CITY OF ASHEVILLE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM
51 BILTMORE PUBLIC ART PROJECT

Located on the exterior of the public parking deck next to the Aloft Hotel at 51 Biltmore Avenue in downtown Asheville

Artists Alex Irvine and Ian Wilkinson are teaming up to create a stylized mural using painted surface and ceramic tile that speaks to both the modern architecture of the Aloft Hotel and to Asheville's historical terracotta buildings. The mural features a central figure of a woman as a daydreamer as she looks over downtown Asheville as a place where creativity flourishes. In the background, an inverted art deco horseshoe pattern references the historic location of Asheville's farrier trade.

Formerly of Asheville and now residing in New Mexico, Irvin's ceramic tile murals can be found in prominent displays in Asheville including Hall Fletcher Elementary School, the Odyssey Center for Ceramics, and the Mission Hospital Donor Recognition Wall. "This is a dream come true to be back in Asheville," Irvin said about the opportunity to return to Asheville. "Working late nights in a River Arts District studio, hovering above the downtown sidewalk on scaffolding, trowel and tile in hand, working next to a great friend… that is my dream job. I am really grateful for this opportunity."

Known for his murals in Asheville, local artist Wilkinson stated, "We are very thankful for this opportunity to collaborate again, and make something amazing for this city that we love so much. We are ready to work and make something great!" Samples of Wilkinson's murals can be seen at Hall Fletcher and Claxton Elementary Schools, the Cotton Mill in the River Art District, and in the Asheville Mural Project in Triangle Park.

See more of Irvine and Wilkinson's work at their websites.
Alex Irvine www.alexirvineceramics.com
Ian Wilkinson www.ianthepainter.com

The Project

The Aloft Hotel and public parking deck at 51 Biltmore Avenue in downtown Asheville, North Carolina is a visible landmark in the city's skyline, set apart by its contemporary architecture and vibrant color scheme. The artwork will be located on the exterior wall of the parking deck exit way on the north side of the Aloft Hotel on Aston Street. It is intended to enhance the sense of local identity in downtown Asheville, as well as compliment the architecture of the hotel. The project is part of the City's *Percent for Art Program*.

The Process

The City of Asheville issued a call for artists in September 2013. The finalists were chosen by a Selection Panel from an applicant pool of over 150 artists. Finalists included the mural artist team of Alex Irvine (Santa Fe, NM) and Ian Wilkinson (Asheville, NC); stone mosaic artist Marc Archambault (Asheville, NC); and glass artist Mike Allison (Joelton, TN).

The Public Art and Cultural Commission hosted a public forum in January 2014 in which the public met the artists and provided comment to inspire them in their design proposals.

A second round of public comment occurred April 4-11, 2014 at which time the artists' proposals were on display at the Blue Spiral 1 and at the Aloft Hotel. The public was invited to view the proposals and make comment. At the same time, the comment period was open online. Over 500 people provided valuable feedback that constituted 25% of the selection process led by a citizen Selection Panel. In addition to public comment, the Selection Panel considered artistic merit, originality, appropriateness for the site; and practical factors such as maintenance, feasibility and budget.

Thanks to Project Partners
Thanks to project partners who assisted in creating the 51 Biltmore Public Art Project.
Trinity Episcopal Church
Blue Spiral 1
Aloft Hotel
Public Art and Cultural Commission

Project Timeline 2014

Public Forum #1 with Artist Finalists	January 24
Artist Finalists Proposals Due	March 17
Public Forum #2 on Artists Proposals	April 4 -11
Select Final Proposal	April 30
Artwork Installation Complete	Fall

Selection Panel
David McCartney, Aloft Hotel
Sharon Trammel, Public Art and Cultural Commission
Jenny Bowen, Asheville Artist and Photographer
Elizabeth Barr, Art Resources
Susie Millions, Asheville Visual Artist
Sarah Larson, 51 Biltmore Neighborhood Resident, Arts Advocate

Follow the Project
Stay current on 51 Biltmore Public Art Project at the City of Asheville's website at ashevillenc.gov. For more information contact Basil Punsalan at 828-259-5552 or bpunsalan@ashevillenc.gov.

Public Art Program
The City of Asheville Public Art Program oversees Asheville's public art collection. The Public Art and Cultural Commission is responsible for approving the site and content of public art, and the development of an inclusive selection process that involves community feedback. The Commission also acts as a public art ambassador by advancing the City of Asheville as an "arts destination" in cultural and economic development efforts.

The city's public art collection includes the popular Urban Trail, a historic walking tour of downtown Asheville; along with other prominent works including but not limited to the *Pack Fountain*, *Energy Loop*, *Deco Gecko* and the *Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial*.