

Sizeler Thompson Brown Architects Creates 'Works in Water' Exhibit for 2009 Art for Art's Sake, Oct. 3

Sizeler Thompson Brown Architects (STBA) will host a reception to unveil a special creative exhibit. "AQUAitecture - Works in Water" on Saturday, Oct. 3 from 6-9 pm, as part of this year's *Art for Art's Sake* celebration. The exhibit, on display in the STBA lobby, features unique interpretations of 'water related' art pieces, including fountains, created by firm architects, designers and staff.

This is the fourth year STBA has created a special thematic exhibition in conjunction with *Art for Art's Sake*.

"We have challenged the members of the firm to create artworks inspired by water." says I William Sizeler, founder of the firm. "These art pieces will be auctioned by silent bid Saturday evening," he notes, "and, as a socially conscious firm, we will donate funds received to the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation to benefit the Save Our Coast and Save Our Lake initiatives."

STBA expects to have more than 30 entries included in the 'Works in Water' exhibition. Artists who submitted fountains were provided with a mini submersible pump around which to construct their art.

"This year's exhibit, 'AQUAitecture - Works in Water', honors the 25th anniversary of the 1984 New Orleans World's Fair whose theme was "The World of Rivers: Fresh Water as a Source of Life," says Thomas Brown, AIA, firm principal, who helped develop the concept for this year's competition.

Each year a team of volunteers - from interns to principals - meet to decide an exhibition theme, plan the logistics, and coordinate the event. "It's a collaborative effort," Brown notes, 'that brings us closer as a firm.'

This year's entries are whimsical, practical, abstract and conceptual 'water' interpretations that utilize woodworking, metal, lighting, plants, and natural elements. Many are also 'green,' employing recycled, natural and energy-saving materials as well as 'found' objects.

"Our annual *Art for Art's Sake* exhibit allows us to showcase the talents of STBA staff, promotes our firm's design culture and allows the public to see architects as visual artists," says Brian Faucheux, AIA, LEED AP, firm principal who is coordinating the exhibit. "For one night, we transform our building lobby into an art gallery - complete with live music, food/beverages and the unveiling of new work."

Included in the exhibit are such works as:

~'High Voltage' by Allen Ohlmeyer, Architect. A fountain with lights created from recycled materials. Water spouts from a ribbed tubular ceramic insulator over glass marbles submerged in fluorescent dye. The fountain is lighted by flexible LED tubes encircling the insulator.

~'Dozen on the Half-Shell' is one of the three fountains created by Eddie Castelin, Construction Administrator. There is nothing more New Orleans than a 'Dozen on the half-shell". A few cool beers, some salty oysters and the serene sounds of a water garden. Sit back and enjoy. As materials, he used a bucket and oyster shells.

~'The Wetlands on the Horizon' by Jay Dufour, Architect. Man-made equipment conforms and becomes more like the natural environment, in order to prevent the deterioration of the planet, as in the wetlands that protect us from storm surge. The materials used in this solar fountain include horse tail marsh grass, sand, gravel, sheet metal, galvanized tub, paint, solar panel and water

~'Condescending' by Bob Bennett, Architect. A water fountain that features water travelling *up* a copper plant form by trickery and descends again into a sea of water lettuces.

~'Leaky Faucet' by Tyler Hutcherson, Architect Intern. A water faucet found during a fellow architect's recent move provided inspiration for this fountain made from found objects including a cabinet door,

gutters and the faucet. The artist's Haiku describes the work: "A storm gives palette Death nourishes life, in spring Fountain leaks like sieve"

~*Aquaflage*² by Mark Brupbacher, Project Manager. The Soothing Sound of Flowing Water Camouflages the Gridded Chaos of a City. Half water, half camouflage. The artist used glass tile, plastic, grating, metal and a light kit.

~*Fluidity* by Anna Bertucci Ghelase, Architect. In this wave-like sculpture, glass, though a solid state material, seems fluid like water. Like water, glass reflects light. Made from wood and glass samples selected for patterns and textures that are further reminiscent of water.

Sizeler Brown Thompson Architects first began their *Art for Art's Sake* exhibit in 2006 to showcase the varied talents of staff and designers in an 'art in architecture' exhibit. The exhibit included drawings, paintings, sculpture, jewelry, furniture and photography and was such a success the firm elected to make the exhibit an annual event.

In 2007, the firm decided on a thematic challenge, "*nLightn - the art of illumination*," with art pieces created around a single compact fluorescent bulb. Last year's "*Tempo - Studies in Time*" raised more than \$3,100 for the Southern Animal Foundation.

The public is invited to view the exhibit from 6-9 pm, Saturday, October 3 in STBA's lobby at 300 Lafayette Mall. Refreshments and entertainment will be provided.

The Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation will use the funds raised by the exhibit to further the group's mission, says Anne Rheams, Executive Director. "We are launching a new campaign - 'Enjoy Our Lake' -- that will help create public venues and access to the restored water bodies and other natural areas in the basin."