

# Litter-ature

Artist: Mighty Mike McGee and Carlos Perez

Completed February 2019

City-wide Business Districts, San Jose, CA

## ABOUT THE PROJECT



Litter-ature is a creative response to litter through poetry.

In 2018 Middle and High School students in the City of San José were invited to submit short poems that inspire use of public litter cans, protecting nature, wildlife, and our streets.

Working with poet Mighty Mike McGee, 180 students were inspired to submit more than 300 poems. A panel of professional poets and business district representatives selected their favorite poems from the poetic submittals that they felt best encouraged environmental protection. The 10 winning poems were developed into graphic art developed by designer Carlos Perez, of ArtOrigin.

The poems now appear on public litter cans throughout San Jose. Residents are encouraged to contribute to the visibility of this program by sharing photos of these special cans on social media and tagging them with #litteratureSJ.

The project is a joint effort between the City's Environmental Services Department and the Office of Cultural Affairs' Public Art Program.

Recognized poets represent Del Mar High School, Harker High School, Downtown College Prep, Moreland Middle School, Miller School, and Valley Christian High School.



Litter-ature Public Litter Can

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Mighty Mike McGee, former Poet Laureate of Santa Clara County, is a long-time resident of the San José area and a local fixture in the poetry community, is a performance poet, storyteller, writer, comedian, creator of open mic events, and facilitator of San José Poetry Slam since its inception. He holds several poetry slam championship titles, and is the first slam poet to win both the American National Poetry Slam Individual Grand Championship (2003) and the Individual World Poetry Slam Championship (2006). McGee's poetry publications include "The Graveyard Shift," *From Page to the Stage*; "Open Letter to Neil Armstrong," *Spoken Revolution Redux*; and *In Search of Midnight: A Collection of Poems by Mike McGee*. As a poet, he has toured throughout the U.S., Canada and Europe. He has performed at the University of Paris, on HBO's *Def Poetry Jam*, on CBC Radio & Television, and is a regular on NPR's *Snap Judgment*.

As a designer the first marketing communications team to manage the Apple account, Carlos Perez is credited with collateral design and production assets created for the first Apple II campaign, including the iconic logo. In 1980, Carlos formed his own design firm, *Carlos Pérez Design Inc.*, now *ArtOrigin*. Carlos has made meaningful contribution to many Silicon Valley corporate clients such as IBM and Hewlett Packard. For the past 10 years Carlos has contributed to the brand of many local civic, non-profits and arts organizations including City of San José, Santa Clara County, Mineta San José International Airport, Santa Clara County Water District, work2future, Hispanic Foundation Silicon Valley, East Side Union High School District, Moreland School District, Somos Mayfair, Arts Council of Silicon Valley, Teatro Visión, Ballet and Symphony Silicon Valley, Mexican Heritage Corporation, Consulate General of México in San José and Friends of the Human Relations. He was also commissioned to create the bronze Maverick Spirit Award for the Cinequest Film Festival.

## 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.



Office of Cultural Affairs **Public Art Program**

408.793.4330    [PublicArt@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:PublicArt@sanjoseca.gov)    [www.sanjoseculture.org](http://www.sanjoseculture.org)