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Metro Rail Station Artwork 'Plantings' Wins National 'Concrete in Transit Award'

July 2 - The Portland Cement Association, a cement company trade group in the United States and Canada, has selected "Plantings" – an installation of artist-designed benches at the 7th and Metro station - to receive its 2004 "Concrete in Transit Award."

"Plantings," by the artist team of Kipp Kobayashi, Marta Perlas and Noel Korten, is a series of three seating areas for transit riders awaiting trains and subway cars on the Metro Red Line and Blue Line platforms.

Twelve cubes made of durable lightweight concrete are arranged to produce a branching 'Y' pattern suggestive of plants and trees. The three-foot-square cubes are engraved with designs inspired by floral tile work in the historic Fine Arts Building directly above the station.

Lighting mounted above the cubes projects a series of foliage patterns onto the seating area, giving transit riders the illusion of sitting under a tree.

Two clusters of cubes are located on the Metro Red Line platform and one on the west Metro Blue Line platform.

The Concrete In Transit

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Plantings

by the artist team of
Kipp Kobayashi, Marta Perlas and Noel
Korten

An installation of seating environments on the platform level of the 7th Street/Metro Center/Julian Dixon Metro Rail Station. Three seating areas for transit riders consist of three-foot-square cubes made of durable lightweight concrete which are arranged to produce a branching 'Y' pattern suggestive of plants and trees. Lighting elements mounted 25 feet above the cubes project a series foliage patterns onto the seating area, giving transit riders the effect of sitting under a tree.

PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON

Awards Program is held every two years to honor excellence in the design and construction of concrete transit and rail projects.

Metro is now a two-time winner of the national award. The Vermont/Santa Monica station, which features concrete of varying textures in the station design by architectural firm of Ellerbe Becket and artist Robert Millar, received the award in 2000.

Picked from among 34 other submissions, "Plantings" was judged on creativity, transferability, aesthetics, economics and functionality. The awards will be presented during the American Concrete Institute convention in San Francisco



Artist team celebrate installation of 'Plantings' at Metro Art's 'Arts a Trip' event Sept. 16, 2002. From left, Noel Korten, Marta Perlas and Kipp Kobayashi.