

Shepard Fairey mural up at The State Hotel

By JOURNAL STAFF

Shepard Fairey, known for the “Hope” poster he did of Barack Obama for the 2008 presidential election, has completed a four-story mural he designed on the west facade of The State Hotel at 1501 Second Ave. in downtown Seattle.

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The 91-unit hotel is set to open in March on Second Avenue. Shepard Fairey's crew, Obey Giant, installed the mural in October.

The 91-unit boutique hotel is set to open in March near Pike Place Market, according to a press release from the owners and Columbia Hospitality, which will manage and operate it.

The mural is titled “Fire Sale.” The owners said it portrays the challenges people face when it comes to environmental responsibility. Fairey installed it in October with his crew called Obey Giant.

In 2015, an LLC associated with Seattle-based Lake Union Partners paid \$5.35 million for the Eitel Building. The mostly vacant landmarked structure is being renovated for the hotel.

The ownership group includes people with local ties: Jon and Kim Hemingway with their extended family, and John and Deanna Oppenheimer. John Oppenheimer is CEO of Columbia Hospitality.

The 1904 building has undergone extensive renovation. In a statement, Columbia said it is not disclosing the investment amount, but said the cost to preserve the building was significantly more than the cost for new construction. Columbia said the owners are “committed to repurposing this heritage building for the community.”

Documents filed earlier with the city indicated the project would cost about \$16 million.

In 2017, the Landmarks Preservation Board approved renovation plans that included adding an eighth floor, as well as seismic upgrades, new elevators, refinishing exterior masonry and reconstructing the storefronts.

The State Hotel will have a restaurant and bar on the ground floor, a rooftop view terrace for guests, and artwork in corridors, public spaces and guestrooms.

Lake Union Partners said it partnered with Fairey to bring the mural to Seattle.

Principal Patrick Foley said, “We are pretty happy to get the chance to work with Shepard. Our crew has admired his work from afar for a long time, and we think this is an incredible opportunity for Seattle. We see Shepard as someone who has taken some pretty substantial risks over his career to create meaningful public art in an underground way, and we support that.”

The project team for the hotel includes Weinstein A+U, architecture; Exxel Pacific, contractor; Vida Design, interior design; Coughlin Porter Lundeen, structural and civil engineering; Glumac, mechanical and plumbing engineer; and Rushing, electrical.