

Thursday, April 5, 2018

Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway: Coming Together on Common Ground



2012 Peter Vanderwarker photo



2013 Matt Conti photo



2014 Matt Conti photo



2015 Matt Conti photo



2016 Matt Conti photo



2017 Matt Conti photo

"In the heart of Boston, there is a fantastic and creative little park...The features of the park are, simply put, works of art...the shape-changing split dodecahedron, like memory is constantly changing... a living piece of art, celebrating life...the embodiment of living memory..." as Wanderlust Americana describes Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway.

To herald the beginning of Spring as the snow melts and the buds on the trees and daffodils begin to emerge, during Sunday morning, April 8 beginning at 7:30am, a crane will lift and pull apart the two halves of the Park's Abstract Sculpture, a split rhomboid dodecahedron made of steel and aluminum and reconfigure the two halves to create a new sculptural shape. This annual reconfiguration is symbolic of all who pulled away from their country of origin and came to these Massachusetts shores, establishing themselves in new and different ways. "The Abstract Sculpture shows how public art becomes a part of the city...", wrote Joanna Weiss in The Boston Globe, "...an example of public art that is both permanent and alive". The Park's Charles and Doreen Bilezikian Endowed Fund supports the annual reconfiguration. A&A Industries, Anahid and Aurelian Mardiros, fabricated the Abstract Sculpture, their very generous gift-in-kind. Aurelian. The rain date is April 15.

The Abstract Sculpture sits atop a Reflecting Pool with its etched inscription read even by those just passing through. "The Abstract Sculpture is dedicated to lives lost during the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923 and all genocides that have followed" one reads also that the Park and its endowed funds is a gift from Armenian-Americans to the City of Boston and the Commonwealth.

Beginning with the annual reconfiguration of the Abstract Sculpture, programs are held at the Park during the year, free and open to the public. On Saturday, April 21, the Commemoration at the Park, a program of the Boston Armenian Genocide Committee, will take place from 3-5pm. The two-day Commemoration of the 103rd Armenian Genocide also includes the annual State House Commemoration on Friday morning, April 20. On Sunday, April 22,

the Walk Against Genocide, a program of the Massachusetts Coalition to Save Darfur, begins at the New England Holocaust Memorial at 1:30pm followed by the walk to Heritage Park with a brief program at each location.

Celebrate Public Art at the Park, a featured program during ArtWeek Boston on Saturday, May 5 at 1pm, begins with the celebration of World Labyrinth Day: Walk as One at 1pm, an international initiative of The Labyrinth Society with over 20 countries world-wide “walking together as One at 1pm “ in peace and harmony. For the first time, Armenia is participating, walking the newly built labyrinth in Gyumri. The Reception to View the 2018 Configuration of the Abstract Sculpture follows at 1:30pm. Sarah Baker, Editor-in-Chief, Art New England magazine, will offer brief remarks. Ms. Baker will be introduced by Lucas Cowan, Public Art Curator, Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy. Tea & Desserts are generously hosted by MEM Tea Imports and Eastern Lamejun Bakers.

Under a Strawberry Moon, a first time event, is being held on Thursday evening, June 28 at 8:30pm to meet & greet, network, walk the moonlit labyrinth and enjoy chocolate dipped strawberries and ice teas, hosted by Vicki Lee’s and MEM Tea Import. Tea & Tranquility, the late afternoon summer series on Wednesday, June 20, July 18 and August 15 from 5:00pm-6:30pm, is again offered this summer in collaboration with Age-Friendly Boston and the Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy with Ice Teas and Desserts hosted by MEM Tea Imports and The Bostonian Hotel.

This year’s Sunday Afternoon at the Park for Families & Friends on Sunday afternoon, September 16 from 2-4 will feature the music of Boston Hye Guys Ensemble: Ron Sahatjian, clarinet; Joe Kouyoumjian, oud and Art Chingris, percussion. Each year the generosity of the musicians who perform continue to inspire as does the sharing of the talents, time and treasure of so many during the year.

The Welcome Reception for New Citizens following the Naturalization Ceremony at Faneuil Hall takes place during the Fall with the date confirmed during the summer. The Park’s Anna and Noubar Afeyan Endowed Fund supports the Welcome Reception offered in collaboration with US Courts, The Bostonian Society, Museum of Fine Arts, Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy among others.

Celebrate Public Art! during HubWeek in October is two day program featuring the Labyrinth and Abstract Sculpture. During the evening highlighting the Abstract Sculpture, the newly developed curriculum, Geometry as Public Art: Telling A Story, will be introduced. The Park’s Abstract Sculpture, a geometric shape that “tells a story of the immigrant experience”, has inspired the development of the curriculum. The intent of the curriculum is to engage students to share their own or their families’ immigrant experience and, in doing so, to build common ground as we are all immigrants to the United States, except for Native Americans.

The Najarian Lecture on Human Rights at Faneuil Hall is being held during the late Fall, following a year’s reprise. Endowed by George and Dr. Carolann Najarian, this public program of the Park, is a “call to action to respond to the societal abuses of today in much the same way as the men and women who gathered at Faneuil Hall in the beginning of the 1890’s who heard the eyewitness accounts of the atrocities taking place against the Armenian minority of the

Ottoman Empire during the First World War, spoke passionately about the urgent need for intervention and were called to action”.

The Candlelit Labyrinth Walk on Sunday, December 16 from 4:30-6:00pm with Hot Chocolate and Cookies hosted by The Bostonian Hotel culminates the annual series of programs.

Thorough the year, there are always visitors to the Park. “In the city, I'm drawn back to the AHP. There is a certain peace, calm and safety I feel there, especially very late at night....”, comments Zareh Zurabyan on Facebook. “It definitely has a certain level of clarity in the middle of all the craziness of the downtown...”.

For details on programs, visit ArmenianHeritagePark.org. To receive the E-News and announcements, please email hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org