



Memorandum

TO: PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE

FROM: MICHAEL OGILVIE

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: May 30, 2019

Council District: Citywide

SUBJECT: CONCEPT PROPOSALS FOR THE NORMAN Y. MINETA SAN JOSE INTERNATIONAL SHOWCASE COMMISSION

RECOMMENDATION

Receive report on selection of artist Philip Beesley, and review and take action on his Concept Proposal for the Norman Y. Mineta Showcases.

DATE OF ARTIST SELECTION: Thursday, May 23, 2019

ARTWORK BUDGET: \$290,000.

LOCATION: The project site is Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport Terminal B, pre-security Showcases.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

The Public Art Program for the San Jose Airport was conceived as a “unified program of Art + Technology” giving travelers an immediate sense that they had landed in Silicon Valley, a global center for innovation. The Art + Technology program is fully integrated into the architecture and design of the airport’s Terminal B, influencing the terminal’s structural, interior and IT design, and has transformed the exterior of the ConRAC garage, the front door to the airport.

The foundation of the Art & Technology program is an Arts Activation Plan that was developed from 2005 – 2008, by Gorbet+Banerjee, a multi-disciplinary team that works at the leading edge of technology research, computer science, architecture, mechanical engineering, product design, and media arts and science. Based on 3 years of research and development, the Airport Art + Technology Program took a landmark approach to public art implementing an “Art Activation Strategy” that operationalized the Master Plan’s vision. As a platform for ongoing creative innovation, the plan called for integrating flexible technological and networked “platforms” throughout the new terminal to accommodate long-term, permanent anchor artworks, and two-year short-term rotating art installations. Flexible Platforms were strategically sited throughout Terminal B both in the pre-security areas and in the secure area of the concourse.

When Terminal B opened in 2010, three permanently-sited artworks were installed. Also included in the opening commissions were nine temporary technology-based artworks that worked with the pre-

established Flexible Platforms. These temporary commissions were to be rotated out and replaced by other artworks in two years. Prompted by the 2010 financial downturn, commissioning additional artworks was put on hold until the passenger activity at the Airport reached a level of 12.2 million passengers per year. This “trigger,” was a number that had been previously established in the Airline Lease agreement as the activity level that could prompt the start of Terminal B Phase II. After eight years, with limited funding for maintenance, and no resources for replacement, the majority of the temporary public art projects were removed leaving the three permanent projects.

In 2018, the 12.2 million annual passenger number was reached and funds made available to support public art at the airport. With the benefit of 8 years of operation, Gorbet Design worked with Public Art staff on a retrospective analysis of the Art Activation Strategy and initial Phase I commissions. The Amended Art Activation Strategy was reviewed by Senior Airport staff, the Director of the Airport, and unanimously approved by the Public Art Committee at their meeting on September 4, 2018. The strategy called for the two prominent pre-security Showcases, to be commissioned as permanent artworks.

Artist Selection

In March 2019 an invitational Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was released seeking artists to submit Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) to develop a permanent installation for the two Showcases.

Nominations were solicited from arts professionals both locally and nationally, and public Art staff reached out to over 40 individual artists regarding the opportunity.

When the RFQ closed on April 8, 2019, a total of 25 eligible submissions had been received. A Public Art Core Team review panel consisting of artists, arts professionals, and an Airport representative met on April 16, 2019 to review the artists' qualifications submitted. Based on past work the panel recommended a short list of three artists/artist teams to be compensated to develop conceptual proposals.

Based on artist presentations held via Skype on May 23, 2019, interdisciplinary artist Philip Beesley of Living Architecture Systems Group, located in Toronto, Canada, was recommended for the Showcase commission. Beesley specializes in architectural design of public buildings, public art and experimental installations. The group is closely associated with the multi-partner Living Architecture Systems Group, the School of Architecture and Faculty of Engineering at the University of Waterloo, Sculptural work in the past two decades has focused on immersive textile environments, landscape installations and intricate geometric structures. The most recent generations of these works feature interactive sound, light and kinetic mechanisms with distributed control systems.

Housed within the cases are wreaths of lace-like clouds that spiral around brilliantly lit center cores.

Concept Proposal

The concept proposal for the Showcases, “Limen” (meaning “threshold” in Latin), creates a gateway experience of worlds in formation. Exploring concepts of “elemental life,” the project is composed of two radiant, intricate worlds enclosed within the two glass Showcases. The south showcase installation, currently called “Aurora,” is a counter-clockwise-turning pool of clouds with a center shower of rays and beaming crystalline bursts. The northern showcase installation, currently called “Mundus,” is a clockwise-turning pool containing dense masses of floating spherical forms encrusted with miniature glass lens orbs. Together, the two showcases offer hovering miniature worlds in formation. Throughout both Aurora and Mundus are open forms created by assembling dense arrays of individual liquid-filled sealed transparent glass orbs surrounded with overlapping thermally expanded transparent polymer and geometric stainless steel laceworks. Together, these clusters of glass orbs and transparent polymer and

metal filters gather incident light creating a radiant shimmering display. Looking closely within the transparent lenses of each glass orb, magnified constantly-changing tableaux of surrounding scenes appear, carrying the vivid bustle of travelers and those waiting to greet them. By drawing in surroundings through lace-like filters and carrying surrounding views in their massed lenses, the views of Limen will constantly change. Multiple visits can offer constantly-evolving renewed experiences.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The Artist Selection Panel was a diverse group of stakeholders representing the airport stakeholders, local and regional artists and arts professionals as follows:

Jaime Austin	Curator and Director of Exhibitions and Public Programming California College of the Arts, Previously Curator and Director of Programs for ZERO1: The Art and Technology Network
Lynne Baer	Independent Art Adviser and Public Art Consultant.
Jamie Barlow	Artist and Experience and Interactive Designer. Currently VP of Creative Technology with Sparks. Previously Project Manager for <i>eCloud</i> .
Vicki Day	Director, Marketing & Customer Service, Mineta San José International Airport
Lance Fung	Independent Curator
Matt Gorbet	Matt Gorbet is an interdisciplinary technologist, researcher and artist specializing in physically interactive technology experiences. Project lead on the Art + Technology Art Activation strategy and implementation.

Staff conducted a search by contacting arts professionals nationally to identify artists appropriate for this commission.

/s/
MICHAEL OGILVIE
Public Art Director