



THE TARTAN

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Scogin mindful of our architectural history

Architect of Gates Center for Computer Science will consider our unique aesthetic

Forum | Tartan Board

It's an exciting time to be a student here at Carnegie Mellon. Our campus is undergoing the most changes it's seen since the construction of the University Center, Purnell, and Newell-Simon Hall. Preliminary plans for the new Gates Center for Computer Science were officially unveiled last week, and much of the campus community is still debating whether or not the building will fit in on campus. Mack Scogin, the head architect on the project, is assuring everyone that the building fits into the vision of Henry Hornbostel, our campus's original architect.

It is truly a breath of fresh air that the aesthetics of our campus are being respected. Scogin and his firm have clearly considered what the Gates Center will say about Carnegie Mellon and the University's mission, and they have considered how everyone else will perceive it.

Hornbostel, and campus architects after him, all created master plans for how Carnegie Mellon's campus would look as it grew and changed over the years. A poster with the most recent master plan is on display on a bulletin board in the basement of the University Center, and even though it predates the Gates Center, one can easily see how the new project would fit in.

What does not fit in, however, is the onslaught of art installations that has hit campus recently. The Kraus Campo is an eyesore, but at least it can't be seen unless you actually go up and stand on it. The "snowman" in the corner of the Mall, next to Doherty Hall, looks ridiculous, but it's small enough that most people will pass it by without even a second glance. The art is spreading, though, and work has begun on the placement of two more sculptures on campus — sculptures that have already attracted plenty of legitimate scrutiny.

The opinions of The Tartan and the campus at large regarding the placement of Jonathan Borofsky's "Walking to the Sky" are extremely played out at this point. It has been at the forefront of student minds for weeks, and the fresh dirt piling up on the Cut is a daily reminder of the campus's newest eyesore.

How can Mack Scogin and his firm, which have no prior relationship with Carnegie Mellon, take into account the nuances of our University's campus and create a massive structure that makes a statement while still complementing the land around it, but many people who are all directly connected to the University can miss the mark so completely? That — more than "Will it fit in?" — is the question this community should be asking.

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