

For Immediate Release
Wednesday, May 31st, 2023

STOLEN: 'Fencelines' Collective Monument to Resilience

To the people of Richmond and the Greater Bay Area,

To the individuals, collectives and organizations that are on the ground fighting for environmental justice.

To those that believe in the power of art, people and community to help us imagine and build a better world.

With sadness and anger in our hearts we inform you that the city-sanctioned public art project "*Fencelines* - A Collective Monument to Resilience" was stolen from its location on the Richmond Parkway along the Bay Trail between Vernon Ave and N Castro St. in North Richmond; the fenceline at this location separates Richmond neighborhoods from the Chevron petroleum refinery.

The *Fencelines* installation brought together messages from the community: messages of hope, of unity and of care for our living world, and calling for accountability from Chevron for generations of polluting the community's air, water, land and people. Collectively and in community with paint and words we built a Monument to Richmond's Resilience in the ongoing struggle for environmental justice. In what we must understand as an attempt to silence our voices and erase our stories, the *Fencelines* public art **has been completely disappeared**.

We are seeking the public's help in locating hundreds of 'slats' painted wood art pieces. It is believed the art pieces were **stolen** or **deliberately removed** between the evening of May 15 and May 16.

We ask you to stand in solidarity with the Richmond community in demanding that our art pieces be found and returned.

We invite the community to come together on June 3rd at Richmond Art Center from 12pm - 2pm to learn more about the *Fencelines* project and talk about what a response should look like. Folks will have an opportunity to paint new art pieces to collectively take a stance against the attempted erasure of our stories.



Fencelines installation on a city-owned fence along Richmond Parkway, April 22nd, 2023.

In 2021, co-creators of the *Fencelines* project started to work with many local organizations to engage community to reflect on Richmond's historic environmental injustices through art. At workshops in the community and at Richmond Art Center, individuals and families participated in creating hundreds of colorful wooden slats, culminating in a major exhibition at the Richmond Art Center during the Spring of 2023 on view until June 3. This allowed participants to get a visual of their personal customized slats in the Richmond Art Center. With so many supporters, this project became a force to be reckoned with!

In addition to popular support and widespread grassroots participation, the *Fencelines* project also received unanimous approval from Richmond's Public Arts and Culture Commission, the City of Richmond's Love Your Block program and Public Works Department, as well as Contra Costa County's North Richmond Municipal Advisory Committee to install the project pieces on city-owned portions of this fenceline.

On Earth Day 2023, *Fencelines* partnered with Richmond LAND to install hundreds of the slats in an effort to amplify the voices of Richmond. Together and in formation, the slats provide a creative platform to express the lived experience of folks here in the ongoing struggle for environmental justice and housing stabilization.

The Fencelines public art installation was installed on April 22, 2023 along the Bay Trail between Vernon Ave and N Castro St in North Richmond and was to be displayed until mid-June.

If you have seen any of the art pieces from the project or have any information regarding its whereabouts, please email Roberto Martinez at roberto@richmondartcenter.org

Please share this letter far and wide. Together we can find our stolen artwork and stand strong against the erasure of the struggle for environmental justice.

Thank you for your support!

With love and gratitude,

The Fencelines Project Team

Graham L.P., Princess Robinson, Gita Khandagle, and members of the Richmond Community. In Partnership w/ the City of Richmond's Love Your Block, Richmond Art Center, Richmond Our Power Coalition, Richmond LAND

#FencelinesProject #ACollectiveMonumentToResilience #StolenMessages #Taken #Erasure

