



PRESS RELEASE

Jacksonville University Asks for Community Input for Public Work of Art

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Jacksonville, Fla. --Jacksonville University students are seeking public feedback on preliminary designs for a glass work of art that will be installed in the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts in downtown Jacksonville. The university is asking the community to offer their input throughout early November by using the college's interactive web site.

Currently, there are five designs being considered for what eventually will become the College of Fine Arts' first-ever large-scale public work of art. To view the designs, go to <http://arts.ju.edu/> and click on "Public Glass Commission," then "Selection." You can study the various designs, read the artist's concept behind the art and offer your comments. Community input and feedback will be an important teaching tool for the student designers, say faculty.

JU will present the glass sculpture to the city as a gift, thanks to Brumos Motor Cars, Inc., which has provided funding for the project. The estimated value of the commission is \$100,000.

Sarah Gay, director of the city's Art in Public Places Program, said, "This will be a signature piece for the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts, one of the city's top venues."

The JU glass commission design team is comprised of advanced art students working in collaboration with JU's two full-time glass art faculty members. The project leaders are Caroline Madden, assistant professor of art, and artist-in-residence Jonathan Christie, who recently oversaw the design, creation and installation of a large-scale commission for JU's new Davis College of Business.

Students are involved in all aspects of the process--from conception to installation. Their original designs contained artist rationales explaining how their design reacts to the space--considering its use and the people who inhabit it--as well as the sponsor's mission and visual identity. Advanced animation students recreated renderings and models online using 3-D animation in the CAVE (Center for Animation and Virtual Environments)

graphics lab to help the public visualize what the designs will look like.

Bill Hill, interim dean of the College of Fine Arts, initiated the project with the city and believes this collaboration will help shape the curriculum goals and facilitate the type of "real world" learning environment the university seeks. Hill further said, "This will be a collaborative and invaluable experience for our students. It will serve the community, while giving them a voice, and integrate with the mission of public art in Jacksonville."

JU's faculty members bring a wealth of expertise to the project. Madden, who recently returned from a year of setting up programs at the National College of Art and Design in Dublin, Ireland, has exhibited across America and Europe. She's been a guest artist at the Pilchuck Glass School in Seattle and the Pittsburgh Glass Center. Christie was previously employed by world-renowned glass artist Dale Chihuly and has collaborated with an impressive list of artists including Jim Dine, Kiki Smith and Maya Lin.

During production, the glass studio will be outfitted with a webcam to record step-by-step progression. WJCT public television has agreed to produce a documentary featuring the project.



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