



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 20, 2017

Contact: Leigh White

(412) 325-0163 – office

(412) 606-9877 – cell

lwhite@downtownpittsburgh.com

DO YOU HAVE A MESSAGE FOR PRESIDENT TRUMP? ARTIST SHERYL ORING WANTS TO HELP

***I Wish To Say* PUBLIC ART COMING TO MARKET SQUARE NEXT WEEK**

FEATURING 10 TYPISTS CONVEYING THE PUBLIC'S MESSAGES TO PRESIDENT TRUMP

DURING HIS 99TH AND 100TH DAYS IN OFFICE

Downtown Pittsburgh – Next Friday and Saturday, Market Square will be filled with the sounds of vintage typewriters transcribing messages to President Trump as part of artist Sheryl Oring's public art performance *I Wish to Say*. *I Wish to Say* invites the public to share their thoughts, feelings, and suggestions with President Trump 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 coincide with the 99th and 100th days of President Trump's administration. Ten typists will set up a public office in Market Square to invite Pittsburghers to dictate messages to the president, sharing some of these messages publicly in Market Square. Oring will also present an artist's talk on Saturday, April 29 from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. at 11 Stanwix Street, Pittsburgh, PA, 15222. The talk is free, but attendees are asked to register in advance by visiting www.publicartpittsburgh.org.

Oring has presented *I Wish to Say* more than 80 times 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. 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*.

At each performance, Oring and her typists dress as secretaries from the 1960s and use vintage manual typewriters. Carbon paper is used to make two copies of dictations: one copy will be sent to the White House, while the other is kept for Oring's ever-growing archive of America's commentary. Each message is hand-stamped with the date and notices like "urgent" or "past due." The collected dictations are a powerful and thoughtful antidote to today's hurried communications. A video of a previous performance may be viewed [here](#).

As this is her first performance in Pittsburgh, Oring stated that she is "... excited to bring this project to Pittsburgh to offer residents a chance to express themselves, and to take part in this national project. With a typing pool comprised of ten local typists, we'll be ready to take down people's comments, thoughts and wishes." The local typists will be trained in advance by Oring, and will practice typing on manual typewriters in preparation for the show. Christiane Leach, one of the typists for this performance said, "Regardless of how I feel about President Trump, conversation is the only way to move us out of this polarized situation. I am looking forward to deep listening. It takes great patience to listen to someone's point of view, whether I agree with it or not."

I Wish to Say is presented by the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership and the Office of Public Art. Renee Piechocki, director of the Office of Public Art, views *I Wish to Say* as a way to "... increase the diversity of voices engaged in civic dialogue, permit people to express their thoughts, and listen to other voices using a technology that reinforces human encounters." Jeremy Waldrup, president and CEO of the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership said "We look forward to providing Pittsburgh with the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings with President Trump in this unique and engaging way."

Pittsburghers also shared their comments on *I Wish to Say* coming to Market Square. "I think this is a really interesting and fun way to engage the public in sharing their thoughts with the president," said North Side resident Bob Kowalski. "I've been giving a lot of thought as to what I feel is important to share with President Trump."

Brett James Salon, located in Downtown Pittsburgh will be donating services, providing updos to the typist pool and make-up artist Audra DeLuca will also be donating her services.

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, 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, Office of Public Art provides technical assistance and educational programs about public art in the Pittsburgh region. For more information visit www.publicarpittsburgh.org.

###