

2.0//ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Working Title: All Kinds of Beauty

A strong community is made up of all types of people who are passionate about all kinds of things. Fernie is a place that has the opportunity to continue to build a tight-knit community because of, not in spite of, its diversity. My goal with this proposal was to capture in a symbolic way that beauty in the diversity we have right here in the Elk Valley.

The style I chose for this piece flows out of a series of prints I've been working on over the past year (see inset images). They are an attempt to capture multiple facets of mountain living using a simplified vocabulary of symbols and pattern repetition to bring emphasize major themes while creating a visually unified piece. The style of these prints lend themselves well to scaling up to a mural size, using a lively but simple palette to create a striking piece.

Someone said to me recently that the Elk Valley is a place with a lot of 'flow'. I've created a design for the mural that flows both from my current work as a printmaker, using the themes I observe as a landscape painter, to create that kind of 'flow' so persistent in our valley. My goal is to draw people along the side of the building using horizontal movement of line. Ideally they will be drawn right onto 2nd avenue where they will be presented with the 'money shot' view of downtown Fernie with the Lizard headwall as a backdrop.

By abstracting the landscape to a series of geometric patterns, I have moved the piece in to illumination of, rather than competition with, the 'real' Fernie, and pushed it into an idealized version that highlights many aspects of life in the valley. As people move along the piece, they embark on a journey that hopefully shows them bits of themselves, but also showcases what parts others might be passionate about. My goal will be to challenge viewers to understand more about Fernie, and as all good public art does, to force people to expand the dialogue about our own understanding about who we are and what defines our community.

Embedded in the piece are symbols of industry, recreation, indigenous history, and architecture. The piece has enough flexibility that, if selected, I am happy to work with the committee to fill in any symbols the members feel would enrich the piece or increase the relevance of it.

Artistically the piece is also designed to stand on its own as a cohesive composition. Care has been taken to give it balance, cohesion, and interest. I've chosen a palette that is vibrant and dynamic, but not brash. For final colour selection, I would like to consult with Ron at the Fernie Museum to ensure a diverse but historically rooted colour palette so the composition has an increased relevance to the history of the town in subtle ways that enrich the piece as well as the downtown core.

