

# The Weavers' Gifts

Artist: Alan Counihan

December 2001

Guadalupe River Confluence / 345 W. Santa Clara St., San Jose, CA 95113 / Council District 3

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The creation of artist Alan Counihan, *The Weavers' Gifts* commemorates and celebrates the indigenous Costanoan-Ohlone Peoples, especially the Tamien Ohlone Indians who inhabited the land along the Guadalupe River where the sculpture is located.



The Weavers' Gifts is a site-specific artwork composed of four elements:

- The names of the 54 Ohlone tribal groups who inhabited California into the late eighteenth century, these are inscribed on pre-existing granite seat walls
- A 4' high carved-granite basket representing a functional and creative part of the Ohlone culture
- A 5' high carved granite mortar, broken to represent broken tradition; and
- A stone representation of an unfinished coiled basket inlaid into the paving with inscribed text that speaks to the history and future of the Ohlone people.

#### **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Alan Counihan has worked with stone for more than 30 years. He started by building walls and stone houses in the West of Ireland, where he is still based, and found that the wild rocky landscape and old stone masons were powerful teachers. Stone is his medium of choice as he finds that it connects him to the shape and flow of the visible world, the flood of time through form, and finds the character and mystery of each type of stone deeply intriguing.

Most of his works, both public and private commissions, are site-specific. It is his goal to find a connection to the spirit of a given site in such a way that the resulting work enriches rather than disturbs the essence of that place.

#### **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. 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 Office of 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.

