

Published September 2nd, 2009

Wanted: Enchanting Art for New Library

By Cathy Tyson



Southwest corner of the new Library Photo
Cathy Tyson

As an army of construction workers complete the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, a "Call for Entry" is going out for submissions of existing artwork to put the finishing artistic touches on the 30,000 square foot structure housing more than 110,000 books and other materials. The City of Lafayette has a budget of \$60,000 for multiple purchases for the lobby, the teen study area, adult reading room, children's area and more.

Looking to create an engaging atmosphere by making art part of a visit to the Library as well as broaden the public's understanding of what art can be, anything goes for potential artists submitting work. "We wanted to do something to attract a greater number of artists, so we left the criteria open-ended," said Cherie Newell, Director of Professional Services at the Oakland Museum of California, "we wanted to leave the door open for all media." She noted that there are already two or three Lafayette artists who have applied and that this type of request is "notorious for last minute entries." The Oakland Museum is

one of many partners in the Glenn Seaborg Learning Consortium - a pioneering collaboration that provides diverse cultural, arts and educational resources to the community.

Once these newest artworks are selected, they will join two site-specific pieces that were commissioned last year: a unique fifteen foot tall bronze of an off-kilter stack of book pages with some pages "floating" across the Outdoor Plaza by Brian Goggin and a series of artworks for the Children's Activity Deck by Kana Tanaka.

"The City is excited to be working again with its Library Public Art Committee and Oakland Museum to select more artworks for the new Library," said Ann Merideth, Community Development Director. "As the outdoor public artworks are enhancing the Library's outdoor spaces, these small artworks will enhance the interior spaces."

Prime wall space has been saved for a number of large and small pieces, up to 4' x 5', there's also wall real estate that can accommodate a 6' x 6' piece, a spot for a freestanding sculpture and suspended work - interested artists should check the Call for Entry for specific requirements. Only professional artists who live or work in the Bay Area are eligible, those from Lafayette will receive an extra preference point in the selection process.

Judging will be based on artistic excellence, innovation and creativity, appropriateness for the library setting, and long term maintenance needs. Oakland Museum staff will pre-screen all submissions, then a panel composed of a variety of art professionals, community members, design team members, City staff and the Library Public Art Committee will review images of pieces that made the original cut.

Deadline for submission of required materials is 5:00 p.m. next Friday, September 11. Installation of the winners is scheduled for October 16, in plenty of time for the upcoming "Create a Novel Evening" Gala event on November 7 as well as the "Celebrate a Place" Grand Opening on November 14. For more information, go to www.lovelafayette.org

Reach the reporter at: cathy@lamorindaweekly.com

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA