

DIA works coming to Northville's Town Square

Suburbs help local museum observe 125th anniversary

By Pam Fleming • STAFF WRITER • August 26, 2010

The city of Northville will help the Detroit Institute of Arts celebrate its 125th anniversary this year by displaying some of its artwork in Town Square.

The DIA is producing 40 works of art from its permanent collection for outdoor installation in various Southeast Michigan communities.

The project is modeled after an exhibit, the Grand Tour, organized by staff from the National Gallery in London, who in summer 2007 installed framed reproductions of its most popular paintings throughout the streets of Soho. (See www.thegrandtour.org.uk/index.html).

The DIA, in partnership with Smart Art Editions, wants to install waterproof, full-size digital reproductions of paintings from its collections throughout cities in Wayne, Macomb, Oakland and Washtenaw counties.

Each painting, displayed in a gilded frame, will be accompanied by an informational plaque with donor recognition.

INTERACTIVE MAP PLANNED

Communities and businesses participating in the project will be featured on an interactive map on the museum's website (www.dia.org) as well as be connected through social networks, including the DIA's 25,000-member Facebook, MySpace, Flickr and Twitter accounts.

The project will receive recognition through the DIA newsletter and other communication vehicles. Celebrating the richness and diversity of the museum's extensive collection, the project's goal is to connect with audiences outside the traditional museum walls in a grand, open-air gallery.

The artwork should be displayed in Town Square

soon and remain up through November.

The DIA will be responsible for the installation, duration and removal of the works at no cost to the city or business.

The city of Northville was approached about participating in the project. DDA staff, members of the Northville Central Business Association and the Arts Commission met with DIA representatives to learn more about the project and discuss a location.

The initial work to be installed is titled "Cotopaxi" and is an 1862 oil on canvas by artist Frederic Edwin Church.

The painting will be installed on the east wall of Town Square on Main Street.

MORE TO COME

DDA staff and members of the Arts Commission asked whether there would be an opportunity to have more works of art showcased in downtown Northville. The group was interested in other American artists from the Victorian period, with the idea that the installation of the paintings could coincide with the Victorian Festival in mid-September.

Arts Commission members and several gallery owners have offered to participate in the development of an educational program centered on

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the paintings for elementary schools as well.

The DIA agreed to allow several additional installations and provided several additional landscape and portrait paintings from the Victorian era from which the DDA staff could select some.

The cost for each additional painting will be \$500.

The other two reproductions selected are "The Communicant" by Gary Melchers painted in 1900 and "Home Fields" painted by John Singer Sargent in 1885.

"The group felt that hanging the three paintings together in a gallery setting would be a more powerful statement than a single painting," said Lori Ward, DDA [director](#).

Also, after the exhibit was over, the DDA will own the two additional paintings and be able to move them to other areas of the city or trade them with other cities for different ones.

The board approved the \$1,000 to be spent on the two additional works of art at its Aug. 17 meeting. The money will come out of the DDA's marketing budget.

pfleming@gannett.com | (248) 437-2011, ext. 260



This painting from the Detroit Institute of Arts titled 'Cotopaxi' is an 1862 oil on canvas by American artist Frederic Edwin Church. The painting will be one of three installed on the east wall of Northville's Town Square on Main Street as part of the DIA's 125th anniversary celebration. The paintings are to be installed around the first of September and remain on display at least through November. (Detroit Institute of Arts)

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