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## CONCEPT OVERVIEW

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## CONCEPTUAL AND VISUAL DESCRIPTION OF “RISE”

I based the concept of Rise almost entirely upon the symbolism of ABC building block toys for children. These blocks provide a foundation for a child to learn and grow. Building and stacking teaches problem solving skills and spatial recognition. The imprinted letters provide the seed for communication and language development to help children move further on in life.

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Upon my return home from Hurricane Katrina’s forced exile, my career, as with many other artists, was put on hold. I needed to find a source of income after four months of home repair. I began measuring and drawing floor plans of flooded houses for real estate agents, designers and families to get an idea of what their houses “used to look like.” After measuring almost a hundred gutted houses, all I began to see were squares upon squares. There was nothing else. I saw the fragility on how we base our value to the “cubes’ in which we live. I also started asking that question that was on everybody’s mind, “How do you rebuild a whole community from scratch?” But, the answer kept coming back, “one house at a time.”

Of course, as improvements began to take hold, my perspective improved and I saw the truth. I was still left with the imagery of boxes, but I saw how our process related to the purpose of those ABC blocks. Yes, a house is not much more than a series of interconnected cubes, but it becomes a home as soon as there is human involvement and attachment.

That is exactly what we did upon our return. We reattached ourselves. Those who were first to finish repairing or rebuilding, laid the first block for others to build upon. As more and more people came back, they continued with this “stacking process,” until, sure enough, we began to see the return of some of our communities. I know there is a long way to go for many, but those who have managed deserve to be proud. Thus, the Columbia Parc figure is placed at the top of the sculpture; further solidifying it’s own meaning of growth and pride. We rebuilt in more ways than one, and we reestablished our foundation in New Orleans.

Another component of the ABC blocks is, of course, the lettering. I thought about what words define a neighborhood. There are many more results of course, but I chose, “Pride, Respect, Trust, Equality, Diversity, Strength and Support.” As another link to the sculpture’s inspiration, I placed these words on each of the seven supporting cubes. I reserved the word, “Community,” for the top spot, as that is what these other words go together to form. That is what the whole vision of Columbia Parc is about.

The physical make up of Rise consists of fabricated aluminum in various patterns of brushed or polished surfaces. The interior surfaces of the three support columns get painted in automotive quality gloss black. The sculpture stands at sixteen feet (maquette to scale at 2” to 1’) and the height of the support columns are at five, six and seven feet consecutively. The height of the boy/tree form is three feet and will be fabricated with a depth of approximately 4 inches. One word of text (written above) is placed on each of the eight cubes. Interaction by viewing from multiple views is required to read some of the words.

If electricity can be supplied, programmable, color-changing LED lights will illuminate the three columns and the boy/tree form. The color on the maquette represents the reflection of the aluminum surfaces from that lighting. The result is similar to the façade of Le Cirque Hotel, located directly on Lee Circle in the CBD. Also, all of the text will be illuminated from behind in white light. Again, LED’s will be used. These are very durable, long lasting and highly energy efficient. Yet, they’re very bright. The power consumption will be equivalent to less than three standard home 60-watt light bulbs. If electricity cannot be supplied, the entire work can run on solar power, but unfortunately cannot be covered within my budget. Estimated cost for a photovoltaic unit is approximately \$1500.

Brief statement about qualifications of the artist:

Since 2004, I have completed four public commissions of significant scale (shown in portfolio images, and budgets listed on resume). All four have fallen within my proposed budgets and all have been completed before their deadline. I am specifically proud to say that Beyond the Blue was fabricated and installed within a four-month period.

## INSTALLATION PLAN FOR “RISE”

Providing there are no revisions with the engineering consultation, three concrete foundations will need to be poured, or one main foundation with three connection points. The engineer will decide whether or not the anchors need to be placed before or after. A template will be provided if bolts get submerged in the pour.

For the installation of the sculpture, a light-duty boom truck or reach lift will be needed to lift the final components in place. No component, other than the base columns will weigh more than 150 lbs (likely median weight is 50-70 lbs). A second boom lift should be available to facilitate installation and wiring (if applicable). As the maximum height is sixteen feet, the fastening can also be accomplished from ladders, if need be. All connecting hardware will be stainless steel- most likely socket screws requiring an allen key. Aside from the support columns, the sculpture will be made in five sections and bolted together on site. Installation time is estimated at one day.

This sculpture was originally designed to contain high-efficiency, low-wattage lighting. The fixtures consume very little power, so it can run on a photovoltaic solar cell as well as standard line voltage. If an agreement can be reached for powering the light source in one of these two ways, the following installation details will apply.

Three LED spots (included in the budget) will be submerged into points of the foundation to illuminate the three support columns. 12 volt wiring will need to be run to these points from the remote box for power supply. If line voltage is supplied, I suggest one more standard flood placed in the central point of the foundation for up-lighting.

One more electrical feed will need to run through the concrete foundation up to the base of one support column. The power supplies that run all of the LED lighting will be contained here. There will be an access panel for service.

The LEDs run on 12 volts and require very minimal wiring. Total wattage of the LED spots is 55, and the backlighting should draw no more than 120 watts- similar to three household light bulbs.

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# ARTIST BACKGROUND: MICHAEL CAIN

## EDUCATION

1993 University of Wisconsin, Bachelor of Arts

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2008 Instructor- Lampworking Glass, Bild-Werk School, Frauenau, Germany  
Instructor- Lampworking and Neon, Bild-Werk School, Frauenau, Germany
- 2005 Instructor – Lampworking and Neon, The Glass Furnace Istanbul, Turkey
- 2004 Official Demonstrator for the 34th Annual Glass Art Society Glass Conference entitled, The Cross Pollination of Glass Techniques New Orleans, LA
- 1995 – Now Owner/Operator – Mercury Injection Studio: Illuminated Vessels and Mixed Media Sculpture
- 2001 Teaching Assistant – Cast Glass & Bronze Bildwerk School, Frauneau, Germany
- 1996 & 1998 Teaching Assistant – Neon & Blown Forms, Pilchuck Glass School, Seattle, WA

## AWARDS & COMMISSIONS

- 2008 Pinellas County Cultural Affairs- Public Commission for Palm Harbor Library, Palm Harbor, Florida. Budget of \$50,000
- 2007 Arts Council of New Orleans- Fleur de Lis Fore! Kids Public Art Project- Sold at auction for \$7,500
- 2004 Arts Council of New Orleans- Percent for Art Public Commission for Tad Gormley Stadium, New Orleans, LA. Budget of \$20,000.
- 2003 Shreveport Regional Arts Council – Public Commission for the city of Shreveport, LA. \$25,000 Budget.  
Louisiana Division of the Arts – Percent for Art Public Commission for Baton Rouge Community College, Baton Rouge, LA \$42,000 Budget.
- 2000 Louisiana Division of the Arts – Artist Fellowship  
Louisiana Division of the Arts – Mini Grant Award  
Arts Council of New Orleans- Festival of Fins Public Art Project. Commission budget of \$3,000  
Corning Award Nomination – Outstanding Student in 1999, Pilchuck Glass School, Seattle, WA  
40 under 40 – Gambit Weekly, New Orleans, LA
- 1999 Niche Award – Outstanding Achievement in Glass, Niche Magazine  
Evelyn Toblin Scholarship – Pilchuck Glass School, Seattle, WA
- 1998 Saxe Award Nomination – Outstanding Teaching Assistant, Pilchuck Glass School, Seattle, WA

## PUBLICATIONS

- 2005 American Craft – June/July Issue, Commissions
- 2004 Inside Out, The Times Picayune - June 5th  
The Glass Art Society Journal – New Orleans  
Niche Magazine- Summer Issue, The Art of Illumination
- 2000 Gambit Weekly: “40 under 40,” October 24th
- 1999 American Craft - Feb/Mar Issue, Portfolio  
Niche Magazine - Spring Issue, Niche Awards  
Home Lighting & Accessories – June Issue, Award Winning Light Artists
- 1998 Glass – Winter Issue: Catalogue – The New York Biennial of Glass

## REFERENCES:

Mary Len Costa  
Public Art Director Arts Council of New Orleans

Mark Flickenger  
Director of Public Art Pinellas County

Kitty Phenev, Judyth Demaryst or Anne Russo  
Louisiana Division of the Arts

Pam Atchison  
Director Shreveport Regional Arts Council



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