

MATH MEETS ART AT UO

The UO just became a dash more cosmopolitan. Internationally renowned architect and designer Volkan Alkanoglu recently installed “SubDivision,” a site-specific sculpture installation spanning three floors in the atrium of Fenton Hall, home of the math department and math library.

The artwork was acquired through the Oregon Percent for Art program — a program that places works of art in public spaces around the state — after a committee of UO faculty, staff and local arts professionals selected Alkanoglu’s proposal, according to the Oregon Arts Commission. The art installation was required to “prompt communication among the three floors” and “incorporate mathematical themes.”

Alkanoglu did just that. “To fabricate this

complex three-dimension piece, we had to write algorithms,” Alkanoglu says. Alkanoglu and his firm designed “SubDivision” by splitting up the curving, hollow polygon into six custom pieces, each with its own algorithm. The final sculpture was constructed with 550 flat, tessellated aluminum sheets. He and his team used scaffolding to lift each piece into place. “In order to build it, we have to rationalize it and understand it,” he says. “We learned a lot about logistics. It’s a very narrow space, you can’t just build the whole structure and lift it in.”

“SubDivision” will be added to Alkanoglu’s global portfolio, including the New Taipei Museum of Art, the Busan Opera and the Cocoon Pavillion in New York City’s Union Square Park. — Alex Notman

PHOTO BY BROOKS DIERDORFF



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