

Dragons Fly by Michael Young on 400 W Gilman St

July 2025 Update: 6 sculptures instead of 4

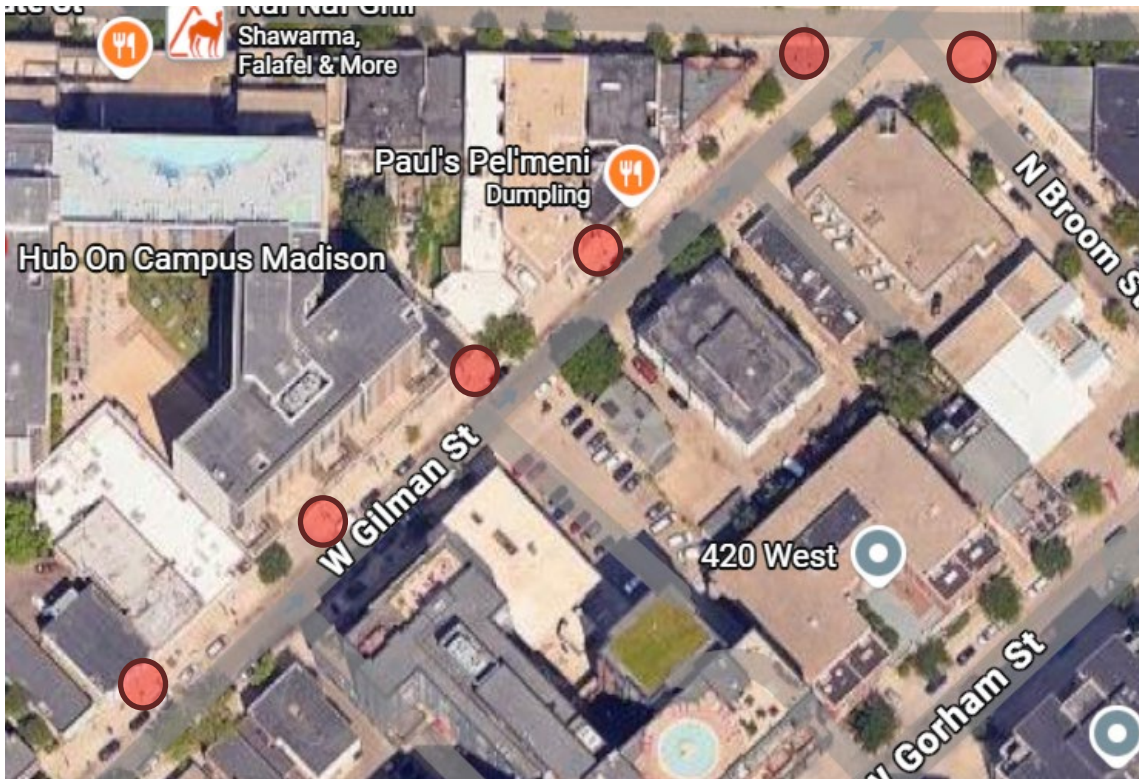


Overview: A [SafeGrowth](#) study was conducted for the 400 block of W Gilman Ave. The study identified issues and goals for this vital area near State Street. A multidisciplinary team from the Police Department, Traffic Engineering, Parking Utility, Planning, Economic Development, the Business Improvement District and other public and private agencies are working to implement some of these goals. This included:

1. Improving perceived and actual safety, particularly after dusk
2. Encouraging positive community engagement and social interactions
3. Increasing pedestrian activity and dwell time
4. Supporting economic vitality of local businesses
5. Creating a more vibrant downtown corridor for residents, visitors, and students.

The team identified light art as an opportunity to both enhance street and pedestrian lighting and create an open and welcoming atmosphere at night. Michael Young was identified through a review of previous calls for art. He applied with similar butterflies to the 2024 Monona Terrace Art on the Rooftop exhibition. He also recently exhibited this work at the 2024 GLEAM exhibition at Olbrich Botanical Gardens. The team proposed his work as they appreciated the playfulness alongside the simplicity of installation.

Location: 6 road lights in the 400 Block of W Gilman St, Madison WI 53703



Description: 4 ~~6~~ LED-lit aluminum dragonflies with mesh wings mounted to road light poles.

About the artist: [Michael Young](#) is a Chicago artist specializing in site-specific public sculpture and light-based work. For over thirty years, Young's artwork and design have appeared in public and private collections across the United States and abroad. Highlights include permanent work for the National Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, McDonalds, Hyatt Hotels, RDD Tokyo, Ballou Senior High School, River Terrace Special Education Center in Washington DC, Carthage College in Wisconsin. From concept to installation, Young's aesthetic reflects the values and interests of each sculpture's site and surrounding community. Young studied botany and ecology at UW-Madison, and is skilled in aluminum, bronze, stainless steel, wood, glass, and light. Young's work is self-fabricated with site and setting in mind.

Price: \$16,000 ~~\$24,000~~ (\$4,000 each)

Funding: The project will be funded by a grant administered by Public Health Madison Dane County.