

Post-Modern Stonehenge Built of Refrigerators to Rise From Landfill

■ **Art:** Discarded appliances reminded one man of prehistoric monument in England. He sees his project as architectural satire. (505) 988-3588

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SANTA FE, N.M.—When Adam Jonas Horowitz saw a pile of dead refrigerators at the Santa Fe landfill, he saw art.

Not just art, but monumental art—a post-modern, post-apocalyptic temple to waste and consumerism.

He saw . . . Stonefridge. Or, if you prefer, Fridgehenge.

"The refrigerators looked like monoliths," Horowitz says, recalling his first glimpse of the rusting jumble of white—and, of course, harvest gold and avocado—rectangular boxes on the mesa above town.

It brought to mind Stonehenge, the ruin of a prehistoric monument in southern England.

So the documentary filmmaker and conceptual artist persuaded the city of Santa Fe to let him build a life-size version of Stonehenge—made of welded-together refrigerators—at the landfill.

He envisioned it as "a futuristic yet primitive architectural satire" to remind art lovers and trash-toters of just how much we throw away.

After 10 months and a circuitous tour of the city bureaucracy, Horowitz got the final go-ahead at the end of May.

By that time, he had set aside about 150 refrigerators and an assortment of smaller appliances, carefully culling them from incoming trash and lugging them to a separate pile at the landfill.

Alas, nobody told a visiting metal recycler it was treasure, not trash. A week after the artist got the OK, his cache of appliances was bulldozed into a mound of rubble.

But while you can crush Horowitz's Hotpoints, you can't crush his dreams.

"In the grand scheme, I do see the humor in it. I see myself now as Sisyphus—with a refrigerator on his back," the artist says.

He is trying to rebuild his appliance stockpile and says he'll begin work on Stonefridge as soon as he has rounded up the first 20 or so refrigerators.

Horowitz also is trying to round up some money for materials, insurance and labor, since the city

provided no funding for the project.

With a diameter of up to 100 feet, Stonefridge would be the same general size, style and arrangement as its megalithic precursor.

A circle of pillars, each composed of two vertical refrigerators—one atop the other, the lower one sunk a couple of feet into the earth—would be capped by a lintel of refrigerators lying horizontally.

It would resemble the arrangement of Stonehenge as it appeared about 1550 BC, when it was still intact.

Inside the circle would be several taller structures—each of them two pillars of refrigerators stacked three high, with a refrigerator lintel—and a scattering of other appliances, evoking the smaller stones within the monument.

About 100 refrigerators will be needed, Horowitz estimates.

The city closed the 30-year-old landfill in May. Covered over and graded, it looks like a vast, empty field.

Stonefridge would be visible to residents taking their trash to a new transfer station nearby. Horowitz hopes they laugh when they see it.

"But I also hope they will think about their part as consumers, their role in the consumer society," he says.

The artist says refrigerators symbolize consumerism on several levels: the appliances themselves, used and discarded; the food they held, which was literally consumed; "and, finally, the Freon that races through their veins that is consuming the atmosphere."

The landfill is on a plateau with expansive views of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the east and the Jemez Mountains to the west. Like Stonehenge—which some believe functioned as an astronomical observatory of sorts—Stonefridge would face eastward, toward the precise point on the horizon where the sun rises on the day of the summer solstice.

The monument's other side would face toward "the atomic sunrise" of Los Alamos, birthplace of the atomic bomb, Horowitz says.

"I think my goal as an artist and filmmaker is to try and establish connections between this technological world and the natural



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Artist Adam Jonas Horowitz stands amid refrigerators he was to weld together into a life-size version of Stonehenge, as shown in sketch, below

world," Horowitz says.

A 1981 graduate of UC Berkeley, he made "Home on the Range," a documentary about U.S. missile testing in the Marshall Islands and its effect on islanders.

He is best-known locally for distributing soup-size cans of "Organic Plutonium," labeled as purportedly from Los Alamos, "the home of the atomic bomb." Their bright blue labels feature a mushroom cloud and assurances that the contents are "100% Natural—No Artificial Colors, Flavors or Preservatives."

Horowitz plans to make a documentary film of Stonefridge's construction, which he envisions as a low-tech process with lots of ropes and pulleys.

"I'm hoping to have the crew dressed in loincloths," he says.

