

Alliance In the Park

Marsha Moss

As public art moves further away from the self contained object and closer to an art that seeks to reshape the environment, it is natural for artists and architects to join forces.

This "collaborative effort" is the theme for ALLIANCE IN THE PARK, an exhibition for which I serve as director. It's a two-part show, held outdoors in Fairmont Park in Philadelphia and indoors at the Philadelphia Art Alliance from July 19 through Nov. 12.

Nine large scale outdoor proposals were selected by Diane Waldmen, Deputy Director of the Guggenheim Museum. These proposals dealt with ideas in which the private expressions of artists and the more public concerns of the architects were successfully integrated.

The result was that the finished works, all environmental, include the merging of the two disciplines in which the outdoor work is not only of high aesthetic value but also has a social dimension. Each of the projects is thought of as a place, inviting the viewer to physically experience it by swinging, entering, sitting or using it in some way.

The Grandeur of the Original 1876 centennial in Fairmount Park is recalled by Phyllis Mark, artist, Jane Stevens Steinberg and Harris Steinberg, architects. Their proposal conceived of an elegant place for reflection and recreation by transforming an existing pool with brightly painted large-scale lilly pads and flowers that float above the painted bottom of the shallow pool.