

**For Immediate Release:**  
Friday, January 27, 2023

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**placeholder photo**

**Photo Caption (photo attached):** Brooklyn-based artists Adam Frezza and Terri Chiao (also known as *Chiaoza*), and their team installing their latest collection of sculptures, a work titled “Charm Field” in downtown Somerville, NJ. The installation is sponsored by the Downtown Somerville Alliance and the Somerset County Board of Commissioners through American Rescue Plan funds, geared towards increasing regional tourism and economic recovery following the COVID 19 Pandemic.

### **Downtown Somerville Alliance to debut new Sculpture Series by Brooklyn duo Chiaoza**

Somerville, NJ – The Downtown Somerville Alliance will be unveiling a new sculpture series on the historic Courthouse Green next week titled “Charm Field” by award winning, Brooklyn-based artists Adam Frezza and Terri Chiao, also known as *Chiaoza*.

The installation is sponsored by the Downtown Somerville Alliance and the Somerset County Board of Commissioners through American Rescue Plan funds, geared towards increasing regional tourism and economic recovery following the COVID 19 Pandemic.

“Somerset County’s tourism and hospitality industry was particularly hard hit by COVID, and our downtowns with their great restaurants, coffee houses, and other amenities were among the most affected,” said Somerset County Commissioner Director Shanel Y. Robinson. “We are pleased to provide the Downtown Somerville Alliance with the venue and the funding for this art installation to draw visitors, diners, and shoppers to the community as part of our efforts to help our local businesses recover and expand as we emerge from the COVID pandemic.”

The colorful collection of work features a series of playful, abstract shapes scattered on the lawn that play on the concepts of surrealist philosophies of “dream symbols” as portals to thought and discovery.

“We’re excited that our first large-scale public art project is centered around the idea of reclaiming the Courthouse Green as a cherished place for gathering, playing and reflecting,” said Natalie Pineiro, Executive Downtown Manager of the Downtown Somerville Alliance.

Although public art has been a part of the downtown Somerville landscape for a number of years thanks to the local non-profit, Arts on Division, it was during the COVID19 pandemic that Pineiro says they witnessed the true power of public art’s effect on communities and quality of life.

“The power of public art in communities is transformational,” said Pineiro, “The COVID pandemic highlighted its positive effects on tourism, economic growth, cultural identity, and even public health.”

As a result, the DSA engaged Houston, TX-based art advisory firm *Weingarten Art Group* to craft a strategic public art plan that captured downtown Somerville’s assets and prioritized areas where art installations could have the most impact. The Courthouse Green arose as the top contender for maximizing the impact of public art.

Partnering with the Somerset County Board of County Commissioners, the Downtown Somerville Alliance looked to *Chiozza* to leverage the Green as a way to increase tourism and economic vitality in the downtown Somerville district.

Frezza & Chiao’s work generally explores play and craft across a range of media, including painted sculpture, installation, collage, photography, design, and public art.

According to the duo, they envisioned the sculptures in the “Charm Field” installation as whimsical charms or magical tokens that have been placed upon the ground as if they were “curious game pieces from the satchel of a mythical giant.”

“These “charms” are intended to appeal to the viewer both from afar via a dreamy gaze and upon closer examination through physical interaction and open-ended play,” said Frezza. “We hope that this series of sculptures will bring a sense of hope, optimism, and positivity to the community of Somerville.”

To learn more about the “Charm Field” installation visit the Downtown Somerville Alliance website at [www.downtownsomerville.com](http://www.downtownsomerville.com) and follow them on Social Media

@DowntownSomervilleAlliance on Facebook, and @DowntownSomerville on Instagram and Tiktok for photos, and video of the project.

To learn more about Chiaozza, visit them online at [www.ernitystew.com](http://www.ernitystew.com) or follow them on Instagram @chiaozza.

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About the Downtown Somerville Alliance:

The Downtown Somerville Alliance is a 501(c)(3) charitable corporation. They are the District Management Corporation for Downtown Somerville, NJ - one of New Jersey's premiere downtowns. The district has become known for its colorful dining scene, flourishing retail, and up and coming arts and culture scene. They promote balanced and progressive economic development and leverage the art of creating experiences that continue to bring a new and diverse population to Somerville. The DSA oversees infrastructure and beautification projects and works with historians and environmentalists alike to maintain and promote the historic charm that is unique to the district. Visit them online at [DowntownSomerville.com](http://DowntownSomerville.com) or follow them on social media @DowntownSomerville (Instagram and Tiktok) and @DowntownSomervilleAlliance (Facebook).