

METAMAX ENHANCES PUBLIC ART PROJECT

Tiny particles of high reactivity metakaolin (HRM) made a whale of a difference in a 2003 public art project in Poughkeepsie, New York. The sculpture, patterned after Herman Melville's Moby Dick, is 100-feet long and made of white portland cement concrete blended with Engelhard Corporation's Metamax® HRM.

Even though MetaMax particles are ground finer than talcum powder, they have a big impact on the strength, durability, and appearance of concrete. The sculptor, Judy Sigunick of Cragmoor, NY, used Metamax HRM to achieve her vision of a public artwork that would survive an outdoor exposure for generations. "The function of Metamax in my work is primarily to reduce the water/cement ratio and thus, corrosion," says Sigunick. "I replaced silica fume, which I had used prior to the Whale sculpture, with Metamax for its white color, since I used a white portland and wanted to keep the concrete looking bright." MetaMax also gave the fresh concrete a smooth consistency. According to Sigunick, HRM "allows me to use concrete like clay for direct application on a stainless steel armature."

The white concrete whale was decorated with a mosaic of colorful tiles created by local children and installed in Wayras Park on the Poughkeepsie waterfront. It is an important and historically significant piece of public art, commemorating the City of Poughkeepsie's whaling industry, which ran slightly over a decade from 1832 to 1845. The sculpture also serves as a beautification effort, erected in the place of old playground equipment which had fallen into disrepair.

Sigunick says she is proud to be part of a "new visual presence on the Poughkeepsie waterfront." And she's happy with the results that Metamax produced. "Metamax allows for a tight, smooth finish and gives us hope for significant longevity." She is currently working on an even larger project using MetaMax for a memorial at the historic Ulster County Poorhouse burial grounds located across the Hudson River in New Paltz, NY.