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Contact: Amy Rogers – Executive Director
Phone: (713) 454-1940
Email: amy.rogers@1940airterminal.org

Historic Air Terminal partners with Local Artist to Showcase History in a New Way

GONZO247 joins forces with the 1940 Air Terminal Museum to paint a 1969 airplane

Houston, TX – The 1940 Air Terminal Museum at Hobby Airport will partner with local artist GONZO247 to paint a 1969 Hawker jet. Made possible in part through the City’s Initiative Grant, Gray Reed & McGraw and various private donors, the artist and museum will work together on the 3-dimensional art installation that will feature GONZO’s bright and colorful design with nuggets of Houston history hidden throughout the mural artwork. The jet currently resides in front of the museum’s entrance.

Painting will begin on Thursday, May 23, 2019 and is expected to end on Sunday, June 2. The museum invites the general public to observe a live demonstration by GONZO on Saturday, June 1 @ 11am.

Originally conceived by Executive Director, Amy Rogers, the project represents the 1940 Air Terminal’s commitment to preserving the historic landmark building while showcasing the multidisciplinary use of the space. “The true success of the art project will be measured by the ways we are able to engage the public at large and build bridges in the Houston community,” commented Rogers. The museum actively engaged with multiple organizations, including the Hobby Area Management District and Houston Botanic Garden, throughout the Houston Hobby area to submit suggestions on symbols to be placed throughout the mural representing the community at large.

Opened on September 28, 1940 the air terminal, designed by architect Joseph Finger, served as the administration building for the airport and supported airline operations and air traffic control functions. The first airline tenants were Eastern Airlines and Braniff Airways. In a few short years air travel grew exponentially, and the terminal ceased airline operations in 1956. The building was completely abandoned by 1978 and was left vacant until its resurgence as the 1940 Air Terminal Museum in 2004.

Local graffiti artist Mario Figueroa Jr., best known as GONZO247, strives to educate communities through engagement, advocacy, and street art /mural tours in order to promote the positive aspects of the graffiti art form. While his art is on display throughout the Houston architectural landscape, this will be the first time the artist has taken on a transforming an aircraft. “When I first saw the jet, I couldn’t believe that it was going to be my canvas! I have transformed cars and even beer silos, but this is a project of a whole different scale.”

Once a mode of transportation for a company to conduct business all over the country, the 1969 Hawker jet was donated to the museum as a way draw people into the museum as they are driving past. The jet has been the first thing to welcome people into the museum parking lot for many years. The museum is now taking this concept a step further by encouraging visitor participation through turning this cool business jet into

a piece of beautiful art.

The 1940 Air Terminal Museum is located at 8325 Travelair Street, Houston, TX 77061 (west side of Hobby Airport) and is open Tuesday – Saturday 10am-5pm and Sunday 1-5pm. Follow the transformation Facebook and Instagram @1940atm to stay up to date on the project's progress.

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