



Date: September 16th, 2011
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TWELVE SOARING WORKS OF ART TAKE FLIGHT AS THE SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN ARTS COMMISSION ANNOUNCES THE ARRIVAL OF ART AT THE AIRPORT

Sacramento, CA—Twelve major public artworks are premiering in October with the opening of the new terminal at the Sacramento International Airport. The public gets its first looks at the art through a special community event Oct. 2, and airport passengers from everywhere will see the work on Oct. 6, when the first flight departs from the new Central Terminal B.

The terminal is the largest construction project in the history of Sacramento County, and the artworks there represent the largest public art project in the history of the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission. These public artworks, shepherded by the commission's Art in Public Places program, are both an integral component and featured attraction of the new terminal.

Each of the 12 artworks activates and responds to the larger environment of the terminal—conceptually and architecturally. They range in scale, form and materials—from a 56-foot sculpture of a red rabbit suspended in the building's atrium to a multi-story interactive video installation to finely-crafted mosaic floors. The artworks also serve a function: ten of them line the terminal's central spine, guiding passengers through the facility, and one piece points passengers to baggage claim.

"The artworks are seamlessly integrated into the new terminal, resulting in architecture that is strengthened by art and art that is more powerful because of a well designed building," says Art in Public Places Director Shelly Willis.

Many of the artists brought the outside natural environment into the airport, further connecting the artwork to the building design. A flock of Central Valley sandhill cranes, created by Marcia Stuermer, lift off in flight on a backlit ceiling in international arrivals. Donald Lipski's grand chandelier, in the form of Valley Oak tree branches and covered with 8,000 Austrian crystals, creates a night canopy over the primary entrance to the concourse. A mosaic floor of free-floating birds and tules, by Sacramento artist Suzanne Adan, reflects the local marshes that are indigenous to the region.

Camille Utterback designed a digital window into the natural world around the airport by using 14 giant flat-screen monitors, installed on a three-story glass elevator. In response to the elevator's movement, the screens play animations of falling leaves and the river. Lynn Criswell's sculptural installation includes 21 empty, emerald-green birdcages suspended above a bright yellow terrazzo floor covered with images, in black and stainless steel, of locally indigenous birds.

Sacramento artist Joan Moment's vibrant blue mosaic floor, titled *A Fragment of the Universe*, evokes the night sky, outer space, the surface of water and the playful interaction of crop circles and planetary forms. Ned Kahn's 420 steel flags move with the passing airport's passenger trains, making the wind visible.

Lawrence Argent's monumental, 56-foot-long red rabbit looks as if it has leapt from the green space outside the terminal to dive headlong into a granite suitcase located in the baggage claim area. Gregory Kondos' oil-on-canvas, the only painting in the collection, depicts the American River's journey through the landscape.

Bringing the "outside in" was the focus of most but not all of the artists. Po Shu Wang and Louise Bertelsen created a giant, polished, stainless steel sculpture in the form of a French horn, inviting passersby to create music by typing emails translated to sound. UCLA professor Christian Moeller's vast, 150-foot long wall hanging pays homage to the largely invisible airport operation worker. Mildred Howard chose to remind travelers of home with a 17-foot hand-blown glass house of reflecting and refracting light that includes fragments of letters written during the California Gold Rush.

"Airports are the gateways to our region, and we're proud that these artworks will play a role in shaping the perception of Sacramento natives and visitors. Public art can transform the identity of a place and is also an economic strategy for Sacramento," said Rhyena Halpern, Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission's Executive Director.

Out of the funds allocated for art at the Airport, 15 percent went to artist fees. The other 85 percent went to their contractors, subcontractors, and electrical and structural engineers. The production of the artworks employed more than 150 people—most of them from in and around Sacramento.

The public is invited on Sunday, Oct. 2, to "Community Day," featuring tours of the new terminal and the public art inside. Reservations and more information are available at www.eventbrite.com. Thursday, Oct. 6 marks the first commercial flight out of the new terminal. SMAC docents will be at each artwork on Oct. 2 and 6 to offer guidance and background to the public artworks.

Guided public art tours will be ongoing after Oct. 6. For more information or to make a reservation for groups of ten or more, contact Dixie Laws at dixie@dixielaws.com.

The Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission is devoted to supporting, promoting and advocating for the arts in the region. Art in Public Places, established in 1977, is a nationally known program founded to expand the experience of visual art in public spaces in and around Sacramento. The Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission, found online at www.SacMetroArts.org, is funded by the City and County of Sacramento.

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