

City Council Memo  
Anila Agha - *The Greys In Between*  
Proposed Installation at Tank Farm Roundabout  
April 25, 2022



*Image 1: Night Installation Shot, Image 2: Daytime Process Shot*

Artist Anila Agha's artwork *The Greys in Between* is the proposed sculpture for the upcoming Tank Farm and Orcutt Roundabout in San Luis Obispo. As the first public roundabout artwork installed since 2016, we proposed selecting a sole source artwork rather than a Request for Proposals. The unique elements

of the piece, its size and structural factors, as well as its strong statement in alignment with the City's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion goals, made this direct selection the best choice.

**About the Greys in Between:** Drawing from motifs found in South Asian art and architecture, Indianapolis based artist Anila Quayyum Agha engages light and shadows to convey the relationships that exist between opposing states: light/dark, known/unknown, fact/fiction, alone/together. The artwork promotes inclusivity while inviting viewers to consider the depths of these contrasts, contemplating how seemingly opposing states intersect and interact. In exploring the intersections of religious dogma, race, class and culture, *The Greys in Between* confronts global exclusionary politics and acknowledges minority and immigrant populations' contributions to our society.

**About Anila Agha:** Anila Quayyum Agha (b. Lahore, Pakistan) received her BFA from the National College of Arts, Lahore and an MFA from the University of North Texas. Recent solo shows include the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, MA, National Sculpture Museum in Valladolid, Spain, The Dallas Contemporary Art Museum, Cincinnati Art Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Jacksonville, FL, Philbrook Museum of Art in Tulsa, and the Toledo Museum of Art in Ohio. For the 2019 Venice Biennale Agha was included in a collateral event, *She Persists*, with 22 contemporary feminist artists. Agha has received the Efroymsen Art Fellowship, Cincinnati Art Museum's 2017 Schiele Prize, and DeHaan Artist of Distinction Award. Agha's 2014 ArtPrize entry, titled "Intersections", earned the Public Vote Grand Prize and split the Juried Grand Prize in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In 2017, she was awarded the Glenn W. Irwin, Jr., M.D. Research Scholar Award by Indiana University. Recently, Agha received an Endowed Chair position titled Professor – Morris Eminent Scholar in Art at Augusta University in Georgia, as well as the prestigious Smithsonian Fellowship in the arts for 2021 and will be working with both SAAM and AAA in Washington DC in May 2021. Her work has been collected by both institutions and private collectors; nationally and internationally.

#### **Draft Timeline:**

April 25 – May 25: Finalized installation designs and sketches, Collaboration with Structural Engineer team and Roundabout City Project Managers to determine and finesse installation approach

June 1-7: Public Art Jury conducted where artist and staff present installation methodology, and conceptual information behind the artwork. The purpose of the Public Art Jury is to gain valuable insights into nearby communities and opportunities, as well as brainstorm and finalize communication strategies.

June 7-20: Artwork prepared for shipping, fabricator creates hanging apparatus, lighting designed and ordered, collaboration with on-site contractor for preparing the site

June 20-30: Artwork received in SLO

July 17-30: Artwork installation by fabricator, artist studio manager, in collaboration with City Staff. Immediately after installation, ribbon cutting ceremony conducted and additional programming scheduled as needed.



**City of SLO DEI Statement:** We envision a San Luis Obispo that is welcoming, inclusive, and safe. Our city values diversity, promotes equity and belonging, actively denounces systemic racism, and actively works toward racial justice.

**Key Participants:**

**Anila Agha**, Lead Artist

**Steve Prachyl**, Artist Studio Manager

**Christian Taylor Owens**, Installation fabricator

**Jennifer Rice**, City of SLO Tank Farm & Orcutt Roundabout Manager

**Luke Schwartz**, City of SLO Transportation Manager

**Meghan Burger**, City of SLO Recreation Manager and Public Art liaison

**Jessica Meadows**, RRM Engineer and Structural Engineering Consultant