Converge 45, a sweeping arts event, will flood Portland venues in late August

Elizabeth Leach is one of the backers of Converge 45, which launches in late August.

CATHY CHENEY | PORTLAND BUSINESS JOURNAL
Portland’s cultural community is preparing for a showcase that could demonstrate how Rose City businesses back local artists.

The opening of the Converge 45 Contemporary Arts Biennia takes place Aug. 24 through Aug. 27 at some 15 venues around the city. Organizers and backers include the likes of commercial real estate magnate Jordan Schnitzer and noted gallery owner Elizabeth Leach.

Converge 45’s programming, which runs through mid-October (some works will remain on view until December) will appear in galleries, college campuses, museums and Pioneer Courthouse Square.

Supporters call Converge 45 "a curated showing of the world’s leading contemporary artworks, some of which will debut for the first time ever here in Portland." The event aims to help locals "experience the way the arts can uniquely help revitalize our city, connect us as a community and drive meaningful dialogue about some of the most pressing topics of our time, from deforestation of the Amazon to monuments to Indigenous people, exploring the concept of citizenship and immigration, to lifting up the voices and experiences of Black bodies and women of color."

Works during the event will include "Broken Spectre," a film by Richard Moss on deforestation in the Amazon, as well as pieces by Marie Watt, Malcolm Peacock and Narsiso Martinez.

Schnitzer and his foundation will display works from his personal collection, including pieces by Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Kara Walker and Robert Rauschenberg.

The event gets its name because the region includes the 45th parallel.