

What does it mean? Absolutely nothing

'Tides of Time'
is just a \$40,000
piece of public art

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The reviews are in on Santa Cruz's newest piece of public sculpture: Some people love it, some hate it. Some people call it provocative. Some think it looks like a giant bowling ball standing next to a chunk of Stonehenge.

Tuesday afternoon, members of the Santa Cruz City Council liked the stone sculpture so much, they bought it for \$40,000 — even

though the public hasn't seen it yet.

Come November, the city will erect the sculpture at the foot of the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf — one of Santa Cruz's most prominent tourist locations.

The abstract sculpture, titled "In the Tides of Time" and designed by Santa Cruz artist Alan Counihan, stands 13 feet high. It includes a primitive arch made of limestone, a giant black orb 4 feet high and several large shapes that look like petrified pieces of cantaloupe.

"It doesn't mean anything," said Councilman Mike Rotkin. "That's what I like about it."

But Councilman Louis Ritten-

house complained the piece was chosen with no public input and is an eyesore and a waste of tax money.

"What a sad state of affairs," he said after losing a 6-1 council vote to buy the piece.

The work beat out 40 other entries in a contest commissioned by the Santa Cruz Arts Commission, a seven-member advisory body to the city council. The contest was held to find a centerpiece sculpture for a \$2 million renovation under way to the wharf entrance and the promenade along Santa Cruz's Main Beach.

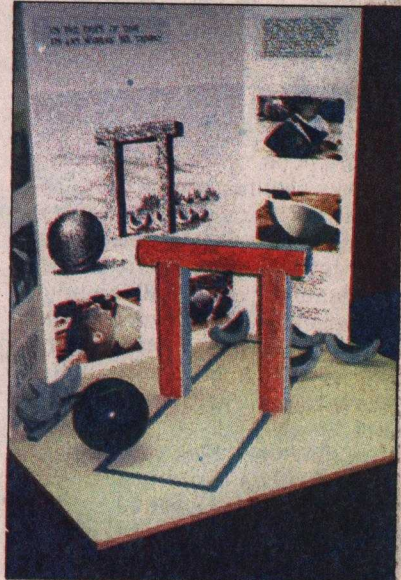
It will be placed in a lookout area near Cowell Beach by No-

vember, said Jim Lang, city parks director.

Rittenhouse said the public should have had a chance to see the finalists before the council spent \$40,000 of public funds. He cited a sculpture contest held last year in which citizens voted on pieces of sculpture to line Pacific Avenue.

The arts commission already is at the center of controversy for creating "The Art Wall," an 800-foot-long wooden fence along Bay Street where people pay \$1 to create a 12-foot-wide mural. Some residents complain the wall is city-sanctioned graffiti, since most of it is covered with large logos spray-painted by teens.

SJMN JUL 13 1994



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A bowling ball at Stonehenge is one description.