



Underfoot yet Overhead (Part I)

Karen Kazmer

July 2009

City Centre Walking Loop Greenway, University Drive

Underfoot yet Overhead is two different, yet related, series of visual markers installed on SkyTrain pillars along the City Centre Walking Loop Greenway. Artist Karen Kazmer calls each series “a microscopic hunt for meaning.” The works are based on enlargements of microscopic forms or particles associated with human activities and natural processes in Whalley Athletic Park and Holland Park. Their intent is to create a visible presence for what is normally unseen or overlooked.

Underfoot yet Overhead is one of six site-specific public art projects produced under Surrey’s 2008 Cultural Capital of Canada initiative and supported by the Department of Canadian Heritage and the City of Surrey. The works explore Surrey’s natural and built heritage, First Nations history, cultural diversity and community activity. They provide a lasting legacy for each of Surrey’s six town centres.

University Drive Installation

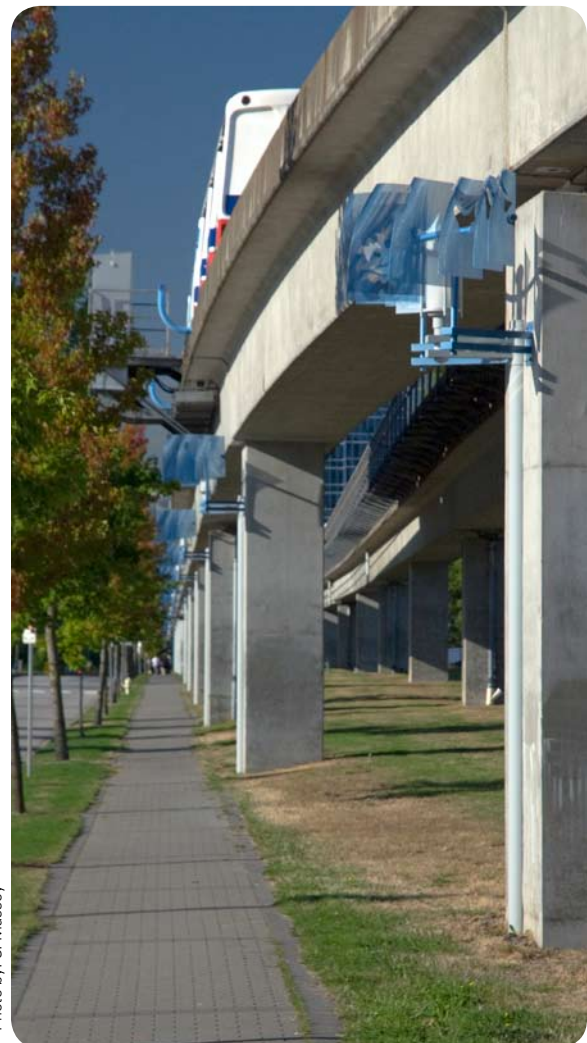
A series of perforated metal panels is mounted in front of light fixtures on SkyTrain pillars. Each of the panel groupings is based on increments of movement that occurs around the body or sports equipment. Arranged sequentially, like stop-motion animation, the series of 12 different actions celebrate sports activities in Whalley Athletic Park.

A moiré effect occurs when viewers look through the perforated layers and detect patterns. Tiny shapes in the patterns are magnified, suggesting the energy and dispersal of air particles in immediate proximity to the athletes’ movements. These effects can often be seen at a distance. Other visual effects can be seen from passing by on the street or sidewalk. Images captured in the series of panels seem to move like stop-motion animation or a flip book. Under night conditions, the light behind the panels can cast evocative shadows on the SkyTrain pillars.

Photo by: S. Massey



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About the Artist

Karen Kazmer is a Vancouver-based visual artist who specializes in mixed-media installations and public art projects. Her work is often site-specific and addresses both the human body and the ways we position ourselves within social spaces. For her City Centre Walking Loop public art projects, she has drawn on her recent interest in the microscopic world and its unseen relationships to our everyday lives and activities.

Born in the Chicago area, Kazmer studied at Loyola University, the University of British Columbia and York University. She has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in both the United States and Canada, from Toronto to San Francisco and from Burnaby to Portland. Her public-art commissions and purchases include projects for the City of Vancouver, the City of Richmond, and the City and District of North Vancouver.

Photo by: Angela

