

April 26, 2009

Artwork for the Graduate School of Oceanography's new Ocean Science & Exploration Center (OSEC) and Pell Library at the University of Rhode Island's Narragansett Bay campus (URI) will be commissioned through Rhode Island's Public Art Law, which mandates that 1% of all state capital construction and renovation funds be allocated to the purchase and maintenance of public art. Through this program the State recognizes that "public art creates a more humane environment: one of distinction, enjoyment, and pride for all citizens."

Construction of the building is rapidly approaching completion. The public art component has a budget of \$90,000.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

The University of Rhode Island is the state's flagship research university, and the Graduate School of Oceanography is a primary center for the University's research activity. URI was founded in 1888 as the Rhode Island State Agricultural School and officially was named the University of Rhode Island in 1951. The Board of Governors for Higher Education appointed by the governor became the governing body of the University in 1981.

The URI Narragansett Marine Laboratory, now the Graduate School of Oceanography, was founded in 1936. The Narragansett Bay Campus, site of URI's Graduate School of Oceanography, is situated on the shores of Narragansett Bay looking east towards Jamestown Island and the famous Pell Bridge to Newport. It is one of three satellite campuses of URI and is located approximately 7 miles east of the central campus at Kingston.

The University's website defines URI as 'the State's public learner-centered research university and a community joined in a common quest for knowledge. The University is committed to enriching the lives of its students through its land, sea, and urban grant traditions. URI is the only public institution in Rhode Island offering undergraduate, graduate, and professional students the distinctive educational opportunities of a major research university. Our undergraduate, graduate, and professional education, research, and outreach serve Rhode Island and beyond. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni are united in one common purpose: to learn and lead together. Embracing Rhode Island's heritage of independent thought, we value: Creativity and Scholarship; Diversity, Fairness, and Respect; Engaged Learning and Civic Involvement; and Intellectual and Ethical Leadership.'

ABOUT THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF OCEANOGRAPHY

The Graduate School of Oceanography is focused on graduate education and research in ocean science, as well as being actively involved in outreach. The school's activities include graduate educational and research programs in physical, biological, geological and chemical oceanography. A relatively recent addition, representing an important component of the new building, is a program in Ocean Exploration. The Graduate School runs a research vessel and has extensive research facilities. It is home to the Center of Excellence in Marine Life Sciences. Outreach activities include the Rhode Island Sea Grant, the Office of Marine Programs and the Coastal Research Center.

The Graduate School of Oceanography tackles important scientific questions with a global reach. These include

- (a) Global Change, covering such topics as global warming, sea-level rise, the retreat of sea ice, implications for marine life, and the impact of human activities on fish stocks, pollution, and estuarine and coastal environments;
- (b) Natural Disasters, covering topics such as tsunamis, hurricanes, earthquakes and volcanoes;
- (c) Ocean Exploration, covering topics such as sea floor geology, life on and beneath the sea floor, marine archeology through the study of ancient shipwrecks.

ABOUT THE SITE

The campus is 200 acres in area, extending from the shore to woodlands along its boundaries. In addition to the Graduate School of Oceanography it is home to the Department of Ocean Engineering and two federal research laboratories. The attractive South Ferry Church (built ~1850) situated within the campus boundary, is all that remains of the South Ferry textile village occupying the site until the early 1900s. On Narragansett Bay's West Passage, with a deep-water pier and easy access to the open Atlantic, the campus offers an ideal location from which to explore the world's oceans. The campus serves as home port for the Graduate School's research vessel *Endeavor*.

The new Ocean Research and Exploration Center, designed by Burt Hill, Boston, MA, will become a focal point for the Narragansett Bay Campus and the Graduate School of Oceanography. The 38,000 square foot facility integrates research, education, administration, library and social functions, and will be the first building to welcome visitors as they enter the campus. With its spacious entrance and reception areas, the building is designed to take advantage of the magnificent ocean views. [Note: a webcam view of the building from the side can be seen at <http://www.gso.uri.edu/pmsl/>.

The Pell Library, housed within the new center, provides a central location for specialized collections and will accommodate projected growth of print and electronic library resources. The new library space promotes intellectual activity by creating an environment for discussion among faculty, staff and students and serves as the hub for distributed access of oceanographic and marine data.

The Inner Space Center represents a new paradigm for ocean studies. Its associated television production center will be in frequent communication with URI's research vessel *Endeavor* and other ships at sea, including NOAA's new Ship of Exploration, the *Okeanos Explorer*. High quality live, real time images and data from undersea vehicles will be transmitted to the Inner Space Center and from there to other research institutions, enabling scientists, engineers and students to participate directly in on-going exploration and discovery.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

In accordance with the guidelines of Rhode Island's 1% for Public Art Law, a five member public art selection panel has been appointed by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (RISCA). It is composed of one representative of the University of Rhode Island, a representative of the community, two artists selected by RISCA, and the project architect. The panel has met to discuss aesthetic and thematic concerns for the project. Artist applicants are asked to consider the following in planning their proposals:

Most visitors will enter the OSEC from the parking lot through the main doors on the west façade into a large open mezzanine that expands to 2 levels at the back, east wall. The east wall is glass with a sweeping view of the ocean. The selected artist(s) will produce interior 2D or 3D artwork for this two-story asymmetrical atrium.

The Narragansett Bay Campus is an informal, working campus with an international faculty and graduate student body. It is a site from which people arrive and depart to all points of the globe. Artwork might be thematically linked to the gathering of data, exploration, science, discovery, oceanography, volcanology, glaciology, cartography, and the new technologies associated with these fields and their interrelationships.

As one panelist remarked, "humans tend to be focused on homo sapiens, but we are just a small portion of what's out there." The enterprises that take place on this site induce a feeling of humility in the face of nature coupled with concern about our impact on it.

Three corridors lead off the main space to more private parts of the building. Artwork should not lead viewers to those parts of the building where people are working and need quiet. No audio work will be considered.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Please note: This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is the first step in the URI public art selection process.

RISCA will conduct the URI Public Art application process online, with all materials submitted in digital format through CaFÉ (see below). There is no charge to the artist for applying or for submitting digital images. At this preliminary selection stage, we are requesting submissions from artists or art teams consisting of six (6) images representing current work (completed within the past five years), resumes, and very brief descriptions of potential site-specific proposals. If an artist wants to apply as an individual as well as part of a team, two separate CaFÉ profiles and two separate CaFÉ applications must be completed (i.e., one application submission for you and one application submission for your team). Applications consisting of six images, answers to designated questions, and resumes will be reviewed by the URI GSO/Pell Public Art Selection Panel to assess the quality and appropriateness of the artist's work, interest in their proposal idea, and the artist's ability to carry out a substantial public art commission.

Applicants are asked only to provide a short description of their proposal for artwork at the site along with a rough outline of expenses totaling no more than \$90,000. 3-5 semi-finalists will be selected from the pool of RFQ applicants and those finalists will craft detailed proposals including an itemized budget, scale models and renderings, and an in-depth project description.

No slides or hard copy materials will be accepted for this call. First time CaFÉ applicants must allow enough time to prepare their CaFÉ formatted digital images and electronic submission prior to the deadline. CaFÉ surveys have shown that it takes approximately 1.5 hours to prepare images and submit an online application, dependent on a variety of factors.

Each application must be submitted via the CaFÉ(tm) web site (www.callforentry.org) and must include:

1. A current resume for each artist. If you are applying as a team, include all team member resumes within one document.
2. Six digital images of relevant artwork. In the Description of Image, accompanying image annotation must list media, size, title, date of completion and a brief description of the artwork if necessary. Please do not present more than one view of artwork per image. If you wish to show a "detail", include it within the six (6) artwork images.
3. A written statement, not to exceed 2000 characters, that addresses the artist's/team's preliminary concept or potential approach for creating site-specific public art for OSEC as well as the total budget amount.

ESTIMATED TIMELINE

May 1, 2009 - CaFÉ website open for submissions

June 25, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. (MST) - Deadline for submissions

Late July, 2009 - panel chooses semi-finalists, artists notified

August, 2009 - semi-finalist site visits

Late September, 2009 - semi-finalist presentations to selection panel, final selection

October, 2009 - final approval by RISCA Council

According to law, final recommendations of the selection panel will be presented to the governing council of the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts who will have final approval of the public art selection.

BUDGET

\$90,000 is available for the acquisition of artwork. This amount must cover all costs of the artwork including artist fees, engineering fees, fabrication, installation, and transportation of the art, as well as all site work required before and after installation. If a proposal includes multiple components that spread beyond the building or incorporate landscape or media elements, those expenses must be included within the allotted budget.

SELECTION PROCESS

The Request for Qualifications is the first stage of the selection process. Visual artists are invited to

submit samples of their work and their CV/resumes for consideration. Six (6) images must be included with your CaFE application. The panel will select between three and five (3-5) finalists from the pool of applicants. These finalists will be invited to submit specific proposals, in person, to the Art Selection Panel based upon the goals and descriptions of the Request for Qualifications.

Finalists' site-specific proposals should convey artists' ideas and plans through designs, renderings and/or scale models with a statement that describes the project's intent, proposed materials, fabrication and installation methods, and an itemized budget. Artists chosen as finalists are also asked to explain how their artwork will be sourced and fabricated. The finalists will be supplied with plans, photographs, and specific information about GSO/Pell and the URI campus. A site visit as well as a meeting with the architect and the URI administration will be scheduled for the semi-finalists. An honorarium of \$1,500 will be awarded to the semi-finalists following presentation of their proposals. The proposals will remain the property of the artist. However, RISCA reserves the right to retain proposals for up to one year for display purposes and the right to reproduce final proposals for documentation and public information purposes.

The Public Art Selection Panel reserves the right to determine which proposals will be funded and the extent of funding for each commission and installation. The panel also reserves the right to not accept any final proposal submitted. If the recommendations of the Public Art Selection Panel are approved by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, the selected artist/s will enter into contract with the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts for the selected commission. The accepted artwork will be owned and maintained by the State of Rhode Island.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The panel will make their selection based on the following criteria:

1. Quality and suitability of the final proposal in relation to the project description, program goals and site descriptions.
2. The artist's ability to carry out the commission, to keep the project within budget, and to complete and install the work on schedule.
3. Permanence and durability of materials in a heavily used public facility. It is the artist's responsibility to ensure that all artwork meets safety standards, adheres to building codes and other state regulations. Artworks must be durable and require minimal maintenance.
4. Willingness of the artist to consult with the architect, construction manager and building staff (or designated representatives) to assure smooth integration of the artwork into the building site and to make necessary adjustments in relation to building codes and other construction issues.

ARTIST ELIGIBILITY

This call is open to all visual artists. Applications may be submitted individually or in collaboration with others. The panel will not discriminate against any applicant artist on the basis of age, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin or physical challenges. Excluded from participation are RISCA Council members, staff and their family members as well as Public Art Selection Panel members and their families.

For specific questions regarding the scope of the public art project, including .jpgs, please contact Elizabeth Keithline at Elizabeth@arts.ri.gov.

Instructions on how to format images to CaFE™ specifications can be found at http://www.callforentry.org/imaging_tips.phtml " target="new">Image Prep.

RELEVANT WEB LINKS

Artists might find some of the following links useful in providing inspiration for their proposals:

1. Primary site for the Graduate School of Oceanography is <http://www.gso.uri.edu/>. From there you can explore various links describing our activities. Click on Research Initiatives (or go straight to <http://www.gso.uri.edu/research/research-initiatives#rore>). Other links will also provide visual ideas that

might prove useful.

2. The Census of Marine Life: A marvelous source of images of strange and even newly discovered marine species. Their image gallery is a good place to start: <http://www.coml.org/imagegallery/>. Beyond that, go to the list of projects <http://www.coml.org/projects/projects> and check out those that might be of interest, everything you can imagine about life in the ocean from microbes to life in the Antarctic. These sites will point you to related projects with excellent visuals, i.e. http://www.scarmarbin.be/photo_gallery.php.

3. For inspiration on mapping the ocean, check out the images at Zdenka.S.Willis@noaa.gov