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FEATURED

Art is in the air

New wind art installation goes up in the Rotary Pavilion

By CHLOE ALLMAND staff intern Jun 26, 2014



Brian Myrick

A wind sculpture turns lazily in a light breeze. Artist Lyman Whitaker designed the sculptures. (Brian Myrick / Daily Record)

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Art is in the air in downtown Ellensburg with a new public art installation at Rotary Pavilion that went up Wednesday.

The installation features three metallic poles, standing between 8 and 10 feet tall. The top of each pole houses outreaching sails of various shapes and sizes designed to catch the wind and make the upper part of the installation spin.

“There’s a lot of talk about the wind in Ellensburg,” Ellensburg Downtown Association Director Carolyn Honeycutt said. “And we wanted to put a positive spin on it, so to speak.”

The EDA partnered with the Ellensburg Arts Commission and a private donor to bring the work of artist Lyman Whitaker to Ellensburg.

Whitaker works out of his studio in Ivins, Utah, and has been a sculptor for the past 40 years. For the past 19 years, he has focused primarily on his trademarked wind sculptures. These sculptures reflect Whitaker’s organic and whimsical style, and are designed to interact with the wind while calling the public’s attention to his belief in the necessity of wind power as a resource in the face of climate change.

One of Lyman’s goals as an artist is to create pieces that bring viewers to take notice of their surroundings and appreciate natural climates and weather. Lyman’s work has been featured in fine art galleries nationwide and in public and private installations throughout the United States, Canada, Europe and Australia.

Because of the suitability of Whitaker’s sculptures to the environment in Ellensburg, EDA member and owner of the 420 Building Mollie Edson sought Whitaker out to create a sculpture to be installed downtown.

EDA Design Committee member and local artist Austin Smith and EDA Board member Brett Wachsmith assisted with installation. Smith and Wachsmith dug holes for each pole in one the pavilion’s flower beds, and placed each pole into a hole ready to be covered with concrete. When secure, the bases of each pole will be covered with bark and rocks.

“Public art creates an atmosphere, and it’s part of our heritage and culture,” Honeycutt said. “We do have a thriving arts community, and our public art gives a more pedestrian feeling to the downtown, which is helpful to our downtown businesses.

“This is the start of something. If it goes well, we hope to continue to expand our public art.”

Chloe Allmand