

IV Love + Remembrance Garden at People's Park in Isla Vista: Bringing Together IV Hearts, Parks, and the Arts

Kim Yasuda / March 2015



(above) Garden pathway design and early stages of installation by staff of IV Rec and Parks District, 2015

The IV Love + Remembrance Garden at People's Park captures the collective spirit of collaboration that is currently taking shape in Isla Vista. The public art installation, in the form of a botanic landscape, will meander between IV's Peoples and Perfect Parks, dedicating a poetic space for contemplation and celebration in memory of the student lives tragically lost almost a year ago. The effort demonstrates the capacity for the IV and UCSB communities to come together and create a meaningful place for public commemoration and healing. The initial partnership, between project artist and creator, [Jordan Killebrew](#) and the IV Recreation and Parks District (IVRPD), has since garnered the support from local businesses, public historians, librarians and craftsmen as well as the UCSB Office of Student Life, Associated Students, the Panhellenic community and the faculty and students of UCSB Departments of Art.

Days following the May 23 Isla Vista tragedy, former UCSB Art Department alum (2010), Jordan Killebrew responded with his heart and design skills to do something positive in the wake of tragedy by creating the online community platform for donations, Project IV<3: www.projectivlove.com/:

"...I need to do something and fortunately for me I have all the resources to do so. This is for IV. This is for the Families. This is for my Gauchos".

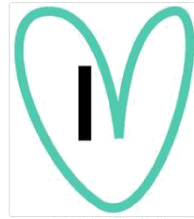


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(above) Project IVLove Donation Web Page, Jordan Killebrew, 2014

Killebrew's mission for Project IV<3 was simple: "To serve as a platform to garner donations for the creation of a permanent Memorial Public Art Installation in Isla Vista, California that honors and remembers the victims who died due to the tragic event on May 23, 2014".

Killebrew worked with another UCSB Art-Film alum, Garrett Gerstenberger, owner of [Isla Vista Screen Printing](#) to create commemorative t-shirts to send out in thanks for the donations that flooded in. Killebrew recalls packaging and shipping hundreds of shirts after hours while holding onto his day job as a web engineer for Yovigo.com in Santa Barbara.

Killebrew's efforts raised almost \$2,000 and spurred local business owner Laura Ambrose and Manager James Glover of [Woodstock Pizza IV](#) to host an in-house fundraiser that brought in over \$5,000. With 100% funds dedicated to the realization of the project, Killebrew approached a number of local organizations in an effort to find a site in IV for the future public art memorial. With guidance from Katya Armistead, Associate Dean of Student Life and Activities, [UCSB Office of Student Life](#), Killebrew connected with [Isla Vista Recreation and Parks District](#) Manager, Rodney Gould. As a 35-year resident of Isla Vista, Gould also has a unique background as a business owner and a major events planner for the SB Fiesta and International Film Festivals. When Gould came on board to the Isla Vista Recreation and Parks District in 2012, he had a number of major improvement projects in mind for Isla Vista's 25 parks and open land and one of them was to install a botanical garden with a self-guided tour in the under-utilized zone that straddled between

People's and Perfect Parks in downtown Isla Vista. A healing garden resonated with Killebrew and they both agreed that the park site, in the heart of Isla Vista, would be the ideal location for the future IV Love + Remembrance Garden.

Killebrew, Armistead and Gould organized an advisory team to help mobilize the project into realization by this coming May, in time for the year anniversary. Members include local business owner of Woodstock's Pizza, Laura Ambrose and manager, James Glover who have stepped up their commitment to a fund-raising and media campaign to raise more money that ensures the garden's sustainable future. A gift of 10K was just announced by Senior Associate Dean, Debbie Fleming from the [UCSB Office of Student Life](#), to be dedicated to the realization of the project. Another gift of 9K was made by the [Isla Vista Tenants Union](#) in order to support the building of the garden. Undergraduates Cricket Cleary and Aimee Hanna have enlisted support from the [UCSB PanHellenic](#) and [Associated Students IV Community Relations Committee](#) networks. Kim Yasuda, Professor, [UCSB Department of Art, Spatial Studies](#), has facilitated involvement by her current art students' of [IV OpenLab](#) to design custom benches for the project. The team was later joined by graduate student, Melissa Barthelemy of the [UCSB Public History program](#) and Annie Platoff, Reference Librarian, UCSB Library who are curating the one-year anniversary campus exhibition, "We Remember Them: Acts of Love and Compassion in Isla Vista" May 20 – June 20, 2015.

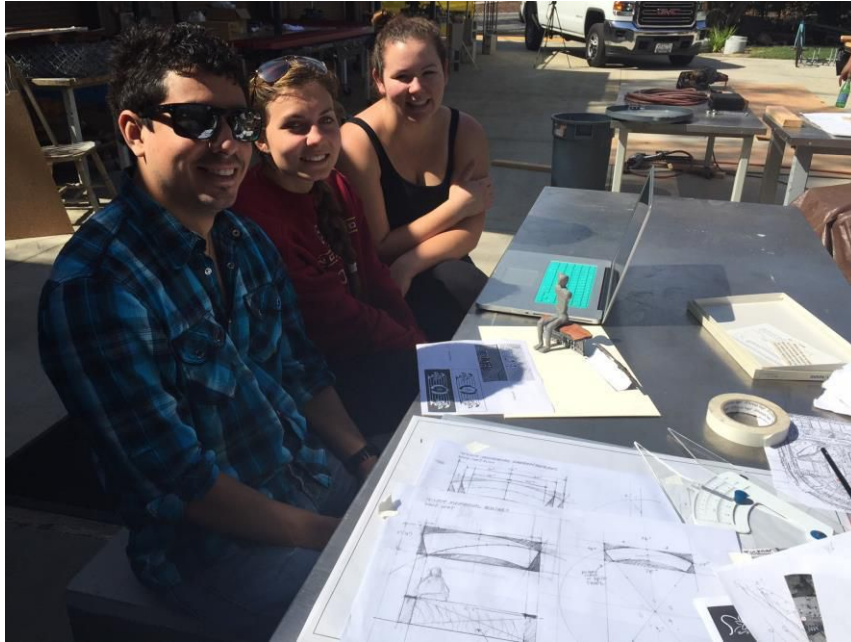
From its inception, Jordan wanted the project to include participation by artists and students and he reached out to his former art department at UCSB: "I am looking for local artists, students, etc. to submit ideas for the Isla Vista community".



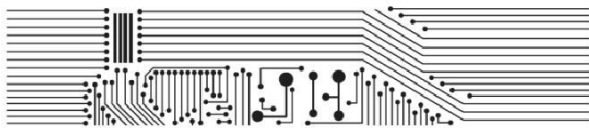
(left) Garden Pathway design plan by Rodney Gould of the IV Rec and Parks District, 2015
(right) Jordan Killebrew discussing student bench designs at the IV OpenLab , 2015

As an undergraduate art student in 2007, Killebrew worked in Isla Vista on the storefront renovation of the former IV Bakery (now Hana Kitchen) as part of a community course by UCSB Art Professor, Kim Yasuda. Killebrew's 2008 mural he painted with Luke DePasse as students is still visible on the exterior wall of the former restaurant. Through the experimental course series of the "[Friday Academy](#)", Professor Yasuda has worked with her art students in Isla Vista since 2005. For Project IV Love, current art seniors, Caila Baltas, Jonathan Holcomb, Bob Hwang and Victoria Borth were recruited from [IV OpenLab](#), a course initiated by Yasuda this past fall that draws participation from both members of campus and community. The 4 undergrads are collaborating with Killebrew to design the 6 wood and steel benches for the garden, each commemorating the life of former UCSB students, Christopher Michaels-Martinez, Katie Cooper, Veronika Weiss, George Chen, David Wang and James Hong.

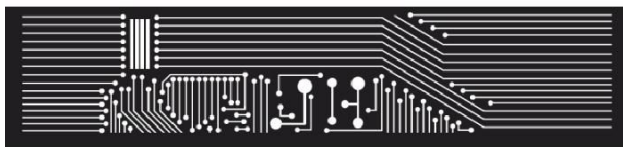
Each of the designs has been inspired by the words and memories provided to the students by the families. Their individual drawings will be cut into plate steel, casting patterns of light and shadow when illuminated. Drawn from the geometry of a circle to symbolize unity and connection, the shape of each bench curves inward like open arms of an embrace.



(above) Jonathan Holcomb, Caila Baltas, Tori Borth and Bob Hwang (not shown) work on the bench designs, 2015. (below) Bench designs by Jonathan Holcomb and Caila Baltas for James Hong and Christopher Michaels-Martinez, 2015

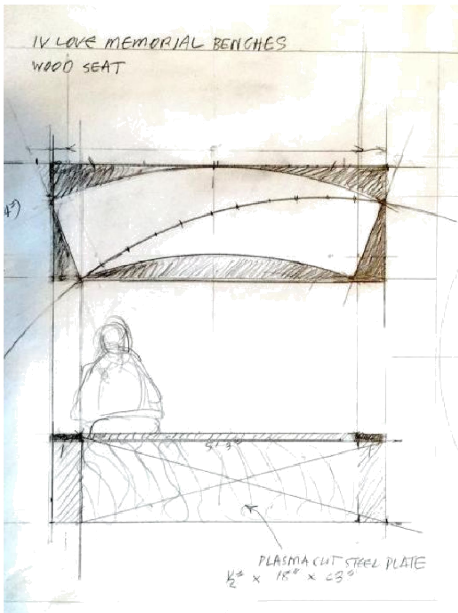


James Hong



Chris Michaels-Martinez





(above) Bench fabrication drawings and models by UCSB Department of Art faculty, Kim Yasuda, 2015

Fabrication of benches will be provided by local craftsmen, Guner Tautrim of [Seaborn Designs, Orella Ranch](#) and Dan Patterson of [Santa Barbara Forge + Iron, Inc.](#) The wood seats will be locally-sourced and milled from aged Cypress trees in IV's Tipi Park and other nearby areas, celebrating the spirit of hope and renewal that has infused this project from its inception.



(Above) Guner Tautrim of Seaborn Designs,-Orella Ranch and Rodney Gould of IVRPD assess fallen Cypress and Eucalyptus trees in Tipi and Camino Corto Parks in Isla Vista for possible wood to mill for garden bench seating, 2015

The IV Love + Remembrance Garden at People's Park is currently in design-construction by the IVRPD field staff, which includes Rodney Gould, Joe Lemus, Bennett Williams, Brad Collison and Carolos Velasco. It will be inaugurated with a community-planting day on May 2. The landscape will host a curving walkway with natural rocks, individually etched with words of love and remembrance. The site will include drought tolerant, native species plants drawn in part from the inventory of [UCSB's Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration](#) and a donation of 12 trees from SoCal Edison.

Donations may be made to support IV Love + Remembrance Garden at People's Park at the IVRPD website: <http://www.ivparks.org/memorialgarden/donate/>



(Above) Garden pathway installation by the staff of the IV Rec and Parks District, March 2015