

KING WILLIAM STREET BEACON AND GATE PUBLIC ART PROJECT



JURY REPORT

BACKGROUND

This report is an overview of the discussion and decision of the volunteer citizen jury which met on the afternoon of Monday August 24th, 2020 to determine which of the six (6) shortlisted artists' proposals for King William Street Beacon and Gate Public Art Project should be implemented. They reviewed the submissions in terms of technical issues, artistic excellence, response to context, public consultation results and in response to the following competition goal:

The new artwork for King William Street should be a landmark that marks the entrance to the King William Street District and expresses the character of this evolving area both day and night to those visiting the street and passing on James Street, inviting them to take part in local events, patronize local businesses and the theatre.

The jury also reviewed submissions for how successfully they addressed one or more of the following themes identified by artists, local residents and business owners:

- *Vibrant*
- *Active 24 / 7*
- *A place of celebration*
- *A place of performance (both formal theatre and on the street)*
- *A place for interaction*

AWARD

After a discussing the various aspects of the six (6) shortlisted proposals the jury gave the highest overall score to the proposal **WoodGate** by **Team Make**. The commission for the work will therefore be awarded to Team Make.

JURY COMMENTS

The jury members applaud the efforts of all 33 artists that made submissions to the competition. There were many excellent proposals. Opening personal ideas and talents to public scrutiny can be difficult and the jury therefore extends their thanks to all the artists that shared their ideas by submitting to this competition, especially the six shortlisted artists whose proposals were presented for public comment.

The jury also extends their thanks to all **265** people that took the time to review the shortlisted submissions, select their preferred proposal and provide comments. There were 25 pages of comments submitted including many excellent comments related to the project goal. These insightful comments were very helpful in understanding public reaction to all of the proposals and in making the difficult decision of which of the six excellent proposals should be implemented.

Jury comments on each proposal are as follows:

WOODGATE by Team Make

The jury felt that this proposal best achieved the project goals proposing an elegant celebratory and performative work that is conceptually accessible. Given its size and dramatic lighting, the proposed work will be impactful both day and night and can easily become a local landmark. The proposed seating adds an interactive component not present in some other proposals. The jury felt that the use of engineered wood and a design that recalls a tree creates a welcome connection to nature, speaks to evolution and growth and brings a unique warmth to the street. Some concerns about the material were made but it was noted that City staff and technical advisors had reviewed the material and indicated that the species proposed and details used in construction were appropriate for an urban setting. This proposal also received the largest number of favourable comments from the public during consultation.

UNTITLED by Petra Matar + Dave Hind

The jury applauded this team's appreciation of an artist's ability to perceive and create beauty and the local arts community's role in the evolution of King William Street as the inspiration for their proposal. They also noted the bold and innovative design that would work well as gate. However, they felt that it did not reflect the character of the neighbourhood as well as some of the other proposals. The work would have a great impact at night when open but based on the proposal information provided it was not clear that the work would be as impactful as others during the day. Though the team received

recognition as talented local artists, the proposal was not embraced by the public as much as some others.

BLUE VERVAIN by Owen Johnson

The jury felt this artist proposed a beautiful structure recalling traditional historic urban street furniture. In particular, jury members were impressed with the gate design which was unanimously regarded as an artistic accomplishment. The jury were concerned however that the artwork was similar in scale and style to the existing street lights and may therefore not work as a landmark. Jury members also felt this work was ‘looking back’ instead of ‘looking forward.’ Though an aesthetically pleasing proposal that resonated with the public during consultation, the jury felt this proposal was not as reflective of the competition goal and themes as the winning proposal.

FLYING HIGH by Xiaojing Yan

The jury were of the opinion this proposal had beautiful lines, would have high visibility both day and night and offered a thoughtful gate design. They also noted that it had a timeless and traditional quality. Although very dramatic the jury felt that the work was not as interactive as some of the higher scoring proposals and not as related to the street as it sits above the street level. Overall, despite having many favourable comments by the public during consultation and high artistic merit, concerns were raised by the jury that the piece did not specifically address the unique evolving character of the surrounding area as well as some of the other proposals.

THE HAMMER-PILLAR by David Trautrimas

The jury complemented the artist’s bold and playful interpretation of the project’s goals and themes. The jury also appreciated that the gate was not merely an extension of the work but part of its story. However, there were concerns that a lack of lighting would mean that the work would have little impact at night and that the concept was not embraced by the public.

LIGHTHOUSE-BEAM-SPOTLIGHT by Lilly Otasevic

The jury appreciated how this proposal addressed the Hamilton context; its history of steel production and position as an important port city. Moreover, the jury felt the gate was beautifully elaborated and a well-considered design. The jury did feel however that the work’s dependence on text that was not yet developed to express key themes was problematic. Jury members also noted that the work would have a dynamic presence at night but were concerned that the artwork would not be as engaging during the day. This proposal did not have a strong response from the public during consultation.

THE JURY

Melissa Bennett	Curator of Contemporary Art, Art Gallery of Hamilton
Monika Ciolek	Arts Advisory Commission / Performance Artist
Kerry Jarvi	Executive Director, Downtown Hamilton BIA
Lori LeMare*	Master Artist / Artistic Director, Hamilton Aerial Group
Josh Neubauer	Principal, Urban Strategies (Hamilton Office)
Sahra Soudi*	Multidisciplinary Artist / YouthCan Coordinator Centre3

**Partial attendance – Stage 1 adjudication only. Written comments provided for Stage 2*

Advisors to the Jury:

Ken Coit	Manager, Placemaking, Public Art & Projects
Zahra Awang	Art in Public Places Project Specialist, Placemaking, Public Art & Projects