

FAIRMOUNT PARK ART ASSOCIATION

1616 Walnut Street, Suite 2012

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19103-5313

www.fpaa.org

COMMON GROUND (2009)

- Artists:** John H. Stone (b. 1966) and Lonnie Graham (b. 1954) in collaboration with Lorene Cary and consulting architect George Claflen
- Location:** Project H.O.M.E., St. Elizabeth's Community Center, 23rd and Berks Streets, Philadelphia, PA
- Commissioned:** *Common Ground* was commissioned through the Fairmount Park Art Association's program *New•Land•Marks: public art, community, and the meaning of place* which brings together artists and communities to plan and create new works of public art for Philadelphia. Generous support was received from the Fairmount Park Art Association, The William Penn Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Samuel S. Fels Fund, The Barra Foundation, The Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Foundation, Union Benevolent Association, The Honickman Foundation, Connelly Foundation, Dolfinger-McMahon Foundation, Macy's Foundation, and an anonymous donor.
- Description:** *Common Ground* consists of three parts: the *Sanctuary*, the *Inspirational Gateway*, and the *Common Room*. The project is located on the "footprint" of St. Elizabeth's church, which was destroyed by fire in 1995. The centerpiece of *Common Ground* is an open air *Sanctuary* that rises where the altar of St. Elizabeth's once stood. Surrounding the site is an *Inspirational Gateway*, a customized fence that incorporates the words "Hope", "Strength", and "Experience" - key concepts for many participants in Project H.O.M.E.'s comprehensive programs. Inside the former St. Elizabeth's rectory is the *Common Room*, an artist designed functional space that celebrates the neighborhood's history and ongoing revitalization. Together, these elements provide new dedicated meeting places for the Project H.O.M.E. community to gather, reflect, and celebrate.
- About the Artists:** The three renowned African-American artists involved with the project each have close ties to the St. Elizabeth's community. Lonnie Graham, who was named Pennsylvania Artist of the Year in 2005, is an internationally exhibited photographer who has been capturing images of the neighborhood for years. Sculptor and designer John Stone had worked in the past as a construction manager at Project H.O.M.E. and had helped clear out St. Elizabeth's Church before its demolition. His past exhibits include Philadelphia venues such as the Levy Gallery at the Moore College of Art and Design. Writer and activist Lorene Carey is the award-winning author of *The Price of Child* and founder of Art Sanctuary at the nearby Church of the Advocate.
- Dimensions:** *Sanctuary* Structure – 20' x 22' x 22' Concrete Surround – 35' x 24'; *Inspirational Gateway* – 366 linear feet; *Common Room* – 24' x 17'
- Materials:** *Sanctuary* – concrete, galvanized steel, stainless steel, hardwood, granite, and lighting
Inspirational Gateway – painted steel fence, customized aluminum text
Common Room – custom designed lighting and table, paint, vinyl text, screen-printed photos on fabric and paper; materials created and collected by the artists and community
- Participants:** Project Manager – Susan Myers, Fairmount Park Art Association, Philadelphia, PA
 Consulting Architect – George Claflen, Claflen Associates, Architects & Planners, Philadelphia, PA
 Contractor – Gary Lorenzon Contractor, Inc., Huntingdon Valley, PA
 Consulting Conservator – Scott Kreilick, Kreilick Conservation, LLC, Oreland, PA
 Customized Signage – Baker The Sign Man, Philadelphia, PA
- About FPAA:** Chartered in 1872, the Fairmount Park Art Association is the nation's first private, non-profit organization dedicated to integrating public art and urban planning. The Art Association works to promote the appreciation of public art through programs and advocacy efforts that commission, interpret, and preserve public art in Philadelphia.
- Project H.O.M.E.:** Project H.O.M.E. (Housing, Opportunities for Employment, Medical Care, Education) empowers people to break the cycle of homelessness, address the structural causes of poverty, and attain their fullest potential as members of society. Since 1995, Project H.O.M.E. has been working with neighborhood residents, corporations, foundations, government, faith communities and others to revitalize the St. Elizabeth's/Diamond Street neighborhood.