

## ‘Waves’ builds momentum at RBPAC



Artists Patti Linnett and Debbie Collette pose for a selfie with ‘Waves,’ the new public art installation at the Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center. Photo by David Mendez

**by David Mendez**

Artist Gordon Huether was something akin to a rock star on Monday at the dedication of his latest piece, “Waves,” at the Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center.

But while he signed autographs and charmed the staff of the RBPAC, the true star was the 37 foot by 15-foot sculpture, a wall relief built with spirals and circles of aluminum that jut and undulate from a polished blue aluminum surface.

The artwork is the first commission of a project created using money from the John Parsons Public Art Fund, named for Redondo’s late councilman and long-time public activist.

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“We’ve gone from policy-making, logistics, and paperwork to get to this point; now the pollination is happening to the trees and the fruit’s dropping,” Redondo Beach Community Services Director John La Rock said.

“When we talk about destinations and peacemaking, that’s what this does. Now, at one of the busiest [traffic] arterials, there’s the iconography of the city,” La Rock said. Eventually, he hopes public art created throughout Redondo Beach will become akin to signposts for meeting spots, and create a community path.

“Waves” began more than two years ago, after the city approved its Public Art Master Plan and opened a request for proposals in Spring 2016.

Thirty-nine artists were interviewed for the project by the Redondo Beach Public Art Commission that fall, in a selection process that was something like speed dating, Huether said.

“Not that I’ve ever done that,” he added.

His vision for the west-facing wall of RBPAC was a piece that would make “the invisible visible,” of sound waves while reminding a viewer of the ocean and its own waves.

At night, its lighting is static, though stark. But during the day, its shadows and reflections move with the sun’s travel.

“That girl over there thought it was a rosebud,” Huether said. “We like to allow people the spiritual freedom to interpret things.”

Huether’s northern California studio has about 34 projects being built.

Former Public Art Commissioner Paul Moses made the motion to accept Huether’s proposal based, in part, on Huether’s reputation for completing commissions.

“That’s the thing about public art: You remember it. For the most part, this is a nondescript building and a big concrete wall,” Moses said. “Now suddenly, it’s the building with the big blue sound wave on it. Good public art is a place-maker, and this is a place-maker.”