

Summer art takes shape in Stamford

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By Nora Naughton

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DSSD President Sandy Goldstein discusses the upcoming Art in Public Places statues that will pepper downtown Stamford in the summer while in her office in Stamford, Conn. on Wednesday, March 22, 2017.

STAMFORD — Art in Public Places will return this summer with a familiar theme.

Forty white, fiberglass statues — shaped like cubes, spheres and pyramids — landed in Stamford this week, blank canvases ready to be transformed into colorful odes to the [City That Works](#).

Artists from Connecticut, and a few from New York, have submitted 200 statue design proposals in hopes of getting sponsored by a local business or supporter of the arts. The [Stamford Downtown Special Services District \(DSSD\)](#) will narrow the proposals to 65 and 40 finalists will receive sponsorships.

About \$175,000 needs to be raised to complete and display the 40 statues.

After the display period ends in the fall, the sculptures will be auctioned off and proceeds will go to the [Avon Theater](#).

“Without the Avon, our downtown is nothing,” said [Sandy Goldstein](#), president of the DSSD.

Bringing back a tradition

The fiberglass statues return after last year was dedicated to abstract sculptures, shipped from throughout the country for their three-month stay downtown.

Remnants of this old favorite are still scattered around the city, in front of the businesses and homes of residents who snatched up their favorite customized statues in the post-display auctions.

After CowParade Stamford in the summer of 2000, the DSSD even assembled a commemorative book featuring that year’s bovine beauties.

Goldstein said the DSSD changes the theme each year, usually featuring the popular customizable fiberglass statues every other summer.

In its 22nd year, the Art in Public Places exhibit has featured various themes from [Seward Johnson](#)’s lifelike sculptures of people to fiberglass cows and dinosaurs. This year’s shapes theme was born from weeks of brainstorming late last year with the DSSD arts committee.

“I think someone mentioned spheres, and I said, ‘well, what about more shapes?’ And that was that,” Goldstein said.

This broad theme has opened the door to many unique ideas, Goldstein said as she flipped through the design book. She stopped at some of her favorites: a cube made of classic board games, a pyramid that features downtown vistas and a sphere appearing like a chocolate truffle.

The life-size sculptures, still untouched by hammer, nail or paintbrush, are stored in an empty Broad Street business, where several of the artists will work on their creations until they are installed on June 1.

“We have been doing this for 22 years, because nothing creates a sense of place better than public art,” Goldstein said.

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