KBR 22
Artist's Statement

I am a . . . sculptor that makes kinetic wind sculptures. I have been making this type of art since 1998. . .

For your Roundabouts I feel that my art is a very good match. The Tahoe area is truly a natural national treasure and the artist selected should have a focus on nature and the environment. Take a look at my past work and you will see sculptures that not only move with the wind, but also mimic creatures and natural forces. This is no accident. As an environmentalist, I am very concerned about the impact humans have on this planet, especially my home, the Sierras and the deserts of Northern Nevada. One of my primary motivations for making wind-driven sculpture is to help create awareness of how man needs to work cooperatively with the environment and not against it. If you are looking for an artist that is sensitive to the concerns of the Lake, I am a good candidate. I love this area and want to see it preserved and protected so that future generations can enjoy and appreciate its stunning beauty as much as I do.

As for my work and working style, here are a few things to consider. I pride myself on being personable and friendly. Many of my past projects have been collaborative in nature and involved my working closely with communities, committees, landscape architects, etc. My working style is organized and thorough, with projects delivered on time, and on budget. Being powered by the wind my art changes with the weather. This variability engages viewers. The materials I use are attractive and extremely durable, and include steel, stainless steel, copper, and stone. My sculptures are robust and require near zero maintenance. They are highly vandalism resistant, fun, and both children and adults enjoy them!

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for this important public art project.

PROPOSAL

What I am proposing is a large kinetic wind sculpture. . . The sculpture consists of six large fish sitting atop curved branches that are attached to a trunk-like base. The fish are connected to the ends of these branches via low friction ball bearings and will be in near constant motion as they shift direction with the ever changing Tahoe winds.

Fish as Symbolism:

The grouping of fish is symbolic in several ways. First, the shape of the fish is an abstract composite of several of Lake Tahoe's native species; specifically the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout, the Mountain Whitefish, the Lahontan Speckled Dace, the Lahontan Redside, and the Lahontan Lake Tui Chub. The use of native fish forms in this sculpture is a reminder of our duty to promote environmental stewardship of the lake; guarding against invasive non-native species, maintaining lake clarity, eliminating pollutants, and using the lake for recreation in a responsible way. The fact that the fish are swimming in unison as a group is also symbolic of the many diverse peoples of the Tahoe basin and how they cooperate and work together to form a large cohesive community. The . . . sculpture . . . has a double meaning, emphasizing community spirt and environmental stewardship.

Structure and Materials

The primary material the sculpture is made of is steel. The steel parts will have a rusty patina giving them the appearance of something from Tahoe's past. This patina is consistent with the colors and finishes of buildings, trees, park structures, etc., in the area of the roundabouts. For contrast to the dark steel, the fins and bellies of the fish will be made of stainless steel. The stainless steel will have a brushed textured finish. This finish is only partially reflective and will in no way distract motorists. At the front of each fish will be a stone, locally sourced from the Tahoe basin. The stones will be granite, which is a defining natural material in the Sierras. In addition to the local granite, it is my intention to use locally sourced steel and stainless steel where possible.

Durability

This sculpture is extremely strong and robust. The support structures are made of heavy walled steel which is MIG welded together. All of the components are over engineered for strength and can easily withstand heavy snow loading, 100 MPH+ winds, and abusive human interactivity. The bearings, on which the fish pivot, are sealed aircraft quality ball bearings and require no maintenance. In this application they will provide maintenance free service for over 20 years. If they ever do fail, it is a simple and relatively inexpensive procedure to replace them. Graffiti is a problem that may or may not plague your location. Because the surface of the sculpture is not painted or powder coated, removing the graffiti with a solvent will not destroy the finish. In extreme cases, the surface can be sandblasted and the patina can be reapplied. If graffiti is a problem at Kings Beach, we can apply a sacrificial coating to the sculpture. This sacrificial coating is kind of like the wax coating on a car. If tagged, the graffiti and coating are removed and then the coating is reapplied. As for the rusty patina, I have a special technique for achieving a dark antique steel artifact look. The technique provides an attractive finish that holds up well in our High Sierra/Northern Nevada climate. In fact, the look of the steel actually gets better with age.

Safety

This sculpture is safe for people of all ages. There are no sharp edges, no surfaces to fall off, etc. The structure is almost impossible to climb, discouraging that activity. Though there are moving parts, they are at the top of the sculpture and well out of reach.

Lighting

Lighting of the sculpture can be accomplished in several ways.

Option #1: Extend the trunk of the sculpture several feet above the branch hub (the large ball where the branches attach) and place a solar panel/battery and lights above the sculpture and down light the art.

Option #2: Place individual small solar panels and batteries on each fish and light them individually with down lights or small LEDs.

Option #3: There are three to four road signs on the perimeter of each roundabout. Either extend the road sign poles higher or install new taller sign poles and place individual solar panels/batteries and hooded inward facing lights on each pole. This option is the least distracting to the art, as it uses poles/signs that already exist.

It is important to note that AC power can be substituted for solar power in options #1 and #3. Because of advancements in LED lighting, this approach, while not off the grid, would still use very low levels of electricity. This approach would be the most reliable, especially in winter when snow loading and overcast skies will make solar power inoperable. The bottom line is. there are many options to accomplish our lighting needs. I look forward to working with the selection committee to pick one of these options, or an option that is yet to be determined, that works best for your community.

Interactivity

This sculpture is interactive in a couple of ways. The most obvious is its interaction with the wind and weather. The fish are designed to “weathervane” into the wind. In a built up and forested area like Kings Beach, the winds are constantly shifting direction as air currents move through and around objects.

This ever shifting of the wind will give the fish a changeling quality as they will be constantly seeking new direction. This motion will be interactive for the viewer in that they will see the sculpture change with the wind and weather. This quality will keep the sculpture fresh and interesting.

Summary

"Swimming with Friends" is a robust, durable, and attractive, large-scale kinetic wind sculpture suitable for either of the two Kings Beach roundabouts. With its themes of environmental stewardship and community cooperation, it is perfect for the Lake Tahoe basin. Designed to be enjoyed by adults and children alike, this sculpture will delight viewers for years to come as it interacts with the environment and the ever changing wind and weather.