



Photo by: Zane Fischer The Railyard Plaza, extending north from the Railyard Park on the opposite side of the Farmers Market, even radiates beauty at night.

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Incomplete Works

The Railyard Park will, happily, never be finished

By: [Zane Fischer](#) 11/19/2008

It wouldn't really be fair to critique a painting that had only its base coat and its rough composition laid out and to pass judgment before the work was complete.

In that sense, it could be premature to discuss the merits of the Railyard Park. On the other hand, the park's landscape architecture is really a living, evolving work that draws much of its value and essence from seasonal shifts, plant growth and death, and changing priorities of public use.

On a recent weekend, with the winter sun bright but bleak and with the wind carrying a bite at the tail of its caress, the public happily used the park. Even though the children's play area, largely designed by public art specialist [Mary Miss](#), is not yet fully open (stonework is still being set around the organic heap of slides and tunnels set into a hillside) it was the popular area for congregation.

It was actually such an unexpected portrait of multi-cultural family happiness that it was momentarily off-putting—like an advertisement for milk or something—but the glee on kids' faces as they dangled across a network of rope nets, spun dizzily in little whirling planet contraptions, dug through sand and bounded over rock piles made it impossible to avoid softening to the moment.

A barrage of hip Santa Fe citizenry, including tattoo artist Dawn Purnell, IAIA Museum Deputy Director Joseph Sanchez and a whole Goler faction, loitered, either around their kids or on afternoon strolls of their own. Unlike most vanilla playgrounds, this one is thoughtfully created and challenging.