

Breaking ground



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TIM FRASER



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COURTESY DANIELS CORP.

Public art adds intrigue, character to neighbourhoods

Developers fund installations through community improvement contributions

Building great cities means more than just bricks and mortar. It's laying down the foundation for communities people can be proud to live in.

The public art installation at Tridel's James Cooper Mansion condo project at Sherbourne and Bloor streets demands a second look.

Dubbed "Inversion," the piece is a multi-sited work by Eldon Garnet that features sculptures of the wildlife that was indigenous to the area when the mansion was built back in the 1800s, including a deer that scales the building facade.

Inversion was paid for by the developer as part of the building industry's commitment to building complete, vibrant communities across the city.

"People are intrigued by it — they stop and stare at it," says Jim Ritchie, Tridel's senior vice-president of sales and marketing. "And I think for the most part they understand it."

Many of Toronto's most interesting public art projects come through new developments.

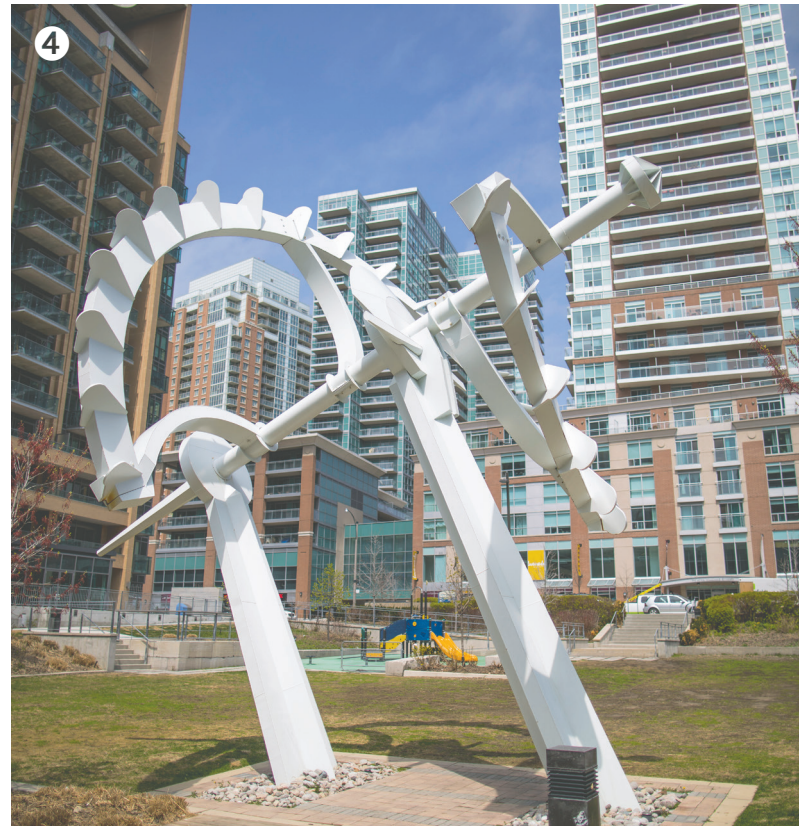
"Public art is an important part of every community and it is a part of every developer's DNA to build great

communities," says Bryan Tuckey, president and CEO of the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD). "These works of art help bring a sense of identity to a new neighbourhood, which is a great way to bring residents together."

Builders contribute at least one per cent of the gross construction cost of a development toward public art, depending on the needs of a particular community. The industry has embraced this opportunity, recognizing that public art plays a big part in enhancing the identity and character of the city's great neighbourhoods.

"We all need more beautiful objects, things in our lives," says Alan Vihant, senior vice-president of high-rise at Great Gulf Homes, whose projects often include public art. "It makes the daily ritual of leaving your home to go to work or school into an experience of art in the public realm. It's a great part of the daily experience of living in a big city."

So the next time you're enjoying a piece of public art, look to the residents or business owners of the new condo or office tower next to it and thank them for making the city a better place to live. They are the ones that built it.



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4 PERPETUAL MOTION

Project: Liberty Village
Location: Liberty Park (70 East Liberty St.)
Developer: CanAlfa Liberty Towers Inc.
Artist: Francisco Gazitua
The story: The artist spent "countless hours" researching the history of Liberty Village and its industrial heritage, specifically washing machine manufacturing. "The references to water wheels and mechanical components (in the sculpture) are evident and look back to a time when this area was bustling with industry," Gazitua said.

7 THINGS END

Project: Festival Tower
Location: King Street West and John Street
Developer: Daniels Corp.
Artist: James Carl
The story: The 1,400-pound sculpture, a playful take on a rubber band, is meant to symbolize the creativity found in Toronto's Entertainment District. "I'm particularly proud that this piece will be part of such a culturally rich location," the artist said at the unveiling of the installation.



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Here are a few other noteworthy development-related public art pieces in Toronto:

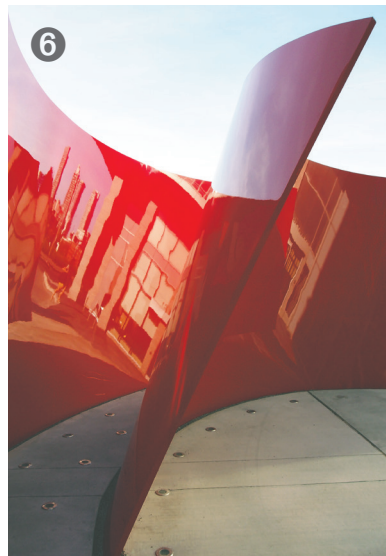
1 RED CANOE

Project: Canoe Landing Park
Location: 95 Fort York Blvd.
Developer: Concord Adex
Artist: Douglas Coupland
The story: Coupland helped design Canoe Landing Park, the first new public park to open in downtown Toronto in decades. The green space features a number of public art pieces, including the namesake Red Canoe, an installation the artist described as "a piece of urban furniture." Perched atop a large promontory made from land excavated during construction of the former railway lands, the

canoe and its passengers can see over the bustling Gardiner Expressway and out to Lake Ontario.

2 BALLAST

Project: Charlie
Location: King Street West and Charlotte Street
Developer: Great Gulf Homes
Artist: Jed Lind
The story: Rising up from the building courtyard like the skeletal bow of a Great Lakes freighter, this five-metre tall bronze sculpture is a visual metaphor for the transformation of the King corridor from working class to creative class, according to the artist. "In this transformed neighbourhood, high-rise buildings like the Charlie condos where



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COURTESY CONCORD ADEX

Ballast stands are the homes of this new creative class," Lind said.

3 BACK TO FRONT

Project: 300 Front St. W.
Location: Front and John streets
Developer: Tridel
Artist: Jason Bruges
The story: Inspired by Toronto's active weather, the installation will include a series of tall granite structures that sense changing light levels in the park, picking up shadows from trees, the moving sun and people walking through. The shadows will be transferred through the structures and used to create animated silhouettes on the other side, displayed with LED lights.

5 DORMEZ VOUS?

Project: Meridian Residences
Location: Yonge Street and Finch Ave.
Developer: Tridel and Hullmark Developments
Artist: Alexander Moyle
The story: This cast bronze sculpture, located at the entrance to the development, features a circular pool, a wall of descending water and a reclining female figure with legs arcing upward, and fiddleheads unfurling into a 20-foot fern. Moyle has said the piece is "like the dawn and the dusk, a reminder of our day, our year, life in transition."

6 APPROACHING RED

Project: Concord CityPlace
Location: 15 Iceboat Terrace, at the base of CityPlace's Parade 1 and 2 towers.
Developer: Concord Adex
Artist: Maha Mustafa
The story: Iraqi-born Mustafa describes the work as "two solid flat coloured forms (that) swirl together into a sculpture, making a connection between the two buildings and improving the esthetic experience of the building. The sculpture creates an effect of depth and a sense of perpetual movement."

8 STRATA

Project: Cinema Tower
Location: Adelaide Street West and Widmer Street
Developer: Daniels Corp.
Artist: Peter Powning
The story: Based on the concept of a core sample of the earth that's been pulled up and exposed, each layer of this "archaeological crust" sculpture references a period of history on the property and in the surrounding neighbourhood. The piece includes bronze casts of objects that were dug up at the actual building site.



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COURTESY TRIDEL DEVELOPMENTS

This is the second in a 4-part series sponsored by BILD. Look for the next one on Saturday, June 7.

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WORKING TOGETHER TOWARD A GREATER GTA

Building healthy, complete communities is a team effort. That's why BILD works closely with our partners in government to establish fair and effective policies that affect the land development, home building and professional renovation industry in the GTA. We are always at the table on behalf of the industry and new home buyers. So why is advocating on your behalf so vital to us?



BECAUSE THE GTA IS OUR HOME TOO

