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## Auraria to receive winged beauty

### New Science Building will feature art

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Before these vials of vampire blood can become vampire bats, they must be hung from the ceiling.

This summer there will be a new resident on campus. Psyche is a giant metal monarch butterfly who will grace the new Science Building, and whose story is ripe with metamorphosis.

It all began with the Art in Public Places Act, a state statute passed in 1977 that states that 1 percent of the construction costs of new or renovated state-owned buildings shall be set aside for public artwork.

Auraria's new Science Building fit this guideline, so in the summer of 2008, Jil Rosentrater, the director of Art in Public Places at the Colorado Council of the Arts, put together a selection committee to begin the process.

Eighteen people, including two faculty members from each institution, reviewed applications from 184 artists across the nation, according to Rosentrater. The five semi-finalists' proposals went on display at the Auraria Library, allowing faculty, staff, and students a chance to give feedback. After receiving community input through the library exhibition, the selection committee voted to install the artwork called Psyche. Philadelphia sculptor Donald Lipski submitted a revised proposal based on a new budget, revised from \$540,000 to \$190,000. The sculpture is set to be installed this summer.

Psyche will add to other Lipski works in Denver, including The Yearling, the stature of the horse on the red chair, outside the downtown Public Library and numerous found-object sculptures inside the Wellington Webb Municipal Building.



Figure 1: Courtesy of Donald Lipski

When Lipski was conceiving of an idea for the new Science Building, he “wanted something that was about science, and something that was really sort of magical,” he said.

Psyche is a 14-foot metal monarch butterfly whose wings will be made of thousands of test tubes filled with shades of orange transparent plastic. Hanging where the old and new buildings connect, the sculpture will simulate stained glass.

Lipski plans to work with local fabricators to construct the piece.

“When there is public money involved, it’s really nice to spend the money locally,” he said.

Due to the reduced budget, Lipski had to reduce the scale and forgo plans to use elaborate fiber optic lighting.

“It will still be quite beautiful and dramatic,” he said. “I think a butterfly is very open to metaphor, and I think people will look at it and make up their own stories about it.”

“It has an element of the Southwest in it,” said Leo Bruederle, chair of the department of integrative biology at UC Denver, who volunteered to be on the selection committee.

Bruederle said he thinks it will attract even those who aren’t taking classes in the building, especially because it will be visible from outside both sides of the building.

Rian Kerrane, area head of sculpture in the department of visual arts at UCD, also represented UCD on the selection committee. She is excited about the addition to the campus’s existing sculpture collection, especially because she is currently working to garner support for launching an Auraria Sculpture Park.

“To me, not only is it a fun piece,” Kerrane said, “but on a deeper, more meaningful level, there’s all of that symbolism about science in the classical sense. I think it really fits with the space in that regard.”