

Art in the City / Week 7

Air Bare



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Designed by Urban Matter Inc., fabricated by Core Design

This week we feature *Air Bare* designed by Urban Matter Inc. based in Brooklyn, and fabricated by Louisville's Core Design. *Air Bare* utilizes art as a tool to help us understand the endless and fascinating complexities of the air we breathe every day. The installation was unveiled yesterday at 4th and Liberty by a collaborative team including The Institute for Healthy Air Water and Soil, Creative Commons, IDEAS Louisville, Manylabs, Perscio, and Propeller Health. At the intersection of science experiment / public art / interactive game, the 6' square orange beacon invites passersby to investigate and visualize air pollution data, with the interface screen layered over a real-time view of the busy downtown street corner beyond.

Shagun Singh with Urban Matter Inc. shared these details about the project:

We are making the unseen, seen by visualizing air pollution and gamifying it to increase awareness. People can pop these air particles to earn points, they can also pop them to take a pop quiz to learn more about air quality. The piece is an augmented reality installation that overlays air pollution on a live video feed of downtown Louisville. The back of the installation is an ambient display that visualizes temperature data using colored LEDs.

Concept design for the project began last November with community participation during a workshop in Louisville. The design team found that seeing is believing, and that most of us are not aware of air quality because air is invisible. With the goal of building awareness about air pollution, the team focused energies on visualizing what we are not able to see with our human eye.

With the irresistible lure of minimalist art (think Donald Judd and Tony Smith) and sculpture as a medium to explore shape, scale, and material, *Air Bare* draws us in with its sleek, geometric shape. Then it surprises us with a challenge to touch it (yes, art that we can touch!), compete with it, and learn from it.

Make sure you include 4th and Liberty as a destination in your next trip downtown, or when you walk to your favorite lunch spot! You won't want to miss the opportunity to experience Air Bare.

[Sarah Lindgren, with material contributed by Shagun Singh]

You can learn more about the Air Bare project by visiting [The Institute for Healthy Air, Water and Soil](#).