



TUCSON
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
FOUNDATION

April 14, 2026

Subject: *Turnkey Sculptures*, Immediate Stabilization and Request for Action

Dear Ms. Shiratori,

On behalf of the Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation (THPF), I write to follow up regarding the condition of the *Turnkey Sculptures* and the continued absence of meaningful protective intervention since the THPF first raised concerns with the Arts Foundation for Tucson and Southern Arizona in July 2025.

Despite the length of the public process, the condition of the works remains unacceptable. As of this weekend, components of the sculptures are unsecured, with smashed elements lying on the ground and exposed to ongoing damage and loss along Park Avenue during major road construction. Since our initial notice, conditions have continued to worsen, including additional impact damage and further destabilization of already compromised elements. This is not a static situation. It is an active and continuing deterioration.

The condition of the sites further compounds this problem. Two of the three City of Tucson owned locations remain vacant, one of which is anticipated to be sold. The third site, at Silverlake Park, has continued to expose the works to damage. Together, these circumstances accelerate loss and underscore the absence of any stable stewardship framework.

Within the last week, neighborhood interest has emerged in keeping the sculptures in place, and we recognize that there may be sensitivity surrounding their removal. At the same time, it must be stated plainly that, over the past decade, no organization, community group, or surrounding neighborhood has taken action to prevent the loss of these works or to address their condition.

The procedural history of the past several months reflects a consistent failure to act. On December 11, 2025, the Relocation and Deaccession Subcommittee of the Public Art and Community Design Committee convened to review the condition, status, and possible disposition of the sculptures. A second meeting followed on January 26, 2026, at which time the

Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission was formally asked to evaluate the significance and integrity of the works. Most recently, on April 8, 2026, the Public Art and Community Design Committee met. At no point during this process did the Art Foundation committee raise, request, or take formal action to require that the Arts Foundation for Tucson and Southern Arizona or the City of Tucson secure or protect the works, despite the THPF having raised these concerns at every stage of the process and having provided photographic documentation of the damage.

During the two meetings of the Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission subcommittees, there was consistent and unanimous agreement on three central points. First, that the condition of the sculptures is inconsistent with the City's preservation standards. Second, that the sculptures, even in their damaged state, retain significance associated with the artist. Third, that the remaining elements should be brought back together in a manner that restores, to the extent possible, their integrity of association.

It is also critical to underscore the position of the Charles Clement Estate. As set forth in its formal February 4, 2026 letter and accompanying report, the Estate determined that the work has been irreversibly fragmented, decontextualized, and partially lost, and that it can no longer be preserved, interpreted, or presented with integrity as a unified artwork. The Estate further stated that the continued display of the remaining fragments constitutes an ongoing misrepresentation of the work. This conclusion is not a matter of interpretation. It is grounded in the documented loss of elements, the destruction of spatial relationships, and the absence of the original context that defined the work.

In light of these circumstances, we respectfully request the following actions:

1. The immediate removal of the surviving sculptural elements from their current locations and transfer into secure storage. Present conditions are resulting in ongoing damage and no longer reflect the work as conceived by Clement, and continued exposure is likely to result in further loss.
2. That this removal be treated as an interim stabilization measure while the Public Art and Community Design Committee continues its public meetings and while a plan is developed in coordination with all relevant parties.
3. Third, that the City of Tucson undertake a formal survey of City owned and City developed properties within a one mile radius of the original sites, covering the period from 1999 to the present, for the specific purpose of locating the three missing sculptural elements.

Additionally, comments made by a member of the Public Art and Community Design Committee during the January 26 meeting and repeated again at the April 8 meeting reflect a continuing mischaracterization of both the Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation and the governing framework that applies here. The member suggested that the sculptures may be subject to discretionary interpretation, expressed personal views regarding relocation, and asserted that

contextualization is open to interpretation. These assertions are inconsistent with the City's Public Art Program Relocation and Deaccession Policy, Administrative Directive 7.01-7, which requires that the integrity of the artwork and the intent of the artist be preserved and that any action proceed through a defined and impartial process grounded in professional judgment. The comments are also inconsistent with nationally recognized preservation policy and practice, including the National Register frameworks for evaluating significance, integrity, and context. These matters are not governed by personal preference.

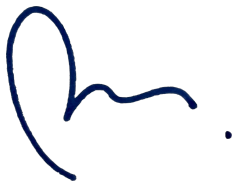
Statements made during the January 26 meeting further mischaracterized the Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation and its role. The Foundation was referred to in dismissive terms, and the Bondante House, a 1956 property designed by Charles Clement and owned and restored by the Foundation, was misrepresented. Such statements diminish the Foundation's credibility and misstate its legal standing as the holder of Clement's intellectual property and as an entity working in coordination with the artist's estate. The Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has worked for more than 40 years to protect and advance the community's cultural heritage and design history.

The discussion also framed the proposed return of the *Turnkey Sculpture* fragments as a removal from public access. That characterization is inaccurate. The proposal is a response to ongoing damage, the absence of stewardship, and the urgent need to stabilize and protect the surviving elements of the work.

Finally, we note with serious concern that the Arts Foundation has scheduled a community meeting with stakeholders for Friday, April 17, without notice to or inclusion of the Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation or the artist's estate. This is particularly troubling given that the Foundation's comments and recommendations have been confined to public meetings and formal written communications, while other stakeholders are being afforded a more direct forum for participation. This disparity creates an unbalanced process, limits a fully informed discussion, and risks mischaracterizing the record.

The Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation remains committed to a constructive resolution grounded in professional standards and the responsible stewardship of the surviving art elements. We would appreciate a prompt response outlining the steps that will be taken, at a minimum, to secure the sculptures and initiate the actions outlined above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'D' followed by a series of loops and a final flourish.

Demion Clinco, CEO
Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation