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Local artist's work welcomes visitors to UofL Health Care Outpatient Center

Efforts to make the University of Louisville Health Care Outpatient Center warmer and more welcoming for patients and visitors than typical health care facilities continued Nov. 4 with the unveiling of an original art piece in the building's lobby.



Clare Hirn's "Integral Spaces" was unveiled Nov. 4.

University of Louisville Physicians commissioned the piece by Louisville artist Clare Hirn. In the four-panel piece titled "Integral Spaces," the artist used charcoal, acrylics and oil in layers to create a real sense of nature and to shed light on her view of the city. Among its images are bicyclists on the waterfront, the Belle of Louisville, a Cardinal and the downtown skyline.

"Ms. Hirn's artwork provides the perfect first impression for people coming to the outpatient center," said Gerard Rabalais, chair of both the UofL Department of Pediatrics and of the physicians group.

"Not only is it a beautiful piece when you first look at it, but there is so much more to it as you look at it more intently. We asked the local arts community for proposals for artwork that is more than beautiful, but also meaningful and representative of Louisville. The more you view this piece, the many more subtle images you find. The similarities with medicine and exploring why people come to us are quite natural."

"My hope is that viewers can interact with the piece and see something new each time they return," Hirn said. "Perhaps it will even bring a moment of comfort."

That is just what UofL Health Care wants.

"The overall experience our patients and visitors have when they come to the Outpatient Center has been at the forefront of our thinking throughout the design, construction and equipping of this building," said Larry Cook, executive vice president for health affairs. "We have tried to make it warmer than your typical health care facility, and to reflect the warmth of Louisville. We thought the best way to capture that was for a local artist to create a piece that welcomes our visitors. Ms. Hirn has done exactly that."

The UofL physicians group commissioned the artwork with the support of Landmark Healthcare Facilities. The building's interior designer, Mary Lee O'Bryan, worked with Ann Drury of the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft to find local artists who would be interested in the project. They received 18 proposals. A 10-person committee of physicians, staff and outside experts selected Hirn's proposal. KMAC has overseen the artwork production and installation.