

# Salem Public Art Commission

~ 2022 ~

Established March 2010



## *General Commission Information*

**Meetings:** Second Wednesday of each month at 2:30 p.m.

**Members:** Zachary Hull (Chair), Susan Napack (Vice-Chair), Paula Booth, Spencer Emerick, Janelle Lilly, Barbara Sellers-Young, Eduardo Diaz-Salazar

**City Staff:** Keith Bondaug-Winn



## Welcoming and Livable Community

Providing and encouraging equitable access to historic, cultural, and artistic resources can help to fuel and foster a sense of pride and connection to a community. The Salem Public Art Commission (SPAC) promotes community awareness and access to artworks in the Public Collection, leads the selection and acquisition of public art across the City, and endeavors to further facilitate artistic expression in Salem.

### SALEM PUBLIC ART COMMISSION

The Salem Public Art Commission is comprised of seven members with expertise in art, architecture, design and arts management. One member serves from the community at-large and all seven members to the Commission are appointed by the City Council. Since 2018, the Commission has been chaired by Chris D'Arcy, with Commissioner Eileen Cotter Howell serving as Vice Chair. In September 2022, Commissioner Zachary Hull was selected to replace Chris D'Arcy as Commission Chair and Commissioner Susan Napack was selected as Vice-Chair. Current Commissioners include Eduardo Diaz-Salazar, Barbara Sellers-Young, Paula Booth, Spencer Emerick, and Janelle Lilly. A separate Collection Subcommittee convenes periodically to address special needs that arise with the Public Art Collection (e.g., coordinate label updates, determine new artwork placement options, assess maintenance needs).

The Public Art Commission stewards the Public Art Collection, approves new art acquisitions, and manages, maintains, and periodically deaccessions artwork in the Collection. Salem's Public Art Collection is diverse and valuable, includes highly respected local and northwest artists, and reflects a historical progression of the Salem area. Salem's public art brings beauty and unique character to our public spaces, and positively impacts quality of life for Salem residents and visitors alike.





## THE PUBLIC ART COLLECTION

The City's Public Art Collection is diverse and includes nearly 100 works of art with a focus on local and Northwest artists. The Collection was appraised for insurance purposes in FY 2016-17 and holds an estimated value of \$1.37 million. This figure does not include the newest additions to the Collection. A majority of works in the collection were acquired in 1972 and 1974 as part of the Civic Center's opening and the First Mayor's Art Invitational. In general, the Salem Public Art Collection is valuable, in reasonable condition, and reflects Salem's cultural history. The Public Art Collection is featured on the City's website ([www.cityofsalem.net/government/boards-commissions/commissions/salem-public-art-commission](http://www.cityofsalem.net/government/boards-commissions/commissions/salem-public-art-commission)) along with an interactive story map of the artwork locations and descriptions ([storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/e086aebd172149cfb38c4a3d1e69d796](http://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/e086aebd172149cfb38c4a3d1e69d796)). At present, much of the collection is housed within the downtown core of Salem. The Commission is interested in expanding the placement of public art across all wards in the City and to make public art accessible.

## PUBLIC ART FUND

The Public Art Fund supports the Public Art Collection and is funded by periodic donations and grants, and through the dedication of one-half of one percent of eligible publicly funded capital improvement project costs. In recent budget years, the Public Art Fund was allocated up to \$15,000 from the Transient Occupancy Tax fund to help support future acquisition, management and maintenance of art in the City's Public Art Collection. These additional funds were not available for the 2021-22 Fiscal Year. Funding from the Transient Occupancy Tax was restored in the 2022-23 Fiscal Year in the amount of \$25,000.

On November 23, 2020, City Council approved Ordinance Bill 13-20 to amend Salem Revised Code 15.030, which removes prescribed percent allocations for acquisition, management, and maintenance within the Public Art Fund. This amendment frees up existing public art funds for improved management and maintenance of the existing collection.

*The adopted Public Art Fund Budget for FY 2022-23 is \$46,000.*

## 2022 COMMISSION HIGHLIGHTS

### **Building the Collection**

#### **½ Percent for Public Art Program:**

In Salem, one-half of one percent of the funding for a public improvement project is dedicated to public art.

- **New Public Works Operations Building.** Construction on the new 50,000 square-foot Public Works Operations Building at the City Shops Complex got underway in January 2022. The construction budget for the project is about \$28 million, which generates \$140,000 for public art to be incorporated with the project. A request for proposals (RFP) from interested artists to provide public art for the project was issued in December 2021. The RFP outlined opportunities to provide art in the exterior entry plaza, the interior lobby area, or both. Twenty-seven responses were received and reviewed by the selection committee, consisting of two SPAC members (Michael Hernandez and Paula Booth), an architect from the design team, and the Public Works Operations Manager.



Ten artists were selected to participate in Phase 2 of the proposal process with the development of a specific concept for the project and participation in interviews. At the conclusion of the process, two artists were selected. Claire Burbridge of Ashland, Oregon will be providing custom wallpaper and two original watercolors for display in the public lobby area of the building. Brad Rude of Walla Walla, Washington will be providing an original bronze sculpture for display in the landscaped area adjacent to the public entry plaza for the building. Both artists visited Salem during June in conjunction with Public Works Day. They were able to tour the job site, interact with the public and City of Salem employees, and visit iconic Salem locations to inform their work. They also received the results of a survey of Public Works employees regarding important symbols of Salem and the work of the Department. At the close of 2022, Ms. Burbridge has completed the paintings that are the basis of the wallpaper and begun production with the manufacturer. She has also developed the concepts for the individual watercolors for completion in 2023. Mr. Rude has completed the wax casts of the forms for the exterior sculpture with casting, assembly, and transport planned in 2023. Both artists are on track to complete their work to coincide with occupancy of the building early in the fall of 2023.

- **Seismic Upgrades to the Civic Center.** The City's Community Improvement Bond package includes roughly \$39 million for Civic Center seismic retrofit, system upgrades, and renovation. One-half of one-percent of the cost of this project would result in a \$195,000 allocation to art. There are several pieces that SPAC would like the engineering project management team to consider incorporating into the new improvements:
  - **Council Chambers Wood Panel Doors** (*artist Wayne Taysom*): The wood panels on the Council Chamber doors were donated to the City of Salem by Mr. and Mrs. Howard Belton (former State Senator) in memory of their son. The panels were removed and remain in storage at City Hall. As part of the Civic Center upgrades the engineering project team plans to create a ceremonial space for more formal meetings where the Wayne Taysom wood panels and other pieces of artwork would be incorporated.
  - **Crescent Probe** (*artist James Hansen*): The sculpture has an estimated replacement value of \$450,000, and the estimated cost to repair the plumbing components is \$90,000. Understanding that there are county health codes required of public fountains and splash pads, SPAC requested that the engineering project team consider repairs to the fountain and the sculpture as part of the Peace Plaza improvements.
  - **The Drummer** (*artist Robert Hess*): The sculpture of *The Drummer* came off of its base as it was being moved by staff from the Salem Convention Center. The artwork was appraised at \$17,000 back in 2016. The artwork was previously displayed outdoors in a reflecting pond near City Council chambers. A motion was unanimously approved by SPAC to enter into agreement with Lee Imonen, a former student of Robert Hess, to perform the needed repairs. SPAC would like the engineering project team to work with Mr. Imonen so that once repaired, the artwork can be reincorporated into the Civic Center outdoor space as part of the new upgrades.



## PUBLIC MURAL PROGRAM

As stated in the Salem Public Art Commission Guidelines, Policies and Procedures, “The Purpose of the Public Mural Program Procedures and Standards is to ensure that the Public Mural Program enhances the aesthetics of the City, provides avenues for original artistic expression in the City, provides public edification through access to original works of public art, encourages community participation in the creation of original works of art, and reduces the incidence of graffiti and other crime while increasing community identity and fostering a sense of place.”

- **Valley Roofing.** On March 9, 2022, the Salem Public Art Commission unanimously voted to accept the Iwo Jima Flag mural at Valley Roofing and Exterior into the City Public Art Collection. The mural is an Iwo Jima veteran tribute depicting the flag raising atop Mt. Suribachi on February 23, 1945. It is applied to the northern exterior of the building located at 4910 Turner Rd. SE.
- **Salem First Baptist Church.** On November 9, 2022, the Salem Public Art Commission unanimously voted to accept the cars mural at the Salem First Baptist Church property at 695 Liberty St NE. The painting pays homage to the long-time former use of the property as home to multiple car dealerships in the area, in addition to recognizing significant points of interest in Oregon, specifically Mt. Hood and the Oregon State Capitol. The intention was to bring vibrancy to the building and property and to highlight its historical association with automobiles, which goes back to the 1950's. These businesses have a long history of participating in our city, selling and repairing various vehicle makes and models. This mural, depicting two iconic car models, is a salute to these dealerships and their many years of involvement in our community.
- **Pacific Coast Producers.** On September 26, 2022, the Salem Public Art Commission unanimously voted to accept the proposal for a mural to be installed on the southern-facing exterior wall on the building located on the north side of the street at 1520 Woodrow St NE. The proposal was for a mural that illustrates the rich history of Oregon cherry growers by celebrating local farms, fruit production, and packaging. The mural hopes to honor the history of Salem and pay homage to Salem's “Cherry City” namesake.

## STREET PAINTING PROGRAM:

The development of a street painting program required a series of code revisions that included the addition of a new term and definition. “Street painting” was added to Chapter 15, and an exemption to the City's sign code, Chapter 900, provided an exemption for street paintings. This set of code revisions required City Council approval, which was approved on June 13, 2022, and a subsequent application process was developed and implemented. The first street painting project was funded, in part, by Neighborhood Program Services funds, then Travel Salem provided funding for seven neighborhood associations in the amount of \$1,000 each, two of which have been completed thus far.

- **Grant Neighborhood Project.** This project was organized by the Grant Neighborhood Association and was installed at the corner of Belmont St NE and Cottage St NE. Local muralist, Erika Baker, designed the bright splashes of pink cherry blossoms amidst a blue and gold background, which was inspired by Salem's history as the Cherry City and the beautiful spring display of cherry blossoms at the Capitol Mall.



- **Northgate Neighborhood Project.** This project was organized by the Northgate Neighborhood Association and ENLANCE Cross-Cultural Community Project, and was installed at the intersection of Carlton St NE and Donald St NE. This was the first of two projects completed this year using funds from Travel Salem in the amount of \$1,000. A sunflower motif shows the diversity of the northeast Salem neighborhood, which incorporates people of a variety of ages, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and life experiences.
- **Highland Neighborhood Project.** This project was organized by the Highland Neighborhood Association and was installed at the intersection of Columbia St NE and Hazel St NE. This was the second of two projects completed this year using funds from Travel Salem in the amount of \$1,000. Artist, Michelle Reed, led the painting with the help of 50 volunteers and created a blue and orange design with a sun theme that evokes the natural world.

## MANAGING THE COLLECTION

- **Library Art Hall.** The Art Hall space has been generously provided by the Salem Public Library in collaboration with the Salem Public Library Foundation, the Salem Public Art Commission, and the Oregon Artist Series Foundation to present rotating art exhibitions to the general public throughout the year and free of charge. This new space is dedicated to exploring artwork created by Salem area artists and is located inside the main entrance to the library. Starting in January 2022 the Oregon Artist Series Foundation (OASF), a non-profit organization that works with local partners to secure artwork from northwest artists for display at the Salem Convention Center (SCC) and in downtown Salem, has agreed to help the Salem Library Foundation secure rotating shows of community art in the Library Art Hall / Exhibition Space.
  - **Amanda Wojick Exhibition.** An exhibition of works on paper by Amanda Wojick was on view at the Salem Public Library through January 2022. She was the first artist to be exhibited in this new space. Her exhibition featured nine works on paper that gave the public an opportunity to learn more about the artist's creative process and the inspiration behind Salem's newest artwork, Call Number Cascade, a site-specific sculpture on the main floor of the newly renovated Salem Public Library.
  - **Kristin Kuhns Exhibition.** This exhibition featured the work of West Salem artist Kristin Kuhns. The new collection titled, *An Artist's Vocabulary: Place, Tools, Methods, Materials*, featured 13 different mixed media artworks that reflects Kuhns' life and upbringing in western Oregon and the time she spends at treasured spaces like Minto Brown Park, Baskett Slough, and Zena Forest. They consist of collaged and painted elements, stitched and marked using various methods and tools.
  - **Diane Beals Exhibition.** Documentary photographer Diane Beals' exhibition titled, *Indelible: Artists Portraits by Diane Beals*, highlights 14 Salem artists who have made indelible and memorable marks through their art and creative practices. Photographed artists include Rob Bibler, Jon Colburn, Nancy Eng, Carol Hausser, Bonnie Hull, Kristin Kuhns, Nancy Lindburg, Sue-Del McCulloch, Jude Morales, Dave Nichols and the late Sandra Nichols (working collaboratively as nic and sloy), Randall Tosh,

April Waters, Krista West, and Gary Westford. Black and white portraits of the artists depicted in their workspaces could be viewed at Level 2 Gallery at the Salem Convention Center, and companion close-up process photographs of each artist could be found in the Library Art Hall.

- **Nic & Sloy Exhibition.** Salem artists Dave and Sandra Nichols (June 9, 1943 – May 9, 2022) created new interpretations of archaic myths and customs from combinations of found objects and fragments of language. Fourteen pieces are currently on display at the Salem Art Hall, which will be open and available to the public, free of charge, through January 2023.

## CARING FOR THE COLLECTION

One of SPAC's primary responsibilities is maintenance of the artwork within the Collection. Over time, the costs associated with maintaining existing artwork in the collection have grown. There continues to be an expanding list of artworks in need of repair or cleaning, especially some that date from the development of the Civic Center.

- **Eco-Earth Globe.** Salem City Council adopted Ordinance Bill NO. 13-22 at the July 25, 2022, session, which designates the Eco Earth Globe as a Local Historic Resource. The Globe has both human and cultural significance for its association with the Oregon Pulp and Paper Mill and Boise Cascade and as one of Salem's first community projects that adaptively reused an industrial structure, converting it to a piece of art representing the earth and symbolizing world peace and cultural diversity. Architectural Resources Group (conservator of record) was retained in 2020 to complete an up-to-date condition assessment of the Eco-Earth Globe, provide recommendations on an appropriate restoration approach forward, and to provide a refined cost estimate for this effort. The final report (completed November 2020) provides a detailed description of the recommended repairs for an estimated cost just under \$250,000, but project administration and contingency costs for construction bring the total estimate to more than \$400,000. The foundation has so far raised \$35,000 just from individual donations, with a goal of raising \$300,000. The local landmarks designation may help to secure additional funds. In the FY 2022-23 budget, the City Council approved an additional \$112,000 of Transient Occupancy Tax fund to go toward the Eco-Earth Globe Rehabilitation at Riverfront Park.
- **Completed & In-Process Artwork Repairs for 2022.** Multiple artworks were prioritized for maintenance this last year:
  - **Guidance of Youth** (*artist Avard Fairbanks*) is a large sculpture in Bush's Pasture Park that was installed in 1959 to commemorate the 100th year of Oregon statehood. It was presented to the City of Salem by Carol Moore, a former janitor at the Supreme Court Building. Graffiti and turquoise staining from a non-water-soluble liquid was observed on the statue, and the City's conservator of record, ARG, assessed the damage and provided an estimate of \$9,110 to repair and restore the artwork. Because SPAC has not yet accessioned the piece into the Salem Public Art Collection, the cost associated with repair and restoration was paid for by the Parks department. The Commission would need to approve accession of this donated artwork in order for this to be included in the Public Art Collection, but a much larger conversation with multiple stakeholders, including the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde



will need to take place. A suggestion to include an interpretive timeline/monument near The Guidance of Youth sculpture was included in the Cultural Landscape Plan for Bush Park and will need to be considered before reviewing the sculpture for accession into the Public Art Collection.

- **The Drummer** (*artist Robert Hess*) recently broke and fell off its base due to undetected rust at the point of attachment. This artwork has been situated indoors at the Salem Convention Center since 2011 but had previously been sited outdoors in a reflecting pond near City Council Chambers. Staff worked to identify options for repair and selected artist Lee Imonen, a former student of Robert Hess, to complete the repair and reinstallation of the piece. During the August SPAC meeting, commissioners voted unanimously to enter into agreement with Lee Imonen for the repair of the artwork, and instructed engineering staff to work with Lee Imonen to bring *The Drummer* back to the Civic Center as part of the seismic upgrade project.

## PUBLIC ART OUTREACH & EDUCATION

- **Civic Center 50th Anniversary.** The Salem Public Arts Commission participated in the August 18, 2022, celebration of the Civic Center's 50th Anniversary. Commissioner Chris D'Arcy provided the public a tour of the exterior artwork located at the Civic Center and Library. Commissioner Paula Booth provided a tour of the Library's interior works of art.
- **Salem Public Art Collection Online Tour.** The Commission worked with staff from the City's GIS department to create an online story map that provides a virtual tour of selected pieces from the Salem Public Art Collection. The interactive map displays artwork located in the Downtown area, Civic Center, Library, and Salem Convention Center. The map is updated with new pieces and includes locations and descriptions for newly acquired public murals and street painting projects.
- **New SPAC Website.** The SPAC website is home to the Salem Public Art Collection Online Tour, the Street Painting Program, information on Commission Members, Rules and Bylaws, the Public Mural Program, and Public Notices, Public Hearings, Staff Reports, and Decisions. It is updated monthly with SPAC meeting minutes and agendas.

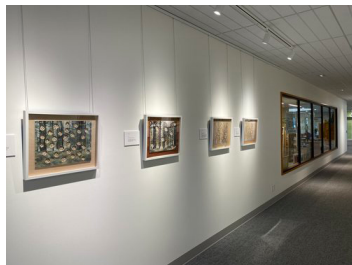
## LOOKING AHEAD – 2022 AND BEYOND

- **Percent for Art Program and Infrastructure Bond.** In November 2022, Salem voters passed the Community Improvement Bond for \$300 million. One-half of one percent of eligible project costs associated with building infrastructure are reserved for public art. Therefore, projects involving the construction of new libraries, fire stations, parks restroom facilities, and Civic Center seismic improvements qualify for a percentage to go toward public art. SPAC will work with project engineering staff to develop public art associated with these building improvement projects.
- **Library Foundation Art Collection.** Kate Van Ummersen, Executive Director of the Salem Public Library Foundation, proposed that the Salem Public Library Art Collection be given to the City of Salem to be managed under both the Library Administration and SPAC. The foundation has 44 pieces with regional artists of significance. When the library was under construction, both collections were moved and stored together in Portland. When returned to the library from



storage, SPAC commissioners Eileen Cotter Howell and Paula Booth and other volunteers combined the Library Foundation's art collection and the City's art collection housed at the library and hung them together and curated them as if they were one collection. Now that these collections are physically melded, the foundation would like to discuss transfer of ownership. All art in the Library building were reviewed for a condition assessment and all of the repairs that were identified were completed.

- **Strategic Planning.** The Salem Public Art Commission developed its last strategic plan in 2018, which focused mainly on completing an inventory of the City's Art collection, assessing the existing condition of the collection, providing recommended maintenance on selected pieces, and developing the website. Much of the work contained in the strategic plan has been completed and many of the commissioners have been replaced by new commissioners. SPAC has engaged city staff to update the strategic plan with one overarching vision in mind – to make public art accessible.



Top Row – Highland Street Painting • Wojick, Salem Library • Virus One, Kristin Kuhns

Middle Row – Brade Rude • The Drummer, Robert Hess • Northgate Street painting Neighborhood Past, Present, Future, Kristin Kuhns

Bottom Row – Eco Earth Globe, photo by Ron Cooper • Diane Beals • Nic and Sloy