

Page Three

Sculptor to craft underpass art

Wisconsin artist imagined retaining walls bedecked with chasing ravens, aspen stands.

By Katy Niner

Don Rambadt finds birds endlessly fascinating. Ravens, in particular, for their intelligence as they fashion tools and toys.

The Wisconsin artist spotted the ebony birds while visiting Jackson in May to see the pathway underpass leading to the National Museum of Wildlife Art. He was competing with three other artists to create his vision on the walls.

Last week, Rambadt's proposal was chosen as the public art installation for the underpass connecting the new North Highway 89 pathway to the museum's in-the-works Sculpture Trail.

By choosing ravens, Rambadt struck a sympathetic chord in the community, said Carrie Geraci, director of the Jackson Hole Public Art Initiative. Social and intelligent, playful and ubiquitous, they are admired by many.

"As far as I am concerned, the raven is the perfect symbol of public art," she said.

Rambadt's design was chosen by a panel of representatives from the art museum, pathways, the National Elk Refuge, Westwood Curtis Construction, the Public Art Taskforce and a local business owner, each of whom weighed different concerns and aesthetics, Adam Harris, curator at the museum, said.

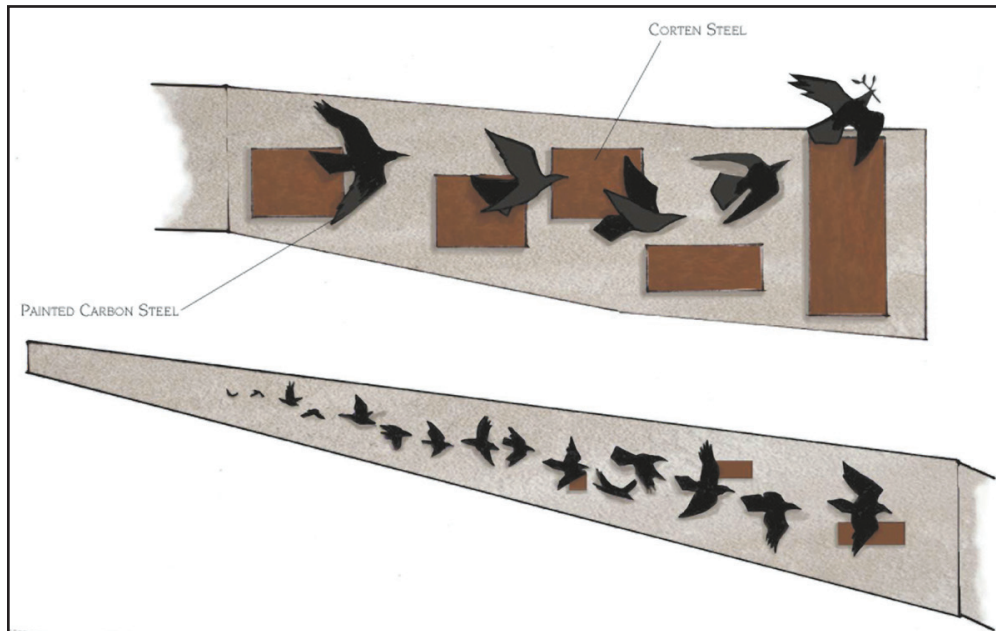
"We all gravitated toward Don's design," Harris said. "I think that's a good sign of its eventual success."

Rambadt approached the retaining walls as an angular backdrop in need of drama. Ravens seemed singularly suited for inciting activity, so he proposed "Sky Play," a flock of carbon steel birds chasing a winged leader brandishing a stick toy.

Beyond being an effective design element, the scene spotlights animal behavior, opening another avenue for discussion, Harris said.

The avian chase is set against an artful arrangement of rusted corten blocks, and the flock's trajectory soars within and ultimately tips beyond the rising plane of concrete.

For the walls on the other side of the



A flock of carbon steel ravens will chase a winged leader carrying a stick toy in "Sky Play," part of Don Rambadt's design for the underpass on North Highway 89.

underpass, he designed "Aspen Gateway" a laser-cut stand of stainless steel aspen trunks, echoing the aspens clustered on the butte above.

Rambadt's design displayed sensitivity to the site, Harris said.

"It stood by itself as an artwork and did not compete with the other sculptures around it," he said.

The underpass is part of the Jackson Hole Community Pathways North Highway 89 Pathway project, which connects the town of Jackson with Grand Teton National Park. In the original grant application, the wildlife art museum was identified as a primary cultural destination along the project corridor. Perched about 2 miles from town, the bike ride to the museum is a family-friendly day trip.

The tunnel should be open to pathway use by mid-July (final paving is slated for September). The whole project is scheduled to be done by early fall.

Installation of Rambadt's sculpture will begin this fall and finish next year.

Rambadt rose to the top of a pool of more than 30 artists who answered the Public Art Initiative's national call, issued in March. The selection panel chose four finalists — Rambadt, Thea Alvin, Karen Yank and Jackson's own Ben Roth — all of whom visited the site, toured the mu-

In addition to the underpass, construction work continues up the cliff. The National Museum of Wildlife Art is building the Sculpture Trail and doing necessary maintenance on the museum's exterior. By October, new rock will sheathe the building. The museum will start installing artwork on the Sculpture Trail next spring.

seum and presented conceptual designs.

Working on a tight budget and a tight time frame, Rambadt worked out all elements of his design, mapping out production and cost.

"The piece has been essentially built already, mentally," he said. "Now it is time for the heavy lifting, which is something I am really excited about."

The underpass project represents Rambadt's largest artwork to date and the first time he has submitted a public art proposal. His sculptures have made their way to public sites but not by design or by selection process.

He has exhibited widely across the country, including being juried 11 times into the "Birds in Art" exhibition at the Leigh Yawkey Woodsen Art Museum in Wausau, Wis. And yet his work has never appeared in Jackson before.

WEATHER PICTURE



ALEXANDRA MIHALE / NEWS&GUIDE

Date	Wed. June 29	Thurs. June 30	Fri. July 1	Sat. July 2	Sun. July 3	Mon. July 4	Tues. July 5
Sunrise	5:45 a.m.	5:45 a.m.	5:46 a.m.	5:46 a.m.	5:47 a.m.	5:47 a.m.	5:48 a.m.
Sunset	9:08 p.m.	9:08 p.m.	9:08 p.m.	9:08 p.m.	9:08 p.m.	9:07 p.m.	9:07 p.m.

Snake flow @ Flagg Ranch:
6,940 cfs, 277% avg.

Snake flow @ Alpine:
21,400 cfs, 177% avg.
<http://waterdata.usgs.gov/wy/nwis/rt>

Jackson Lake 79% capacity
<http://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/burtea.cfm>



New Moon
July 1



First Quarter
July 7



Full Moon
July 14



Last Quarter
July 22

	HI	LO	PRE.
June 22	75	37	n/a
June 23	73	46	n/a
June 24	70	39	n/a
June 25	70	41	n/a
June 26	64	41	n/a
June 27	73	34	n/a
June 28	82	37	n/a

Courtesy National Weather Service

THIS WEEK

Pulling wire

This summer, the Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation expects to reach the 150-mile mark in its mission to remove barbed wire that can injure and kill wildlife. A crew of volunteers got a good start last Saturday at the first of six fence pulls planned for this summer and fall.

See page 3B.

O's for Triangle X

Repeat visitors to Triangle X Ranch in Grand Teton National Park sent love to the guest ranch on the occasion of its 85th birthday. Dudes and wranglers agree: The secret to the spread's success has been the generations of Turner family members who make it tick.

See page 13B.

Need for speed

Mountaineers have been climbing and descending the 13,770-foot Grand Teton for decades. However, a new group of enthusiasts are engaging in a friendly competition to see who can do it fastest. One of the quickest car-to-summit-to-car trips was made in a staggering time Tuesday.

See Sports cover.

Hitting the park

Jackson Hole Mountain Resort is known for its steep and deep slopes in the winter. Now the resort is transforming some of those slopes into a summer playground with the opening of its new bike park, giving locals and tourists quite a thrill.

See Sports cover.

Plowed for Panic

Having scooped up 586,000 cubic yards of snow, Grand Targhee Resort is now ready to host three nights of Widespread Panic. Camping spots are sold out, but concert tickets remain. The six-man band — revered for its blend of rock, jazz and blues — is on the road for its 25th anniversary tour.

See Stepping Out page 3.

Cause for celebration

To toast its 10th anniversary and 23-artist stable of talent, Diehl Gallery hosts its annual summer Fete, a Thursday evening affair featuring new work by all of the gallery's artists, including painter Hung Liu and sculptor Simeon Gudgeon. A portion of Fete sales will benefit the Jackson Hole Land Trust.

See Stepping Out page 13.

Hitting a high note

It began with a pickup ensemble of musicians from across the country and the dream of Jackson Hole movers and shakers to bring some high culture to town. Now, 50 years on, the Grand Teton Musical Festival has grown grandiose. This week, the festival kicks off its golden anniversary season with the Jackson Hole Wine Auction, a "Black, White & Gold" gala and its first regular-season concerts.

See Stepping Out pages 16-17.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"The fun and games are over. The moment of truth is here."

— Former U.S. Sen. Al Simpson, who spoke in Jackson on Sunday about how the country has to face its growing national debt (see story 1A).