

Avant-garde 'RedBall' could roll into city

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A big red ball is rolling toward Scottsdale ... where it stops nobody knows.

The Scottsdale Public Art program is in talks with artist Kurt Perschke, known for The RedBall Project, described as a mobile sculptural performance that brings a 15-foot inflatable red ball to different structures in a city over a period of one to three weeks.

So far, the traveling sculpture has visited Korea, Spain, Australia, Portland, Ore. and St. Louis.

Perschke was in town a couple weeks ago to stake out some spots in the Valley.

"Some sites don't function if there aren't the right traffic patterns," he said in a phone interview. "It's not a piece you experience from a car. Where is it in Scottsdale people aren't in their cars?"

The RedBall Project will most likely happen during January and February, when the Valley will be buzzing with events.

"Wouldn't it be cool if a red ball turned up at the Barrétt-Jackson auction or in a soccer match in the middle of the CAP Sports Basin?" asked Valerie Vadala Homer, public art director "Maybe it will be on the Waterfront at the time of the Hashknife Pony Express ride."

Homer said officials scouted other sites like the Loloma Transportation Center and the new skate park at the McDowell Mountain Ranch Park

and Aquatic Center.

"We'll do public events around the ball installation," she said. "It'll be really fun. It makes for beautiful photographs."

The ball shows up between buildings, stuck in a roof, in city plazas, squeezed under a bus stop and under bridges.

"The piece is very much about using the sculptural object to play with architectural spaces," Perschke said. "It's not a sculpture on its own. It's more about how it moves

around the city."

Perschke said some people follow the ball to every new site, while others see it as a great story to tell about something they passed on the way to work.

Perschke said he likes to find places where the ball actually blocks the path and people are forced to go around it.

"It's not as important to me that every site be something famous or important," he said.

Scottsdale will be a different experience because it's not as dense as most cities, Perschke said.

"In Scottsdale it's going to move a lot all through the different areas with new construction and great things going up," he said.

View Perschke's sketch from his visit to Scottsdale at www.redballproject.com/redball-pages/rb_current.html.

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RedBall project in Barcelona, Spain