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Sculpture voters take a 'Quantum' leap

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By Matthew Weaver

Herald senior staff writer

Winning artist feels piece represents scientific art 'breakthrough'

MOSES LAKE -- The Moses Lake Museum and Art Center recently announced the winner of its second annual Sculpture Without Walls competition.

Museum representative Ramon Cerna estimated the Peoples Choice Award-winning "Quantum Man" sculpture, by Julian Voss-Andreae, received about 20 percent more votes than the other artistic displays up for consideration during the past year.

"It feels good because it's an ongoing process," Cerna said. "What I'm pleased about is people did get out there and vote. That's always nice. Our votes were a little bit more than last year, so it's increasing a little bit."

Cerna said it seemed like there was more public interest in the program this year, with people taking the time to check out the various sculptures, but it was still a relatively small number of participants by comparison to the city's total population.

Voss-Andreae, a Portland, Ore., artist, said via e-mail from Germany he had no idea his piece was selected.

"I am very excited about this, especially since 'Quantum Man' feels a little bit like a breakthrough for me in merging my interests in scientifically-inspired art with my interest in art focusing on the human being," he said.

The sculpture, an image of a walking human made up of thin, vertically-oriented steel sheets, was already covered by Science Magazine, which Voss-Andreae described as one of the world's leading science journals.

"But having it selected by art lovers from all walks of life instead of a scientifically trained audience is especially rewarding," he said.

The sculpture appears on page 913, in the Volume 313, Aug. 18, 2006, issue of the magazine, according to Voss-Andreae's Web site.

Voss-Andreae feels the selection confirms he reached his goal to create a sculpture which makes sense within a scientific context, and also as an art object in its own right.

"According to quantum physics, the world is fundamentally quite different than it seems," he said.

Matter can be demonstrated to have a wave-like quality associated with its motion, he said as an example.

"Quantum physics describes a moving object as consisting of waves oriented perpendicular to its direction of motion," he said. "Symbolizing the dual nature of matter with the appearance of classic reality on the surface and cloudy quantum behavior underneath, the sculpture seems to consist of solid dark steel when seen from the front, but dissolves into almost nothing when seen from the side."

"It's a piece that's interesting to look at," Cerna said. "It's not something recognizable, so there's a curiosity as to what it is. Once you start looking at it, it's interesting the way it's put together. You do get the sense it's a figure. It's cool the way you walk around it or walk past it, it changes."

Voss-Andreae decided to participate in the Sculpture Without Walls because he felt it was a good opportunity to share his work in Central Eastern Washington State, he said.

Cerna said the City of Moses Lake is in the process of purchasing the sculpture. It will be moved from its spot outside the Moses Lake Public Library on Fifth Avenue to Sinkiuse Square until finding a location where it may stay for a few years, Cerna said.

The next batch of exhibits for the Sculpture Without Walls program is being sorted through, following a June 2 entry deadline. Those sculptures will be unveiled in September, Cerna said.

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