HYGIENIC ART PARK

Hygienic Art, Inc. has proven to be a key leader in the revitalization of downtow New London. In January 2000, the derelict landmark building was restored, bringing artists, residents and the community back to the nearly deserted downtown area, spurring economic development and the creation or relocation of other fine art venues, like the Alva Gallery, The Burnished Chariot Gallery, Empress of Art, and the Golden Street Gallery.

Hygienic Art, Inc., now established as the center of the fine arts community, accomplished its first phase mission by restoring the Hygienic Building and creating residential artists studios and a public art gallery. Phase two of the project transformed its surroundings into a beautiful public art space. In September 2001 Hygienic Art completed its second renovation project. A dark corner lot in the rear of the building on Golden Street has been transformed into the Garden of Hygienia, a sculpture garden with wrought iron fences, red brick walkabouts and lampposts. A street that could not be walked down at night has now become inviting.

Hygienic Art, Inc., driven by its mission to save the view of the mural on its south wall from speculative developers, negotiated the sale of two adjacent vacant lots and acquired them for $110,000 on December 28, 2001.

Funding for the sale was raised from private donations and the Hygienic Endowment Fund. Hygienic then sold the lot adjacent to the Bulkeley House Restaurant to them for $50,000.

Hygienic Art developed site plans for Hygienic Sculpture Gardens and Outdoor Theater Art Park. The plan emulates a classic renaissance design in the Greek Revival style. The park was designed to accommodate sculpture, fountains, seating, reception areas, and a large performance area.

Landscape architect/designer Brian Kent was hired and a meeting of community members was held to share ideas on the design and planning of the park. The panel included resident artists, international sculptors, Hygienic board members, musicians, master landscapers, theater professionals, construction managers, and downtown property owners. The resulting site plans can be viewed at the Hygienic Art Galleries.

With full support from the City of New London, Hygienic Art received planning and zoning approvals and raised $384,500 and to start the construction phase. Generous grants from The State of Connecticut D.E.P.,the Frank Palmer Fund, The Day Publishing Co., Citizens Bank, N.L. City Center District, AT&T Corp., Raymond and Helen Langfield, D.N.L.A., Mr. Toby Griffis, Mr. David and Muriel Hinkle supported this project through its design and construction phases.

The park is open to the public during the day and during gallery hours. It is available for use in collaboration with other nonprofit arts and academic organizations for performances and educational presentations. The O'Neill Theater Center, The Garde Art Center, the Secret Theater and the Eastern Connecticut Symphony have expressed interest in the project. An outdoor film series is planned to be projected on the side of the Hygienic building on summer evenings. The park is also available to rent for private events. Fees from this usage will be used to defer the costs of maintenance, insurance, and utilities.