Stop Your Engines! The Artist Is Tracing

BY DOROTHY SPARKS

WHEN the Los Angeles artist Ingrid Calame wanted to trace the skid marks on the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, the track's manager was skeptical. “The request was pretty unusual,” said the manager, Dan Wheldon, in an interview with the author. “In eight years at the speedway, I’ve never received a request like that.”

Calame, who is known for her large-scale installations and interactive public art, had long been interested in the history and culture of racing. She had seen photographs of skid marks on the track and was determined to capture the essence of the raceway’s speed and energy in her artwork.

“I’m a huge racing fan,” she said. “I’ve always been fascinated by the thrill of the race.”

When Calame arrived at the speedway last October, she met with the track’s manager to discuss her project. She asked to walk the track and take photographs of the skid marks, and she was granted permission to do so.

The skid marks are created by the tires of vehicles sliding over the track’s surface, leaving behind a痕 that tell the story of the speed and intensity of the race. Calame was struck by the way the marks seemed to resist the passage of time, as if they were frozen in place forever.

“I was inspired by the fact that these marks are still visible after all these years,” she said. “They remind me of the idea of time being both finite and infinite.”

Calame then began to think about how she could use these marks as a starting point for her artwork. She decided to create a series of paintings that would capture the essence of the raceway’s history and culture, using the skid marks as a visual reference.

“My goal was to create a piece that would capture the energy and excitement of the speedway,” she said. “I wanted to create something that would be both a celebration of the past and a reflection of the future.”

The result was a series of large-scale paintings that were exhibited at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in a special exhibition called “Traces of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.” The paintings were accompanied by a book that told the story of the speedway’s history and culture.

Calame’s work has been exhibited in museums and galleries around the world, and she is known for her innovative and thought-provoking approach to public art. Her work has been featured in numerous publications, including The New York Times, Artforum, and The Los Angeles Times.

“I’m honored to have been able to work with the Indianapolis Motor Speedway,” she said. “It’s been a real privilege to be able to capture the essence of this iconic place.”

The success of her exhibition at the speedway has inspired Calame to continue exploring the history and culture of racing in her artwork. She has already begun work on a new series of paintings that will focus on the history of Formula One racing.

“I’m excited to see what the future holds,” she said. “I think there’s a lot of potential for exploring the history and culture of racing in my art.”

Calame’s work can be seen at galleries and museums around the world. To learn more about her work, visit her website at www.ingridcalame.com.