



Artwork provides focal point for Campion college entrance

"I'm really interested in watching how students respond when they have knowledge open up to them," says Chris St. Amand, as his eyes survey his work at the entrance to Campion College at the U of R. Perhaps that's because St. Amand, who is a technician in the University's department of visual arts, had the same experience when he registered at Campion and began his studies.

"I recall while sitting in classes my first year," St. Amand muses, "of getting a sense of a much bigger perspective of the world. Students go through a lot of changes in a short time."

St. Amand's work is not really one piece of art; it would be better described as a collection of interconnected pieces, using an eclectic range of materials. That's partly because it serves a functional purpose as the entrance to the college; hundreds of people walk through the space every day, yet it has a very different appearance and feel to it than the utilitarian corridor just a few steps away.

"I wanted to create a sanctuary setting, as a focal point for people entering the college," St. Amand explains. "I also wanted to align it with other ideas and values that the college promotes."

The college had issued invitations to several artists to submit ideas for the project, which was intended to update the entrance to the college. St. Amand's proposal was chosen from a short list of three.

"It was a nice circular thing to come back to the college," says St. Amand, who had been working from a studio at Echo Lake before taking the visual arts job about two years ago.

The main elements of the work, titled Arc, include a round pillar where the corridor and the entrance meet. A band of stainless steel bearing words written by the college's namesake spirals around the pillar, and then leads into the entranceway, where it joins a bright blue "river" recessed into the ceiling. The river flows into a circular dome, which is echoed by a large circular design on the floor below. The circle encompasses a colourful map showing oceans and land masses, although none of the shapes are recognizable. The four points of the compass are integrated into the map, and other black lines arc out across the floor in different directions. Gazing across the floor, it's as though two-dimensional maps of the Earth and of the solar system have settled in together, layer on layer.

On one side of the circle, a rust-coloured monolith hangs suspended from the ceiling, through a notch in the ceiling projects through a notch in the monolith, illuminating what looks like the ribs of a fish or a sailing ship.

"I thought of the early explorers, going into uncharted waters with few navigational tools," St. Amand explains. "They had to rely on their senses. Starting university is like that, because students can consider going in any number of directions, metaphorically."

St. Amand likens the monolith to a



Chris St. Amand stands at the centre of his unique artwork that marks the entrance to Campion College.

Photo by Bill Armstrong

navigational instrument that has sat rusting at the bottom of the sea, and now is restored to provide guidance and light. It's best seen in the evening when light and shadow fall in the circle, he advises.

The work also includes a bench for anyone who wants to spend a few moments observing its various elements, or to simply watch people going by. Behind the bench stand three marble slabs listing the names of Campion benefactors donating \$500 or more between 1990 and 2000.

All of the elements fit comfortably

together, for which St. Amand credits close collaboration with an advisory committee of Campion representatives, chief designer Jim Steeves and the tradespeople who did the work.

"Campion had a vision, but the people involved were open as to how it might be carried out," says St. Amand. "The idea for this work grew considerably from the start, and Campion's advisory committee was behind it all the way. I commend the college for finding the additional support so the work would be the focal point they envisioned."

U of R continues to show strength in many areas

"We're experiencing a period of great excitement in higher education in Canada," says University of Regina president David Barnard, "and the U of R is part of that."

In an interview following four days of convocation ceremonies, Barnard surveyed activities at the University over the past year, and ventured a look into the near future. He sees many good things happening, and the potential for more.

"I was pleased with the community interest in the convocation ceremonies," Barnard says. "The number and quality of the graduates was impressive."

One of the most notable activities of the past year, says Barnard, is the amount of construction taking place on campus. Two large projects, the new residence building and the Centre for Kinesiology, Health and Sport, are on budget and on schedule to open this fall. Both facilities will be pivotal to the Canada Summer Games in Regina next year.

"Providing housing and athletic

facilities for the Games shows that the University is a strong member of the community," Barnard says. "I expect the Games will be good for the University, the city and the province."

Barnard also notes significant growth in the University's partnership with the adjacent Regina Research Park, which is home to several research and high technology oriented organizations and enterprises.

"The University is particularly pleased with our partnership with the Communities of Tomorrow initiative," says Barnard. "Executive director Anne Parker works with a strong team of people doing interesting and creative research in the area of sustainable communities, and members of the University community contribute to that research. I think the whole initiative has potential that is very significant for the city and the province," says Barnard.

In a similar vein, Barnard says that the University is part of a national trend that

has seen an increase in the number of graduate students. It's important for the University and the surrounding community, he explains, to have graduate students doing research that can realize social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits.

"We're also continuing to pay attention to student recruitment and the diversification of the student body," Barnard says. "That includes an increase in the number of aboriginal students at the U of R, in collaboration with the First Nations University of Canada. We also believe many students benefit from exchanges, which includes hosting students from other countries and having our students attend schools in other countries."

Barnard says faculty members continue to demonstrate creativity in developing programs to meet society's changing needs. As an example, he points to the development of the four-year degree in police studies, in which students receive a

core liberal arts education, followed by a term at the Saskatchewan Police College and an internship with a police service. The expanded program has received a good response from students and from police services looking to hire graduates, Barnard says. "I expect that will be a growth area in the future," he adds.

Regarding the suggestion that students regard universities as little more than professional certification factories, Barnard says there's a bit of that attitude among students at the U of R, as there is at all universities.

"It's somewhat understandable," says Barnard, "because people recognize that a university education can lead to better jobs. But if students see a degree as just a ticket to get a job, they'll have missed a major part of the university experience. Part of the university's role is to encourage students to become thoughtful, informed citizens who contribute to and participate in a democratic society," he concludes.

CAMPUS LIFE CALENDAR

Mon., June 21 - 1 p.m.

Cougars Men's Basketball Golf Classic
Entry fee is \$140 per person
Royal Regina Golf Club
Info: 585-4018

Tues., June 22 - 1 p.m.

First Nations University of Canada 2nd Annual President's Cup Golf Challenge
Entry Fee is \$150 per person or \$600 per team
Deer Valley Golf Course
Info: 790-5950 ext. 2200

Tues., June 22 - 7 p.m.

Alumni Association Annual General Meeting
Meet alumni, provide input, or find out how you can be involved.
Language Institute Theatre
Info: 585-5158

Thurs., June 24 - 12:30 p.m.

15th Annual U of R Alumni Golf Classic
Entry fee is \$125 per person
Tor Hill
Info: 585-4030

July 1

University closed

For a complete calendar of events at the University of Regina visit our website at www.uregina.ca



University registrar Janet Denford prepares to place a convocation hood around John Kenneth Samways (in red serge) as Chancellor Art Wakabayashi confers upon him a bachelor of arts degree in police studies. The University's June 8 convocation ceremony marked the inaugural awarding of the degree. Samways, now a constable with the RCMP in Wainwright, Alta., and Daniel Frederick Pollock are the first graduates of the program which began in September 1999.

U of R Photo by A/V Services

