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## Two artists win skate park art competition



**Two artists win skate park art competition.** Centretown's Alisdair MacRae and Negar Seyfollahy were selected as the winners of the public art competition for the new Richcraft Recreation Complex, Kanata skate park. *Sherry Aske*

The skate plaza at the new Richcraft Recreation Complex, Kanata will be getting a boost of inspiration thanks to two local artists.

Centretown's Alisdair MacRae and Negar Seyfollahy were selected as the winners of the public art competition for the skate park, as part of the city's public art and community arts program.

"We're both really excited about the project," said MacRae. "We really want to make something out of it. We want to make it so that the people who use the park and live in the immediate area enjoy it."

The two artists were chosen by a selection panel, with consideration given to the artists' resumes and experience with the community collaborative process.

"We did an unconventional call to artists based on a request for qualifications," said Caleb Abbott, arts specialist for the community arts program. Instead of presenting a design for the skate park, the 11 qualifying artists were interviewed about their previous experience, potential ideas and how they would engage the community.

"They'll be developing (the art) as they get feedback from users, the community and New Line," said Abbott. New Line Skate Parks will be constructing the plaza.

Public consultations are scheduled for April 18, May 23 and June 20, all from 6 to 8 p.m. in Hall D of the Mlacak Centre.

"We came up with some loose ideas but we really wanted to get some feedback,"

said MacRae. “We want to be flexible.”

MacRae has displayed his work in group and solo exhibitions in Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal, Halifax and Vancouver, as well as New York. MacRae focuses on issues of community and exchange experienced through a hands on approach enabling social engagement, said a city press release.

Seyfollahy has pursued her education in the fields of archaeology and heritage studies and has recently earned a bachelor’s of architecture from Carleton University. She has been involved in the design and development of various projects ranging from theatre set design, to housing and mixed-use buildings, and most recently a community revitalization draft study for the town of Batawa, Ont., said the city.

“These are two really good artists,” said Kanata North Coun. Marianne Wilkinson, adding they will work to develop something “that is very meaningful to the community.”

The public art program commissions artists’ works for display in public spaces. One per cent of funds from city development projects are set aside for public art.

The city’s community arts program asked to integrate art into the new recreation complex’s skate plaza, while engaging the community in the artistic process.

“In community arts we do a public arts competition, we focus arts on community engagement,” said Abbott.

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