

ARTS & CULTURE

Discovery Green begins new Art Lab Program for Houston-area artists

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[Gabby Dawkins](#) | December 24, 2024, 9:00 AM



Discovery Green Conservancy

An aerial view of Discovery Green in downtown Houston.

Discovery Green's Inaugural Art Lab Program teaches artists the instrumental aspects of what defines a successful public art project. Through mentorship and hands-on experience, Art Lab aims to empower artists to create outdoor art installations.

Two Houston-area artists, [Karen Navarro](#) and [Gerardo Rosales](#), are the inaugural fellows of [Art Lab](#).

Susanne Theis, the artistic director for Discovery Green, said creating this program was pivotal because they want to create opportunities for Houston-based artists to showcase their skills.

"We found that Houston doesn't really have a robust community of artists working in this kind of art; this kind of interactive work is rare," Theis said. "So, what we wanted to do was create an opportunity to offer the chance to experience creating this kind of work to Houston artists by pairing them with a lead artist."

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The two fellows traveled to Lewin's studio in New York to learn the administrative parts of creating public art.

Other art mentors during this program are Weingarten Art Group and Metalab. The participants and the mentors meet weekly to flesh out ideas for an upcoming proposal.

Navarro typically uses sculpture, photography and collages to showcase her artistic skills highlighting the importance of representation, race and her personal migrant experience. She said this program has pushed her.

"Once I drain myself completely and put everything I have into my work and I am being extremely honest with the work, all of those opportunities and long-term opportunities will come," Navarro said.

Navarro and Rosales are currently working on a proposal that will be presented to Discovery Green.

"The artist selected will be awarded a budget and amount of \$80,000," Theis said. "In that 80,000 they will need to create and install the artwork."

The Art Lab program runs from September 2024 and concludes in January 2025. The winner of the proposal will be notified in March 2025.