

Inside Art

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PILLARS OF BRYANT PARK

Bryant Park is known for its lunch crowd, its ice-skating rink, its performances and, until recently, its fashion shows. Unlike Madison Square Park or City Hall Park, it only occasionally shows art.

But from March 8 to 18, in front of the fountain facing the Avenue of the Americas, you will find a pair of towering pillars and, within them, ziggurats, each soaring 60 feet in the air and displaying paintings of goddesses, pharaohs, eagles, sphinxes and the Hindu god Ganesh: modern-day reinterpretations of works from the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The seven-tiered work is by the New York artist Ben Tritt. Painted with a combination of tar and enamel on burlap, these weatherproof frescoes are part art and part architecture and will be displayed on bamboo scaffolding.

“There’s a Western side and a non-Western side,” Mr. Tritt said on Monday, standing in what he called his “pop-up studio,” raw space on the first floor of 5 Bryant Park, across from the site. He has been working there for the past two weeks.

The project has taken a mile and a half of bamboo, 200 gallons of enamel and tar, and 600 yards of burlap, along with 32,000 pounds of steel. The paintings incorporate bits of rubbish: torn paper, corrugated cardboard, even a paint brush (reminiscent of Robert Rauschenberg’s much-loved combines).

“People can walk between the towers,” Mr. Tritt said.

Called “Analogia,” the project will cost an estimated \$500,000. So far, half of the money has been raised from private sources who have bought some of Mr. Tritt’s artworks. (Bryant Park has not donated any money, but it has given the organizers their choice spot in the park.) It is produced by Jodi Kaplan, who has organized dance performances at Bryant Park. “There will be sound installations during different times in the day,” Ms. Kaplan said.

Since only half the money has been raised to cover the costs of “Analogia,” Ms. Kaplan said, she and Mr. Tritt are trying to raise the rest through Kickstarter.