

**CITY OF PALM DESERT
STAFF REPORT**

MEETING DATE: September 25, 2025

PREPARED BY: Erica Powell, Management Analyst

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION TO PURCHASE RISING INVERSION SCULPTURE BY
CRISTOPHER CICHOCKI

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approve agreement with artist Cristopher Cichocki in the amount of \$150,000 for the purchase of *Rising Inversion* to be installed at Ironwood Park.
2. Authorize the City Attorney to make necessary non-monetary changes to the agreement.
3. Authorize the City Manager to execute contract and all documents necessary to execute the project.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Ironwood Park, located at 47800 Chia Drive, is a tranquil desert setting with no existing public art. Acquiring the piece as part of the City’s Public Art Program, the proposed placement of *Rising Inversion* will offer residents, visitors, and park users an opportunity to engage with large-scale contemporary art in a serene and contemplative outdoor space. Staff routinely surveys sites throughout the City for potential public art opportunities, and Ironwood Park was identified as a suitable location due to its undisturbed desert setting, accessible pathways, and the opportunity for the sculpture’s phosphorescent glow to be experienced safely by residents and visitors during dusk hours. An additional benefit of this location is that it currently does not have any public art.

The 12-foot-tall and 40-foot-long sculpture weighs approximately 3,000 pounds. It features a spherical form tapering from five feet deep at the center to one foot at the edges. Its phosphorescent surface absorbs daylight and emits a soft, low-lumen glow at dusk, creating an immersive public art experience without impacting nearby residents.

In addition to its artistic merit and interactive quality, *Rising Inversion* holds special significance as the work of Cristopher Cichocki, a Palm Desert native whose internationally recognized career in contemporary art reflects the City’s ongoing commitment to nurturing and celebrating local talent. He also has works in permanent collections including the Getty Museum and Palm Springs Art Museum.

The artist will handle site preparation, transportation, and all other related expenses to install the sculpture on-site. Costs for this are included in the purchase price.

<i>Rising Inversion</i> Sculpture Cost Breakdown	Amount
Sculpture	\$ 130,000

Soluble varnish/graffiti coating	\$ 2,000
Grading	\$ 5,000
Installation	\$ 2,000
Crane	\$ 5,000
Transport	\$ 1,000
Landscape	\$ 5,000
Total	\$ 150,000

Rising
was originally

Inversion

commissioned by the Laguna Art Museum for its 11th Annual Art + Nature program. Fabrication was fully funded by the Museum, and the purchase price reflects this prior investment.

On July 9, 2025, the Cultural Arts Committee unanimously recommended, by 6-0 vote, the purchase of the *Rising Inversion* sculpture by Cristopher Cichocki to be installed at Ironwood Park. This item was also presented at the Parks and Recreation Committee at its regular meeting on August 5, 2025, where the Committee expressed support. This project advances the Cultural Arts Committee’s goals while maintaining the FY 2025–26 Work Plan priorities:

1. San Pablo Roundabout, Phase 2: Request for Qualifications
2. Public Art Programming Subcommittee
3. Utility Cabinet Beautification Review and Refresh

Staff therefore recommends approval of the purchase.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The total cost for the acquisition and installation of *Rising Inversion* is \$150,000. Funds for this purpose are included in the approved FY 2025-26 Financial Plan and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) in Public Art Capital Projects Account No. 4364650-4400100. Therefore, there is no impact on the General Fund with this action.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Artist Agreement
2. Agreement Exhibit A- Scaled Drawings and Images
3. Cultural Arts Committee July 9, 2025, Staff Report with attachments:
 - Presentation of *Rising Inversion* by Cristopher Cichocki
 - Cristopher Cichocki Biography
 - LA Times article
 - Palm Springs Life article
 - Proposed Location at Ironwood Park