

Albright-Knox sculpture features 60 used boats

BY TRACEY DRURY
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Artists this week began assembling a massive new sculpture on the front lawn of Albright-Knox Art Gallery.

The sculpture, located on Elmwood Avenue across from the Rockwell Road entrance to Buffalo State College, will be supervised by artist Nancy Rubins, who will use high-tension steel cable to connect 60 used aluminum boats.

Working with a team that includes an engineer, the work is expected to measure up to 60 feet wide and 40 feet high.

A concrete pad was installed in early June at the site, later anchored by a steel post to which the boats will be attached.

Rubins is known for using everyday used and discarded objects to make monumental forms. She began working with boats in 2000

and has since installed sculptures at Lincoln Center in New York City, as well as the Gagosian Gallery in Beverly Hills, Calif.

In a media release, Albright-Knox officials say although the sculpture from afar may appear monochromatic, closer inspection will reveal the used boats' dents, scrapes, patches and patina.

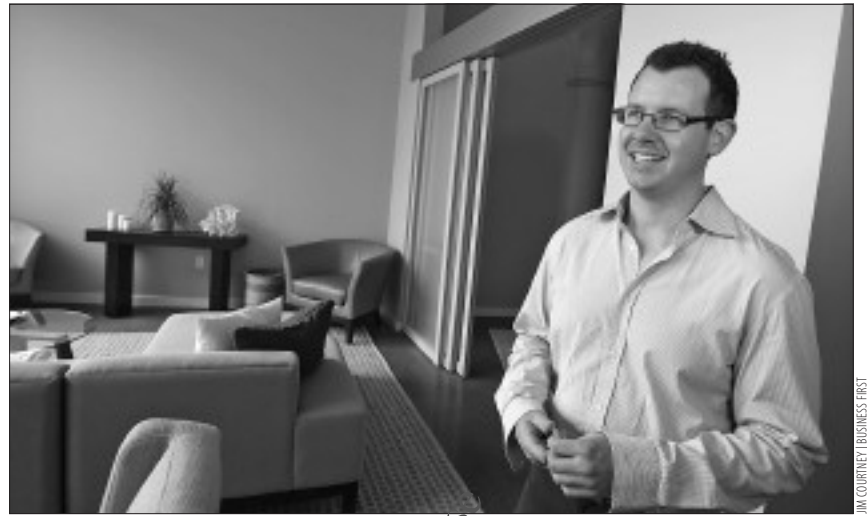
Officials said the sculpture will transform its campus, as well as have a significant visual impact on Elmwood Avenue and the city's museum district.

"This is a spectacular addition to our collection and our campus," said Louis Grachos, gallery director. "Nancy's work has such force and such impact. I think it will be enjoyed by the community for years to come."

The sculpture will be officially unveiled during a lighting ceremony at a gallery fundraising event June 30.



A large sculpture by Nancy Rubins is assembled on the lawn in front of Albright-Knox Art Gallery. The work, which measures about 60 feet wide and 40 feet high, will use steel cables to connect a collection of aluminum boats.



Tom Barrett of Kissing Interests LLC shows off the model apartment in Remington Lofts at the Canal, a \$20 million project that overlooks the Erie Canal in North Tonawanda.

Warehouse revived

Remington Rand site now a 'live-work-play' center

BY JAMES FINK
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After sitting vacant for years, the former Remington Rand warehouse in North Tonawanda is seeing new life.

Crews from R&P Oak Hill are racing to finish the nearly \$20 million historic restoration effort by Kissing Interests LLC. It's Kissing's first local project outside the City of Buffalo and is symbolic of how portions of North Tonawanda are attracting the attention of developers and tenants who otherwise might have bypassed the city.

"This is a case of a building being reinvented - and in a good way," said Tom Barrett, who is overseeing the project. "This is a case of building on the romance and architecture of what was already here."

Kissing acquired the nearly 180,000-square-foot former Sweeney Street warehouse several years ago with the intent of bringing it back to life as a "live-work-play" center that mixed loft-style apartments with commercial and retail space.

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The four-story building, which dates to the late 1890s, offers postcard-like views of the Erie Canal, the Tonawandas and Niagara Falls, which is clearly visible from the upper floors.

The company is bringing 79 apartments into the building, called the Remington Lofts at the Canal, with 17 available in the initial development phase. The apartments range from 1,000 square feet to more than 2,300 square feet. They have attracted a unique tenant mix, including a husband-and-wife tandem of doctors, a dentist and other area professionals.

The design work for the project was handled by Carmina Wood & Morris P.C., Buffalo.

Leon Studio One opened on the first floor, as did Evolution, a yoga studio and training center.

Restaurateur Paul Jenkins is slated to open an eatery on the main floor, as well as Liquid Energy, a raw juice bar and health food cafe.

Other amenities include a rooftop garden and indoor parking. The main courtyard has a steel sculpture that represents typewriter keys, a nod to the building's historic past. Remington Rand once assembled typewriters and other machines there.

"This has probably, around here, been our most extensive undertaking," Barrett said. "But we were determined not to give people cookie-cutter lofts. We wanted a high-end product that you don't see in Buffalo."

The first tenants recently moved in.

According to Barrett, construction should be completed later this year.

Williamsville firm debuts robot surgical simulator software

BY TRACEY DRURY
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A new software module will give surgeons a better opportunity to simulate what it's like to use a robot for surgical procedures.

Simulated Surgical Systems Inc., the spin-off company of Roswell Park Cancer Institute and the University at Buffalo, introduced its new Hands-on Surgical Training (HoST) software last month for use with its Robotic Surgical Simulator (RoSS).

The software is designed to help teach robot-assisted surgical techniques, guid-

ing the hands of novice surgeons through every step of four common surgical procedures.

"It takes the experience of a real surgeon and holds the hand of the trainee and makes them go through the same moves," says Dr. Khurshid Guru, director of robotic surgery at Roswell Park and UB clinical assistant professor of urology. "It's cognitive, immersive training - not just watching someone operate."

Guru co-founded the company in 2009 with Thenkurussi "Kesh" Kesavadas, director of UB's Virtual Reality Lab and a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering. Kesavadas says the new software

also offers a "warm-up" opportunity for surgeons preparing for procedures.

"That's the whole point of any simulation - a way for you to get mentally prepared and get the feel of immersion," he says.

But the best part of the software is that it uses actual video footage from real surgeries, versus illustrations, Kesavadas says.

"We're hoping this will shift the paradigm from graphics and cartoonish animation to something which is based on real application," he says.

The two-year-old company based in Williamsville is bringing in revenue and sold systems to 11 different teaching hospitals

so far, including the Cleveland Clinic, Cornell Medical Center and the Henry Ford Health System - where robotic surgery systems were born. The company is fielding calls from around the country and Europe.

The systems are also in place at five sites participating in beta studies aimed at designing a national curriculum for people who have never trained on robotics.

If the company meets its targets this year, Kesavadas says it could be profitable by next year.

"There's a lot of demand for simulation," he says. "We're at the right time frame when people want to see this."