
Thank You America

Artist: Tuan Nguyen

Completed 2024

Viet Heritage Garden / 1499 Roberts Ave. San Jose, CA 95112/ Council District 7

ABOUT THE PROJECT

San José is home to the largest Vietnamese population in any city outside of Vietnam. There has been a long-standing desire from many in the local Vietnamese and Vietnamese American community to have a “Thank You, America” monument as a display of gratitude for being welcomed by the United States as refugees, and for the American service members who fought in support of the Republic of South Vietnam.



The monument is of two bronze figures of armed male soldiers, one American, one South Vietnamese, side-by-side. The height of the American soldier standing is ten feet, and the height of the South Vietnamese soldier standing is nine feet. The monument is a symbol of Vietnamese-Americans’ gratitude for the Americans and Vietnamese who risked or lost their lives in the cause of freedom, democracy and human rights. The community proposed monument design was derived from an existing South Vietnamese monument in Westminster, CA by artist Tuan Nguyen. To ensure integrity of original author is honored, the original artist Tuan Nguyen was contracted for his services to create a monument in San José based on his monument design in Westminster, CA. The concept design by Tuan, slightly modifies his original design and was customized for San José based on community input. Tuan presented his concept design to the community on August 1, 2022. The community were overwhelmingly receptive of the design.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

The Vietnamese American master sculptor Tuan Nguyen is internationally known for his seemingly weightless figurative sculpture merging Western techniques with traditional Eastern values. Among his most notable public installations are the Vietnam War Memorial in Westminster, California, the heroic sculpture of Saint Therese in Mobile, Alabama, and the extensive public collection of his works at the Plaza in Orlando, Florida. Tuan's latest project is the creation of a Vietnamese Refugee Memorial. Tuan's works can be found in the permanent collections of the Pasadena Museum of Art and the White House and Pentagon.

<https://www.tuansculptor.com/tuan>

ABOUT THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

The City of San José Public Art Program seeks to build community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enhance the civic landscape and experience. Through active community engagement, public art strives to reflect the City's diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future.

The Public Art Program is part of the City's Cultural Affairs, a division of the Office of Economic Development. The Public Art Program was established by a 1984 municipal ordinance that provides public art through funding from City capital improvement projects and eligible private development.

For further information and photos, please contact the San José Public Art Program at publicart@sanjoseca.gov.

