



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 29, 2017

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**SHERYL ORING BRINGS *I WISH TO SAY* PUBLIC ART PERFORMANCE TO MARKET SQUARE  
FEATURING 10 TYPISTS CONVEYING THE PUBLIC'S MESSAGES TO PRESIDENT TRUMP  
DURING HIS 99<sup>TH</sup> AND 100<sup>TH</sup> DAYS IN OFFICE**

**Downtown Pittsburgh** – On April 28 and 29 2017, Market Square will be filled with the sounds of vintage typewriters transcribing messages to President Trump as part of artist Sheryl Oring's project *I Wish to Say*. A pool of ten typists will set up a public office in Market Square to invite Pittsburghers to dictate postcards to the president. The public is invited to share their messages on Friday, April 28 from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, April 29 from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. These two dates were chosen as they coincide with the 99<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> days of President Trump's administration. *I Wish to Say* will provide the public with an opportunity to share their thoughts, feeling, and suggestions with the new president. The Pittsburgh performance of Oring's work is presented by the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership and the Office of Public Art.

Oring has presented *I Wish to Say* around the country since 2004. The project grew out of her concern that not enough American voices were being heard in regards to the current state-of-affairs, and her strong belief in the freedom of expression. To date, more than 3,200 postcards have been sent to the White House as part of this project, including many that were shared in her 2016 book *Activating Democracy: The I Wish to Say Project*.

"I'm very excited to bring this project to Pittsburgh at this critical time in our nation's history," says Sheryl Oring. "Pittsburgh's diverse population, in addition to the important role Pennsylvania played in this last election, makes it the perfect location to engage people in the project."

At each performance, Oring and her typists dress as secretaries from the 1960s, wearing vintage suits with matching hair and makeup. A former journalist, Oring has long been obsessed with typewriters. The typists will be using vintage manual typewriters that Oring collected from thrift stores, typewriter repair shops, and eBay.

Oring uses carbon paper to make two copies of dictations: one will be sent to the White House, while the other is kept for her ever-growing archive of America's commentary. Oring hand-stamps each message with the date and notices like "urgent" or "past due." The collected dictations are a powerful and thoughtful antidote to today's hurried communications.

"We are looking forward to providing Pittsburghers with an opportunity to thoughtfully share their messages with President Trump in this unique and engaging fashion," said Jeremy Waldrup, president and CEO of the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership. "Market Square is our central gathering spot in Downtown, filled with programming, protests, and events - it is the perfect location."

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*I Wish to Say* has been performed more than 70 times around the country. Acting as the people's secretary, Oring has tirelessly transcribed messages from a park on Skid Row in Los Angeles to a laundromat on the Navajo Nation in Arizona to university campuses across the nation. A video of a previous performance may be viewed [here](#). This is her first performance in Pittsburgh.

"At its center, *I Wish to Say* increases the diversity of voices engaged in civic dialogue. I admire Sheryl's project because it is a platform for people to express their thoughts and listen to other voices using a technology that reinforces human encounters," says Renee Piechocki, director of the Office of Public Art. "*I Wish to Say* removes the anonymity of social media posts."

Local Pittsburghers will be filling the role of the typing pool. They will be trained in advance by Oring and will practice typing on manual typewriters in preparation for the show. Additionally, Brett James Salon, located in Downtown Pittsburgh will be donating services, providing 1960s style up-do's to the typist pool. Additionally, readers will be sharing some of the messages collected in Market Square. Oring will also present an artist's talk on Saturday, April 29; details are forthcoming.

### **About Sheryl Oring:**

*Artist Sheryl Oring has typed thousands of postcards to the President from locations across the U.S. since launching her "I Wish to Say" project in 2004. Her book, "Activating Democracy: The I Wish to Say Project," was published by Intellect Books/University of Chicago Press in October 2016. Other recent projects include "Travel Desk," a public art commission at the San Diego International Airport and "Maueramt," a performance and exhibition done in Berlin on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Oring, an Assistant Professor of Art at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, divides her time between North Carolina, New York and Berlin. She is currently working on a large-scale public art commission for the Tampa International Airport.*

### **About the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership**

*Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership (PDP) is a dynamic, nonprofit organization comprised of business and community leaders, property owners, civic organizations, foundations and residents who provide energy, vision and advocacy for Downtown Pittsburgh. Working collaboratively with its partners, the PDP strives to create a positive Downtown experience for residents, workers and visitors alike. The PDP's strategic initiatives include clean and safe services, transportation, and economic development and advocacy. For more information, visit [www.DowntownPittsburgh.com](http://www.DowntownPittsburgh.com), follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/downtownpitt> and "like" us on Facebook.*

### **About the Office of Public Art**

*The Office of Public Art is a public-private partnership between the City of Pittsburgh Department of City Planning and the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council. Founded in 2005, they provide technical assistance and educational programs about public art in the Pittsburgh region. For more information visit [www.publicarpittsburgh.org](http://www.publicarpittsburgh.org).*

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