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"Celtic Forest -- Book of the Raven" Public Art Installation

Date: June 2009 - November 2009

Hours: Open to Public Daily

Location: Truckee River, Downtown Reno, NV (Sierra Street & Island Avenue)

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**"CELTIC FOREST: BOOK OF THE RAVEN"
BURNING MAN ART INSTALLATION
TO DISPLAY ALONG TRUCKEE RIVER IN DOWNTOWN RENO
Black Rock Arts Foundation (BRAf) Civic Arts Program**

RENO, NV – The corner of Sierra Street and Island Avenue will be transformed into a temporary interactive art installation, performance venue, and community gathering spot. Previously exhibited at **Burning Man** in 2008, "*Celtic Forest: Book of the Raven*" was conceptualized by Laura Kimpton and created by artists Jeff Schomberg, Antonio Ruperto, Dusty Burton, and Bob Hofmann. It is unique in its materials (metal and fire), scale, and artistic vision. Fire Special Effects by Bob Hofmann will light up the night sky on a weekly basis, surrounded by fire dancers and spinners from Controlled Burn. Sunday afternoons will feature a variety of musical performances from 2-5 pm. The installation on the river features a 16-foot tall, steel and copper book entitled "*The Book of the Raven*".

Celtic Forest is an environment where the elements of nature, earth, wind, water, and fire, literally and figuratively represented, are balanced with the human senses. Each of the Gods/Goddesses in the three moats will represent an element – and all moats will represent fire. The sculptures created by Antonio Ruperto are: the Goddess of Air, Belissima; the Goddess of Water, the Mermaid; and the God of Earth, the Centaur. The moats house metal books, each with a title. Artist Laura Kimpton states, "We hope to create a Celtic place where you can break free from the voice of words, so that other voices, the voice of sight, the voices of intuition, smell, and nature – can be heard and celebrated. The sculptures are half-human and half-animal, bird or fish, symbolizing that we need to tune into the animal side of our nature..."

While embracing many “new age” systems of our era Laura Kimpton became especially interested in the largest social art experiment of our time, Black Rock, Nevada’s Burning Man movement. In 2007 and 2008, Laura Kimpton, Jeff Schomberg, and Bob Hofmann received Burning Man Honoree Grants to help build “*Celtic Forest*”.

Various parts of *Celtic Forest* have been exhibited in Museums, Art Galleries, and Benefits, including: “Close to the Flame” Museum of Art & History, Santa Cruz, CA; “Burning Words” Exhibition, Laura Kimpton & Jeff Schomberg, NY Studio Gallery, New York, NY; “Bringing Back the Fire”, Santa Rosa Junior College Art Gallery, Santa Rosa, CA; “Treelabra” Site Installation, Forest Ethics Benefit, supperclub, San Francisco, CA; “In Flight” Site Installation, Project One Gallery, San Francisco, CA.

“This is the second Burning Man art installation to come to Reno through the collaboration of the Civic Art Program of the Black Rock Arts Foundation, the non-profit art organization of Burning Man, and The City of Reno Arts and Culture Commission’s grant program. “*Celtic Forest: Book of the Raven*” supports the mission of the Reno Arts program to involve its citizens in the community’s cultural life and encourage artistic excellence,” said Maria Partridge, Reno project liaison for BRAF.

“We believe the exhibition of *Celtic Forest* during ARTown will serve the community in many ways,” said Crimson Rose, Member Board of Directors, BRAF and Director of Art Management for Burning Man. “By enhancing civic space through the temporary transformation of an empty lot into an inviting art park and creating a creative gathering spot for Reno citizens with weekly performances and workshops that provide entertainment and interactive possibilities that the community can enjoy for free.”