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## Newport Beach approves sculptures for summer exhibition after residents weigh in

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Pictured is “A Novel Idea” by Florida Artist Craig Gray. It received 85 votes from Newport Beach residents to be included in a new wave of sculptures to be installed this summer in Civic Center Park. (Courtesy of the city of Newport Beach)

The Newport Beach City Council recently approved a new wave of sculptures to be installed this summer in Civic Center Park. It's the seventh phase of the city's sculpture exhibition, which began in 2013 after the completion of Civic Center Park's development. Pieces are loaned for two-year periods and sculptors are granted a small honorarium to loan their work.

City staff are responsible for the installation of the artwork and sculptors are accountable for repair and maintenance.

“In essence, the exhibition has become a ‘museum without walls’ that offers the temporary display of public art in a unique, naturalistic setting,” stated a staff report prepared for the City Council.

Richard Stein, president and chief executive officer of Arts Orange County, said this was the first time that the selection process for the final sculpture choices and rankings were put out to the residents of Newport Beach to be voted on.

The 10 sculptures and four alternates were selected by the public. Submissions were initially reviewed by a curatorial panel along with professionals May Sun and Brian Peterson in December at the city’s Arts Commission meeting and evaluated on the basis of their artistic merit, durability, practicality and site appropriateness.

The 10 sculptures selected by residents were: “A Novel Idea,” by Craig Gray; “Got Juice” by Stephen Landis; “The Archaeology of the Everyday” by Tyler Burton; “David” by Miggy Buck; “Eve” by Joe Forrest Sackett; “Where Have All the Birds Gone?” by Marguerite Elliot; “Cross-Section” by Tim DeShong; “Prey” by Lisa and Robert Ferguson; “Pluma Sculptura, aka ‘The Feather’” by Kirk Seese; and “Pathway Parabola” by Greg Mueller. The four alternates were “To the Moon” by Alex G; “Integration” by Jaydon Sterling-Randall; “Calling the Four Winds” by Dennis-Redmoon Darkeem; and “Hoodoos” by Joan Benefiel.

No new sites for display needed to be created for this phase, Stein said. “When you have all 20 on display, you’ll see it’s a very robust group of sculptures and I think it’s proven to be very popular with the public,” said Stein. “There isn’t a day that I come to the park that I don’t see families with children who are really intrigued by and engaging with the works. Some, they don’t understand. Some are very obvious and delightful ... it’s a very successful program.”