cycle of life. The Magic Leaky Canoe has a Chinook Salmon at the bow and Eagle feathers at the stern. Herons are native to Oregon and rivers are their habitat. Native Americans used canoes to cross and navigate the rivers rain or shine, and Pioneers and Native American ancestors make the whole of our collective history.

The colors of the bronze Magic Leaky Canoe are natural hues of greens and blues with semi-polished bronze, which will harmonize and complement the colors of the grass, mulch, forest and sunlight of the park.

## Site Integration & History

Boones Ferry Park has yet to recognize the Native American ferry system that most likely operated in this exact same location for untold millennium. There likely were already landings on both sides of the river, with ancient paths going to and from the landings when the Boones and other pioneers arrived.

I asked Ken and he does not know of any recognition of the Native American ferry system anywhere. This is significant because everywhere there is an old bridge, there likely was an ancient old growth, dugout, cedar canoe ferry landing with clearings and paths to and from. You can hear Ken talk about this in his video interview.





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The photo of the current plaque in the park titled “Oregon History” mentions the Tuality Native Americans as the first oarsmen employed by the Boones for their early ferry in one sentence. *Within that one sentence are untold millennia of ferry history that I believe is worth expanding upon to learn a little more.*

The BFP Master plan states that “The ferry site is reported to be along an ancient Native American trail that crossed the river here. According to a description published on the McMenamins web site, Native Americans helped carry customers across the river in their canoes in the early days of the ferry’s operation.” This fascinating part of the site’s history could be further developed into a cohesive BFP Public Art Masterplan.

The story of the Magic Leaky Canoe pays our respects to the Native American ancestors and their descendants with an allegory to serve future generations: *Bail and Paddle Together.*

This is my design for a 24” x 24” bronze plaque to accompany The Magic Leaky Canoe sculpture:





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## Commemorative Plaque Text

### *In Honor of the Native American Ancestral Ferry System*

*Indigenous peoples from the Kalapuya, Clackamas, Tualatin, Molalla, Chinook, Wasco and countless tribes over time crossed this river for hunting, trade, ceremonies, connection, vacations and migration for untold millenniums. Their carved cedar canoes were part of a sophisticated system of river crossings that are an important part of Oregon history.*

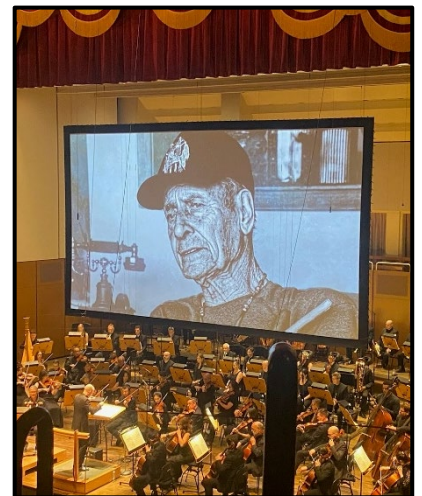
*Where there is an old bridge, there likely was a pioneer ferry before, and where there was a pioneer ferry before, there likely was a Native American Ferry long before. We pay our respects to the Native Americans ancestors, their ferry systems, and their descendants who are our family, friends and neighbors.*

## Community Participation and Public Engagement

Two respected local elders have agreed to participate in this project to represent descendants of Native Americans and Pioneers and to offer words of affirmation to encourage us to *Bail and Paddle Together*.

### *Native American Representative:*

Ken Smith is a 91-year-old Wasco Medicine Chief and one of the last speakers of seven local Indigenous dialects taught to him by his grandfather who raised him. His grandfather lived 116 years from 1834 to 1950! Ken is a neighbor and a friend. He is very well spoken, and his photo (see adjacent) was recently projected with the Oregon Symphony as part of a visual presentation of Native American history for a symphony written to honor Celilo Falls on the Columbia





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River, which was a Native American Salmon fishing site before it was submerged when Bonneville dam was built in 1938.

As a friend, I was invited to attend the 30-year vow renewal of Ken and his wife Heidi's wedding anniversary a few years ago at the Vista House in the Columbia River Gorge, which is where they first met, and near where we all currently live.

I video interviewed Ken and Heidi on August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Heidi has become very knowledgeable from 30 years of being married to Ken. The entire video interview can be made available to the public by scanning a QR code on the bronze plaque.

A two-minute short preview video with Ken talking about Native American dugout cedar canoes and how the Native American ferries operated in this area can be viewed by clicking the link below, or by copying and pasting this web address into a web browser: <https://youtu.be/8mfezVHg0ns>

## Pioneer Representative:

Janet McGarigle is a 4<sup>th</sup> generation direct descendant of the famous Daniel Boone of American folklore, and she lives close to Boones Ferry Park. Please see her letter below:

Dear City of Wilsonville Public Art Committee,

I am excited and honored to have been asked by such a prestigious sculptor as Todji to be a part of his proposal to produce public art for Boones Ferry Park which bears my namesake.





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I am a 4<sup>th</sup> generation great granddaughter of the famous frontiersman Daniel Boone. His oldest grandson Alphonso and his family migrated to Oregon in 1846 and built the Boones Ferry & Boones Ferry Road.

I am 81 years of age, and the Boones Ferry Park holds many special childhood memories for me. At age 10 I rode the Boones Ferry during the last trip across the Willamette River when it was decommissioned in 1954. Later that day I was part of the "Christening Ceremony" of the new I-5 Boone Bridge with the governor. I am in the right bottom corner of the adjacent photo that is currently displayed on a plaque in the park. During adulthood I have been actively involved in keeping Boone history alive locally and nationally.



In retirement I reside in nearby Charbonneau, a lovely community across the Willamette River from the park. Charbonneau is located on the original Boone-Curry land donation claim of my ancestors.

The concept for the Magic Leaky Canoe is meaningful and I am excited to participate by offering words of affirmation to encourage people to bail and paddle together to support the theme of the "Essence of the River" through cooperation with each other and nature.

Todji has proposed to conduct a video interview of me that can be accessed via a QR code on the sculpture plaque that visitors to the park can scan with their cell phones and see the interview while in the park. I am available and delighted to participate should this project be chosen.

Janet Boone McGarrigle



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## Proposal: The Magic Leaky Canoe

Since ten times the current foot traffic in the park is headed for the playground, and the history of the site is from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and before, I've taken inspiration from old fashioned children's book illustrations, with my own stylistic touches. The second verse from the story is inscribed on the plinth, which makes this design a large bronze sculpture storybook illustration.



## Interactivity

There are three levels of interactivity available to different levels of age and interest:

- 1) Children and adults can walk by and enjoy the sculpture's fun aesthetic appeal.
- 2) People can read the plaque and learn a little about the ancient history of the site.
- 3) People can scan four QR codes with their cell phones and:
  - a) Watch two separate video interviews with the community participants
  - b) Read the storybook
  - c) Visit the artist's website and watch the artist speak about the concept of the sculpture and how it was made.

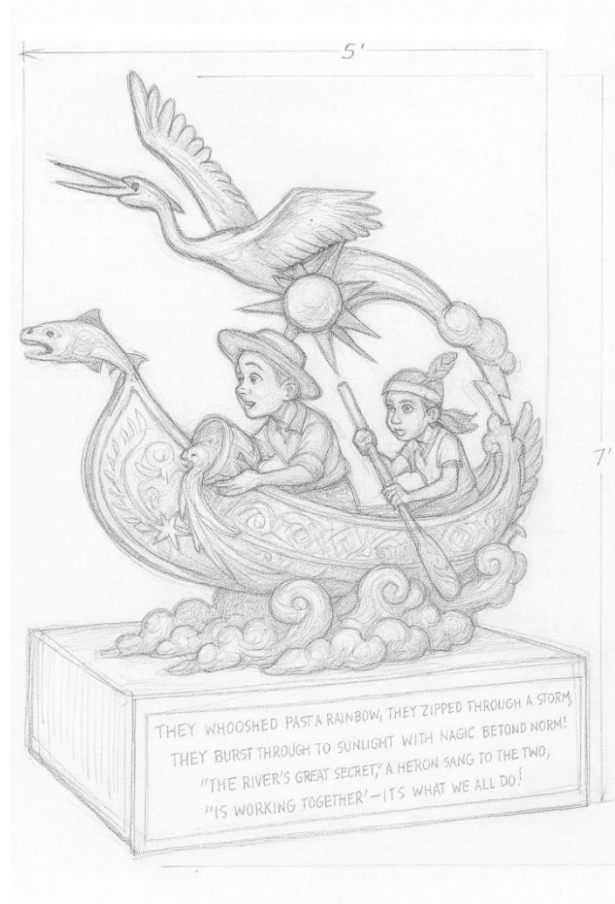


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## Proposed Sculpture Design

The design of the finished sculpture will be 90% similar to the line drawings below, and the colored drawing is the following page; I am open for revisions requested by the committee, and I will have the latitude to improve the design as I work on it.

The finish for the bronze is a blue-green verdigris patina with bright teal and blue highs and warm semi-polished bronze edges, accented with golden highlights, slightly glossy; raised geometric motifs on the canoe; stylized cloud base; Chinook salmon on the prow, Bald Eagle wing abstraction at the stern. Heron, Sun, Rainbow, Cloud and Lightning bolt attaching to the stern and the Sun attaching to the boy's hat with stainless steel interior armature for strength. Boy is exhilarated and bailing, girl determined and paddling. The 2<sup>nd</sup> verse from the storybook is inscribed on a tinted concrete plinth.



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## Proposed Sculpture Design



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## Public Feedback

I wish for the Magic Leaky Canoe to appeal universally, so I have attempted to simplify a very complex history into what I believe to be one simple universal principle: When things are difficult, it works out better when people choose to work together.

I have invited Ken and Heidi to share my proposal with the Native American Community. I wish to have their support in this project, and I am open to make revisions to my proposal that deepen respect and understanding of the history and feelings that are current. The shadow of this history is very dark. Ken has shared some of his firsthand experiences with me. The only answer I have is to pay my respects and honor what is true, and to honor all the truths. Official apologies are both present and missing, and I believe that they matter. I believe that time does heal all wounds in mother nature's time and wisdom. History repeats itself, and my hope is that children who are taught to work together during times of adversity will hopefully grow into adults that choose to work together in times of adversity. Those are my wishes for this project, and I am open to feedback and to make revisions to further the higher purpose.

I am also open to feedback and ideas from Janet and Ken who have not yet seen this proposal. I wish to craft it to everyone's satisfaction.

## Materials, Longevity & Durability

Bronze is the most durable, lowest maintenance and longest-lasting public art medium with a potential lifespan of 4,000 years with no maintenance. In comparison, stainless steel is stronger, the fabrication process can be less expensive, but its life expectancy outdoors is 20 to 50+ years depending on the grade. Cor-Ten steel can last 40 to 100 years and has a rusted surface. All metals are affected by environmental conditions.

The finish on the bronze is a patina made from copper and iron nitrate. Patinas are a living finish and they change with time. Patinas can develop beautiful depth over centuries. Natural green and blue are forest and river colors which will integrate into the natural beauty of the park.

Plinth: Concrete tinted with Davis concrete tint, perhaps Omaha Tan, seen in the adjacent photo. Mixing colored pigment in with wet concrete ensures that the color goes throughout the concrete. When concrete that has only been colored on the top surface gets chipped,



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which is inevitable over time, the chip shows grey and looks cheap. Concrete that is tinted throughout does not show chips as much, because the color remains the same under the surface. The plinth will be engineered, stamped and approved according to city code, and built by a city hired contractor as specified in the RFP contract.

**Sculpture Anchoring:** 3/4 or 1" diameter stainless steel threaded rods set in epoxy in holes drilled into the concrete plinth is the industry standard to secure bronze sculptures to plinths.

**Maintenance:** A maintenance and color packet will be provided upon project completion. Waxing the bronze bi-annually is recommended. The sculpture will last for millenniums without any maintenance.

**Durability:** An unskilled vandal with a hammer could total a car in 5 minutes. Comparatively, heavy hammering on bronze monuments would only produce surface impact marks, and a vandal would likely injure themselves before damaging the sculpture; unless they were skilled, or using power tools. Spray painted graffiti can be removed with acetone, and if the city follows the maintenance instructions and waxes the sculpture bi-annually, spray paint would dry on top of the wax coating and it would be easy to clean with acetone. Onsite re-patination is a bronze restoration service that some art foundries provide.

\*Note, I attended the ACHC meeting on April 16<sup>th</sup> and a committee member commented that images of my sculpture that I had submitted did not look strong. To follow up on any questions of durability, the sculpture that was commented upon had been engineered to withstand California earthquake code and designed for kids to climb on. It was engineered, stamped, inspected by the city and installed seven years ago and there have been no issues. I built bronze monuments that were installed as far back as 2007 which have had no issues.

## Lighting

The RFP states that: *Artists/teams are encouraged to incorporate a lighting plan for their finished work(s) as a system for viewer enjoyment and vandalism deterrent. The City may consider moving electrical access to any of the identified zones for the awardee(s). If the artist/team chooses not to include their own lighting system, the City may add uplighting at their determination.*

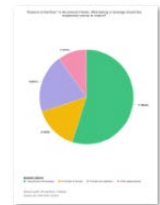
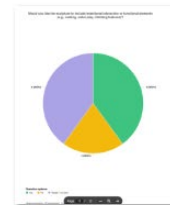
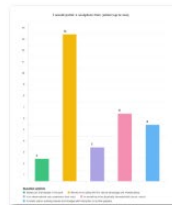
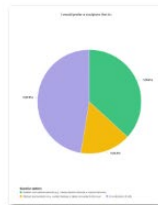
As this clause states that the city "May" provide electricity. I will provide a lighting design that will best accentuate the sculpture at night. If the city chooses to run electricity to the sculpture and install the lights, my lighting plan will be available.



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## Community Public Art Survey

I created the concept and design of the Magic Leaky Canoe to conform to the statistics of the interests of the community from the survey, although the quantity of respondents was small. All the interests that were voted on in the survey are represented in my design: The Willamette River's historical importance, wildlife, community / Indigenous heritage, nature, people, community engagement, interactivity and colors that blends into the park. In terms of style my design is both representational with abstract with symbolic elements. The natural green, blue and gold patina will blend subtly with the natural landscape. The plaque and QR codes make the sculpture interactive and educational. Education was not one of the questions asked of the public in the survey, and if it had, I surmise that people would have voted in favor of an educational component.



## Budget

Artist RFP Design Fee (April 16th- August 25th) 3 months full time work	\$1,500
Artist Sculpting Fee, 3 months	\$35,000
Bronze Art Foundry Casting Fee: 5' x 3' x 5' Length Bronze	\$34,000
Engineering & Stamped Drawings	\$5,000
Bronze Plaque	\$5,000
Sculpture Transportation and Installation	\$5,000
Tinted Concrete Plinth 7' x 5' x 2'	\$5,000
Insurance	\$1,000
Contingency (10%)	\$10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>

\*Estimated hourly pay for my 6 to 7 months total full-time work is \$30 an hour.

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## Timeline

Sculpting and Drafting: Nov 2025 - Jan 2026

Sculpture Casting, 6 Months: Feb 2026 – July 2026

Plinth Construction & Prep: July 2026

Sculpture Delivery and Installation: August 2026

Community Dedication Event: August / September 2026

Thank You For Your Consideration

