



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media contacts:

Molly Stieber, [mstieber@devinepartners.com](mailto:mstieber@devinepartners.com), 215-568-2525 / 717-682-2774

Caitlin Martin, [cmartin@associationforpublicart.org](mailto:cmartin@associationforpublicart.org), 215-546-7550

Rebecca Morley, [rmorley@williampennfoundation.org](mailto:rmorley@williampennfoundation.org), 215-988-1830

## **PARKWAY COUNCIL ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR BENJAMIN FRANKLIN PARKWAY CENTENNIAL**

### **Major Grant from the William Penn Foundation Supports a Parkway-wide Public Art Installation; More than a Year of Activities Mark the Milestone**

**PHILADELPHIA (March 23, 2017)** – Philadelphia’s grand cultural boulevard, the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, is turning 100, and the Parkway Council, a coalition of cultural and educational institutions, businesses and residences in the Parkway Museums District, has planned more than a year of activities to mark the centennial. From September 8, 2017, through November 16, 2018, the Parkway Council will present a calendar of exhibitions, events, community conversations, and promotions that are themed to this important milestone. Cultural leaders, City of Philadelphia officials and Parkway 100 funders joined today in announcing the plans as well as a major \$1.25 million grant from the William Penn Foundation to support a dramatic public art installation that will serve as a centerpiece next winter. The official Parkway 100 logo was also unveiled.

“The Benjamin Franklin Parkway is Philadelphia’s great cultural axis and it is known around the world for the world-class museums and institutions that make their home here,” said Gail Harrity, chairperson for the Parkway 100 Committee. “Created to connect the city to its park, it now also serves to connect us to art, culture, science, horticulture, education and to each other. The Parkway centennial is an unprecedented opportunity for us to tell the story of the bold vision that led to the creation of this great public space, and to envision what the Parkway could be in the future. Parkway 100 is the result of an exceptional collaboration among those world-class museums and institutions that comprise the Parkway Museums District.”

-more-

“There is so much to see and do every day in the Parkway Museums District,” added Judi Rogers, executive director of the Parkway Council, “and during Parkway 100, there will be even more. With the Parkway 100 exhibitions, events, community conversations, and promotions, we have created four exciting ways for residents and visitors to engage – all of which are reflected in the Parkway 100 logo.”

**Exhibitions: “Collections and Connections”**

For the first time in the history of the Parkway Museums District, each of the member institutions, attractions and organizations are collaborating to create a series of exhibitions sharing the common centennial theme. Titled “Collections and Connections,” these exhibitions together will create the calendar of happenings throughout the Parkway Museums District. They will celebrate the collection of significant art, culture and architecture on the Parkway, and connect the institutions as a common destination.

*Winter Fountains for the Parkway* by artist Jennifer Steinkamp is commissioned by the Parkway Council with the Association for Public Art (aPA) for Parkway 100, and with major support from the William Penn Foundation. The installation will redefine the Parkway after dark, illuminating its vast space with five dazzling, mesmerizing *Winter Fountains*, inspired by the signature fountains of the Parkway landscape. They will glow with animated video projections informed by the botanical, horticultural and related collections found in the cultural and educational institutions of the Parkway Museums District. The five architectural domes, each measuring 7.5 feet high and 35 feet in diameter, will be covered with glass beading, producing a shimmering beauty during the day and providing a vintage-era movie screen projection surface at night for the artist’s flowing video animations.

*Winter Fountains for the Parkway* is supported by the grant from the William Penn Foundation, with additional support from The Logan Hotel and Visit Philadelphia.

“The world premiere of Jennifer Steinkamp’s ethereal *Winter Fountains* will be emblematic of the collaborative spirit of the Parkway 100 celebration,” said Penny Balkin Bach, executive director and chief curator, Association for Public Art (aPA). “Steinkamp’s artworks at different locations along the Parkway will join the existing iconic images of Philadelphia’s grand boulevard – a nexus of remarkable public art, architecture, landscape, and world-class institutions.”

“*Winter Fountains* will create a cultural experience that reimagines this familiar public space,” said Janet Haas, M.D., board chair of the William Penn Foundation. “Over the last 100 years, the Parkway has evolved into the centerpiece of Philadelphia's cultural life, and *Winter Fountains* will offer a dynamic experience that will engage new and diverse audiences.”

Among the other “Collections and Connections” exhibitions are: *Corridor of Culture: 100 Years of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway* exhibit at the Free Library of Philadelphia (September 2017 through May 2018); *Parkway as Civic Space* photo and archives exhibit at Friends Select School (September 8, 2017); *Cai Guo-Qiang: Fireflies* presented by the Association for Public Art with Guest Curator Lance Fung of Fung Collaboratives (September 14-October 8, 2017); *Terracotta Warriors* at The Franklin Institute (September 30, 2017-March 4, 2018); *A Peek at the Past* at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University (October 2017 through November 2018); *Old Masters Now: Rediscovering the John G. Johnson Collection* at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (October 2017 through February 2018); *Paul Philippe Cret and the Barnes Foundation* at The Barnes Foundation (Fall 2017).

Other exhibitions include: *Celebrating Moore's Legacy: 170 Years of Art & Design* at Moore College of Art & Design (January 27 – March 17, 2017); *Strange Neighbors* at Eastern State Penitentiary (April 2018); *City Hall: The Design and Architecture of The People's Building* exhibit presented by the City of Philadelphia Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy in partnership with The Athenaeum (December 1, 2017 through January 30, 2018); and an artifacts exhibit at the Philadelphia Mormon Temple (2018).

### **Events**

The Parkway 100 “We Are Connected” Kickoff Festival from 4:00-10:00 p.m. on Friday, September 8, 2017, is the official launch of the centennial celebration. More than 100 free, family-friendly activities will take place indoors and outdoors at the museums and attractions, as well as in the Parkway's pocket parks, great public places, and many observation decks. Discounts to view the museums' collections and exhibitions during Friday evening hours will also be offered in the form of free admission, “pay what you wish” admission or a Parkway 100 coupon. Inside and outside activities will include entertainment, make-and-take crafts and highlights tours.

Among the activities neighborhood residents and visitors can enjoy are a community art project; plein-air painting and art lessons at scenic vistas; photo walks; hand painting of frogs, swans and turtles at *Swann Memorial Fountain*; mobile making; lighted balloon parades; guided architecture and public art tours; kids music jam sessions; line dancing with dinosaurs; storytelling circles and book carts.

Park Towne Place will unveil a Parkway mural working with Mural Arts Philadelphia. A television special will be broadcast on 6abc in conjunction with the kickoff festival and showcase the many attractions that are part of the Parkway Museums District.

To conclude the Parkway 100 celebration, the museums, institutions and attractions will simultaneously open their doors to the public on Friday night, November 16, 2018, for the Parkway 100 Finale. Installations, performances and concerts, premieres, docent tours, café talks and educational programs will encourage a progressive, visit-them-all experience.

Other Parkway events include: Night Skies in the Observatory at The Franklin Institute (September 14, 2017); a City in Bloom Planting Day on the Parkway with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society; concert series at the Cathedral Basilica of SS Peter & Paul (2017-2018); and the summer 2018 season at The Oval, presented by Fairmount Park Conservancy and City of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation.

### **Community Conversations: Telling the Parkway Story**

Chief Parkway historian and author David Brownlee details the creation of the Parkway in his book, *Building the City Beautiful* (1989). Writes Brownlee: “Philadelphia’s Benjamin Franklin Parkway was conceived as the great symbol of a modern city – the new face of a gritty industrial metropolis as it remade itself in the complex circumstances of the twentieth century.” (*Building the City Beautiful*, pg. 1)

Brownlee will be updating this important Parkway history text and the Parkway Council will re-release it in 2018 in conjunction with the centennial. Discussions planned in conjunction with the book re-launch, as well as a series of Community Conversations presented each month during the centennial, will tell the story of the Parkway and encourage residents and visitors to share their own Parkway stories.

The Parkway Museums District website ([www.parkwaymuseumsdistrict.org](http://www.parkwaymuseumsdistrict.org)) details a timeline of the development of the Parkway, including referencing the 1907 Parkway plan developed for the Fairmount Park Art Association (now the Association for Public Art) by Horace Trumbauer, Clarence Zantzinger and Paul P. Crét; and the Jacques Gréber plan adopted by the Fairmount Park Commissioners in 1917. Many of the milestones on the timeline will be topics for the Community Conversations series.

Among the education activities planned are community forums and lectures, behind-the-scenes tours, and guided and self-guided walking tours. Through a program of events called “Observe-a-Stories,” held on the Parkway’s many observation decks and overlook spaces, Parkway stories will be shared, informing audiences about the history of Philadelphia’s grand cultural axis, the people who were instrumental in the development of the Parkway, and those who make the Parkway what it is today and might be in the future.

A few of the Community Conversations planned are: “Cultural Districts,” a two-part forum presented by Center City District and Central Philadelphia Development Corporation (December 2017 and 2018); “Beautiful Parkway...But Where Did Everyone Go?” presented by Eastern State Penitentiary (Spring 2018); “Lost Buildings of the Parkway” presented by Hidden City Philadelphia (Spring 2018); and “Rocky Steps” presented by the Greater Philadelphia Film Office with filmmaker Garrett Brown (May 2018). The Barnes Foundation will offer a four-week “History of the Parkway” course with David Brownlee (Spring 2018).

### **Promotions**

Street banners, a “My Parkway” photo contest, restaurant promotions, hotel packages, and official Parkway 100 merchandise will add to the centennial celebration. Many annual events on the Parkway will feature centennial themes.

-more-

Parkway 100 is a result of the creative collaboration of 23 Parkway Council member organizations, including: the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, Aimco/Park Towne Place, Association for Public Art, The Barnes Foundation, Brandywine Realty Trust, Cathedral Basilica of SS Peter & Paul, Center City District (Cret Park, Dilworth Park, and Sister Cities Park), City of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, College of Physicians/Mutter Museum, Eastern State Penitentiary, Fairmount Water Works, Fox Rothschild, The Franklin Institute, Free Library of Philadelphia, Friends Select School, Independence Visitor Center, The Logan Hotel, Moore College of Art & Design, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Philadelphia Mormon Temple, Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Philadelphian, and the Rodin Museum.

Parkway 100 is made possible through the generous leadership support of the William Penn Foundation, PNC Bank and PECO, and the following sponsors: The Logan Hotel, Cooke & Berlinger, 6abc, Devine + Partners, LeftHand Creative, and Visit Philadelphia.

Numerous organizations throughout the city are partnering with Parkway 100, including: The Athenaeum; City of Philadelphia Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy; Fairmount CDC; Fairmount Civic Association; Fairmount Park Conservancy; French American Chamber of Commerce; Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance; Greater Philadelphia Film Office; Hidden City Philadelphia; History Making Productions; Logan Square Neighborhood Association; Philadelphia History Museum; Spring Garden CDC; Spring Garden Civic Association; and Wawa Welcome America!

More Parkway 100 Exhibitions, Events, Community Conversations, and Promotions will be announced leading up to and throughout the centennial. Follow Parkway Museums District on Facebook and Instagram, and visit [parkway100.org](http://parkway100.org). Take the Philly PHLASH Downtown Loop from the Independence Visitor Center.

-more-

### **About the Benjamin Franklin Parkway**

The development of the Parkway took place over decades, from the first proposal and signed petition received by City Council in 1891, to groundbreaking in 1907, and finally construction in 1917. On November 16, 1918, Philadelphia's *Evening Public Ledger* announced the completion of the Parkway, reporting: "Uninterrupted Parkway at last leads from City Hall to Fairmount's entrance."

The one-mile Benjamin Franklin Parkway stretches to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, connecting the city's business district to Fairmount Park, one of the largest urban green spaces in the United States. Known as the Parkway Museums District, the cultural destination is home to some of the city's most treasured museums, including The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, The Barnes Foundation, The Franklin Institute, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and Rodin Museum. The picturesque *Swann Memorial Fountain* at Logan Square is among the Parkway's most scenic spaces and an example of the Parkway's abundant public art. Locals and visitors like to gather at the Parkway's pocket parks, including Dilworth Park, Love Park, Crét Park, Sister Cities Park, and The Oval, or run the steps "Rocky" made famous.

Trees and international flags line the boulevard, which is also known for its exceptional architecture. The Cathedral Basilica of SS Peter & Paul, Friends Select School, Moore College of Art & Design, and the newly completed Philadelphia Mormon Temple are also here.

### **About Jennifer Steinkamp**

An artist who works with video and new media to explore and share ideas about space, motion and perception, Steinkamp (American, born 1958), has been the subject of numerous exhibitions at such venues as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, California; the Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo, New York; MassMoCA, North Adams, Massachusetts; the Sundance Film Festival, Park City, Utah; and now, the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. Her art has toured with the band U2. She is a professor in the Department of Design Media Arts at UCLA, and lives and works in Los Angeles.

-more-

### **About the Parkway Council**

A coalition of cultural and educational institutions and businesses in the vicinity of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, the Parkway Council is dedicated to ensuring that the Parkway Museums District realizes its potential as a truly unique cultural destination. The Council's members are committed to creating a distinctive, vibrant, and welcoming place for local residents, visitors, and the institutions and businesses that share the Parkway. It works closely with the City of Philadelphia and other public and private organizations to identify the best strategies for enhancing and promoting the Parkway, and serves as a strategic partner and catalyst to ensure that those strategies are implemented.

### **About the Association for Public Art**

The Association for Public Art (aPA, formerly the Fairmount Park Art Association) commissions, preserves, interprets, and promotes public art in Philadelphia. The aPA is the nation's first private nonprofit organization dedicated to creating a "Museum Without Walls" that informs, engages, and inspires diverse audiences. We honor the past while supporting originality and innovation, and we advance opportunities for creative people to contribute to the city's places and spaces. Established in 1872, the aPA integrates public art and urban design through exemplary programs and advocacy efforts that connect people with public art.

We respond to the conditions of our time, adding new perspectives to the civic landscape and maintaining a legacy for future generations, while promoting Philadelphia as a premier city for public art.

### **About the William Penn Foundation**

The William Penn Foundation, founded in 1945 by Otto and Phoebe Haas, is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the Greater Philadelphia region through efforts that increase educational opportunities for children from low-income families, ensure a sustainable environment, foster creativity that enhances civic life, and advance philanthropy in the Philadelphia region. In partnership with others, the Foundation works to advance opportunity, ensure sustainability, and enable effective solutions. Since inception, the Foundation has made nearly 10,000 grants totaling over \$1.6 billion. The Foundation's assets exceed \$2.3 billion as of March 31, 2016.

-more-

### **About PNC Bank**

PNC Bank, National Association, is a member of The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE:PNC). PNC is one of the largest diversified financial services institutions in the United States, organized around its customers and communities for strong relationships and local delivery of retail and business banking; residential mortgage banking; specialized services for corporations and government entities, including corporate banking, real estate finance and asset-based lending; wealth management and asset management. For information about PNC, visit [www.pnc.com](http://www.pnc.com).

### **About PECO**

Based in Philadelphia, PECO is an electric and natural gas utility subsidiary of Exelon Corporation (NYSE: EXC). The company's 2,500 dedicated employees provide advanced, innovative energy solutions to 1.6 million electric and more than 516,000 natural gas customers in southeastern Pennsylvania. In 2015 PECO delivered 86.9 billion cubic feet of natural gas and 38 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity. The company also has an estimated annual economic impact of \$4.3 billion in Pennsylvania, supporting more than 8,700 local jobs and producing \$732 million in labor income. Founded in 1881, PECO is one of the Greater Philadelphia Region's most active corporate citizens, providing leadership, volunteer and financial support to numerous arts and culture, education, environmental, economic development and community programs and organizations. For more information visit [PECO.com](http://PECO.com), and connect with the company on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

# # #