

From: [BonDurant, Sherry](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Madison Metro Public Art
Date: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 1:50:30 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Hello Madison Arts Commission-

I am writing to submit my support for Jenie Gao to be awarded the Madison Metro Transit Public Art Project. I have followed Jenie for a number of years, appreciating her talent and contributions to the city's public art scene. I admire her tenacity to increase public art in the Madison area, as well as her values related to equality and diversity.

Please include my comment in the public comment records.

Thank you,

Sherry BonDurant

ADMINISTRATIVE CLERK

email: SBonDurant@cityofmadison.com

GreaterMadisonMPO.org

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From: [Emily Leach](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Request to Add Support for Jenie Gao (Madison Metro Transit Mural/Agenda Item 65288)
Date: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 5:38:15 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Madison Arts Commission:

I'm hoping to add my thoughts to the Public Comment records, both for documentation and for the Madison Arts Commission's review. I'm writing in full support of Jenie Gao's proposal, "The Time is Ours," for the Madison Metro Transit Mural project.

I was incredibly moved by and would be excited to see this mural on Washington Ave. I think that the narrative — focusing on the experience and motivations of bus riders and centering the interiority of BIPOC living in Madison — is a compelling investigation of the urgent need for public transportation and one that feels meaningfully responsive to lived community experiences. I would love for these interviews to be cataloged, as another way of documenting this project.

I appreciate that it makes extensive and well-planned use of the space, while still being considerate of and responsive to tree cover, shade, and seasonal changes. I appreciate that Jenie intends to source local materials, hire labor from local companies, and compensate/engage with local community members to complete the project. Although I understand some of the sidings will be updated, I was reassured that Jenie had investigated and determined which pieces and where — and, of course, that they will not interfere with this proposed mural. I think that the scale will not be distracting to drivers and that pedestrians will also benefit from spending meaningful time with the work up close.

When I first came to Madison in 2012, I entered through Washington Ave. I saw the Capitol Building in the distance, but I also saw the Metro Transit building. The building itself didn't make much of a first impression, but I recall the feeling that E Washington was a neglected space. It seemed to me that city values centered on the Capitol and that priorities visibly waned from there. As I grew to know the neighborhood and the city writ large, I became far more aware of the community, concerns, and stories of Washington Ave. If I had seen something like this mural when I first moved to Madison, I would have been excited. I would have felt valued and welcomed. I also believe I would have felt a sense of what I have come to learn over the years I've lived in Madison, and seen myself reflected within that narrative.

I would be proud to see "The Time is Ours" in Madison, and I would love to introduce Madison to more people in this way.

Thank you for all your work, and for the opportunity to contribute comments in support of this project.

Best,

Emily Leach (she/her)
leachylime@gmail.com
[Website](#) | [Instagram](#)



From: [Erin Crawley](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Metro Project Public Comment
Date: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 6:23:36 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I'm emailing to show my support of Jenie Gao's proposal for the Madison Metro project. I am so excited by her proposal. I think that it would make a profoundly meaningful contribution to public art works in Madison, as well as to the public face of the Metro bus system. Her proposed project is exciting, gorgeous, respectful, inclusive, thoughtful, makes terrific use of local products and labor, and is beautifully researched and presented. I was so moved (really!) by her attention to Metro bus ridership and the way that she incorporated riders and their views on public transportation in her work. I responded earlier in support of her proposal and made comments on the other proposals, but I want to make sure that my support is part of the public record. Jenie Gao has an excellent record of creating public art works that are visually stunning and that are the result of careful collaborative work that goes beyond token interest in the communities involved.

As a graduate student and later as an administrator at UW-Madison, I was a regular rider on the bus system (especially in the winter!). I'm a long time resident of Madison and care about what kinds of public art works we support.

Erin Crawley
[REDACTED]
Madison, WI 53704

From: [Kelsie](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Mural
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 2:34:18 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Madison Arts Commissioners,

I'm writing to express my full support for Jenie Gao's proposal for the Percent Arts Program's Metro Transit Mural project. My name is Kelsie I'm a Madison resident of 12 years. I am a nanny and part of the west side community of Madison. Jenie's proposal really, really resonated with me. I don't rely on public transportation in Madison currently, and the design just made me think about how much I enjoyed watching the city and the seasons pass from my seat on the bus when I rode it. It's relaxing and empowering and Jenie really captured that.

I don't think any of the other finalists measure up to Jenie in artistic design, ethical considerations, community involvement, or economic impact. Artistically, Vito's doesn't use the space well and relies on an app that will soon be out of date. Deborah's is busy and detailed with a subtle color palette that doesn't stand out much, which will be distracting to drivers. Actual Size Art's design relies on Where's Waldo-style chicken spotting, which is liable to cause an accident on an already dangerous street.

Ethically, I'm worried about all of the finalists except for Jenie. Deborah and Actual Size Art's designs rely on evoking and celebrating a racist, segregated history of transit. I think that whitewashing Madison's past does a disservice to its citizens, many of whom were and are personally harmed by said racism and all of whom should know better than to romanticize racism and erasure. As a white resident of Madison, I take offense to the idea that Madison's transportation history started in the 1880s, like Deborah's proposal implies. Indigenous people were here and transporting each other across Madison's rivers, lakes, and land long before settlers ever stepped foot on Ho-Chunk territory. Additionally, Actual Size Art's design is a slap in the face to bus riders who are forced to wait at bus stops with no protection from the elements, as they use bus shelters to protect a vintage bus. Why protect a keepsake from a racist past but not the people who ride the buses today? Deborah, Vito, and Actual Size Art's designs all rely heavily on plastic for installation, and require the removal of fully grown trees that provide valuable shade and cooling to a section of East Washington that is mainly concrete. Jenie's does not.

In terms of community involvement, Jenie's design is best researched and gets to the heart of what people who ride the bus all have in common in a way that doesn't rely on surface level community portraits or the whitewashing of an imagined past. Vito's design doesn't seem to have had any community input at all. Jenie's has not only involved the community

through the planning process, but will throughout its execution as well, which I think is really important. Because Jenie's business and many of her community ties remain Madison-local, the money from this project will also stay in Madison's local economy if Jenie is selected, which can't be said for Deborah or Vito. It's also worth noting that Jenie is the only person of color in the finalists, and the only one who centered the BIPOC community of Madison in her proposal. This is an oversight on the part of the other finalists that only serves to further alienate an already marginalized group of people.

I urge you to choose Jenie Gao's proposal for the mural. Not only does she deserve it, given her history of community engagement and organization and her deep commitment to artistic ethics, but we, Madison as a community, deserve it too. I want to drive past that mural every day and I hope that you do too.

Thank you,

Kelsie

From: [Barb Glassel](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Metro Project Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 3:35:29 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

This email is to repeat my support for Jenie Gao's proposal. I believe her proposal is the one which reflects best the forward spirit of Madison and its progressive city transportation department.

Please include my previous, more extensive comments on all 4 proposals, which were emailed by the September 30th deadline... I can re-send them if you tell me exactly which email address to use, For that or any other questions, the best way to contact me is by phone,



This has been such an interesting process, and thank you for encouraging the public dialogue! Wish I could attend the selection meeting; however, I will be unable to attend in person.

Sincerely,
Barbara Glassel

From: [fiachan13](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Metro Mural Proposal
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 5:02:23 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Madison Arts Commissioners,

I'm writing to express my full support for Jenie Gao's proposal for the Percent Arts Program's Metro Transit Mural project. My name is Brannen Clark, I'm a Behavioral Health Therapist at GHC-SCW, a Madison resident of eight years, and have lived in Madison's diverse and underprivileged South side in the Burr Oaks neighborhood since 2014. Jenie's proposal resonated with me on many levels. I'm a disabled rider who currently relies on public transportation in Madison, and the design made me think about how much I enjoy watching the city and the seasons pass from my seat on the bus when I commute to and from work or other locations. It's relaxing and empowering, and Jenie captured this in her proposal.

None of the other finalists measure up to Jenie in artistic design, ethical considerations, community involvement, or economic impact. Artistically, Vito's doesn't use the space well and relies on an app that will soon be out of date. Deborah's is busy and detailed with a subtle color palette that doesn't stand out much, which will be distracting to drivers. Actual Size Art's design relies on Where's Waldo-style chicken spotting, which is liable to cause an accident on an already dangerous street.

Ethically, I'm worried about all of the finalists except for Jenie. Deborah and Actual Size Art's designs rely on evoking and celebrating a racist, segregated history of transit. Whitewashing Madison's past does a disservice to its citizens, many of whom were and are personally harmed by said racism and all of whom should know better than to romanticize racism and erasure. As a non-Indigenous resident of Madison, I take offense to the idea that Madison's transportation history started in the 1880s, like Deborah's proposal implies. The Ho-Chunk and other indigenous nations were here and transporting each other across Madison's rivers, lakes, and land long before settlers ever stepped foot on Ho-Chunk territory. Additionally, Actual Size Art's design is a slap in the face to bus riders who are forced to wait at bus stops with no protection from the elements, as they use bus shelters to protect a vintage bus. Why protect a keepsake from a racist past but not the people who ride the buses today? Deborah, Vito, and Actual Size Art's designs all rely heavily on plastic for installation, and require the removal of fully grown trees that provide valuable shade and cooling to a section of East Washington that is mainly concrete. Jenie's does not.

In terms of community involvement, Jenie's design is best researched and gets to the heart of what people who ride the bus all have in common in a way that doesn't rely on surface level community portraits or the whitewashing of an imagined past. Vito's design doesn't seem to have had any community input at all. Jenie's has not only involved the community through the planning process, but will continue to involve the community throughout its execution, which is important and necessary. Because Jenie's business and many of her community ties remain Madison-local, the money from this project will also stay in Madison's local economy if Jenie is selected, which can't be said for Deborah or Vito. It's also worth noting that Jenie is the only person of color in the finalists, and the only one who centered the BIPOC community of Madison in her proposal. This is an oversight on the part of the other finalists that only serves

to further alienate an already marginalized group of people.

I urge you to choose Jenie Gao's proposal for the mural. Not only does she deserve it, given her history of community engagement and organization and her deep commitment to artistic ethics, but we, Madison as a community, deserve it too. I want to drive past that mural every day and I hope that you do too.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

With warm regards,

Brannen Clark

From: [Chrissy Ramakrishnan](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Support for Jenie Gao's Metro Transit Mural Project
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 7:46:55 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Madison Arts Commissioners,

I'm writing to express my full support for Jenie Gao's proposal for the Percent Arts Program's Metro Transit Mural project. My name is Chrissy Ramakrishnan. I'm a Madison resident of 6 years, a state employee, and part of the Greenbush community of Madison.

I am excited to support and urge you to choose Jenie Gao's proposal for the mural. Not only does she deserve it, given her history of community engagement and organization and her deep commitment to artistic ethics, but we, Madison as a community, deserve it too.

I don't think any of the other finalists measure up to Jenie in artistic design, ethical considerations, community involvement, or economic impact. Artistically, Vito's doesn't use the space well and relies on an app that will soon be out of date. Deborah's is busy and detailed with a subtle color palette that doesn't stand out much, which will be distracting to drivers. Actual Size Art's design relies on Where's Waldo-style chicken spotting, which is liable to cause an accident on an already dangerous street.

Ethically, I'm worried about all of the finalists except for Jenie. Deborah and Actual Size Art's designs rely on evoking and celebrating a racist, segregated history of transit. I think that whitewashing Madison's past does a disservice to its citizens, many of whom were and are personally harmed by said racism and all of whom should know better than to romanticize racism and erasure. As a non-Indigenous resident of Madison, I take offense to the idea that Madison's transportation history started in the 1880s, like Deborah's proposal implies. They were here and transporting each other across Madison's rivers, lakes, and land long before settlers ever stepped foot on Ho-Chunk territory. Additionally, Actual Size Art's design is a slap in the face to bus riders who are forced to wait at bus stops with no protection from the elements, as they use bus shelters to protect a vintage bus. Why protect a keepsake from a racist past but not the people who ride the buses today? Deborah, Vito, and Actual Size Art's designs all rely heavily on plastic for installation, and require the removal of fully grown trees that provide valuable shade and cooling to a section of East Washington that is mainly concrete. Jenie's does not.

In terms of community involvement, Jenie's design is best researched and gets to the heart of what people who ride the bus all have in common in a way that doesn't rely on surface level community portraits or the whitewashing of an imagined past. Vito's design doesn't seem to have had any community input at all. Jenie's has not only involved the community through the planning process, but will throughout its execution as well, which I think is really

important. Because Jenie's business and many of her community ties remain Madison-local, the money from this project will also stay in Madison's local economy if Jenie is selected, which can't be said for Deborah or Vito. It's also worth noting that Jenie is the only person of color in the finalists, and the **only one who centered the BIPOC community of Madison in her proposal.** This is an oversight on the part of the other finalists that only serves to further alienate an already marginalized group of people.

Thank you,

Chrissy Ramakrishnan



From: [Jess Draws](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Support for Jenie Gao's Mural Proposal
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 8:00:49 AM

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Dear Madison Arts Commissioners,

I'm writing to express my full support for Jenie Gao's proposal for the Percent Arts Program's Metro Transit Mural project. My name is Jess Draws. I'm a Madison resident since 2012, a fellow artist, and part of the queer and disabled community of Madison. Jenie's proposal really, really resonated with me. I don't rely on public transportation in Madison currently, but the design just made me think about how much I enjoyed watching the city and the seasons pass from my seat on the bus when I rode it for the past 10 years to and from school and work. It's relaxing and empowering, and Jenie really captured that.

I don't think any of the other finalists measure up to Jenie in artistic design, ethical considerations, community involvement, or economic impact. Artistically, Vito's doesn't use the space well and relies on an app that will soon be out of date. Deborah's is busy and detailed with a subtle color palette that doesn't stand out much, which will be distracting to drivers. Actual Size Art's design relies on Where's Waldo-style chicken spotting, which is liable to cause an accident on an already dangerous street.

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In terms of community involvement, Jenie's design is best researched and gets to the heart of what people who ride the bus all have in common in a way that doesn't rely on surface level community portraits or the whitewashing of an imagined past. Vito's design doesn't seem to have had any community input at all. Jenie's has not only involved the community through the planning process, but will throughout its execution as well, which I think is really important. Because Jenie's business and many of her community ties remain Madison-local, the money from this project will also stay in Madison's local economy if Jenie is selected, which can't be said for Deborah or Vito. It's also worth noting that Jenie is the only person of color in the finalists, and the only one who centered the BIPOC community of Madison in her proposal. This is an oversight on the part of the other finalists that only serves to further alienate an

already marginalized group of people.

I urge you to choose Jenie Gao's proposal for the mural. Not only does she deserve it, given her history of community engagement and organization and her deep commitment to artistic ethics, but we, Madison as a community, deserve it too. I want to drive past that mural every day and I hope that you do too.

Thank you,
Jess Draws

-

Jess Draws

 || jessicalyndraws@gmail.com

Pronouns: she/her/hers

From: [Susan Coffin](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Select Jenie Gao's Mural
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 8:43:06 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

As a neighborhood resident and transit user, I am writing to ask you to select Jenie Gao's proposal for the mural on East Washington Road.

I think Jenie's submission is the most attractive, and makes the most sense for Madison. She is a local artist, and the work celebrates our natural environment and the diversity of people in our city.

Thanks in advance for your attention

-Susan Coffin
Winnebago Street

From: [Abi Priepe](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Madison Transportation Mural Feedback
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 8:55:15 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Madison Arts Commissioners,

I'm writing to express my full support for Jenie Gao's proposal for the Percent Arts Program's Metro Transit Mural project. My name is Abi Priepe. I'm a Madison resident since 2017, received my undergraduate degree at UW, am currently pursuing a Master's in Secondary Education to give back to my community, and part of the queer, student community of Madison. Jenie's proposal really, really resonated with me. I don't rely on public transportation in Madison currently, but the design just made me think about how much I enjoy seeing this city evolve; the mural's location is one I drive past every day on my way to my student teaching. It's relaxing and empowering and Jenie really captured that.

I don't think any of the other finalists measure up to Jenie in artistic design, ethical considerations, community involvement, or economic impact. Artistically, Vito's doesn't use the space well and relies on an app that will soon be out of date. Deborah's is busy and detailed with a subtle color palette that doesn't stand out much, which will be distracting to drivers. Actual Size Art's design relies on Where's Waldo-style chicken spotting, which is liable to cause an accident on an already dangerous street.

Ethically, I'm worried about all of the finalists except for Jenie. Deborah and Actual Size Art's designs rely on evoking and celebrating a racist, segregated history of transit. I think that whitewashing Madison's past does a disservice to its citizens, many of whom were and are personally harmed by said racism and all of whom should know better than to romanticize racism and erasure. As a non-Indigenous resident of Madison, I take offense to the idea that Madison's transportation history started in the 1880s, like Deborah's proposal implies. They were here and transporting each other across Madison's rivers, lakes, and land long before settlers ever stepped foot on Ho-Chunk territory. Additionally, Actual Size Art's design is a slap in the face to bus riders who are forced to wait at bus stops with no protection from the elements, as they use bus shelters to protect a vintage bus. Why protect a keepsake from a racist past but not the people who ride the buses today? Deborah, Vito, and Actual Size Art's designs all rely heavily on plastic for installation, and require the removal of fully grown trees that provide valuable shade and cooling to a section of East Washington that is mainly concrete. Jenie's does not. Madison's tree lined streets are an important staple, and it really spoke to me that Jenie sought to preserve this: driving down Gorham on my way in to town or Johnson on my way out and enjoying the trees lining the street shows me that I would sorely miss any trees removed for this project.

In terms of community involvement, Jenie's design is best researched and gets to the

heart of what people who ride the bus all have in common in a way that doesn't rely on surface level community portraits or the whitewashing of an imagined past. Vito's design doesn't seem to have had any community input at all. Jenie's has not only involved the community through the planning process, but will throughout its execution as well, which I think is really important. Because Jenie's business and many of her community ties remain Madison-local, the money from this project will also stay in Madison's local economy if Jenie is selected, which can't be said for Deborah or Vito. It's also worth noting that Jenie is the only person of color in the finalists, and the only one who centered the BIPOC community of Madison in her proposal. This is an oversight on the part of the other finalists that only serves to further alienate an already marginalized group of people.

I urge you to choose Jenie Gao's proposal for the mural. Not only does she deserve it, given her history of community engagement and organization and her deep commitment to artistic ethics, but we, Madison as a community, deserve it too. I want to drive past that mural every day and I hope that you do too.

Thank you,

Abi Priepeke

From: [kumara rathnayaka](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Metro Project Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 9:24:02 AM

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I'm emailing to show my support of Jenie Gao...

Sent from my Huawei phone

From: [Allen Ebert](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Support of Metro Public Art Project # 65288- Jenie Gao
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 9:28:34 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello -

I wanted to write my support for Jenie Gao's proposal. Of all the proposals I found hers to be very thoughtful and comprehensive and is cohesive with the redevelopment in that area. I feel Jenie's design captures a diverse, fun and imaginative design. I appreciate that she took time to learn and hear from the community to implement her design. I strongly urge that this design and artists be selected to create this important and impressive mural.

Sincerely,
Allen



Allen Ebert (He series)

Executive Director, Children's Theater of Madison

608.255.2080 allen@ctmtheater.org

Address: 1055 East Mifflin St
Madison, WI 53703

Website: www.ctmtheater.org



Click to schedule a meeting

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From: [Greta Landis](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Metro Project Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 10:13:27 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hi Madison Arts! It's come to my attention that the public comments I registered through your website may not have been recorded, so I am emailing to show my support of Jenie Gao and her proposal for the Metro Public Art project before your vote tonight.

Jenie's proposal is phenomenal. Her plan of work is by far the most community-focused, most beautifully and thoughtfully designed, and most visually striking of these proposals, making it an obvious choice for the Metro Public Art project. Jenie's commitment to representing the experiences of bus drivers and riders through this proposal—alongside her proven record in public art installations in the Bayview Community, Trinity Church, Madison Public Library, and other local murals and works—makes her by far the most appropriate and qualified selection for this installation.

Jenie's proposal and body of work represents the values we want and need to grow in this city—centering the experiences and leadership of BIPOC community members, integrating environmental themes and natural history of this region in the design, and keeping the city investment in local labor, local materials, and local education. As a resident of the Tenney Lapham neighborhood and a seasonal bus commuter, I could not be more thrilled to see this proposal come to life.

In short, Jenie Gao's proposed project is by far the most values-driven, community-minded, environmentally-conscious proposal, and is also just a beautiful application of color, space, and storytelling. This is an example of what public art can and should be

Thank you for your consideration.

All the best,

Greta Landis


Madison, WI 53703

From: katemckay325@gmail.com
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Support for Jenie Gao!
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 10:14:58 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Madison Arts Commissioners,

I'm writing to express my full support for Jenie Gao's proposal for the Percent Arts Program's Metro Transit Mural project. My name is Kate McKay. I'm a Madison resident of 2 years, an educator, and part of the queer community of Madison. Jenie's proposal really, really resonated with me. I rely on public transportation in Madison currently, and the design just made me think about how much I enjoyed watching the city and the seasons pass from my seat on the bus when I ride it. It's relaxing and empowering and Jenie really captured that.

I don't think any of the other finalists measure up to Jenie in artistic design, ethical considerations, community involvement, or economic impact. Artistically, Vito's doesn't use the space well and relies on an app that will soon be out of date. Deborah's is busy and detailed with a subtle color palette that doesn't stand out much, which will be distracting to drivers. Actual Size Art's design relies on Where's Waldo-style chicken spotting, which is liable to cause an accident on an already dangerous street.

Ethically, I'm worried about all of the finalists except for Jenie. Deborah and Actual Size Art's designs rely on evoking and celebrating a racist, segregated history of transit. I think that whitewashing Madison's past does a disservice to its citizens, many of whom were and are personally harmed by said racism and all of whom should know better than to romanticize racism and erasure. As a non-Indigenous resident of Madison, I take offense to the idea that Madison's transportation history started in the 1880s, like Deborah's proposal implies. They were here and transporting each other across Madison's rivers, lakes, and land long before settlers ever stepped foot on Ho-Chunk territory. Additionally, Actual Size Art's design is a slap in the face to bus riders who are forced to wait at bus stops with no protection from the elements, as they use bus shelters to protect a vintage bus. Why protect a keepsake from a racist past but not the people who ride the buses today? Deborah, Vito, and Actual Size Art's designs all rely heavily on plastic for installation, and require the removal of fully grown trees that provide valuable shade and cooling to a section of East Washington that is mainly concrete. Jenie's does not.

In terms of community involvement, Jenie's design is best researched and gets to the heart of what people who ride the bus all have in common in a way that doesn't rely on surface level community portraits or the whitewashing of an imagined past. Vito's design doesn't seem to have had any community input at all. Jenie's has not only involved the community

through the planning process, but will throughout its execution as well, which I think is really important. Because Jenie's business and many of her community ties remain Madison-local, the money from this project will also stay in Madison's local economy if Jenie is selected, which can't be said for Deborah or Vito. It's also worth noting that Jenie is the only person of color in the finalists, and the only one who centered the BIPOC community of Madison in her proposal. This is an oversight on the part of the other finalists that only serves to further alienate an already marginalized group of people.

I urge you to choose Jenie Gao's proposal for the mural. Not only does she deserve it, given her history of community engagement and organization and her deep commitment to artistic ethics, but we, Madison as a community, deserve it too. I want to drive past that mural every day and I hope that you do too.

Thank you,

Kate McKay

From: [Ashley Hartman Annis](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Choose Jenie!
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 10:25:09 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Madison Arts Commission,

Please do the right thing here! In a world where racism is still impacting Black & Brown bodies on macro & micro levels, we all deserve the art in this city to be actively working against that. Jenie's proposal is the only one worth considering—the others range from downright offensive to simply not an accurate representation of what Madison is (or could be!). [This feedback form](#) written by another local artist goes into such great detail about why Jenie's proposal should be chosen—please read / re-read it!

Thanks so much for your time and looking forward to seeing Jenie's art on our streets!

Sincerely,
Ashley

ashley hartman annis
she / they [pronouns](#)
located on ho-chunk [land](#)
[ashleyhartmanannis.com](#)

From: [Kim Knorr](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Metro Project Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 12:29:08 PM

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I'm emailing to show my support of Jenie Gao...
Her project is well-designed, well-researched, and appealing. I like that I feel included in her process and represented in her artistic design.

Kim Knorr

From: [Nancy Sorensen](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Metro Project Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 1:28:30 PM

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I'm emailing to show my support of Jenie Gao... yes I am!

My name is Nancy Sorensen and I have been a resident of Madison since 1985-- one of those who arrived to attend the university and as a young adult, adopted the city as my own. I am not currently a regular Metro user, but have been, for about half of my time here, and the East Washington corridor is a regular path for me. I have driven it thousands of times, but walked it fewer than fifty. I have also lived on or near both ends of Ingersoll, and on or near some of the major bus routes. I have worked on the Capitol square and walked State St for decades. All this to say that the buses, drivers, and other commuters have been part of my daily experience even when I am not riding regularly. I was excited to hear about this project! And thrilled to be able to view the four proposals, and invited to comment.

Jenie Gao's proposal stood out for me, like a beacon! It filled me with hope and vision! But I did watch them all-- thanks so much for this opportunity.

Vito DiBari's proposal was difficult to get through, it was so obviously not a good fit. I felt a complete lack of real energy or care in the presentation as well as the proposal. To be frank, the presentation felt like an infomercial and the proposal was as compelling as a magazine left behind in a waiting room. This particular idea showed zero knowledge, understanding, or regard for Madison, much less the challenges our city faces.

I am a huge fan of the art I have seen the past several years created by Actual Size Artworks/ Gail Simpson & Aris Georgiades-- can we please have the Sad Yeti sitting outside of the Metro building, on the corner? Can we add even more art to this space? Or, nearby? Or, can this bus and these chickens be featured in another spot around the city, maybe at one of the transfer points? I am regularly delighted all the way with their work! The Actual Size proposal to rescue and highlight this antique bus with glowing chickens was presented in their characteristic fun, playful, imaginative light. It reminded me of the toy buses I played with, as a kid, and that my son played with; it felt like almost an invitation to adopt the little bus (and/or a glowing chicken) as a mascot. For this location and project though, it falls short for me in a couple of ways. First, it unwittingly invites nostalgia about busing, and buses. We as a city, state and country have so much ugly history/so many current harmful systems in place with regard to busing/public transportation/city planning/growth/land acquisition to admit, reckon with, and change. Board members have spoken to this already, during the Q & A. Second, the bus stop housing itself seemed to be caging it. We would need to protect this bus from actual use, and using the shelter to do so is a wonderful marriage. Having the shelter hug it so tightly though, then thwarts our relationship with it. And while we are thinking of sheltering this fun but fraught artifact, shouldn't we shelter the riders, first? Maybe featuring this little bus elsewhere would connect us by highlighting and honoring the Metro workers who have maintained the vehicles for these many decades? I don't know. But this is not the right fit for this project.

Deborah Aschheim's proposal also gave us good stuff to work with. She has a bright and welcoming illustration style. Her respect for the neighborhood and the project is evident. She

researched well, and on a very human scale, and her proposal shows acknowledgement and a sense of place. The size and placement of the individual pieces do chop up the wall in a way that is probably unclear if you haven't driven or walked past so many times, and glanced over repeatedly, and thought, are we stiiillllll on this same block? I have the same strong reservations about the bus nostalgia highlighted, but as this was brought up in the Q&A, the artist is willing to collaborate and focus on the employees and neighborhood.

But Jenie Gao's proposal blew my mind. This idea is a clear winner in my opinion; it is a 50 on a 1-10 scale. On simply every level. I am already an enthusiast when it comes to Jenie's work, and I so appreciate the murals I have driven and walked past regularly in Madison and Milwaukee. There is brilliance and beauty and movement inherent in the art itself. The scale of the piece brings a visceral relief-- I can imagine driving past and breathing deeply, walking past and feeling awestruck and glad that I am stiiillllll on the same block. The title of the work, *The Time is Ours*, brings light and focus to the time spent each day, on the buses, by the commuters. The quote she shared by the rider who is soothed by their head resting against the glass shows the level at which this artist is responding with her images. I can feel that this work grew from her time rooted here, and her care for community in general and this community in particular. Her idea of using the motifs in additional ways, for zines and for low-vision riders, brings so much possibility to connected projects. Including young people from Operation Fresh Start for the creation and installation of the project is key. Including a few "easy paint" sections that additional community members (mural fan, here! will paint, no skills though) can work on is so welcome. This building is an integral part of our community, and while we work to improve the Metro system for the people who live in our city, Jenie's proposal builds bridges and widens the circles that we so badly need. And, it is gorgeous. It speaks to time and timelessness, to seasons of a year and of a life. For anybody riding, walking, or driving the East Wash corridor for the first or the zillionth time, Jenie Gao's piece will be a spectacular sight. It will welcome people. The images will last and hold meaning, for many many years. My choice is crystal clear! Count me as Team Jenie Gao, for this project.

I am also including here my comments made on Jenie's YouTube channel, made immediately after watching, so that they are included in the public record: "Beautiful proposal! Thank you so much for interviewing the commuters-- and weaving this narrative that celebrates and builds community and adds tremendous beauty to the E Wash corridor, and richness and depth to the entire process. And I am stunned actually by the realization that the shade is a welcome and important part of the pedestrian experience! It isn't only me! So very true. Thank you for your work Jenie! This is fantastic in every way."

Thank you all!

Nancy Sorensen

From: [Megan Spielbauer Sandate](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Support for Jenie Gao
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 1:47:36 PM

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Hello!

I am emailing my support of Jenie Gao and ask her proposal is chosen for the Madison Metro Transit project.

Jenie's project is thoughtful and involves community input. Her project attempts to represent the folks who do use the bus system in Madison and how they experience the bus.

Also, Jenie is a kind person who cares about the community and cares about sharing art with everyone. She gave my friend and I her leftover paint before she moved because she wanted it to be used here in Madison and for it to be shared.

Thanks,

Megan

From: [Michael Flanagan](#)
To: [Madison Arts](#)
Subject: Support for Jenie Gao proposal
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 4:21:45 PM

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Dear Madison Art Commission Members:

I am writing to support the proposal of Jenie Gao for the Madison Metro Art Project. I had an opportunity to work with Jenie Gao in the past when she had an exhibit of her work at the Crossman Gallery at UW-Whitewater. I found her to be very thoughtful and deeply immersed in her work. She dug deep to explore a specific line of reasoning making her series of works part of a consistent thread. She connected to a common thought that was explored and revealed in a poignant, illustrative manner.

Her proposal for the Metro Art Project is consistent with her ability to compose thoughtful and insightful images apropos to the environs and population of the city of Madison.

I completely endorse her proposal for this project!

Regards, Mike

Michael Flanagan
Emeritus Director, Crossman Art Gallery
University of Wisconsin - Whitewater