

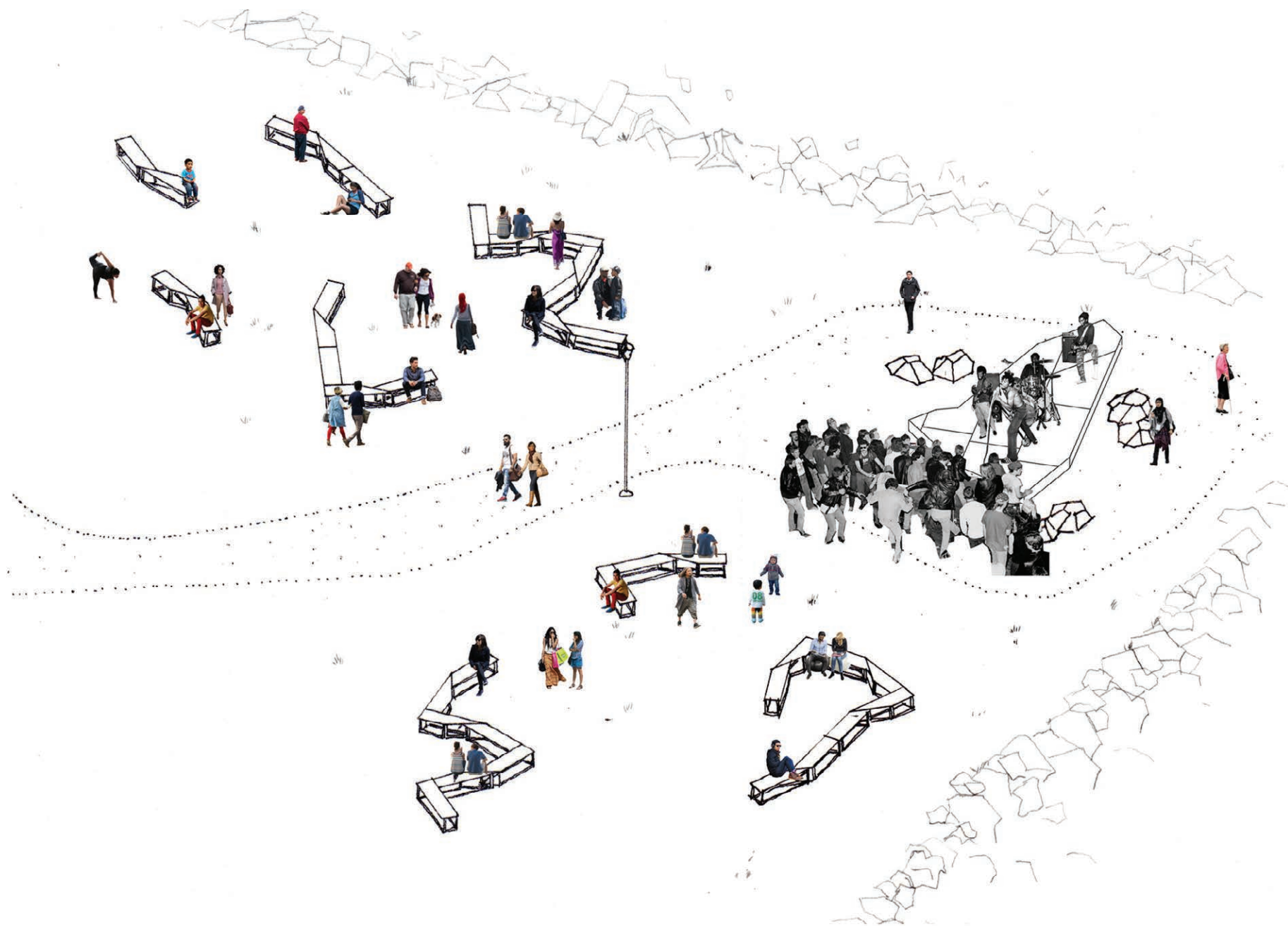
BENCH PARTY

Jose Parral + Tasia Paulson



Port Spaces 02

32°37'48.1"N 117°06'29.9"W





Jose Parral + Tasia Paulson

Temporary Art in Minor Seating

November 19, 2016 – May 20, 2017

Port Spaces 02

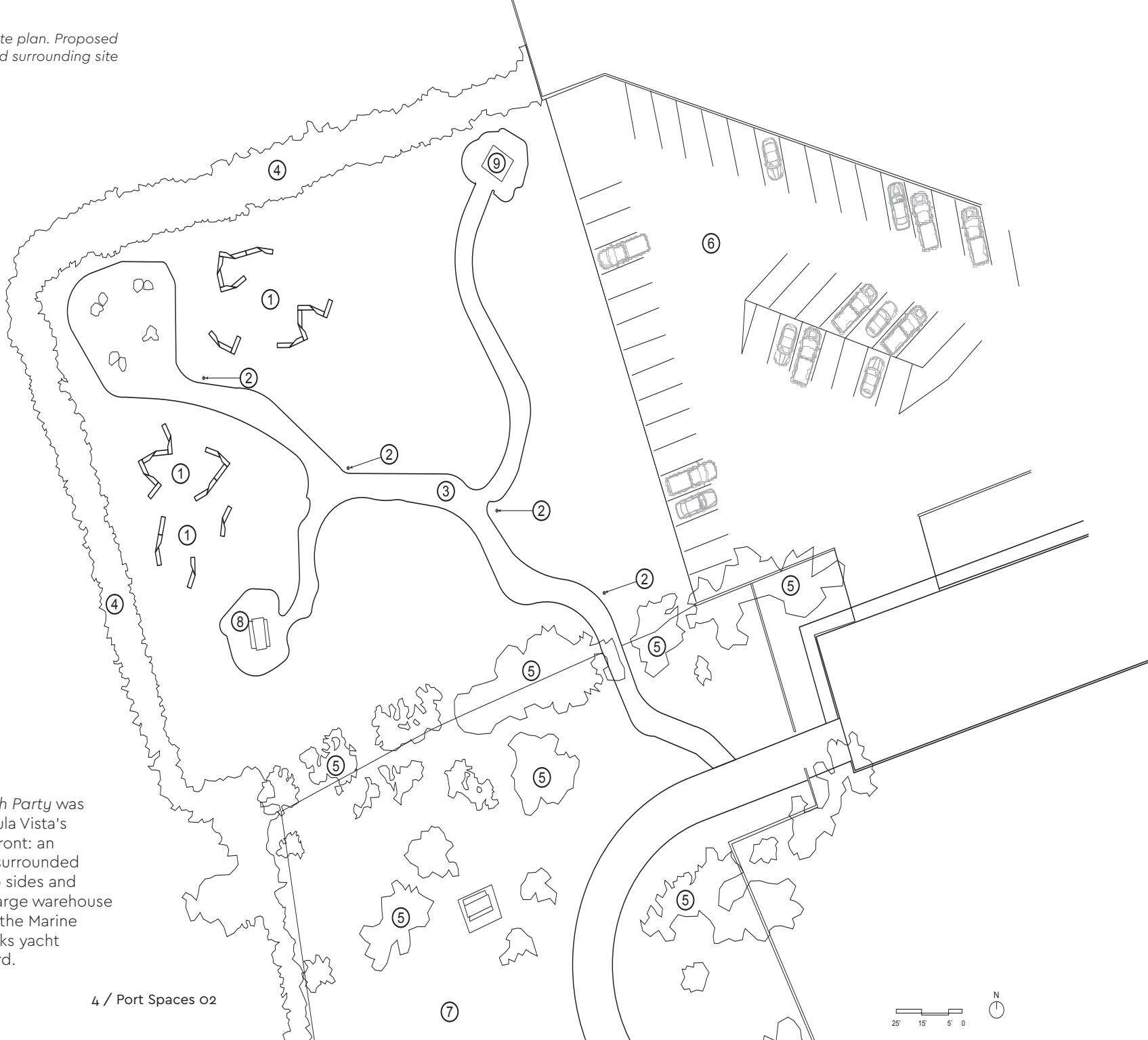
32°37'48.1"N 117°06'29.9"W

Commissioned by
Waterfront Arts & Activation
Port of San Diego

ISBN 978-0-9998531-1-5



Artist's concept site plan. Proposed bench clusters and surrounding site features.



The site of *Bench Party* was once part of Chula Vista's industrial waterfront: an abandoned lot surrounded by water on two sides and occupied by a large warehouse that was part of the Marine Group Boat Works yacht maintenance yard.

SITE PLAN

LEGEND

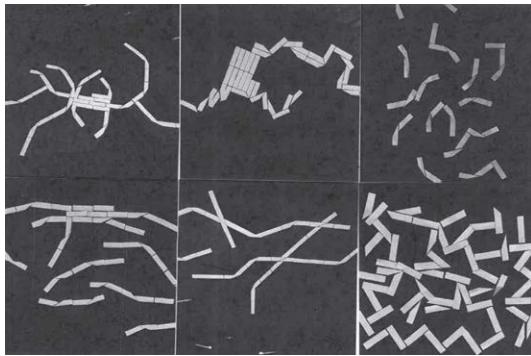
- Proposed bench locations ①
- Existing light fixture ②
- Existing gravel path ③
- Existing boulders on slope ④
- Existing trees ⑤
- Existing parking lot ⑥
- Existing park ⑦
- Existing table ⑧
- Existing concrete pad ⑨



Recently relinquished to Chula Vista Bayside Park, the lot is minimally landscaped and still separated from the park proper by a row of trees that once lined the lot's fence. The site offers a sweeping panorama of San Diego Bay's waterfront.



BENCH PARTY



Artist's sketch "modules" for Bench Party concept. In architectural and landscape design, sketching in the abstract frequently elicits the potential of functional objects.

This publication memorializes *Bench Party*, the second temporary site-specific installation commissioned through the Port of San Diego's Port Spaces curatorial program, which provides the public with experimental temporary art installations and social interventions throughout Port tidelands.

Artist and landscape architect Jose Parral, in collaboration with Tasia Paulson, created *Bench Party*, a placemaking installation that indexes the convergence of social and spatial aspects of San Diego Bay's waterfront. Parral and Paulson fabricated and installed a series of benches whose materials derive from and reference the materiality of the site and its surroundings. As noted by Parral and Paulson in their proposal:

"A crane that is strength and support, metal weathered by time, layers of experience and history- the framing of each bench. Boats with billowing sails, folded by speed and wind- the seating of each bench. Swirls and ripples left behind

from boats gushing by- the placement of benches ..."

The benches were designed in five unit-types: one with straight short sides, two with varying acute angles at one end, and two in the angled benches' mirror images. By placing varying units end to end, swirling clusters of benches could be transformed and restructured. The created seating provided a framework for emergent gatherings in a site ringed by grand vistas stretching from downtown San Diego's skyline to Mexico: the benches at last giving these vantages direction.

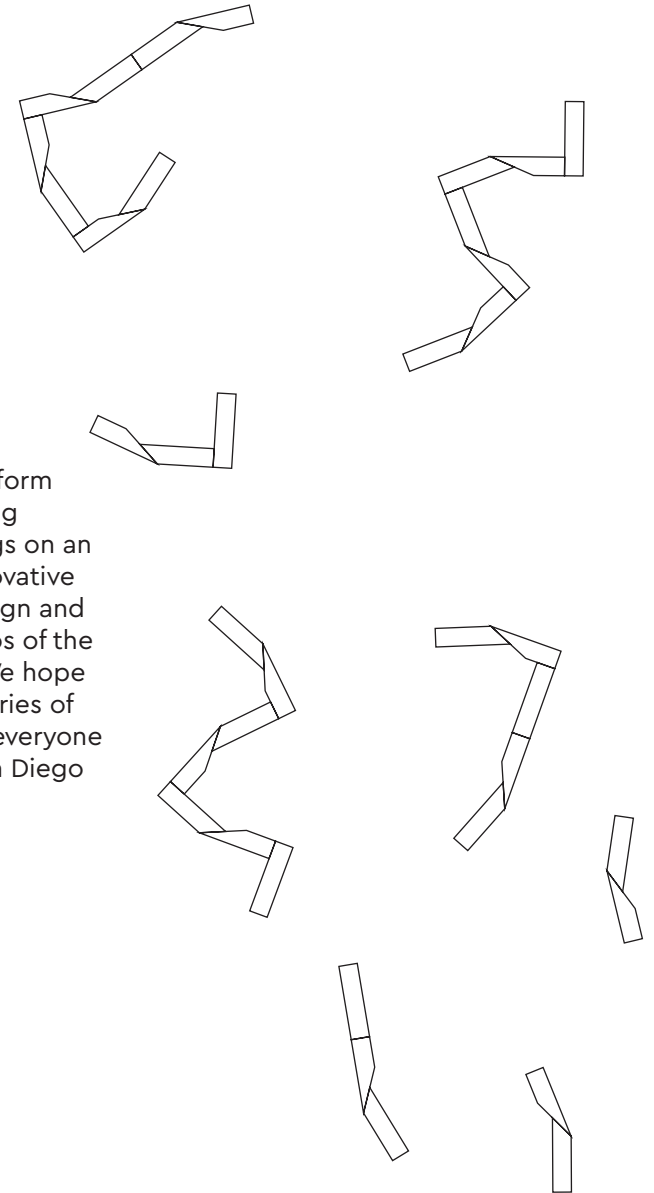
Striking in its own right as a functional sculptural installation, *Bench Party* was also a platform for numerous informal social gatherings from the fall of 2016 to the spring of 2017. Furthermore, it established a framework for the realization of a series of formal cultural events in an unconventional setting. Over the course of the spring, *Bench Party* hosted performances by San Diego Youth Symphony's Community Opus Program, the San Diego Dance Theater,

and the Fern Street Circus. Each of these organizations is based in the San Diego region and focuses on synergizing specific communities with the performing arts. It could not have been predicted, at the outset, what a simple but elegant sculptural intervention would eventually provoke in its six-month tenure at the north end of Chula Vista's Bayside Park. Parral and Paulson again:

"Upon visiting the site, what stood out for us right away are the contrasting views. For instance, there is a grove of trees, a wall, crane/construction, and the ocean. Each view offers a different experience and it is up to the viewer to choose, sit, and watch. At the moment the site is flat, open and has no orientation. We noticed people walking through the area seemed misdirected and confused. Our interest . . . is in the way people flow throughout the site and gather at viewpoints. The choreography of human activity can be accomplished through the curation and placement created by benches."

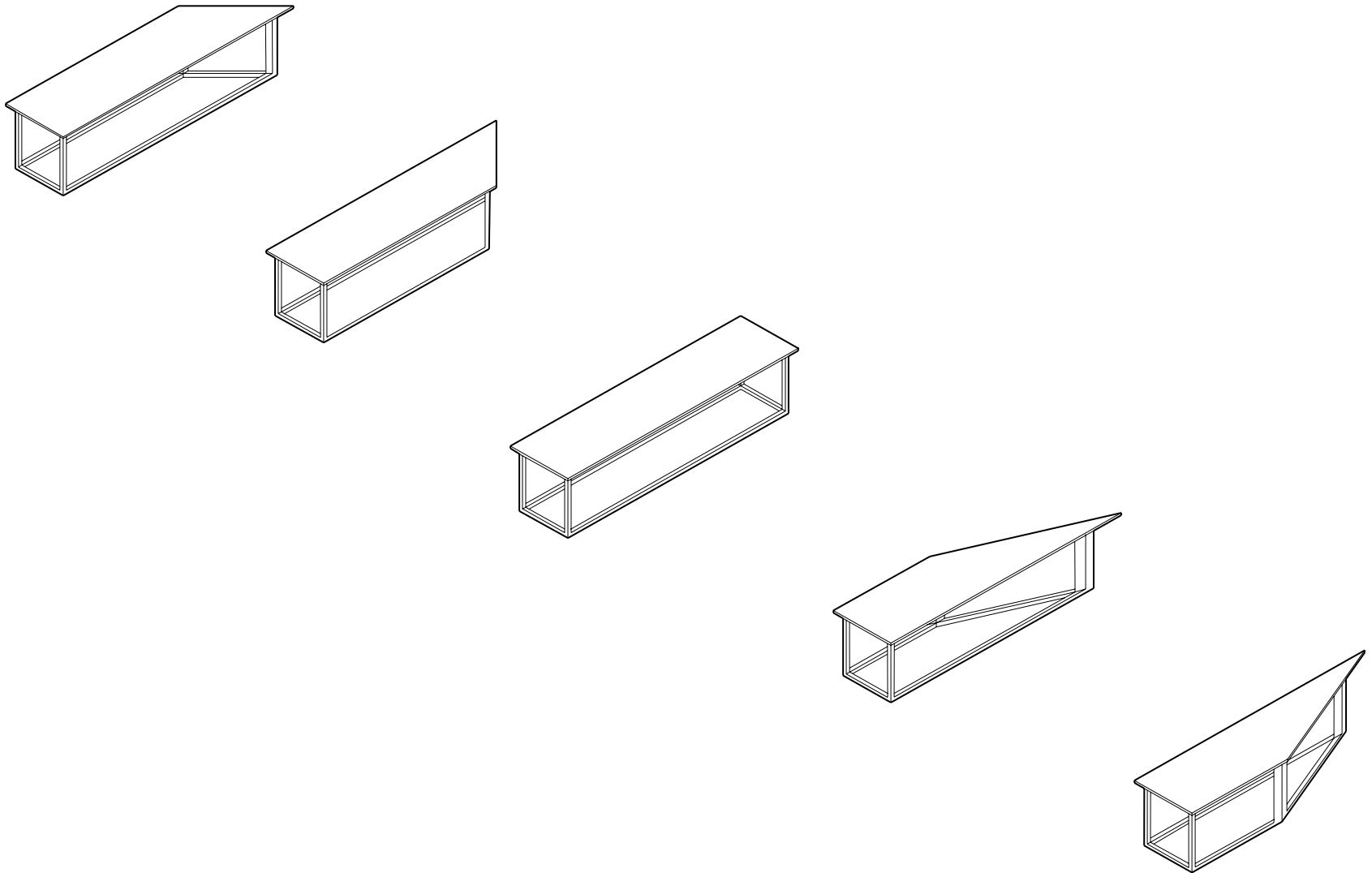
Bench Party, with its unassuming form and subtle functionality, yet striking potential for catalyzing happenings on an understated site, achieved an innovative hybridity between landscape design and sculpture, and embodied the ethos of the Port Spaces curatorial program. We hope this publication will stir the memories of those who attended, and remind everyone of the rich cultural potential of San Diego Bay's waterfront.

Yvonne Wise, Director
Waterfront Arts & Activation
Port of San Diego



Bench cluster configurations. The snaking chains of benches create a series of incidental alcoves and varying vantages.





*Artist's concept array of modular bench types.
Variable end-angles and their mirrored version
enable numerous configurations.*





Alvino & the Dwells

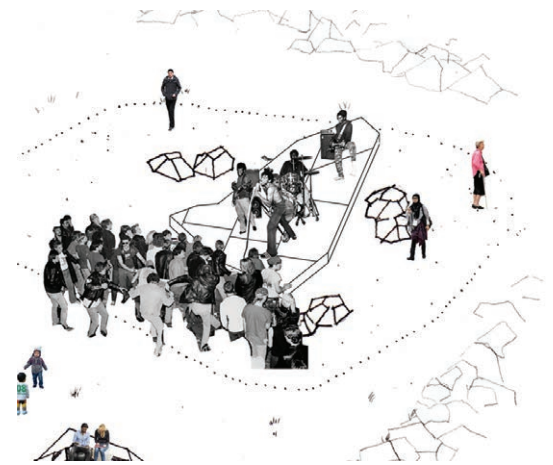
November 19, 2016

Opening event

Self-described as San Diego-based 1960's reverb vibrato guitar/drums trio, Alvino & the Dwells play surf, instrumental, and other genres with roots in San Diego's teen post-punk and mod scene.



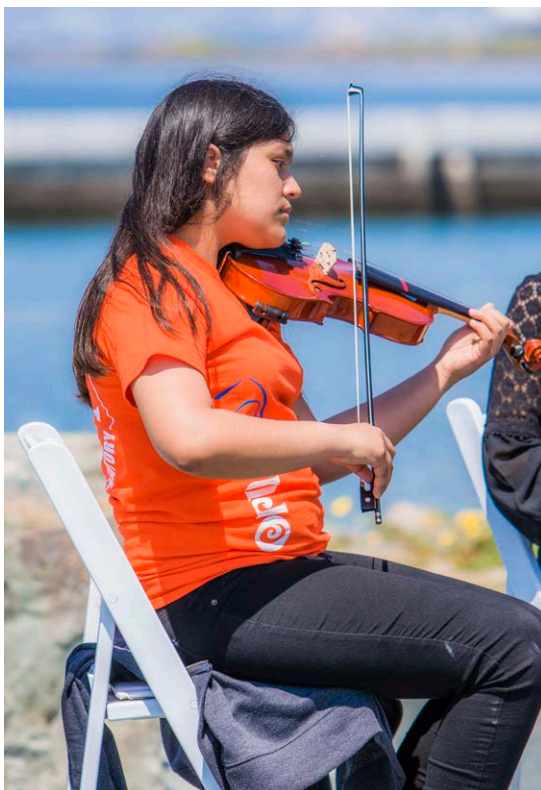




*Detail from artist's
concept rendering*







San Diego Youth Symphony Community Opus Project

April 8, 2017

The Community Opus Project provides after-school instrumental orchestra and band programs for students in Chula Vista. The San Diego Youth Symphony collaborates with school districts and local partners to make high-quality music instruction available to all students. *Bench Party* provided a unique open-air opportunity for the Community Opus Project to showcase a diverse program of student talent.











San Diego Dance Theater

May 6, 2017

The San Diego Dance Theater was established in 1972 to produce dance concerts and train young dancers. Under the direction of Jean Isaacs since 1997, the theater has become known for its unconventional and frequently site-specific, community-rooted programming. The performances in May of 2017 were developed specifically in response to the site and artwork.

"Drawing off of the South Bay's beautiful landscape — with its natural and industrial views — San Diego Dance Theater will add another layer of site transformation with a series of short, seemingly impromptu dance performances ..."

Yvonne Wise, Director
Waterfront Arts & Activation
Port of San Diego











Fern Street Circus

May 20, 2017

Fern Street Circus serves families and transforms neighborhoods through performance and teaching of circus arts. Professional artists collaborate with learners and their families in neighborhood settings. Participants co-create every aspect of the circus, using their own talents and available resources, working in public locations and creating visible community. *Bench Party* was an ideal site to further the Fern Street Circus's mission.











Jose Parral and Tasia Paulson are a California-based art-and-design team whose work crosses over between landscape urbanism and public art. Their combined experience includes international collaborations as part of the InSite 05 exhibition in the San Diego/Tijuana border region, as well as in Rome, New York City, and San Francisco.



BENCH PARTY

Temporary Art in Minor Seating

**Jose Parral &
Tasia Paulson**

November 19, 2016 – May 20, 2017

Commissioned by Waterfront Arts &
Activation, Port of San Diego

Port Spaces 02
32°37'48.1"N 117°06'29.9"W

Bench Party was commissioned as part
of the Port Spaces curatorial program,
a series of temporary site-specific
artworks activating public spaces on
Port Tidelands.

Sculpture fabrication by
Jacob Buller & Fernando Becerra

Images and graphics on front cover,
front inner cover, pages 2 – 7, 11 (lower
right), 12, 13 courtesy of Jose Parral and
Tasia Paulson. All rights reserved.

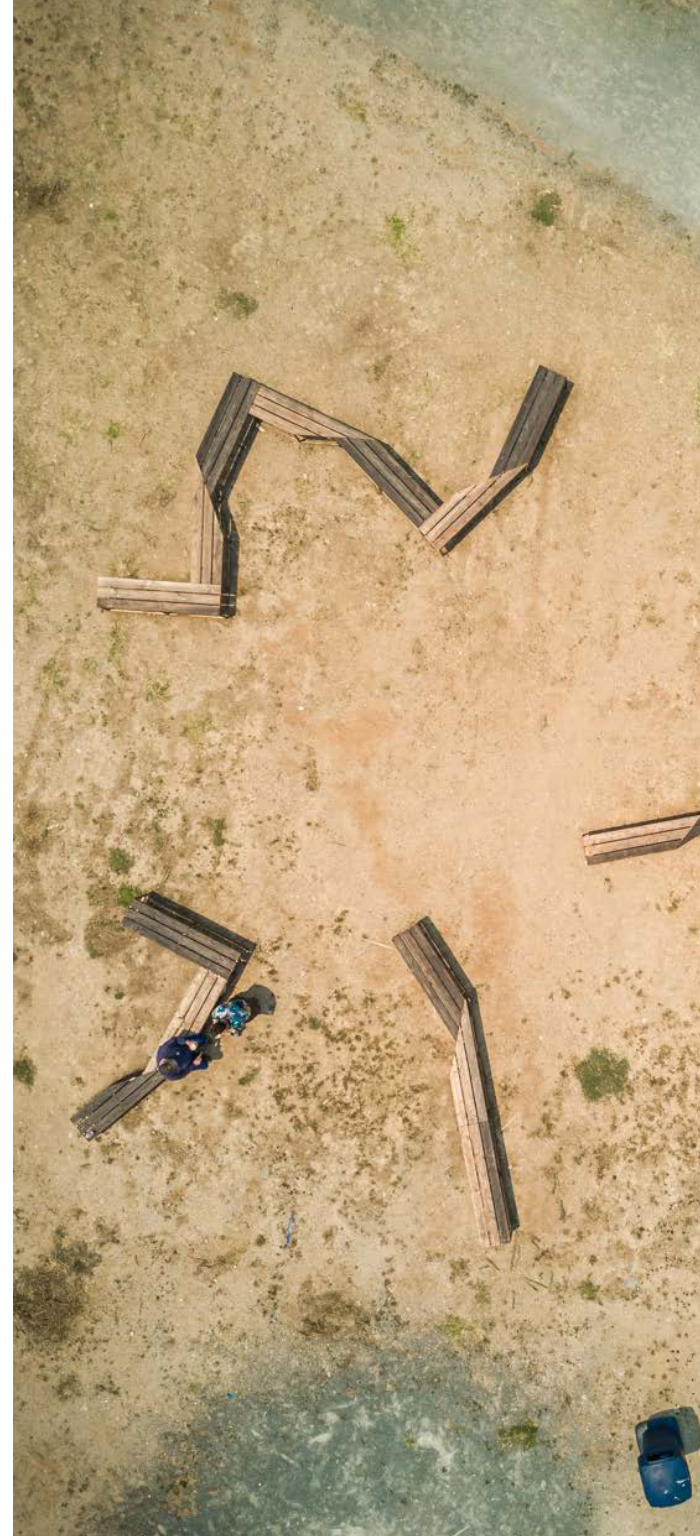
Images and graphics on back cover, back
inner cover, pages 18 – 26 (upper left),
27, 28, 30 courtesy of Sam Chen | Aloha-
PhotoVideo.com. All rights reserved.

Images and graphics on pages 1, 3, 8 –
11, 14 – 17, 27 (lower left), 29 by Port of
San Diego and may be duplicated with
attribution to the Port of San Diego.

ISBN 978-0-9998531-1-5

Port of San Diego
Waterfront Arts & Activation

portofsandiego.org
arts@portofsandiego.org
#TideLandArt





**PORT of
SAN DIEGO**
Experiences

ISBN 978-0-9998531-1-5