PONT INTERNATIONAL
Gordie Howe
INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE

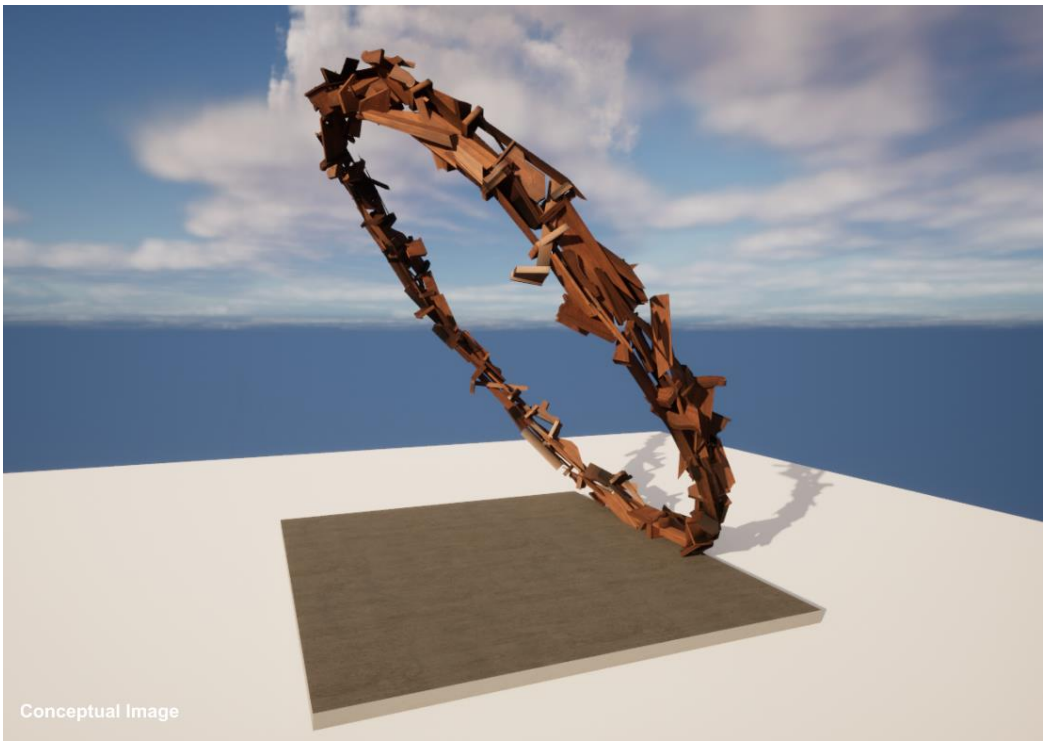
BACKGROUNDER

Commemorative Art Commission: Artist's Concept

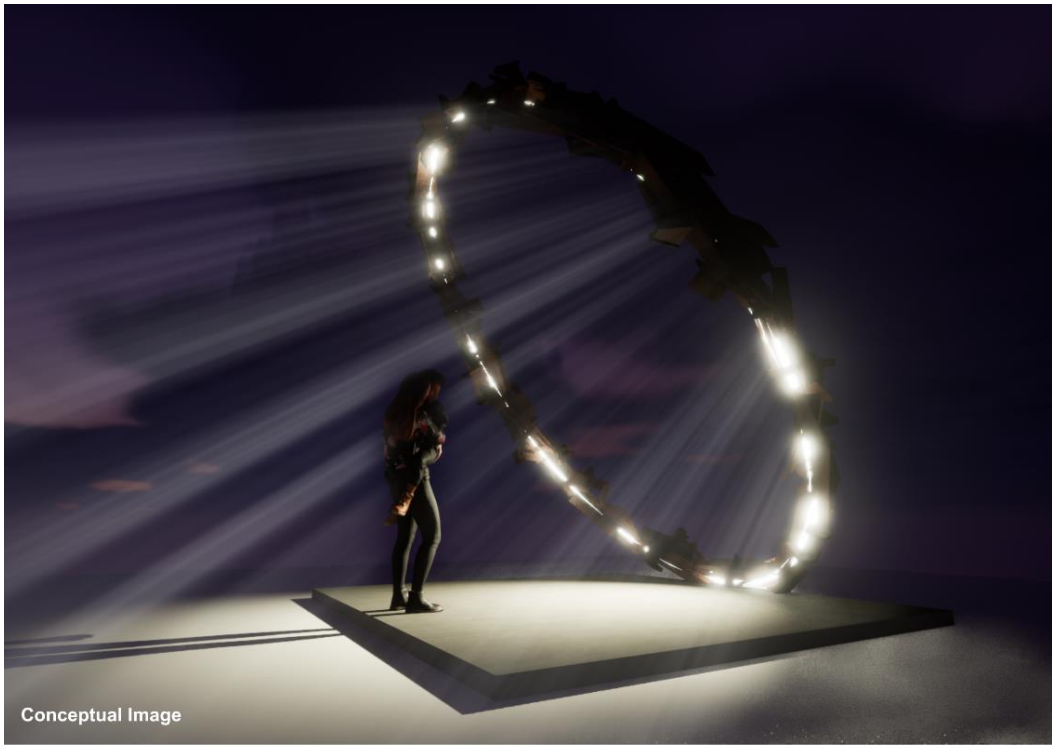
The large-scale free-standing sculpture, titled *Make a Joyful Noise*, symbolizes hope and freedom for past, current and future generations. The artwork is a three metre/nine-foot circular metal structure composed of replica church pews and intentional lighting. Between 1800-1860, more than 30,000 refugees from slavery and free people of African descent used the network and routes of the Underground Railroad to reach freedom with many of them crossing the Detroit River to Canada.

Through this concept, the artist signifies the network of institutions, connectivity and resilience, and a pathway through the uses of:

- replica church pews to represent the role churches often played in offering assistance and safe harbour for those travelling from the southern US to freedom in the north
- the circular form to represent the idea of looking up to the sky, which provided direction to those travelling along the Underground Railroad
- lighting at night to help simulate the stars that aided navigation.



Conceptual Image


Conceptual Image

Centrally located outside the Port of Entry's perimeter and visible to travellers as they enter and exit Canada using the multi-use path, the artwork will be accessible for the public to visit and reflect upon.