

Public art displayed in Miramar

City gets new art pieces at library and cultural center

By Chris Guanche
STAFF WRITER

The amount of public art in Miramar just got a boost with two recent additions.

Public art in Broward County is administered through the county's Cultural Arts Division. The installation of public art is tied to the construction of new county buildings or the renovation of exist-

ing ones, said Cultural Arts Director Mary Becht. Miramar's first piece of public art was "Terra Fugit," created by Massachusetts artists Mags Harries and Lajos Heder for the Miramar Regional Park.

Now, public art is part of the recently opened Miramar Branch Library and Education Center, as well as the soon-to-open Cultural Center and Arts Park. The Cultural Center's art

comes from the building being partially county-funded, while the library's art was part of a 1999 county bond to build and renovate libraries.

"The goal was to put art in every library, but some of them aren't even built yet today," Becht said. "It takes a long time to get those things done."

The Miramar library's art piece has been nearly 10 years in the making.

"Tesoro," a mixed-media project covering most of one wall, greets visitors entering the library. The piece incorporates many elements, such as star charts, navigational maps, local photos, the periodic table of elements and symbols from all the world's religions. But the art serves a dual purpose, as it lists library sections and what subjects they cover.

Throughout those nearly 10 years, artist Robert Calvo of Portland had to alter his design as the building's plans were

changed. In creating the piece, Calvo said he was looking to connect the larger world with a more regional one — in this case, Miramar.

"In a library, you can see that connection is made with all the resources you have," Calvo said.

Although "Tesoro" is fairly large at more than 7 feet tall by 20 feet long, Calvo classifies it as one of his smaller pieces, as some of his art at airports can

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take up to 100,000 square feet.

Visitors can see "Tesoro" now at the library, but they'll have to wait a bit longer for the art at the Cultural Center, which will have special preview events in November ahead of its December ribbon cutting.

The center's botanical garden will serve as home to "Vanishing View," a glass sculpture immersed in a reflecting pool of water. Equipped with LED lights, the sculpture will reflect the sky and water during the day. However, as the sun sets, the sculpture completely changes to a shadowy silhouette of local wildlife.

"It's symbolic of the vanishing Everglades," said New York City artist Alison Sky.

Sky, who has created public art since the 1970s, said she prefers working in public because it allows people to accidentally discover art rather than going to a gallery or museum with expectations of what they should see.

"I wanted to take my work to an everyday context," Sky said. "You're on your way to work, and

you find something interesting. People discover art when they least expect it."

Officials hope bringing public art into Miramar will make the city a destination for people interested in the arts. The two newest pieces create synergy between the Cultural Center and library, said Camasha Cevieux, the city's assistant director of cultural arts.

"It solidifies how serious Miramar is about cultural arts," she said.

As Broward's population continues to shift, Becht said it'll be more common to see new art out west. Many of the county's public arts projects have been focused further east, with several projects under way at parks and the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport.

However, Becht said some western cities such as Sunrise and Coral Springs are taking the initiative to feature public art by drafting new art ordinances.

"You'll see more art in cities that have ordinances," Becht said.

Chris Guanche can be reached at cguanche@tribune.com.

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