



IOWA WEST FOUNDATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 10, 2007

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IOWA WEST FOUNDATION UNVEILS PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

(Council Bluffs, IA, October 10, 2007) The Iowa West Foundation (IWF), which is headquartered in Council Bluffs, has announced today the commitment of \$9 million to implement the first phase of a community-based public art program called Iowa West Public Art (IWPA).

Six new public art sites in Council Bluffs at the Mid-America Center (MAC) and in downtown continue the Foundation's public art commitment, which began with Bayliss Park art earlier this year. Public art by William King and Deborah Masuoka, two nationally recognized artists, is being unveiled today at four of these sites.

William King is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and is a past President of the American Academy of Design. He began producing his large scale outdoor aluminum sculptures in the 1960's. Next month in New York City, King will be receiving a prestigious award from the International Sculpture Center for Lifetime Achievement in Contemporary Sculpture.

King was selected by the IWPA art selection panel for three installations at the MAC. The first work by King is appropriately titled "Interstate" and located right off of the interstate at the South 24th Street entrance to the MAC arena and convention facility. The second work is titled "Circus" and is located near the west entrance to the MAC arena. The third work by King is titled "Sunrise" and is located near the entrance to the convention center. This monumental work is about 26' tall and is executed in aluminum plate.

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Deborah Masuoka is a local Omaha based artist who is known for her large scale “Rabbit Head” sculptures. Although Masuoka’s sculptures are often executed in ceramic, she has created three 8’ tall bronze rabbit heads for Council Bluffs. The rabbit heads are being installed in the Historic Haymarket District at the junction of South Main and Pearl Streets in downtown Council Bluffs.

“An initial public art master plan viewed the entire city of Council Bluffs as a sculpture park,” explained Todd Graham, Executive Director and CEO of IWF, and “we are optimistic about the potential impact of the public art on tourism, arts-related businesses, and economic development.” He also said that “the improved quality of life will bring more than visitors --- we hope it will attract new residents and new businesses to our community.”

In 2004, IWF funded and coordinated a community-based public art master planning process for the city of Council Bluffs. A 19-member stakeholder steering committee comprised of citizens, governmental representatives, and IWF representatives was formed to provide input to consultants in drafting the master plan.

For additional information about IWPA, please visit the public art program’s new website at www.iowawestpublicart.org.

Funding for the Iowa West Foundation comes from investment income and the Iowa West Racing Association (IWRA). The IWRA receives contracted fees from casino operators – Ameristar and Harrahs.

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