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Finalists for latest Newport Civic Center sculptures go to City Council



A rendering shows how one finalist, "Popsicles," would look in Newport Beach's Civic Center Park. (Courtesy of city of Newport Beach)



Hillary Davis Contact Reporter

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A towering, stained-glass matchstick and a whimsical stack of larger-than-life Popsicles are closer to going on display at Newport Beach's Civic Center Park.

The city Arts Commission confirmed the [picks of its selection panel](#) Thursday for the next round of artworks to go in the sculpture garden outside City Hall, passing along nine finalists and two alternates to the City Council for its approval later this month.

Artists from around the country submitted 46 pieces for consideration. An online People's Choice survey, then a panel of judges including three arts commissioners and two outside arts professionals, winnowed the field before the full Arts Commission's endorsement.

"A lot of thought, a lot of input ... really has provided a very cohesive plan of something that will be aesthetically beautiful, and I think the community will enjoy it," Commissioner Arlene Greer said. "We're looking forward to their enjoyment."

The council will consider this tentative lineup at its Sept. 26 meeting:

- "Burnt Matchstick" by Karl Unnasch: This golden and blue-toned tower glows with LED lights behind the stained glass and acrylic panels of its body and gnarled tip. The artist may adapt the piece with solar panels so it doesn't need an outside electricity source.
- "No Swimming" by Oleg Lobykin: A shark's dorsal fin of shiny aluminum leaf on glass fiber-reinforced concrete over foam.
- "Popsicles" by Craig Gray: A steel, wood and stucco jumble of colorful ice pops.
- "Life is a Balancing Act" by Cindy Debold: A bronze girl in a leotard balancing on a rock with her arms outstretched and eyes closed.
- "Cosmic Glints" by Patricia Vader: A kinetic sculpture that resembles a lollipop with bicycle wheels spinning around its head.
- "In Affioramento" by Brunivo Buttarelli: A steel ribcage and marble spine emerging from the earth.

- “Getting Your Bearings” by David Boyer: A kinetic wind sculpture resembling a tree.
- “Be Still and Know” by John Merigian: A leggy stick figure of welded corten steel. This replaces the nearly identical “Contender II,” also by Merigian, who withdrew “Contender II” after selling it.
- “Flight” by Steven Rieman: A steel bird soaring through a porthole mounted to a boulder.
- “Depth of Form” by Jacob Burmood (alternate): An abstract, twisted aluminum column.
- “Cultural Pedestrians” by Sue Quinlan (alternate): A quintet of 6-foot-tall posts carved in relief with faces of diverse races.

A third alternate, “Kinetic Beam,” was withdrawn by the artist after the death of his wife.

“Burnt Matchstick” is the tallest work, at 40 feet. The rest of the sculptures range from about 5 to 13 feet tall.

Sculptures are selected to be in the park for two years on a rotating schedule. The program is entering its third phase.

The sculptures from the second phase will be removed this month, and the sculptures for the third phase will be installed in October.

hillary.davis@latimes.com

Twitter: [@DailyPilotHD](https://twitter.com/DailyPilotHD)

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