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**Design**

## STARGATE

Public Art by Blue Republic 'Makes Contact' in Toronto as part of new Redpath development



 **STARGATE** by Blue Republic.

**Imagine walking through a giant 3D Intergalactic universe on your way to work, passing towering alien characters weighing over 1000lbs each and standing 15ft tall. Massive intergalactic art installation makes contact with Toronto, Canada, through a portal at Yonge and Eglinton. Landing as a permanent installation at 150 and 155 Redpath, STARGATE was announced as the winner of a public art competition.**

Toronto's Yonge and Eglinton neighbourhood will soon be transformed by a massive public art experience and permanent \$1.5 million art installation. STARGATE – an evocative, traffic-stopping scene created by Toronto-based art collective Blue Republic – will land in Toronto's midtown, as part of the 150 Redpath and 155 Redpath condominium developments by Freed Developments and Capital Developments.

Emerging from two portals at 150 and 155 Redpath, the winning contemporary art installation by Anna Passakas and Radoslaw Kudlinski will animate the neighbourhood with a crew of intergalactic 3D characters, weighing thousands of pounds and standing at 15-ft and 12-ft tall, in varying states of materialisation. These characters will appear on the scene in a moment frozen in time, for a dance, or a battle about to take over the street.

Transforming a busy and populated corner of Canada's largest city into a window into outer space, STARGATE's colourful protagonists will tower over several smaller, lively cohorts, creating the theatrical scene.

*"STARGATE stood out because it was so bold," says Todd Cowan, Founder and Managing Partner, Capital Developments. "It's bright and energetic – exactly the personality we want to bring to 150 and 155 Redpath. We want to push the boundaries of what's being done with public art in Toronto. We see this as a real opportunity to add intrinsic value to our city. The dynamic installation will knit together the fabric of the neighbourhood, connecting the residential towers through, what we believe, will become landmark urban artwork."*

Animating the public spaces around the two buildings into a bold and immersive pedestrian experience, Blue Republic's proposal was one of six submissions in a national public art competition.



*STARGATE by Blue Republic.*

*"We are both huge science fiction fans, and study diverse cultures in general," says Passakas. "We were inspired by the idea of why and how we're in constant pursuit of connection, no matter how strange or different. The characters tell a narrative of the world today. STARGATE attempts to inspire connection between different worlds. We are not meant to resist the unknown, rather, we are meant to explore and understand it, whatever it may be."*

*"The way that STARGATE is staged, there is an electric energy in anticipation of that moment when anything can happen and everything is possible," adds Kudlinski.*

At street level, each building's lower glass walls morph into murals projecting STARGATES from each tower. The installation encourages viewer engagement and connection (not to mention, selfies). Examining the swirling patterns in the glass mural, observers can spot other creatures making their way through the vortex.

*"STARGATE is not only a part of 150 and 155 Redpath; it's part of the city. The artwork interacts with the public space and draws you in," says Kudlinski. "It's a busy world, but we want this to command your attention. The characters are approaching the traffic on the street, so all who pass by will find themselves in the middle of this dramatic scene. It's up to the viewer to narrate what is taking place."*

STARGATE is a collage of cultural references that takes inspiration from different cultures, like Eastern and Greek Mythology. The installation pulls a narrative from sci-fi; STARGATE's characters are familiar, but unique to their own diverse universe. Seemingly ever-changing, the sculptures' colour, shape and size appear to morph as the day progresses; wide-awake during the day mysteriously lit at night and, at all times, in conversation with the 'STARGATES'.

Standing guard, at opposite corners of the intersection, 150 and 155 Redpath's sculptural forms evoke a modern aesthetic, mimicking the youthful energy and cultural diversity of the development's residents. From dramatic, floor-to-ceiling windows to 24-hour amenities, every feature of each development is an experiential design expression, putting residents in the middle of the action.

*"We see an investment in art and design as an investment in the local community," says Peter Freed, President, Freed Developments. "For us, it's not about decorating a building, it's about pushing boundaries to make a statement that both the residents of 150 and 155 Redpath and the city will be proud of. There is no greater contributor to placemaking than art, especially when it's paired with a narrative and vision as rich as STARGATE."*

Blue Republic is an internationally-renowned, award-winning, Toronto-based collective, known for its sculptural installations. The team are recipients of several notable public commissions, including pieces at Luminato and the Biennial of Urbanism and Architecture in Hong Kong. STARGATE will be Blue Republic's first permanent public art installation in Toronto.

*"STARGATE is just the beginning," says Passakas. "These portals can open anywhere in the world. You can be travelling through Thailand or Australia and stumble across another vortex with different characters telling a different story, but always sharing in that pursuit of connection."*