

New Sculpture Proposed for PSH

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Capital Times Staff

Penn State Harrisburg students may soon sun themselves next to an elaborate sculpture featuring cascading water, a stainless-steel column, and large slabs of granite, if sculptor John Diamond Nigh's plans become reality.

Diamond-Nigh, a 1988 Penn State Harrisburg alumnus with a Bachelor of

Arts degree, has proposed the structure to the campus arts committee and the provost. According to Dr. Ruth Leventhal, both have approved the plan.

The sculpture will be rectangular, surrounded by low seating platforms and grass. A 13-foot-high stainless-steel pillar and two intersecting water-filled trenches will highlight the piece. Flowing water will cascade over three

differently hued slabs of granite near the upper edge of the structure near a steel pyramid and weathered boards.

Diamond-Nigh said he wants the environmental sculpture to be functional as well as beautiful. He hopes that it will become the outdoor campus gathering place that was missing during his time here.

"When I was going to Capital as a

student, there was no place that automatically came to mind that you could go to and just sit and talk," said the sculptor. "I think that moving water is very conducive to just sitting and thinking. . . or sitting and talking." Hopefully the sculpture will be a "place that would draw students to it to spend some time."

The sculpture, which will cover about 40 feet by 15 feet, will be built on the lawn between the picnic tables and the parking lot behind the Olmsted Building. The piece will join the three bronze statues, which have been loaned to the college by the provost.

Troy Thomas, associate professor of Humanities and Arts and a member of the campus arts committee, said the project will benefit the college. "John's project will be representational and abstract—a perfect counterpoint to the realistic forms of the statues. The sculpture will complement them," he said.

It is not clear at this point where the money to fund the project will come from, or how much the project will cost. Early estimates of about \$12,000 for materials alone may prove to be too low. Leventhal said that the initial size of the project was deemed too small for space available.

The artist has erected a full-sized plywood mock-up of the sculpture that will determine the cost of the actual piece.

The provost said money for the project "would have to come out of campus funds or it would come from fundraising."

Linda Ross, Penn State Harrisburg art instructor and arts committee member, said, "This must be seen in the context of long-term development for the campus aesthetically. We hope to actively try to acquire larger, permanent pieces of art to be showcased in this area."

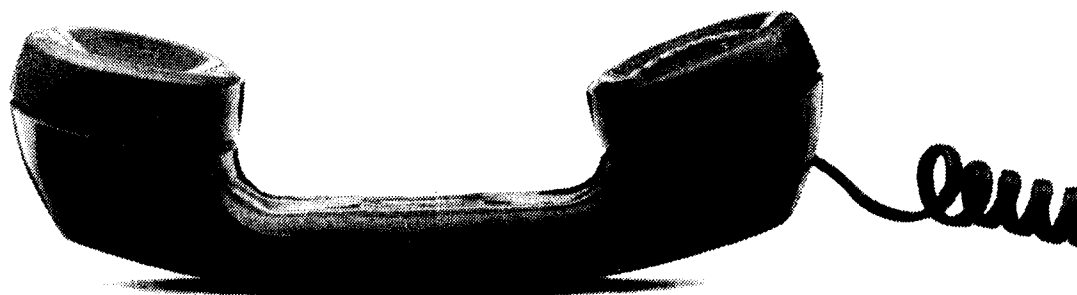
Diamond-Nigh said that exposing more students to many forms of art is important. He would like to see his proposed sculpture become a springboard for newer, indigenous talent on campus and can see his piece as "the genesis for a whole collection of sculpture on campus."

Diamond-Nigh was born and raised in Ontario, Canada. He has received the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen Award for Outstanding Craftsmanship in 1986 for a collection of hand-crafted work. His accomplishments have also been featured in the magazine *Fine Woodworking*.

He had a number of sculptures on exhibit at Messiah College in Upper Allen Township last month, and a future display containing five or six of his pieces is planned for inclusion at a major exhibition at the Woodmere Museum in Philadelphia.

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