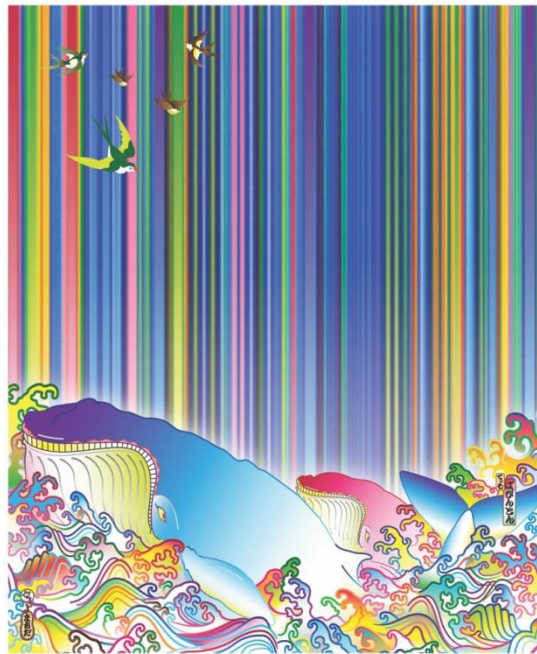


2018 COULD BRING PROPOSED ART MUSEUM IN DOWNTOWN LAS VEGAS

Carol Cling January 7, 2018



Artists Sush Machida Gaikotsu and Tim Bavington's "Museum Print" part of the limited-edition Art Museum at Symphony Park portfolio.

It's a new year — one that could be *the* year for a proposed art museum in downtown Las Vegas.

Not that 2017 wasn't consequential for advocates of the Art Museum at Symphony Park, considering a \$1 million state appropriation for a major Las Vegas museum and expansion of Reno's Nevada Museum of Art.

But the upcoming 12 months will prove pivotal, according to Katie O'Neill, who chairs the Art Museum at Symphony Park's board of directors. "It's a really exciting time coming up."

One reason for the excitement: the planned merger between Reno's NMOA and the proposed Las Vegas museum.

“It’s going to be a single entity,” O’Neill says, with museums at both ends of the state. “We continue to work toward a merger — and we hope to have a clear direction by May.”

As plans for the museum progress, advocates realize “we’re going to have to build a local staff,” she adds, especially someone who can “bring art-world knowledge to the post.”

That description also applies to O’Neill, who as a girl “told everyone I was going to grow up to be an artist,” she recalls. After studying art history in college, she worked in galleries in New York, so “I understand the business of art.”

Among the many items on the proposed art museum’s to-do list: matching the state’s million-dollar appropriation.

To that end, Art Museum at Symphony Park advocates plan to re-promote a limited-edition, \$10,000 portfolio of 10 color lithographs by local artists who have donated their work to support the museum.

Issued last spring, the portfolio will be relaunched soon at a meet-the-artists reception, according to board member Michele Quinn, who’s showcasing the art at her downtown gallery, MCQ Fine Art. (Half of the \$10,000 cost is a tax-deductible donation — or at least it was at the time of the portfolio’s 2017 release.)

Discussions with city of Las Vegas officials regarding the Symphony Park location also continue, O’Neill reports.

The multiple steps forward mean “this is really going to happen,” O’Neill says. “I feel better about this than I ever have. It feels like everything’s coming together.”