

Media Contact

Madison Walkes

832-652-8023

mwalkes@midtownhouston.com

***Unhoused Houstonians and Local Creative Community Collaborate
on Employment Opportunities through a Series of Public Art
Installations***

*HueMan:Shelter Project and Career and Recovery Resources
Announce Participating Artists and Support Services*



UpRise Enterprise Contractors and Houston Artists Emanuelee Bean and Marlon Hall (lower left) beneath the underpass at Spur 527 and Milam

Houston, TX – May 20th, 2025 – Houston is addressing homelessness using the power of public art to provide economic development opportunities and social service support for the unhoused community. Supported by a \$1 million grant from [Bloomberg Philanthropies](#), [HueMan:Shelter](#) will develop six public art installations aimed at challenging traditional narratives surrounding homelessness and bring art to public spaces while creating employment opportunities for unhoused individuals. This initiative is a joint effort of the [City of Houston](#), [Career and Recovery Resources, Inc.](#) (CRR), and the [Midtown Cultural Arts and Entertainment District](#) (MMD). Unhoused participants hired for the project will be trained by [Career and Recovery Resources](#) (CRR) and receive “on-the-job” training to help them take an additional step toward economic stability.

Workforce development skills:

Through CRR’s [UpRise Enterprise](#) program, unhoused participants will receive paid opportunities related to employment, finances, and housing. They will learn new skills such as site preparation, project management, and maintenance while also being connected to wraparound support services designed to remove barriers to employment and increase support on the path toward long-term stability.

“UpRise Enterprise is about meeting people where they are and helping them take the next steps—whether that’s learning new skills, earning income, or gaining the confidence to lead,” said Nkechi Agwuenu, Chief Executive Officer of Career and Recovery Resources, Inc. “Our participants are stepping into a unique experience to be collaborators, leaders, and creators of this city’s future.”

While participating in UpRise, participants attend a weekly dedicated Resource Day, where rotating services such as job fairs, certification training, group counseling, and soft skills workshops help equip them with tools to succeed. By pairing paid work with intentional social services, UpRise empowers clients to move from transitional employment to sustained self-sufficiency.

Homelessness is a critical issue nationwide, and Houston is making strides to address it with innovative and compassionate solutions. Through Career and Recovery Resources’ UpRise Enterprise program, 60% of participants go on to achieve stable housing or long-term

employment—proof that when individuals are equipped with opportunity and support, progress follows.

About the art installations:

Each of the six *HueMan:Shelter* installations will center lived experience as both subject and source. From large-scale murals to immersive digital works, the art reflects resilience, humanity, and community. By involving unhoused individuals in both the design and execution *HueMan:Shelter* will work to transform not only Houston's streets but also the narrative around the root causes and realities of homelessness.

Each artist will work with a cohort of 40 unhoused community members who have been selected by Career Recovery Resources, for 24 months. Participants will work at each site as apprentices, providing site maintenance and preparation.

"Public art can educate, empower, and employ," said Cynthia Alvarado, Director of Cultural Arts and Entertainment at the Midtown Management District. *HueMan:Shelter*, embodies all three."

Across several **METRO** bus shelters in **Midtown**, visual artists will present new works that activate public space through photography and digital media. *HueMan:Shelter* is proud to showcase the work of Houston artists committed to healing, and empathy.

Full List of Selected Artists and Site Locations:

Multi-Media Artists:

- **Marlon Hall**, visual artist, installation at Spur 527 & Milam
- **Peter Merwin**, visual artist installation at Spur 527 & Milam
- **Sherman Finch** visual artist, installation at I-45 Pierce & Milam
- **Joel Zika** visual artist, installation at I-45 Pierce & Milam
- **Jacobi Green** visual artist, installation at I-45 Pierce & Milam
- **Cris Rocha**, visual artist, installation at I-45 Pierce & Milam

Large-Scale Mural Artist:

- **Reginald Adams** visual artist, installation at 3200 Travis Street

Bus Shelter Artists:

- **Cam Shot First** visual artist, installation at Milam & Webster St.
- **Melissa Aytenfisu** visual artist, installation at Milam & Tuam St.
- **Chris Robinson** visual artist, installation at Milam & Elgin St

Social Media & Storytelling:

- **Emanuelee Bean** social media storyteller
- **Zainob Amao** & **Matthew Usoro** film storytellers

About the Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge

The Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge brings together cities and their leaders, residents, and artists to develop temporary public art projects that address important civic issues in their communities. In 2022, Bloomberg Philanthropies invited U.S. cities with 30,000 residents or more to apply for up to \$1 million in funding to create temporary public art projects that address important civic issues and demonstrate an ability to generate public-private collaborations, celebrate creativity and urban identity, and strengthen local economies. More than 150 cities from 40 U.S. states applied. Bloomberg Philanthropies selected eight winning cities to develop projects focused on local challenges. Since launching in 2014, the Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge has spurred more than \$100 million in economic benefits for participating cities and action across a range of civic issues. For more information, please visit publicartchallenge.bloomberg.org.

For more information please visit www.huemanshelter.com. For media inquiries, contact **Madison Walkes** at 832-652-8023 or mwalkes@midtownhouston.com