

Designers to give city an artistic makeover

Neighbourhoods in Toronto will put on a new face as six projects by art college students go up this year

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STAFF REPORTER

There are efforts in place to beautify the city. But don't call it art, because it is much more than that. This city-wide makeover is all about bringing art and functionality through the concept of design.

Six designs, created by students at the Ontario College of Art and Design, will be displayed on the canvases of Toronto — abandoned buildings, bus shelters and bridges — over the next year.

The backdrops are intentional, and in many ways the source of inspiration for most of the nouveaux designers, all of whom are students.

The students spent 14 weeks on the Toronto Unbound project, 10 for research and four for creating. They were urged to talk to people, to research the history of neighbourhoods and to find out how their designs would inspire, motivate or change the lives of those who would see it every day.

The six winning designs, chosen from a total of 22, were selected by judges from the city of Toronto and from OpenCity Project, a group of a Torontonians looking to bring "creativity" to the city.

Bold, bright and practical, these designs not only challenge the city's "tentative" artistic past, but also confront the harsh and unsightly social realities of living in an urban city.

The winners were selected for their sustainability, ease in implementation and cost-effectiveness among many other categories.

They are Nightscape by Kaveri Joseph, Night Mural by Michelle Ip, Living Canvas by Amanda Billark, TTC Gallery by Carrie Liang, The Community Garden by Matthew Gubernat and Red Carpet by Vincent Monastero, Jessica Ching, Laura Henneberrry and Vincent Coccogana.

The concept for Liang's TTC Gallery is to turn TTC bus shelters in Corktown into galleries of sorts with

a display of historical photographs encased in glass. Liang wanted to give a more welcoming and inviting atmosphere to people waiting for transportation.

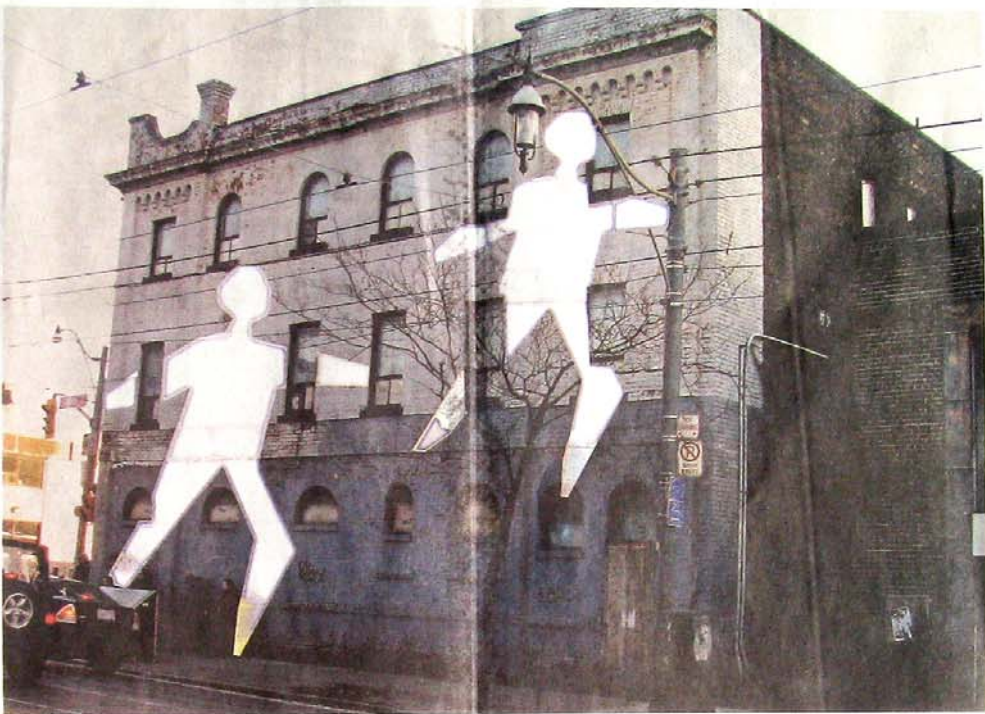
Gubernat, whose concept was to create social gathering spaces in Regent Park, was inspired by Toronto community housing plans to revitalize Regent Park and the scarcity of plans to ensure interaction in the community. In response, he created a market where people will be able to buy, interact, tell stories and invest in the neighbourhood.

With her design, Billark was inspired to create a wall for all seasons. In a Corktown park, where a rusty chain fence now stands, the plan is to erect a wall that will bloom with plants in the spring and summer, and will be painted by local artists in the fall and winter.

Billark was inspired to bring the community together to build, plant and maintain the wall and to inspire local residents to make their neighbourhood beautiful.

All 22 designs are on display this week at XPACE at 58 Ossington Ave. and at openacityprojects.com.

NIGHTSCAPE



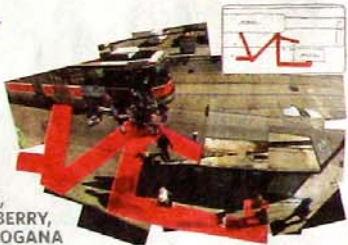
BY: KAVERI JOSEPH

CONCEPT: Murals will be painted with reflective paint on old buildings and lots in Corktown. The paintings will only be visible at night.

INSPIRATION: There is a stigma that downtown Corktown is unsafe, said creator Joseph, and her goal was to change that.

"As you walk through the area, you will see all these crazy murals and instead of feeling unsafe, you will be interested. That was the whole point, to remove what you focus your thoughts on."

RED CARPET



BY: VINCENT MONASTERO, JESSICA CHING, LAURA HENNEBERRY, VINCENT COCCOGANA

CONCEPT: Creating a "red carpet" with bright red paint at the street-car stop at the junction between Parkdale and West Queen W.

INSPIRATION: To both welcome and improve the experiences of those using the TTC. "We want to elevate that experience, which is often considered to be mundane and boring," said Jessica Ching.

NIGHT MURAL (DAYTIME)



BY: MICHELLE IP

CONCEPT: To design a day and night mural using acrylic outdoor paint, moss paint and invisible fluorescent paint that presents a forest during the day, and lights up at night.

INSPIRATION: To create a more pleasant and safe experience when walking through the bridge at Triangle Junction, especially at night.

NIGHT MURAL (NIGHTTIME)

