

USI announces winner to art commission for new Griffin Center

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The University of Southern Indiana announced today that John McNaughton and Joan Kempf deJong have been awarded a commission for a piece of public art to be installed on the new Robert E. Griffin Center, currently under construction on the USI campus.

McNaughton is a professor emeritus of art at USI, and has successfully completed 30 commissioned public art projects. deJong is an associate professor of art at USI and has managed and led numerous design projects, including the visual design of multi-million dollar commercial buildings. Both were featured in the year-long Master Teacher Series held at the Evansville Museum of Arts, History, and Science in honor of USI's 50th Anniversary.

The proposed work, titled "Bent Twig", is based on a twig and branch composition designed to contrast the geometric design of the Griffin Center. The sculpture will measure approximately 22 feet long and 8 feet high, and will be constructed by Evansville Sheet Metal.

"The chosen site offers one of the most beautiful settings on campus where both forest and lake converge providing a dramatic effect," said McNaughton and deJong in their proposal. "We wanted to honor this secluded location by designing a sculpture inspired by nature."

The Griffin Center is a new meeting venue on campus being built on the west side of Reflection Lake, and was made possible through private donations as part of the USI Foundation's Campaign USI: Elevating Excellence. The sculpture will be revealed at the official ribbon cutting ceremony planned for May 6.

"The sculpture chosen is a perfect fit from its concept to its name," said David A. Bower, USI Foundation president. "Now in our 51st year of operation, the University can be justly proud of its growing art collection. We are grateful that generous friends and alumni are contributing private gifts, including works of art, adding to the beauty of the campus."