

2. BRYANT PARK COMMISSION INFORMATION, 1985

From: Mel Chin

Re: The Bryant Park Artist in Residence Program

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As I have been selected as the 1984 artist in residence for Bryant Park, I would like to submit this document to further articulate my concerns and revised considerations for the proposed sculpture and to adjunct my brief preliminary proposal.

#### Conceptualization of Proposed Sculpture

I listed some source materials in my earlier proposal that served as points of departure or references from which this particular work is derived. The wicker giants of Northern Europe became one reference that probably served as a catalyst for the large figure. These giants were fair size, 30' to 40', and sacrificial in nature. The Druids made these figures of osiers and grass, encasing human victims with the intention of burning them on or near the midsummer solstice. It is important to note the Druids were believers in the tree-spirit or spirit of vegetation, and the performance of these sacrifices was meant to promote fertility of the land and continued harmony with their gods, the trees. In later centuries this tradition was carried into western Europe where the giants were constructed and paraded, much to the delight of the public, during the midsummer solstice festivals. Although the sacrificial burning of victims had been excluded, these woven images continued to stand as symbols of rejuvenation. These practices ended in the 18th century. Upon hearing the plans for the revitalization of the park, I felt a modern representation of the wicker giants would be appropriate.

I have substituted metal wire for the wicker, feeling that the visuals would translate. This adds a note of practicality, structurally making the work lighter, and allowing a breathability that would greatly lessen wind load factors. The sculpted skeleton encased within the wire-work serves as more than a metaphor for the sacrificial victims. By including rather than denying the skeletal structure, another degree of visual complexity can be realized. It also supplies the means by which the necessary infrastructure may be hidden.

(cont'd)

The figure was chosen from Gustave Dore's illustration of Myrrha for Dante's Divine Comedy. The fine lines of the engraving offered possibilities for the wicker concept and the figure proved suitable for translation into a large scale.

#### Engineering Notes

A piece this size and of this complexity requires particular engineering considerations. I have consulted Richard Rose and Associates.\* Mr. Rose has agreed to assist me. All structural engineering plans will be presented before construction begins.

#### Site Consideration (see attached map of Bryant Park)

Due to a suggestion that the proposed central location may be an obstruction to the public use of the park, I have revised the site choice to either the east or west end of the lawn. Area required : 24 ft. X 4ft.

#### Program During Residency

Work area will be clearly delineated and roped off during phases of construction which require welding or cutting of materials.

As the construction of the sculpture is to be done in sections, the space required for the work area need not be excessive (20' X 30').

The artist will be available to interact with the public on a personal level during all phases of construction.

A table will be set up on site displaying the model, plans and drawings for the project, thus serving as an information center.

Artist will maintain the sculpture during the period of installation and return site to the original state upon removal of piece.

\*Richard Rose Associates, 255 West 26th St., NY, NY 10001  
212-206-8600

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

▲ 25 Central Park West  
Suite 25R  
New York, New York 10023  
212 541 8423

■ Contact: Lyn Freeman  
Project Coordinator; or  
Jenny Dixon  
Executive Director

MONUMENTAL SCULPTURE TO BE UNVEILED IN BRYANT PARK

Selected as the 1984 Bryant Park Artist-in-Residence, sculptor, M. Chin began what was to have been a brief three month Summer residency - - six months later he is still on the job. Working out-doors each day in Bryant Park since August, he puts in seven, sometimes twelve hour work days as he labors to complete, "Myrrha/P.I.A.", a giant 29' high, steel and mixed media sculpture of a nude, seated woman. The work which will be on display in the Park through May 31, 1985 is scheduled for unveiling in a public ceremony Thursday, January 17, 1985 at 10am in the Park, located at 42nd Street and Sixth Avenue. A reception for the artist will immediately follow in the HBO Building's 3rd Floor Conference Room located at the corner of 42nd and Sixth Avenue - directly adjacent the Park.

A paradoxical work, containing contemporary and historical references to literature, art, and myth; "Myrrha/P.I.A.", eludes clear definition. The monumental work portrays a seated woman, face partially obscured by upraised arm, body bent forward. The image is taken directly from an engraving found in Gustave Dore's illustrated version of Dante's Divine Comedy. Constructed as a double silhouette, the figure's details are 'drawn' through the ingenious use of steel plugs which fit into the 1/2" apertures of the work's perforated steel surface. Visible through the cage-like enclosure formed by the silhouettes is a full, three dimensional skeletal rendition of the figure.

Born in Houston Texas, Chin now lives and works in New York City. His past public art works are characterized by an interest in the exploration of new materials and forms and include; "The Manila Palm", a 60' high artificial palm of rope and steel, "See and Saw", a kinetic earthwork, and "Keeping Still - The Great Wheel of China", a complex wood, water and sand installation; all located in Houston.

Part of a program to bring art to the public, the Bryant Park Artist-in-Residence Program was begun in 1980. It is co-sponsored by the Public Art Fund, Inc. and the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation, and is made possible through the cooperation of the N.Y.C. Department of Parks and Recreation, Hon. Henry J. Stern, Commissioner, and is supported, in part, with public funding from the New York State Council on the Arts and the NEA.

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MEL CHIN

MYC

Form of 'MURRHA' P. I. A

S. LEVI plot

MYRNA/P.I.A

CELEBRATION LUNCH of

5 PARK PEOPLE - 4 HARDORE  
BRYANT PARK BUMS, MIM CHIN,  
MEL, JOE DUGAN, SANPRA LEVY,  
BILL ELLIS, ELLEN, FRANK DAVIS

GUEST CHECK

SERVER 5 TABLE 2/1 TIME 14:35

4 COFFEE	4.00
2 BLOODY MARY	6.00
2 WH SPEC GL	6.00
1 GIN HB	2.75
1 VODKA CT	3.00
1 HEINEKEN TAP	2.50
1 DOS EQUIS	2.75
1 AMSTEL LIGHT	2.50
1 SAKE	3.25
1 HEINEKEN TAP	2.50
1 GIN HB	2.75
1 VODKA CT	3.00
2 LITTLE NECKS	9.50
1 OYSTERS ON 1/2	5.75
2 HOUSE SALAD	5.50
3 WATERCRESS SO	9.00
2 COUNTRY PATE	7.50
1 OYSTERS ON 1/2	5.75
1 WD TURKEY CT	3.50
1 GIN HB	2.75
1 BLOODY MARY	3.00
1 CUTTY HB	3.25
1 WH SPEC GL	3.00
1 TONIC WATER	1.25
1 WH SPEC GL	3.00
1 VODKA CT	3.00
1 FRESH FRUIT	8.00
1 TURKEY SAND	7.25
1 GRIL HAM/BRIE	7.95
2 FILET MIGNON	27.90
3 CHICKEN MUST	26.85
1 WATERCRESS SO	3.00
1 HAMBURGER	4.95
1 PASTA DU JOUR	8.95
1 REDFISH	12.00
3 GRILL SALMON	39.75
1 1/2 CHCK ENTR	8.00
1 GRILL SWRDFSH	12.95
1 PAILLARD	8.50
1 BACARDI CKTL	3.50
1 WH SPEC GL	3.00
1 CUTTY HB	3.25
1 SAKE	3.25
1 HEINEKEN TAP	2.50
1 GIN HB	2.75
1 BLOODY MARY	3.00
1 R MARTIN VSOP	4.50
1 COFFEE	1.00
1 CHOC SATIN CK	4.75
1 CUTTY HB	3.25
1 JAMESON	3.00
1 SAKE	3.25
1 HEINEKEN TAP	2.50
1 DSH ICE CREAM	3.50
1 CHOC SATIN CK	4.75
1 TEA	1.00
1 COFFEE	1.00
1 BREWED DECAF	1.25
1 ESPRESSO	1.50

TOTAL 339.30  
TAX 27.98

GRAND TOTAL 367.28  
15% Service 56.00  
CENTURY CAFE  
423.28

132 W. 43RD ST.  
NEW YORK N.Y. 10036

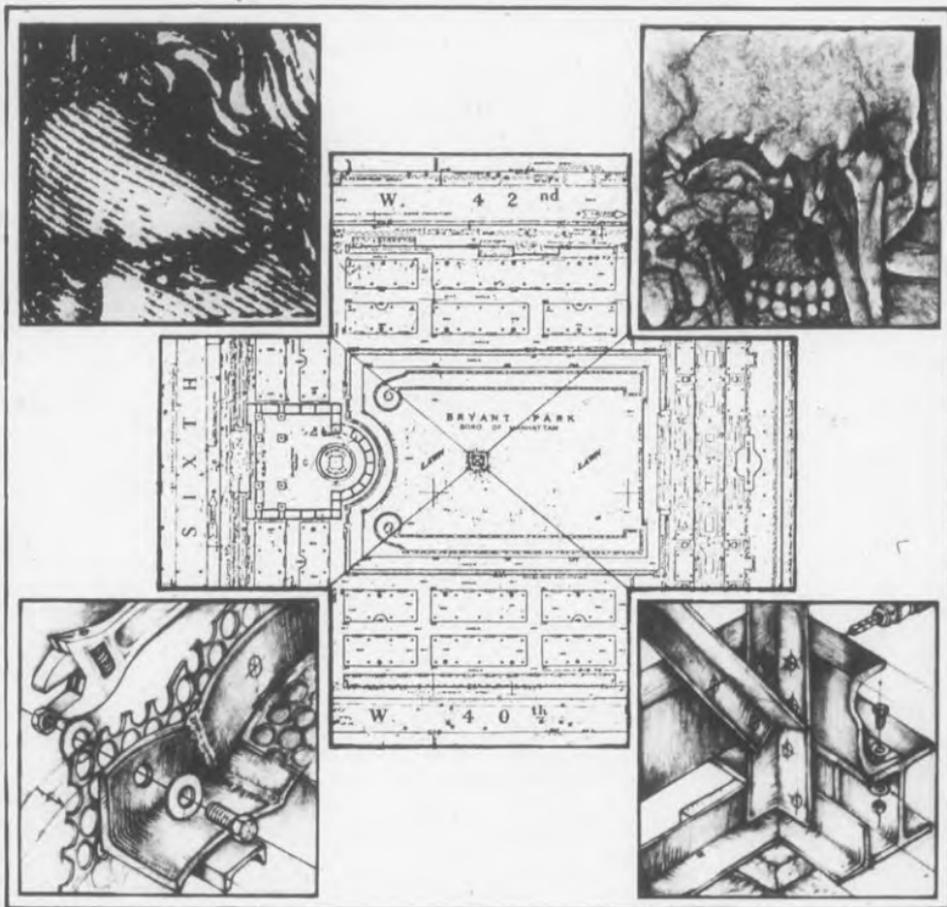
85-01-17 16 GUESTS NUMBER 73

Total \$423.28

10:00 A.M.

# UNVEILING

12:30 P.M.



*The Public Art Fund, Inc.  
and  
The Bryant Park Restoration Corporation  
cordially invite you  
to attend the unveiling of*

*M Y • R R H A / P . I . A .*

*a sculpture by Mel Chin  
for the 1984 Bryant Park  
Artist-in-Residence Program*

*Thursday, January 17, 1985*

U N V E I L I N G  
M Y R R H A / P. I. A.

Thursday, January 17, 1985

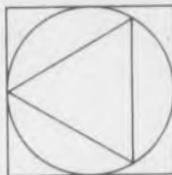
10am-12:30 pm

Bryant Park

Sixth Avenue at 42nd Street

A reception for the artist will immediately follow at  
HBO Building, 1100 Avenue of the Americas  
3rd floor Conference Room

The work will be on exhibit  
January 17-May 30, 1985.



**Public Art Fund Inc.**  
25 Central Park West  
Suite 25R  
New York, New York  
10023

(212) 541-8423

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*The Bryant Park Artist-in-Residence program is sponsored by the Public Art Fund, Inc. and the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation. This program was developed in 1980 and is made possible through the cooperation of the N. Y. C. Department of Parks & Recreation, Hon. Henry J. Stern, Commissioner, and the Mayor's Office and is made possible in part with public funding from the New York State Council on the Arts and the NEA. Special thanks to: Mr. & Mrs. Irvin A. Levy, Mr. & Mrs. Den B. Chin, Ann Harithas and Helen Katherine Nagge.*



3. GILL + MEL CHIN - JAN 17, '85  
UNVEILING of 'MYRRHA/P.I.A.

SANDRA LEVY photo

MEL CHIN JAN 17, 1985  
UNVEILING of 'MYRRHA/P.I.A.

SANDRA LEVY photo



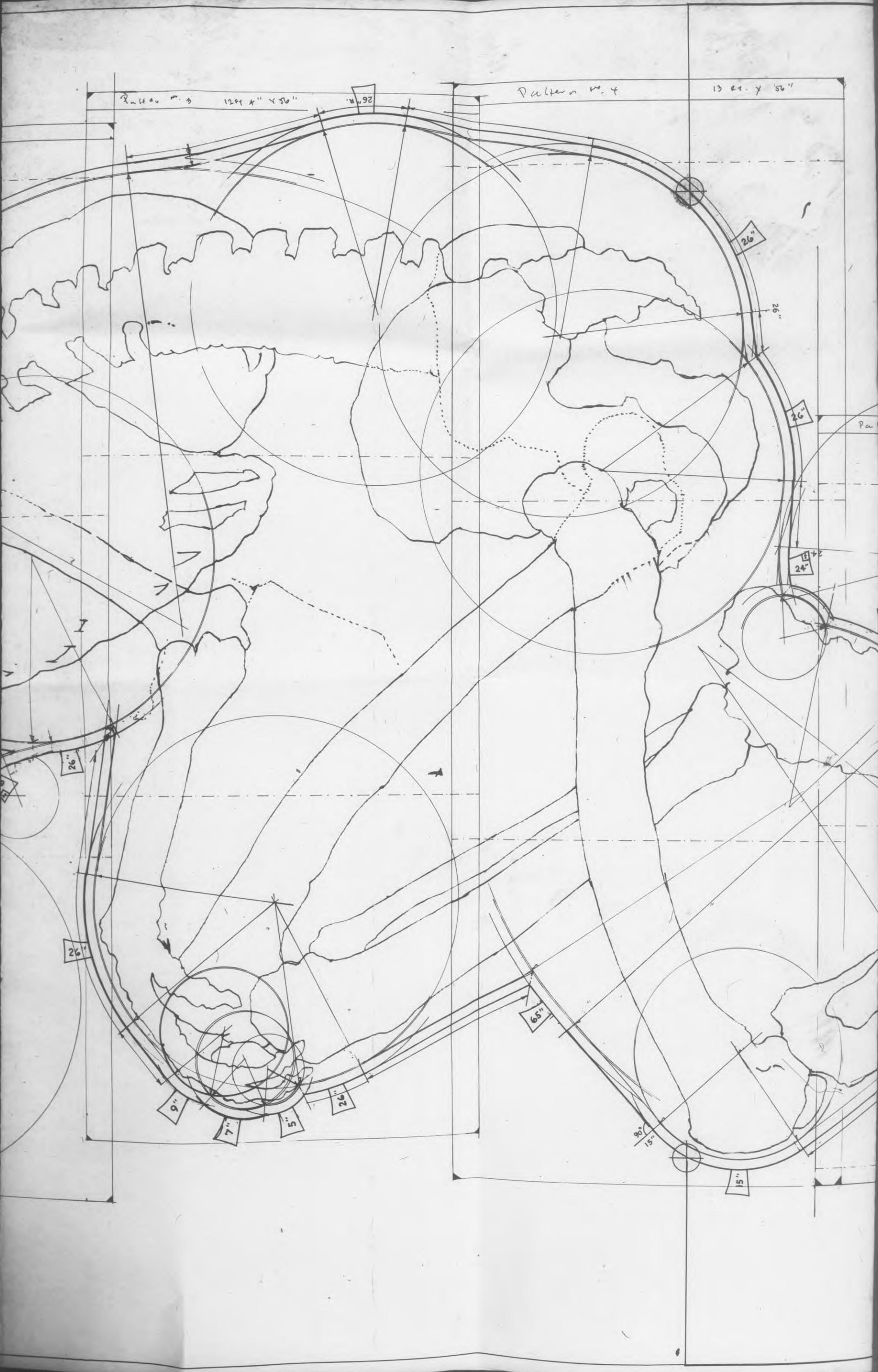
MEL CHIN - JAN. 17, 1985  
UNVEILING of 'MYRRHA / P.I.A.

SANDRA LEW photo

MEL CHIN 1985  
MYRRHA / P.I.A. BRYANT PARK, NYC

SANDRA LEW photo





my own of P.I.A.

Patterns (3/66 L 1 1/2 x 2 1/2") Pattern

M. Levin '88

