

PROJECT NARRATIVE

LARGE SCALE SCULPTURE PROPOSAL - Indianapolis Airport Authority

for: Outdoor Garden Sites (north or south)
by: John Van Alstine
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"CARDINALIS (Redwing for Wilbur and Orville)"



OUTDOOR GARDEN SITE - setting the tone

The proposed work *Cardinalis* is a dynamic and graceful free standing sculpture designed to capture the eyes and minds of the traveling public and to reflect positively on the airport, city and people of Indianapolis. Because of its scale and proposed locations flanking the terminal entrance, it will be one of the first artworks seen approaching the airport and one of the last when leaving. Visible from many key positions and because of the way it complements the dramatic terminal architecture, it will play a critical role in shaping the public's positive travel experience.



THEME, CONTENT, CONCEPTS - state bird and local boys

The two part title first makes direct reference to Indiana's state bird the **Cardinal** (*Richmondena Cardinalis*). This is reinforced by its striking colors: cardinal red and black. Second, it pays homage to the Wright Brothers, perhaps the most well know of all aviation pioneers and two of Indiana's native sons. (Wilbur born 1867 in Millville, IN and Orville 1871 in Dayton, IN - both not far outside of Indianapolis.)

GENERAL IMAGERY and STYLE - bridging earth and sky

The dynamically positioned "red wing" and its connection to the "ground" via the sweeping arch element makes an immediate and obvious link to aviation. This act of "bridging" can be seen as a symbol of airports, which are in fact "middle ground" - the physical places in our contemporary society that connect the earth and sky. Airports are between two worlds and take on modern mythic status.



The physical shape, positioning and color of *Cardinalis*, with its uplifting, sweeping and graceful energy, is itself a **metaphor for the act of flying**. The delicate and relatively small area where it "touches down" not only give the work great physical drama and visual excitement, it also is symbolic of the skill and "magic" of taking off and landing. *Cardinalis* not only pays homage to the Wright Brothers but also to all those men and women whose skill and dedication make air travel a reality.



Figure 1 -
CARDINALIS,
backed by limestone
retaining wall

PERSONAL STYLE - sculptural vocabulary



Figure 2 - related past work

Relative to my own personal style or "sculptural vocabulary", *Cardinalis* is an extension both formally and conceptually. My work generally involves engaging or elevating heavy, earth bound materials - choreographing them in a way that makes them dance or fly. (examples above)

SCALE, MATERIALS and METHODS - reaching for the sky

Scale: Because of the potential locations the scale of the work must be substantial - between 24 - 35 feet tall. Current budgets earmarked for these sites are relatively tight for the what I believe is needed. Budget considerations will dictate scale range. (See further discussion in budget section)

Materials: **Steel and/or aluminum.** The work will be fabricated with sheet and structural steel. I also exploring the possibility of other composite construction material such as fiberglass for the wing element. **Granite** plinth maybe used. Specifics will be coordinated with landscape plan.



CARDINALIS, proposed ht. 24-35 feet*

Fabrication: Welded, bolted, riveted and anchored as per engineering specs.

Finishes: The metals will be sandblasted, primed with an acid etch industrial primer and painted with industrial UV protected enamel. Some elements may be powder coated (process that is even more durable than enamel). The final color surface will be a semi-matte (not glossy). If composite materials are used, UV protected pigment will be infused into the material creating a glowing , permanent color.

The granite (if used) will have a flamed or thermal finish (even, textured - non slippery)

Electrical: Needed for lights. Will be coordinated with general construction and landscape designers.



METHODS and PERSONAL - engaging local talent

Fabrication: I will investigate finding a professional fabrication shop near Indianapolis. This will provide several advantages:

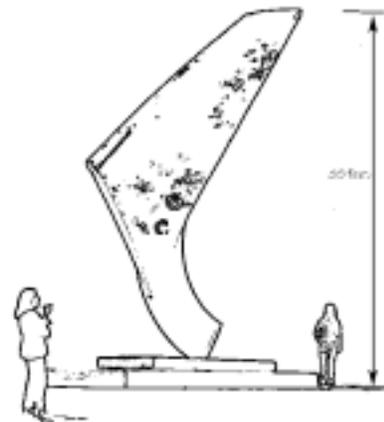
- reduce shipping/transport cost of final work to airport site.

- involve local residence in the project - has positive ramifications by engaging those involved in a way that they have a invested interest/ownership/participation in the project. It is my experience from past successful public art projects that when the public is included in the process they more likely to embrace the project and share their enthusiasm with co-workers, family and friends. Even though this starts out as a small group, it tends to multiply and I believe would positively impact all airport art projects.



Installation:

- Site prep: proper foundation and footings as per engineer specs will be coordinated with local subcontractor and general airport construction and landscaping in order to minimize costs and facilitate schedule.
- Sculpture installation: I will subcontract with local crane and rigging company coordinating with general construction to again minimize costs and disruptions. (See schedule section below for further considerations.)



*BUDGET - scale considerations

The outdoor garden sites flank the entrance of the terminal and are large and highly visible,. The importance of these sites demand a monumental work. In the interest of overall success of this specific site, I feel the committee should consider increasing the budget commensurate with the scale needed. My proposal, is 24' high for \$100,000. 35 feet high, for example - would need further budget consideration.