

Artist Statement for Main Street Public Art Installation  
By Daniel Miller

Installation Title: ***Ottumwa - Past and Present***

Title of individual pieces: ***Caretakers of The Land, Flow of Life, Age of Steam, We Are One***

Daniel Miller’s public art explores histories and relationships to place through a contemporary lens. *Ottumwa - Past and Present* is an installation of light sculptures by Daniel Miller exploring the iconography of Ottumwa. Each of these four light sculptures symbolically engage the history and future of Ottumwa. Made from layered stainless steel and acrylic the sculptures are activated by light throughout the day. During the day light hours light plays across the ground stainless steel surfaces. Then in the evening LED Light emerges from within each form made of fabricated stainless steel laminated with clear acrylic. From one angle these sculptures will form recognizable forms that align with the story of Ottumwa. However, when the viewer adjusts their angle by 90 degrees the forms become line abstractions. All of these sculptures are made from water jet cut stainless steel and laser cut acrylic and were completed in the spring of 2021. The following is a description of each individual sculpture.

Image	Description
	<p><b><i>Caretakers of The Land:</i></b> Agricultural production has been a part of Ottumwa from its very beginning. This sculpture stands as a tribute to the many ways this is manifested area. At the center of the sculpture is a barn and silo. On one side stainless steel and acrylic are layered to represent livestock and a round hay bale. On the other side visitors will see a tractor inspired by the John Deere Plant located in Ottumwa. Green LED light emits from all the layers to active the sculpture at night.</p>
	<p><b><i>Flow of Life:</i></b> For this artwork Miller has taken the path of the Des Moines river as it winds through Ottumwa and turned it into a three dimensional sculpture. The form opens to visitors from the Canteen Alley, where they can see into the layers of stainless steel and acrylic with blue LED light substituting for water. While from the street people can see the blue outline of the sculpture rising from its base.</p>
	<p><b><i>Age of Steam:</i></b> In this artwork Daniel Miller looks to the past and Ottumwa’s connection to coal mining and the age of steam. On one side of the piece the Coal Palace built in the 1890’s is reimagined as layered relief form. While on the other side steel and acrylic layers create the form of a steam engine inspired by the Chicago <i>Burlington &amp; Quincy Engine #3001</i>, located outside the Ottumwa historical society. In the evening white and red LED light from Inside mixes and illuminates windows and different features of the sculpture.</p>



***We Are One:***

This piece is a unity symbol. On both sides, relief cuts symbolizing people holding hands form a perimeter. On one side the artwork focuses our place as members of the world community reflecting on the diversity in the community. In the center is a water jet cut symbol of the earth. In the evening this side cycles through hues of red, green and blue. The opposite side is illuminated in red LED light. Thematically this side focuses on the youth of Ottumwa using a letter "O" symbolizing Ottumwa high school.