Sac State art faculty have designs on Dumpsters

Four Sacramento State art instructors are making beauty out of trash bins. That’s right – trash bins.

Joy Bertinuson, Mark Emerson, Brenda Louie and Robert Ortbl are participating in Art of the Dumpster (www.powerinn.org/art), a public art project commissioned by Sacramento’s Power Inn Alliance, a nonprofit property and business improvement district, and curated by the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission.

A total of 10 emerging and established regional artists have each been given a 22-foot-long trash bin to celebrate the distinctiveness of the area with eye-popping designs on a very unusual canvas.

Art of the Dumpster will run June 14 to Aug. 30 at Power Inn Road and Cucamonga Avenue. The outdoor display of bins will be open sunup to sundown every day during that time. Special celebrations featuring entertainment, local food trucks and more will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. during Second Saturday Celebrations June 14, July 12 and Aug. 9.

“We hope this eclectic collection will spark conversation, inspire creativity and, most importantly, celebrate the local businesses and artists that make this city great,” says Sally Freedlander, Granite Park Partners manager and vice chair of the Power Inn Alliance’s board of directors.

For Ortbl, there was one preferred solution to this artistic challenge – chrome.

“The chrome surface has a catalytic effect, transforming the Dumpster and its associations with the waste, refuse and the discards of our culture into a container of endless possibilities,” Ortbl says.

A 2-foot strip around the bottom of the container has been left un-chromed and serves to anchor the work, which Ortbl has titled “The Sky Begins at Your Feet.”

Bertinuson was inspired by the move to create “parklets” – parking spaces turned into seating and green areas – in urban areas.

“The idea I had was to cut geometric shapes into the steel structure, which would then be folded over to create seating, tables and shelves,” Bertinuson says.
Primarily a painter, Bertinuson enlisted the help of fellow artist Eddie Stein, who works with metal. “The palette is orange and blue with some brown and black stains added since I’m finishing the exterior in a faux wood grain.”

The title of Louie’s piece is “Rivers United Series SMACD-06-01-2014.” It was inspired by the first work she ever had included in a group show, “Water: Essence and Potential,” at the Robert Else Gallery, curated by Professor Pat Chirapravati.

Louie has narrowed her palette to just phthalo blue, and black and white paints. “The use of the purity of the blue is to promote clean air and safe drinking water for everyone on the globe,” she says.

Emerson’s artwork is titled “Trash Talking” and is based on a painting he created a couple of years back. Emerson is not only a Sac State art instructor; he’s an alumnus of the Art Program as well.

The other participating artists are Nathan Cordero, Waylon Horner, John Berger, Gioia Fonda, Jim Piskoti and Susan Silvester.

Visitors are encouraged to come back to the exhibit often to see how the changing light enhances and interacts with the artwork. It’s recommended that visitors wear comfortable shoes.

For more information about Art of the Dumpster, including a video of the artists, visit the website or www.facebook.com/artofthedumpster. For media assistance, contact Emilie Cameron at (916) 420-1779 or emilie@3foldcomm.com. For media assistance regarding Sac State’s participating artists, call the University’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156. – Craig Koscho

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