ART harnesses the power of creativity, emotion and innovation, and can transform the public realm from mundane to marvelous. It is what our children, visitors and investors remember about a city, whether they grew up with an iconic landmark, pass it on the way to work, or see it on their way to the airport, cruise ship or walking down a street. ART tells a story and connects people to a place. The presentation will provide examples from downtown West Palm Beach and other locales that demonstrate the overwhelming difference that art makes in how the public realm is perceived and experienced. The site selection process, and how to gain support, will be also be discussed.

Throughout the decade Raphael has been working as the Executive Director of the Downtown Development Authority for the City of West Palm Beach. He has increasingly utilized art and creative “instigations” as tools to improve and enhance the public realm. These projects and programs have resulted in a measurable improvement of the public perceptions of West Palm Beach and an increase in business revenues. As a result of the success of arts based programs, the Downtown Development Authority launched the West Palm Beach Arts and Entertainment District in November of 2015. Since that time the District has made a tremendous impact in the community with dozens of arts based projects, and over $100,000 of grants and sponsorships in less than two years.

RAPHAEL CLEMENTE

**The Impact of Art on Towns and Cities**