

Madison Arts | Public Art Proposal

"Sueños de Paloma"

Imagination Center at Reindahl Park

FLOR MOLINA

GABRIELA JIMÉNEZ MARVÁN

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"Sueños de Paloma"

Scaled Renderings of The Design On Site



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Scaled Renderings of The Design On Site



"Sueños de Paloma"

3D model previews



"Sueños de Paloma"

Original Model



Narrative Description of The Project & Relevance to The Site and Stakeholders

Our Imagination sculpture, *“Sueños de Paloma”* (*Dreams of Paloma*), is rooted in the belief that every person in this community deserves to feel seen, powerful, and at home. As migrants (Gabriela) and Afro-Mexican artists (Flor), we are drawing directly from our own stories of movement, resilience, and belonging to create a figure that can hold the dreams of a neighborhood shaped by migration and Black and brown families.

We are centering this piece in Flor Molina’s sculptural style because her work carries the strength and beauty of Afro-Mexican identity, which is often erased in both Mexican and U.S. narratives. Her characteristic facial features, broad, proud, and tender, will appear in the sculpture’s face, offering a clear, positive reflection for Afro-descendant and Hispanic children and families who visit the Imagination Center. We envision kids looking up at this face and recognizing something of themselves, their relatives, and their histories in it.

In the sculpture, a human figure fuses with a bird, creating a layered symbol of freedom, migration, and hope. This bird-human fusion comes from the language of imagination, but it also speaks to a deep desire to move freely. To land in a place

where you can build a new community, and to feel that the sky is open above you. The wings that transform into arms are a visual reminder that humans and nature are not separate, they are a symmetric gesture of care, work, and strength.

Knowing that the Imagination Center will rise on land that was once farmland guided us back to the earth. We chose to sculpt the figure with bare feet, firmly grounded, so that the body connects directly with the soil of Reindahl Park and the land that now holds so many new stories. The barefoot stance quietly honors the labor of farmworkers and migrants whose hands and feet have sustained communities across generations, and it anchors this dreamlike figure in the reality of the place.

The hair of the figure carries a double meaning, which is read as curly Black hair and, at the same time, as the texture of rocks of the riverbed and the underwater landscape. This connects the sculpture to the marine life and to the movement, fluidity, and creativity that migration requires. As artists, we are deeply connected to water and ocean imagery, placing this aquatic symbolism in Madison, by a lake within miles of the park, ties

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the piece to the local landscape and to the many different communities that have grown around water across time. Through all these elements, we want this sculpture to embody hope, resilience, and love. We imagine it as a welcoming guardian for the Imagination Center. A figure that children can return to again and again, a landmark where migrant and Black families feel reflected, and a daily reminder that their stories, languages, and dreams are at the heart of this new community space.

When you want to escape from a troubling reality, art and imagination can help to give you strength, energy and clear your mind to look for solutions, clean your heart for any negative feeling this can carry, and bring hope to your mind.

Flor explains “Our ancestor wanted to escape from the slavery imagining that they become a bird that travels through the wind to forests, lakes, and to other peaceful places, that is why I feel connected to those figures.”



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Proposed Material List

Sculpture: modeling and design

- Pottery clay for hand-built study models.
- 3D scanning of the clay model to create a precise digital file.
- 3D printing for scaled physical models and refinement of proportions.
- EPS (expanded polystyrene) foam blocks, 1–2 lb density, sized for a 10-ft figure.
- Foam adhesives (foam-safe construction adhesive, spray foam for gaps).
- Foam sculpting tools: hot-wire cutter, hand saws, knives, rasps, surforms, sanding blocks.
- Internal steel armature: welded steel pipe/tube, cross-bracing, and base plate (galvanized or stainless where possible).
- Internal mounting flanges/plates integrated into the feet/base for anchoring.
- Temporary support stands/blocks for working at height.

Fiberglass shell and coatings (done by fabricator)

- Foam sealer/barrier coat (acrylic or epoxy primer compatible with foam) to protect EPS from resin attack.
- Fiberglass cloth and mat in multiple weights (lighter for details, heavier for structural zones).
- Polyester or vinyl-ester resin system for outdoor use.
- Catalyst/hardener: MEKP.
- Fairing compound / epoxy or polyester filler for smoothing forms.
- **Primer:** automotive-grade primer formulated for fiberglass, to promote adhesion and smooth the surface.
- **Color:** automotive-grade acrylic urethane paints for high UV resistance and vibrant, stable color.
- **Clear coat:** UV-resistant automotive clear coat or polyurethane clear sealer to protect against sun, minor abrasion, and regular cleaning.

Cleaning and touch up supplies for long term care:

- Mild soap and water for routine washing.
- Soft cloths and non-abrasive sponges for removing dust and

smudges.

- Surface prep and cleanup: acetone (for tool cleaning), cleaning rags, sanding blocks, wet/dry sandpaper.
- Application tools: mixing containers, paint strainers, paintbrushes, spray equipment (HVLP gun or similar), fiberglass rollers (for bubble removal – used by fabricator).

Safety equipment:

- Safety glasses, chemical-resistant gloves, respirators/masks, and protective clothing for all resin, sanding, and painting work.

Installation materials and equipment

- Stainless steel all-thread rods, bolts, washers, nuts.
- Non-shrink grout or epoxy at base plate (if needed).
- Exterior-grade flexible sealant for base joints.
- respirators, safety glasses, gloves, coveralls.
- Acetone for tool cleanup, mixing containers, brushes, rollers, spray equipment.
- Reinforcement: 3/8" rebar or similar, embedded in

the concrete footing or slab for added strength (per engineer's design, for foundation).

- Structural support: internal steel mounting flanges or plates pre-installed within the fiberglass base and coordinated with the anchor layout.
- Sealants: exterior-grade flexible sealant to protect any penetrations at the base from moisture and debris.

Tools and equipment for installation

- Lifting and handling: crane, forklift, or heavy-duty engine hoist, depending on site access and final weight.
- Safety gear: gloves, eye protection, hard hats, high-visibility vests, and masks (especially if any cutting or drilling is needed on-site).
- Drilling and fastening: hammer drill, masonry bits, torque wrench, and socket/wrench sets appropriate for stainless steel fasteners.
- Leveling and alignment: levels, shims, and temporary braces to ensure precise vertical alignment during anchoring and curing.

Fabrication Process

1. Design and scale model

- Develop small clay model to lock in pose, proportions, and symbolic human–bird elements.
- Produce orthographic drawings (front, side, back) and a simple grid or digital scale-up plan.

2. Full-scale foam rough-out

- Assemble EPS foam blocks into the rough 8-ft volume, gluing layers securely.
- Use hot-wire and hand tools to carve the overall form, keeping foam slightly oversized for later refinement.
- Maintain ample foam around structural zones (legs, hips, wings, neck) where armature will tie in.

3. Internal steel armature and integration

- Fabricate an internal steel armature sized for the 8-ft height and anticipated loads; include a base plate and internal mounting flanges.
- Carefully open foam in key areas, insert and secure the armature, and re-foam or infill around steel.
- Ensure that all critical cantilevered elements (wings, arms, beak)

are tied back into steel, not just foam.

4. Foam refinement and sealing

- Refine anatomy and details in the foam (feathers, face, clothing) with rasps and sandpaper.
- Round all edges and surfaces at child-height, eliminating sharp corners.
- Apply foam-safe sealer/barrier coat over all EPS to prevent resin from melting the foam and to improve bond.

5. Fiberglass layup over foam

- Lay up fiberglass cloth/mat with catalyzed resin over the sealed foam, starting with lighter cloth, then heavier layers at base, joints, and impact zones.
- Build sufficient laminate thickness for long-term durability in a public setting, thickest at base and touchable projections.
- Allow full cure, then trim and sand edges; maintain smooth, safe surfaces.

6. Surface fairing, priming, and painting

- Apply fairing compound to unify transitions, fill pinholes, and refine forms.
- Sand to a smooth, paint-ready surface.

- Prime with automotive-grade fiberglass primer, sand lightly, then apply automotive urethane color coats and UV clear coat.

7. Installation

- Coordinate with City's foundation contractor on base plate layout, anchor pattern, and elevation.
- Deliver sculpture to Madison; set onto foundation using crane/telehandler.
- Bolt sculpture through internal flanges/base plate with stainless hardware; grout/seal base.
- Touch up any minor transport/rigging marks; conduct final safety and finish check.

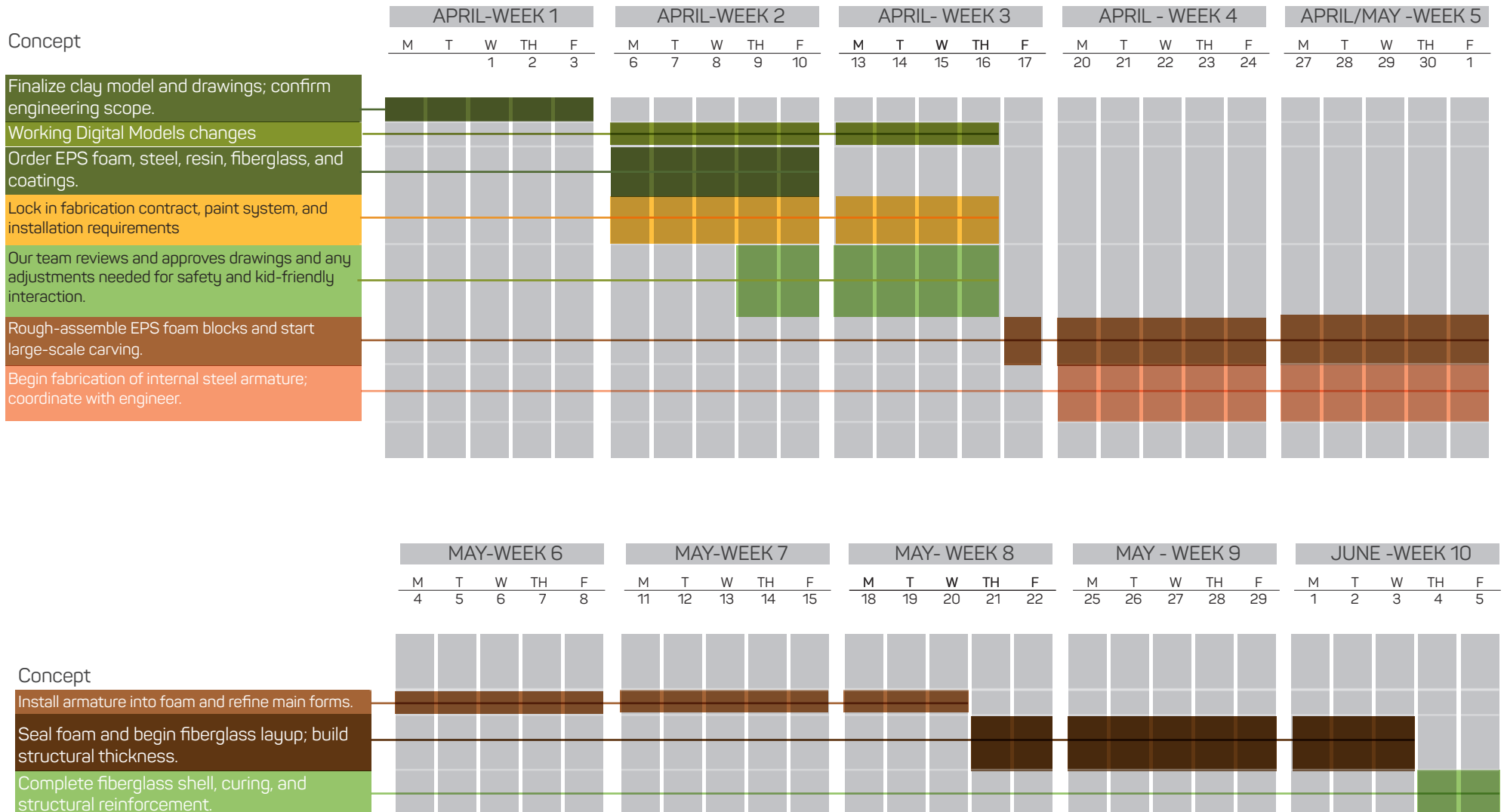
Potential Maintenance Needs

The fiberglass structure, combined with automotive-grade paint and UV-resistant clear coats, is designed for long service life with minimal maintenance.

Recommended routine care for City staff includes periodic gentle washing with mild soap and water, visual inspections for chips or impacts, and occasional touch-ups specified color and clear-coat system.

"Sueños de Paloma"

Timeline For Fabrication and Installation



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Opportunities for Community Involvement

Some Ideas we have in mind for community engagement are:

Curriculum and activity guides

Provide the library with a short bilingual activity sheet for teachers and families that connects the sculpture through themes of migration, imagination, and cultural identity.

Annual art making day at the sculpture

Propose an annual "Animals of Imagination" day where kids create small temporary artworks or chalk drawings around the sculpture, keeping it alive as a community ritual linked to the library's programming calendar.

Offering that same day an artist talk at the library (in English and Spanish) about alebrijes, Afro Mexican heritage, and the symbolism of the human and bird figure, followed by a walk to the sculpture for questions and photos.

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Itemized Budget

Category	Description	Amount
Artist fee	Three artists, multi month.	15,000
Community engagement	Story circles, workshop, materials, translation	2,000
Foam, modeling & armature prep	EPS foam blocks, adhesives, carving tools; clay and maquette; internal steel armature materials (pipe, plate, welding consumables).	6,500
Engineering & professional services	Structural engineer for armature and anchoring; any required stamped drawings.	4,500
Fiberglass & coatings materials and fabrication labor	Foam sealer, fiberglass cloth/mat, resin, catalyst, fairing compound, automotive primer, urethane paints, UV clear coat. Labor for full scale foam carving, armature integration, fiberglass layup, fairing, and primer ready finish (in-house or hybrid with fabricator).	26,500
Installation hardware & site work (artist side)	Stainless anchors, all-thread, nuts, washers, non shrink grout/epoxy, sealants, small tools and PPE; City separately funds foundation.	2,500
Transportation & crating	Crating/packing of foam and fiberglass sculpture, transport within Wisconsin, transit insurance.	3,500
Equipment rental (installation)	Share of crane/telehandler/forklift and operator time, rigging straps, short-term storage if needed.	3,000
Travel & lodging from Viroqua to Madison (2 artists)	Multiple trips across design/engagement/installation; mileage at WI rate, 2-3 nights lodging at installation.	2,000
Travel & lodging artist from Mexico	Round trip airfare, ground transport, 5-7 nights lodging in Madison.	3,500
Contingency	For minor design/material changes, extra foam/resin, additional installation adjustments.	1,000
Total		70,000