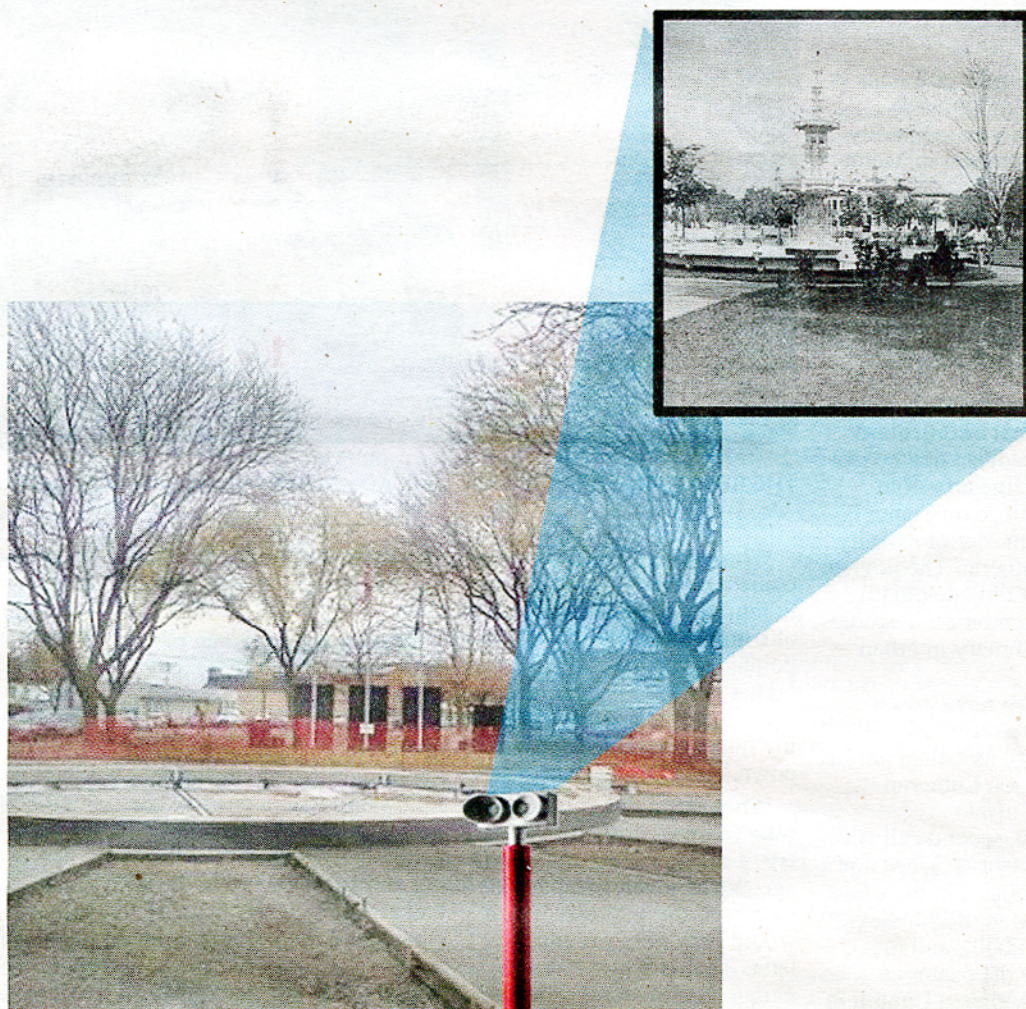


Neighbors

CITY OF SYRACUSE



Submitted photos

A STEREOSCOPE (*right*) is to be installed at Forman Park that will give visitors an unusual view of the facility. When a person looks through it, what will be seen is a view of the park circa 1880.

Looking Back

Stereoscope art project to offer unusual views

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SyraViews: A Look at the Past

A Syracuse Public Art Commission project

By Becky Voss
Contributing writer

When the weather turns nice and visitors peer through a new scope at Forman Park, they might be surprised at what they see. Instead of viewing the present-day fountain and flowers, they will take a journey back in time to visit Syracuse circa 1880.

The visual time travel is courtesy of artist Colleen Woolpert and her project: SyraViews Stereoscopes.

Spearheaded by the Syracuse Public Art Commission, the project includes the installation of two powder-coated, anodized aluminum stereoscopes resembling tourist viewers at the park. When looking inside, instead of seeing a telescopic view of the current scene, tourists will see a historic three-dimensional photograph, or stereograph, of the same view from the 1880s. The photo shows the original fountain and four citizens posing for the camera.

"When the past comes to life, it is made real in our imaginations, and we begin to think about the space we inhabit," Woolpert said. "We consider what our city was, is

and can become. We realize that others before us created this place, this community and we are now its stewards.

"I want people to see those who were here before us. And I want them to think that those people are looking back at them and think, 'What would we say to each other?'" she said.

Kate Auwaerter is the city of Syracuse public art coordinator who helped commission the artwork.

"One of the roles of public art is to help us see physical space in new and engaging ways," she said. "I think Colleen's work does this in a very real sense. It sends the viewer back into a different century, but also makes you think about what changes have taken place over time, the place today and where we are going next."

Originally from Michigan, Woolpert has lived across the United States and currently resides in Seattle. However, her path brought her to Syracuse in 2007 where she received her master of fine arts degree from Syracuse University in the Department of Transmedia, College of Visual and Performing Arts.

While in Syracuse, she was interested in local history. She frequented the Onondaga Historical Association and the

Erie Canal Museum, lived in an 1865 home in the Hawley-Green neighborhood and rented a studio in the historic Gear Factory building. Ironically, she discovered that in the very same building a major invention was created.

"In the mid-1800s, Syracuse was at the forefront of optical innovations that led directly to the invention of cinema. The popular parlor device known as the mutoscope was invented in what is now the Gear Factory (formerly Lipe building) by two men who later formed American Biograph, the nation's first company dedicated solely to the production of movies," she said.

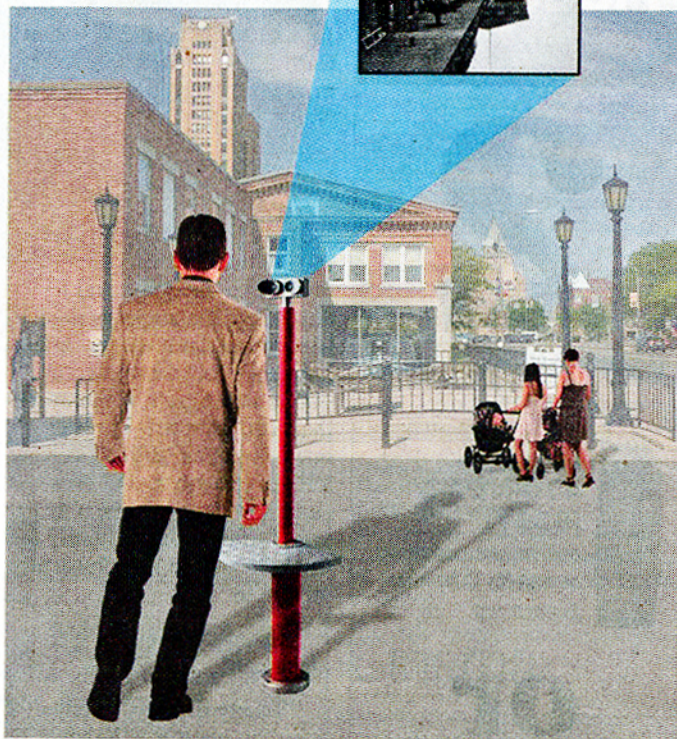
"Prior to cinema, viewing stereographs was the most popular form of entertainment. It brought views of faraway places into the homes of folks who would likely never stray outside their own ZIP code," Woolpert said.

The installation of SyraViews Stereoscopes is slated for late April or early May. The viewers will be placed side-by-side at the southwestern edge of the fountain circle and bolted into the concrete. One will be handicapped-accessible and each stereoscope will have the same image.

Woolpert will also curate an exhibit of stereographs for the Onondaga Historical Association, viewable in their new second-floor gallery from May through October 2012.

According to Auwaerter, the Forman park project is one of 21 works reviewed and approved by the Art Commission, including a variety of videos, murals and sculptural works. SyraViews is funded by a \$17,000 grant from the Connective Corridor.

Another notable project was "Arterie," a collaborative project between the 40 Below



Submitted photo

THE MAIN PHOTO shows the Erie Canal Museum as it is today. The small view shows what a visitor would see if they looked through a stereoscope installed there.

Public Art Taskforce and the Erie Canal Museum. It involved painting a two-block stretch of Erie Boulevard between Salina and Montgomery Streets blue.

"The blue striped pattern represents both the water of the former canal and is also read as a bar code from above," Auwaerter said.

"This project really hit the mark — conceptually bold, collaborative, participatory, and although abstract is easy to grasp and understand."

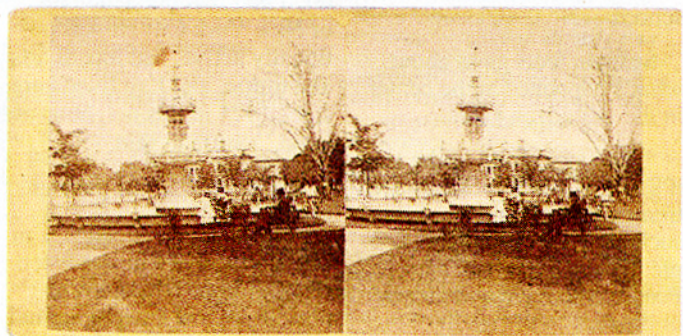
Local art enthusiasts can also look forward to an upcoming project launched by the commission.

The SALT Mural by Brett Snyder, due to be installed this spring on the Lemp Gallery, is a downtown mural that simultaneously celebrates Syracuse's industrial past and its current status as an artistic hub.

At first glance, the image is historical, depicting a pump house and brine distribution center. On closer inspection, viewers realize the image is a mosaic composed of dozens of unique QR codes or "quick response" codes, each linking to a contemporary arts organization in the greater Syracuse region.

Auwaerter thinks that projects like these play an important role.

"Artwork, such as Arterie or SyraViews, creates an interesting aesthetic environment that promotes conversation," she said. "It also tells a story about who we are and where we've come from — this is valuable to us as residents of the community, but it also indicates to the wider world that we are a community with an interesting story to tell and, I believe, an interesting future ahead of us."



Submitted photo

A STEREOSCOPE SLIDE of Forman Park. When viewed through a stereoscope, the pictures look 3-D.