GO, TIGERS!

WE TOO, SHALL RISE

Tommie Robinson

DATE

Artist Commissioned January 2017
Installed January 2019

LOCATION

710 E. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
Charlotte, NC 28202

DESCRIPTION

The Second Ward High School (1923-1969) was the first High School for African Americans in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area providing secondary education and curriculum designed for academic studies and vocational occupations. Prior to the school's development, students attended church schools or traveled out of town to complete a high school education. The school enrolled over 1500 students in 1966, and students were recognized for their academic and vocational achievements, with many earning memberships in the National Honor Society. Built in 1949, the Second Ward High School Gym is the only building remaining from the commencing Second Ward High School Campus. Students used the gym for performances, practices, sporting games, as well as for graduations, social events, and community gatherings. The athletes and band also used the nearby Pearl Street Park, one of the first African American Parks in the area, for their practices, but the gym holds precious memories for the Second Ward High School Alumni. The last commencement was held in 1969, after which the school was closed and torn down as part of Charlotte's urban renewal plans.

We Too, Shall Rise is inspired by the hope and determination of a people living in the segregated South to rise above their current circumstances. Faced with the realities of separate, but not often equal opportunities, students of the Second Ward High School strived to excel in pursuit of a better tomorrow.

Go Tigers! captures their spirit and tenacity working as a team, participating in cultural activities, and cheering for the big win!

SELECTION PANEL

Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation requested ASC public art staff directly select Tommie Robinson as the sole source for the public art opportunity.

FUNDING PARTNER

This project is funded through Mecklenburg County's 1% for the Arts Ordinance. ASC administers the public art program for the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. Artist Selection and designs are approved by the appointed Public Art Commission.

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