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Dublin Bicentennial Public Artwork Selection Committee Awards Commission to Brower Hatcher

DUBLIN, Ohio— (Feb. 9, 2010) At the Feb. 8, 2010 Dublin City Council meeting, Dublin Arts Council (DAC) Executive Director David S. Guion announced that the Dublin Bicentennial Public Art selection committee has chosen the recipient of the project's \$150,000 all-inclusive commission; artist Brower Hatcher, who works from Mid-Ocean Studio in Providence, R.I.

Hatcher's artistic concept is to build the memory of the historic George M. Karrer blacksmith shop that once stood on the Karrer Barn property, 225 S. High St., in Historic Dublin. The property is owned by the city and was selected as the site for the Bicentennial Public Artwork installation. Hatcher proposes building the old foundation with the hearth, an anvil and the historic wheelwright table to re-create the image of the building as a digital matrix in powder-coated metal rod with reflective discs creating the effects of dissolution and of light.

The artist envisions the approximate 13-foot-square, 16-foot-tall structure as a sophisticated trellis, which could be allowed to support a growth of climbing vines to periodically hide the structure. Therein lies an opportunity for community involvement to "reveal Dublin's history" by allowing the vines to be cut back to reveal the ghost of the blacksmith shop. The optical tapestry of the open structure will allow the artist to imbed a number of forged artifacts, such as a wagon wheel and blacksmith tools, in the matrix framework.

If the final approval process proceeds according to plan, the artist anticipates that the artwork could be completed and installed during October 2010.

Hatcher's proposal was chosen by the Dublin Bicentennial Public Artwork selection committee of five voting members including community representative Mark Emerson, who has extensive monument and art gallery experience; DAC board member and engineer John Losco; Gayle Holton, Dublin Historical Society representative and graphic designer; Irene Finck, a Columbus-based public art consultant and former program coordinator of the Percent for Art Program through the Office of Individual Creativity with Ohio Arts Council; and Todd Slaughter, a Columbus public artist and Ohio State University professor who created Watch House for the Dublin Art in Public Places program in 1998. Sara Ott, City of Dublin's senior project manager participated as a non-voting ex officio committee member. Guion also served on the committee in an advisory, non-voting capacity.

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Deliberations concluded after a Feb. 4 presentation during which all three artist finalists presented their proposals to more than 50 members of the community and the selection committee. Audience members were encouraged to ask questions of the artists and leave comment cards upon departure for review by the selection committee as part of their confidential deliberation process. The committee deliberated for more than three hours.

“I am so impressed with the selection committee,” said Guion. “They were each chosen to bring a specific perspective to the process, and that’s exactly what they did. Deliberations took into consideration the preferences expressed by the community and deeply probed the technical aspects of each proposal. Members of the committee brought forth their expertise in discussions of the artworks’ expected durability, safety, potential for deterioration, choice of materials and their structural integrity, and whether the proposal was executable as submitted. The committee explored the long-term implications of the artwork, both structurally and aesthetically, and considered the educational potential for the community. Each selection committee member is to be congratulated for a job well done.”

The other two proposals included an earthen berm edged by an upright 18-ft., wagon wheel configured of braided Corten steel by artist Thomas Sayre of Clearscapes Architecture of Raleigh, N.C. Artist Suikang Zhao of New York City proposed a stacked glass wall, evocative of the rock walls that surround Dublin, embedded with subtle interactive lighting and writings about the site’s history.

The artists and the selection committee reviewed, and carefully considered, extensive public comments about the project, which were collected in November and December of 2009 as part of the process.

City Council will consider a resolution at its February 22 meeting to authorize the city manager to enter into an agreement with the recommended artist. Additionally, it is anticipated that City Council will act upon finalizing the review process and any involvement by boards and commissions at this meeting.

The Dublin Art in Public Places program is administered by Dublin Arts Council and is funded, in part, through an endowment of Bed Tax funds from the City of Dublin.

For more information about any of Dublin Arts Council’s programs, exhibitions and events, call (614) 889-7444 or visit www.dublinarts.org. Dublin Arts Council (DAC), is located at 7125 Riverside Dr. in Dublin, Ohio. Hours are Tues., 10am-7pm; Wed./Thurs./Fri., 10am-5pm; and Sat., 11am-2pm. DAC is supported in part by the City of Dublin’s Hotel/Motel tax endowment and the Ohio Arts Council, which helps fund Dublin Arts Council and its programs with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. DAC is further supported by individuals, corporations, foundations and through in-kind contributions. DAC engages the community, cultivates creativity and fosters life-long learning through the arts.

More about the artist:

Brower Hatcher was born in Atlanta. He attended Vanderbilt University School of Engineering in Nashville, Tenn., and received his degree in Industrial Design from Pratt Institute in New York. He then studied sculpture at St. Martins School of Art in London with Sir Anthony Caro and William Tucker. He was on the faculty at St. Martins for several years and returned to the United States to join the faculty of Bennington College, Bennington, Vt., where he taught until 1986. He has built more than 30 public art projects throughout the country since that time. Brower Hatcher is a recipient of three National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships, a Guggenheim Fellowship and an honorary Ph.D. from the State University of New York. He works at the historic Steel Yard in Providence, R.I., as the artistic director of Mid-Ocean Studio Inc. He lives in Block Island, R.I., and New York City.

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Select comments about Hatcher's proposal from the selection committee and the community:

"The framework lures me to be inside."

"There is great opportunity for community engagement."

"This proposal has the strongest reference to personal and public history."

"He [Hatcher] is a blacksmith. I'm confident about the authenticity of the forged items."

"I'm drawn to the record – the memory of the structure."

"I think Hatcher's work fits the site in the best way."

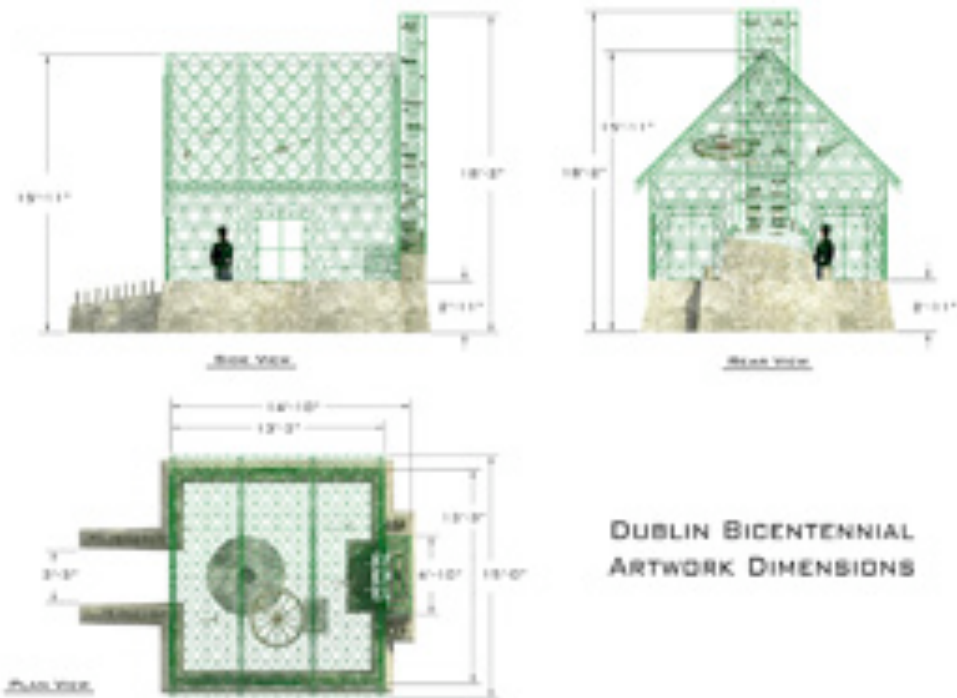
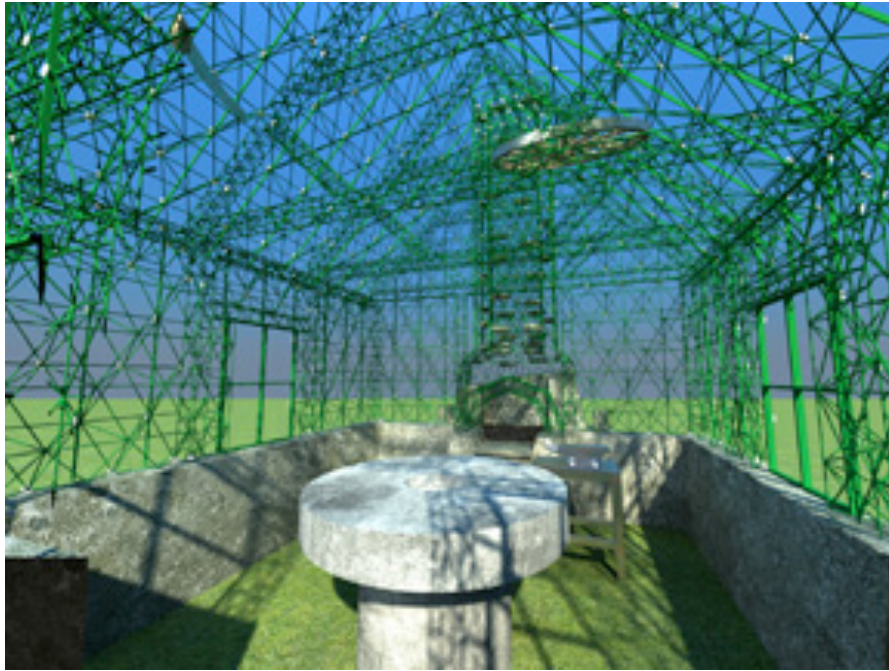
"Best commemorates historic use of the site ... suitable for Historical Society walking tours."

"I liked the concept of a ghostly or transparent vision of what used to be there."

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FIVE RENDERINGS AND PHOTOS (LOW RESOLUTION) FOLLOW







Above: Brower Hatcher using the forge at the Steel Yard (Mid-Ocean studio location) in Providence, R.I.

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