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These dogs could get tongues wagging

Monday, May 22, 2006

Jesse Tinsley
Plain Dealer Reporter

A canine carnival will unfold today in Cleveland's Chinatown when 25 hand-painted fiberglass hounds are unleashed in celebration of the Year of the Dog.

The exhibition is intended to raise awareness of Asian culture, support local artists and encourage economic development by exposing Clevelanders to the neighborhood, which is undergoing change with new live-and-work lofts, restaurants and shops, said Jamie Blackston Baker, executive director of the St. Clair Superior Development Corp.

"Chinese culture is more than 5,000 years old," said Johnny Wu, president of the Organization of Chinese Americans of Greater Cleveland. "This is an interesting and artistic way to bring people to this part of the city."

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The Chinese lunar calendar follows a 12-year cycle and names each year after a different animal. This year it is the dog; next year the boar.

The dogs were painted and decorated in varied styles by local artists and will be anchored to pedestals in front of places like Siam Café on St. Clair Avenue, Josaphat Art Gallery on East 33rd Street, Mueller Lofts on East 31st Street and

several locations along St. Clair and Superior avenues east of East 30th Street.

They will be on display from May 22 to late September throughout the St. Clair-Superior neighborhood, which includes the city's Chinatown, said Baker.

The St. Clair-Superior neighborhood goes from East 30th Street on the west to Rockefeller Park on the east and from the Cleveland lakefront south to Payne and Superior avenues.

On Oct., 21, the dogs will be auctioned by the development corporation, which funded the project with help from a grant from Cuyahoga County and contributions from sponsors.

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