

Artful design: Landmark pieces of art heighten community appeal



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Published on: April 16, 2015

Last Updated: April 16, 2015 1:36 PM MDT



Land of Horses, a commission by Chilean sculptor Francisco Gazitua, won an art competition for public art for 6th and Tenth residential condo project.

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SECTIONS

Two 18-foot steel horses, one white, one black, will face each other proudly across a piazza of granite.

Nine-foot tall steel sails will propel forward at a central intersection of roads, reflecting the watersports enjoyed on the nearby lake.

And within a towering three-storey atrium, residents will be greeted each day by a plethora of colourful, powerful circles in a “chocolate box” splashed across one wall.

These are just three of recent public art pieces commissioned by developers for local multi-family projects.

The Land of Horses installation, by Chilean artist Francisco Gazitua, is part of \$1 million Lamb Developments will spend on improvements to the block in the Beltline on which its 6th and Tenth project will sit.

Company president Brad Lamb expects the sculpture — chosen from a worldwide open call competition — will be installed in spring 2017, on completion of the 31-storey condo tower. Lamb, based in Toronto, has included art in other buildings he has built, including the one he lives in.

The investment in art and the publicly accessed space (anyone will be able to walk under and around the sculptures, touch them, sit on the benches) was part of a negotiation for increased density in the Calgary project. Lamb says everyone wins with public art, and the design of architecturally beautiful buildings.

“Good art and good design make people happy. We can choose to build horrible, grey Soviet-like cities or build beautiful cities people feel good living in.”



Nautical Sails, by Chinese artist Richard Dang, will grace Chestermere Station.

Supplied / Calgary Herald

For Slokker-West, the Nautical Sails piece of modern sculpture commissioned from Chinese artist Richard Dang — completed and to be installed this spring in its Townhouses of Chestermere Station project —is like a “housewarming gift” from the company.

“It is a present to the community as a good neighbour,” says Peter Paauw, president of Slokker Canada West.

The company consulted with the City of Chestermere and Pauuw says he absolutely would look at adding art to other Slokker projects, if they fit into the style of the community.



At the Mark on 10th project, by Qualex-Landmark, the residential lobby atrium of the Beltline project will feature artwork from one of Canada's most well known authors and visual designers, Douglas Coupland. It will be the first large scale Coupland piece in Alberta and its series of colourful circles represent modern Calgary.

As Coupland describes his piece: "It is a work that engages the viewer in an ongoing challenge to identify and remember what is depicted — almost like a chocolate box and its map."

Entitled Interpretation of Calgary, Alberta in the 21st Century, the art's unveiling— hopefully by Coupland himself — is expected by the end of this year.

Qualex also introduced the first art piece of its kind in Vancouver into its Promaria residential tower.

Parham Mahboubi, vice-president planning and marketing for Qualex-Landmark, says the company's vision to create a unique, modern, youthful and edgy building was in many ways effectively represented in the commissioned art.

"We feel we are not only contributing our part in promoting the arts in the emerging Design District, we are also infusing a new energy and vibrancy into the building."

He says the piece has attracted considerable attention from homebuyers as yet another unique element that sets Mark apart from other developments.