

UPCOMING EVENTS



Art Workshops

Since early June, Public Art Saint Paul has produced art workshops for kids and families in Western Sculpture Park. Taught by professional artists and performers, this series will continue through August. Later in July watch for arrival of the PAsPider, a mobile art education studio! Summer calendar available on our website.



Western Sculpture Park

New sculptures will be installed in Western Park this summer. *Rabbit* by Mary Johnson is nearly ready to hop into the park in late July and will be poised along the Marion Street edge.



Stewardship

The season for public art stewardship is here and over 200 citizens citywide have volunteered to care for artworks in their neighborhoods.



Everyday Poems for City Sidewalk

Winners of the annual citywide poetry contest were announced in June. 5 new poems will join 2008 winners to be stamped into sidewalks as part of Saint Paul's annual sidewalk replacement program.



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Summer 2009 Newsletter

Public Art Saint Paul • Creating and Caring for Art in Saint Paul's Civic Realm

Minnesota Rocks! Three Years Later

By Larry Englund

On the evening of June 10, 2006, three sculptors entered the Hat Trick Lounge in downtown Saint Paul. One was from Japan, the second from Finland, and the third from Saint Paul's West Side. Atuso Okamoto, Sakari Peltola, and Craig David were three of fourteen sculptors taking part in Public Art Saint Paul's International Stone Carving Symposium. They were celebrating a birthday that Saturday night, and ended up wildly dancing the night away to a blues band.

The sight of Sakari and Atsuo so thoroughly enjoying themselves was a highlight among my many memories of the days when Minnesota Rocked!

Since the sculptors returned to their homes near and far in early July, 2006, they have kept in touch with each other and with Public Art Saint Paul. All continue to create vibrant art wherever they are in the world.

Jurgen Zaun of Neuss, Germany reports, "I am focusing more on sculpture than I did at any time

Continued



Photo by Andy King

Minnesota Rocks! Three Years Later

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before." In addition to teaching and preparing for exhibitions, he is currently working on a project in Croatia and recently finished a piece for a sculpture park in the Netherlands.

Sakari Peltola of Finland and Zaun became close friends and in 2007 their work was featured in a joint exhibition in Dusseldorf, Germany. Peltola has traveled extensively to take part in symposia in South Korea, Bulgaria, Dubai, Turkey, and Latvia. He arranged his schedule on the way home from Korea to visit Atsuo in Japan. Peltola noted, "The best and unique part of the symposium idea is good people and friends, not only work and art."

I can attest to that. I recently saw Javier del Cueto in Mexico City. We spent a day together as he showed me around and took me to dinner with his family. Our day was delightful, with the same easy camaraderie that the symposium brought out. With his limited English, and my limited Spanish, we managed just fine. After the symposium, he spent a year in Spain, while his wife studied and taught ancient music, and he had an exhibit in a small town outside Madrid. He is currently working on a collection of small pieces for museum exhibition.

Salah Hammad is a major figure in the artistic life of Egypt, continuing his leadership of the Aswan Symposium (he invited Pasquale Martini of Italy to join him there in 2007 – both wore their Minnesota Rocks T-shirts as they worked at the ancient site! In 2008 Salah served as president of the *Madinaty International Sculpture Symposium* – Madinaty is a new city built on 8 thousand feddans inside Cairo, designed to provide a modern life for 600,000 inhabitants!) Salah sent a beautiful catalogue of the exhibition to Christine Podas-Larson and always talks of Minnesota Rocks as one of the fond memories of his life.

Eight of Martini's big sculptures were featured in the park of a seaside town in Italy in 2008. Writing from his beautiful studio near Urbino he says, "I finished a safe made of stone and wrought iron that was a very long work." While recovering from back surgery last winter he made a lot of drawings for new projects and was back to stone carving in the spring. He treasured his time



in Minnesota, "I would like to see you all because I think of you with a lot of love and remember all of you with joy. I don't have big projects to be famous... the only aspiration I have is to be able to work every day to realize the ideas that are in my head. Some months ago I began to realize sculptures that I designed while I assisted my dying mother. I think I will make 12 pieces that will form a show dedicated to her."

Lazarus Takawira, of Zimbabwe, his voice booming over the phone, reported that he is working on projects small and large. "My wife is still loving me," he said, as the smile in his voice traveled thousands of miles over the phone.

Craig David, Peter Morales, and Lourdes Cue continue to live in the Twin Cities. Craig is currently working on three projects in the Twin Cities, including a piece for the University of Minnesota, another for Raspberry Island, and murals for the new Twins

Stadium."All I can say is I'm a lucky artist," he quipped.

Mike Sinesio suffered a bit from what he described as "post symposium syndrome" at the close of Minnesota Rocks! He loved the work and camaraderie of such a great group of artists. Back at his studio in the beautiful woods around Ely, Minnesota, he continues to carve in wood, stone and snow



Minnesota Rocks! Celebration at home of Nancy and Dick Nicholson, June, 2006: From left: Lei Yixin, Juergen Zaun, Craig David, Mike Sinesio, Steve Hedberg, Mayor Coleman, Dave Wyrick, Lazarus Takawira, Duane Goodwin, Peter Morales, Joan Mondale, Lourdes Cue, Sakari Peltola, Javier del Cueto, Atsuo Okamoto, Pasquale Martini, Salah Hammad

and his work is featured every summer in the Ely Greenstone public art program.

Duane Goodwin took pieces of un-carved stone from Minnesota Rocks back with him to Bemidji and has been making sculpture from it every since. Buffalo, eagles and other figures have emerged. One is now at the courthouse in Bemidji and another at the New York Mills Art Center! He continues to do some teaching at the Leech Lake Tribal College but mostly spends his time making art in a new studio he created in his barn.

Peter Morales and Lourdes Cue both received Jerome Foundation fellowships to create sculptures at Franconia Sculpture Park. Lourdes' small floating boat sculptures were featured in Public Art Saint Paul's gallery in 2008 and this summer she is working

with young people of the Rice Recreation Center to create *A Place to Be*. A show is in the works that will travel to a number of museums in Mexico.

Peter visited with Jurgen Zaun in Germany last summer. For the past 2 years he has been working on the artful design of the Western Avenue Streetscape with Public Art Saint Paul and was commissioned to create a stone drinking fountain for Minneapolis. "I wish I could take part in more international events, but I haven't been able to work that into my life," he reported.

Since the Symposium both Peter and Atsuo Okamoto married the loves of their lives! Atsuo returned to St. Paul in 2007 for a lecture in his capacity as international advisor to Public Art Saint Paul's environmental initiatives. Last summer his work was in the Amabiki sculpture exhibition, carved from white granite of nearby Mt. Kaba. His mind is never at rest! Says Podas-Larson, "he sends delightful e-mails and St. Paul is often mentioned in his on-going blog where he posts 'many chatty writings' including his thoughts about Minnesota."

Lei Y-Xin and his wife, "Rocky" think of Minnesota Rocks as a life long memory that forged special friendships and connection to St. Paul. Lei was chosen as the sculptor for the Martin Luther King National Memorial in Washington D.C., having come to the attention of the project's leaders through Minnesota Rocks! Dedication is tentatively scheduled for 2011. Says Rocky, "On May 12 2008, a major earthquake struck Sichuan, China, Lei has created a group of statues in memorial: *Moment of Life and Death*. He has just finished urban sculptures in Guizhou and Hunan. Please remember us to all of our friends in St. Paul"

All of the artists agree. The symposium created more than sculptures and memories -- it created lasting friendships around the globe.

Larry Englund was Public Art Saint Paul's office manager from 2004-06 and played a huge role in production of Minnesota Rocks!

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

The Art of Recycling

At home we St. Paulites are an environmentally conscientious citizenry with one of the highest recycling rates in the country for home and business. But away from home, Saint Paul had no public space recycling until 2008. Then suddenly last summer, Sparky the seal flipped a plastic bottle into the first recycling bin in Como Park and we were another toss closer to meeting the City of St. Paul's goal to be zero waste by the year 2020.

Plastic water bottles are a serious culprit: 34% of all beverage containers are consumed away from home and 8 out of 10 plastic water bottles become litter or garbage. The same state and federal grants to Eureka Recycling that supported public recycling in Como Park also looked for a second model in collaboration with Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, and Public Art Saint Paul – one that would engage artists to look at both aesthetics and behavior change in public recycling. The site was to be Mears Park, co-designed by artist Brad Goldberg and landscape architect Don Ganje in the 1990's and honored by the American Society



of Landscape Architects as a national landmark for outstanding landscape architecture. In Mears, the dark green plastic bin used at Como would be, well...unworthy. But that design and its slight variations have been the only option for cities all over America.

The Art of Recycling grew out of questions about environmental stewardship and public space design. The project features the talents of artists Seitu Jones and Marcus Young. "Mears Park is a unique space," says Lynn Hoffman of Eureka Recycling. "What works there in terms of design won't work everywhere. We wanted to find a way to reflect the values of the place where recycling

happens. For Mears Park it is only fitting to commission artful recycling containers that rise to the standard of this national landscape design landmark."

Seitu Jones, a Frogtown-based leader in public art, works in a variety of media, from public murals to furniture and gardens in his public and private commissions. In this artistic team he focused on the sculptural integrity of the bins and was concerned with their ability to withstand the harsh Minnesota climate and surviving the rough realities of the "Load 'N Pack" pick-up method.

Conceptual artist Marcus Young, Saint Paul Public Artist-in-Residence, was interested in what the bins communicate to the neighborhood about art and sustainability, and how park-goers are educated by these objects. Young has created a whimsical ritualistic "gift" designed to engage citizens. "The point of the gift is to reconcile the desire within each person to keep the gift for one's self, or to give it away: to let it circulate throughout the neighborhood and thus bind residents to the place and to each other. We are saying: This Is for You."

Through the Art of Recycling, a dialogue is invited -- how do the aesthetics and ritual of recycling affect public behavior? Jones and Young see the recycling bin as a behavioral device that will ultimately disappear when behavior changes and nothing is left behind on the ground or in the bin.

A long chain of people launched the project in Mears Park on June 26, passing from person to person plastic bottles to their destination in the new bin. The gifts began to be given that day.

Follow the course of the program through the website: www.recyclinginmearspark.org.

The Art of Recycling is supported by Public Art Saint Paul's 20th Anniversary Fund, the Lowertown Future Fund, and Saint Paul Cultural STAR, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation and Public Works, and Eureka Recycling through grants from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Environmental Protection Agency.



ART IN THE CITY

The Expressive Potential of the Watershed

On May 19, the Capitol Region and Ramsey Washington Watershed Districts co-sponsored with Public Art Saint Paul a lecture by public artist and landscape architect Cliff Garten. Over 120 people gathered that day at Harriet Island's Wiggington on the Mississippi Riverfront to hear of Garten's work in developing a public art plan for utilities in the City of Calgary's Bow River Watershed. The lecture was followed on June 11 by a day-long workshop to establish the foundation for a public art plan for the watershed districts that serve the larger St. Paul area.

Seitu Jones, a distinguished public artist who also serves on the Board of Managers for the Capitol Region, initiated the idea and approached Public Art Saint Paul in 2008 to partner in promoting a public art plan here. "I'm a water guy," says Mark Doneux the Capitol Region's Administrator. "From Seitu I've come to see how art can assist the mission of the watershed district."

The impressively diverse group of scientists, educators, engineers, designers, public officials and artists who came together for the workshop agreed that the watershed has expressive potential and were visionary in brainstorming how that potential could be realized through a public art plan.

Held in the Great Hall of Metropolitan State



University, overlooking the river valley from atop Dayton's Bluff the workshop backdrop featured great blue herons and gulls gliding past the huge windows, evidence of a flyway and renewed Phalen Creek water quality. Opening the workshop, Jones commented, "There was a time when engineers were taught art history and learned to draw, and when artists learned math. It's time to work together as scientists and artists in this important cause – the awareness and protection of our precious waters."





the day were led by Public Art Saint Paul Board members Craig Amundsen and Peter Kramer, environmental artist Christine Baeumler, Great River Greening Executive Director Deborah Karasov and St. Paul Design Center Director Tim Griffin.

In addressing fundamental work of the Watershed Districts in flood and erosion control and improving water quality, groups saw public art as an opportunity to express the dynamic of water and to envision realities that cleaner water will make possible. They saw artists as agents for change – in systems and in human behavior. Many watershed projects are invisible – below the ground. Here is an opportunity to make the invisible visible and understandable. They saw the opportunity for metaphors that transform materials and broaden the experience of natural places.



Seitu Jones

Ramsey Washington Administrator Cliff Aichinger and Doneux urged participants to consider how artists can be engaged at every step of the watershed management plan, from capital projects to education and outreach. Work table discussions through



Cliff Garten presented the city of Calgary's public art plan for the Bow River watershed.



Following the suggestion in Garten's lecture, Peter Kramer's group proposed developing a Watershed Language of Art, to codify the principles of the workshop and make them available immediately for application in opportunities presently before the watershed districts. Feedback from this activity would inform a longer term (10 year) plan.

Christine Baeumler shared a metaphor that developed at her table from writer Ping Wang: "In our world exists a political island, a community island, an island for engineers, an island for water conservationists, and a island of designers. Art is the boat that carries us between each island."

The aspirations for a watershed public art plan included room for multiple projects of

varying scales over long periods of time. This will be a plan to stir the soul and compel action.

The information gathered from the workshop will provide the framework for a request for proposals for a watershed public art plan. Stay tuned.

The watershed public art planning process was launched by Public Art Saint Paul, Ramsey Washington Metro and Capitol Region Watershed Districts.

Participants in the Watershed Public Art Plan workshop at Metro State University



OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER

Mary Kay Briggs

As 14 artists labored to create sculptures in the summer heat for six weeks of Minnesota Rocks!, they were buoyed and nourished by the warm hospitality of Mary Kay Briggs. Mary Kay volunteered to cater meals for the artists and most nights prepared a massive feast and delivered it to the artists at their home base in the Macalester College French House. Traditional American fare was supplemented by Italian picnics, Mexican fiestas, and, every night, there was a whole roasted chicken for Lazarus Takawira.



Sakari shows his appreciative stomach.



Mary Kay first began interacting with Public Art Saint Paul when her children helped to stuff envelopes for mailings nearly 20 years ago, and she has been helping ever since. She prepared a feast for the team led by James Carpenter as they worked to design the V-Mast Wabasha Street Bridge in 1993, sending all into a near swoon over her blueberry cake. She crafted ship shaped cookies for the rededication of Ibsen in Como Park, and delivers a colossal, delicious fruit bowl to the volunteer dinner at the end of Wishes for the Sky every year.

Mary Kay's warm heart, and scrumptious fare help make Public Art Saint Paul's events special. Minnesota Rocks! artists were so fond of her that they treated her like a queen, kissing her hands, opening doors and, of course, carrying laden dishes to the dining room. One bite of Mary Kay's food and you might be doing the same.

Mary Kay is the manager of the Alumni House at Macalester College, where she is beloved of the many students from throughout the world who work there. Take a moment to thank Mary Kay next time you see her at a Public Art Saint Paul event, and she might even slip you one of her recipes...

NEW PROJECTS

A Place To Be

Every kid needs a place to be, to hang out, to belong. But in a core “invest St. Paul” city neighborhood that has experienced an uptick in crime and gang activity, this simple “coming of age” need poses a challenge. After years of community organizing, this public space for youth to safely congregate is about to become a reality through a partnership among Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, the District 6 Planning Council and Public Art Saint Paul.

Rather than just building a spot, we are engaging young people to create it... and develop a sense of citizenship in the process. From conception to completion *A Place to Be* in the landscape of the Rice Recreation Center at Marion and Lawson is being planned, built and cared for by the kids who will use it.

Environmental sculptor Lourdes Cue has worked with a group of seven teens enrolled in the Center’s programs since March to design what she calls a “social landscape”, meeting with them twice a week for 2-hour workshops.

“They right away were interested in animals,” Cue said, “The whole idea of this project is conservation of the environment, so we decided to think globally and act locally.” They researched endangered species and built an impressive array of models for the overall project and its individual sculptural amenities. They worked with a series of visiting artists and took field trips, including one to Franconia Sculpture Park. Cue smiles, “They realized ‘hey we’re actually doing something big! At first, they thought we were going to be doing little clay models.”

Hardly! The final project will include three large earthworks: a 20-foot long, five-foot tall polar bear, a climbable leatherback turtle with a chessboard atop, and a Bactrian camel (the one with two humps) with a butterfly garden integrated between boulders that make up the camel’s humps and head.

The endangered animals will be made of earth, grass and salvaged granite that has a sense of memory and history.



Lourdes Cue with the Rice Rec. creative team

Councilmember Lee Helgen who represents the City’s North End has long advocated for public art and hopes to bring the function of recreation centers beyond sports: “we are excited about introducing a well-known artist to the kids and its a great chance to create a well-designed space. It’s something that shows kids that the community cares about them and that they can also feel a sense of pride and ownership in what they’re doing.”

Every day 70-100 kids show up at the Center; those numbers are likely to increase due to the closing of two near by recreation centers. This is a neighborhood whose diversity and teenage youth population have grown significantly over the past 15 years; 74% of the area’s public school students are children of color. Last summer a survey of teens identified a place just to safely hang out as a top priority.

North area youth & families specialist, Patti Schwartz, initiated the project and envisioned Rice Center as an educational campus. “Even if they don’t come looking for education, I hope they’ll discover new ideas and build new skills in our programs.”

Funding for A Place to Be has been provided by Public Art Saint Paul’s 20th Anniversary Fund and Saint Paul Cultural STAR.

NEW PROJECTS

Hunting and Gathering: Walks

In 2006, Public Art St. Paul sponsored the International Stone Carving Symposium, the largest and arguably most significant undertaking in PASP history: six weeks of artistic celebration highlighting the work of international as well as local sculptors. Ever since the symposium's inception, the question has been raised: Will there ever again be a project of the same scope? If so, what will it look like? And when will it happen?

"We would like to do something with similar scale and outreach but want to explore a more expansive look at the natural environment as the core idea" says PASP director Christine Podas-Larson. In 2007, Public Art Saint Paul launched a series of temporary installations and performance-based events related to sustainability that began to build the foundation for an international environmental art symposium 2011-12.

When Public Art Saint Paul Sustainable Art-making fellow Olive Bieringa talked of her involvement in the SEEDS Festival in the Berkshires, Podas-Larson was intrigued. Bieringa described a performance-based piece that paired an artist with a scientist and encouraged them to converse on a particular subject while leading a walk through a nearby forest. The point was to see what conversation would flower from the cross-pollination of such different minds.

Podas-Larson had been looking for a place to begin in terms of organizing an international symposium. What emerged from discussions with Bieringa, Public Art Saint Paul

board member Dr. David King and Artist in Residence Marcus Young was a proposal for a series of Hunting and Gathering walks to begin in July, centered around the dynamic of two people—an artist, a scientist—in conversation over a minimum of three walks.

King will be one of the participating scientists and is excited about the project; he anticipates the walks will be "mind-expanding." Bieringa expresses this same desire: to be "pushed beyond her own mind," to achieve, in the experience of the walk, a "synergy of understanding."

The artists and scientists will contribute to an ongoing blog for the duration of the project to share their findings, and an informal sci-art fair will culminate the work. Notes Bieringa, "we may explore recording some of the conversations for purposes of documentation or future podcast."

These conversations between artists and scientists can explore a variety of themes that include, but are not limited to, animal life on the Mississippi, the role of the body in urban planning, and energy alternatives in the urban landscape. The participants can frame and fill their walks in any manner they wish to make the most of their time together. For example, the artist may lead an activity related to movement; the scientist may lead an activity related to observation.

Says Young, "Public Art Saint Paul hopes to reach out across a wide distance of understanding will create a dynamic to explore how public art can contribute to the essential work of making our world more sustainable. Perhaps walking and talking will encourage dreaming together."

Film still from *The BodyCartography Project*



AWARDS

Summit Lookout Park

Saint Paul's Heritage Preservation Commission and the Saint Paul Chapter of the American Institute of Architects recently awarded The Lookout Park Partnership a Preservation Award for Summit Lookout Park. Public Art Saint Paul's Bob Bierscheid, Peter Kramer and Yamy Vang joined representatives of other partnership organizations in accepting this award.

It began with the saving of an historic art treasure. In 1998, Public Art Saint Paul secured titled to the 1890 *New York Life Eagle* by Augustus and Louis Saint-Gaudens and over the next 4 years raised over \$125,000 for its complete restoration. Ah, but where was a worthy aerie since its original had been demolished in the 1960's? After diligent exploration of building and bluff heights, Public Art Saint Paul's board voted to accept the late board member Jim Czarniecki stirring proposal that the Eagle land in Summit Lookout Park.

This park was originally the site of the Carpenter's Hotel of the late 1850s. Projecting three stories above grade, the hotel was crowned with an open observation deck. When the hotel burned down, the newly formed Saint Paul Board of Park Commissioners took possession of the hotel site in 1887 to create a public park. The restored sculpture was jubilantly re-dedicated in 2004.

In consideration of this major investment in art preservation and in the park site, Ramsey Hill Association undertook restoration of the

park itself. A charette in 2002 resulted in a conceptual plan proposed by Philip Rickey and Peter Kramer and further developed by landscape architect Regina Flanagan.

Denise Beigbeder, a Ramsey Hill neighbor, led the park restoration and worked tirelessly with patience, determination and humor to guide what turned out to be a many years labor of sheer civic love. Architect Jack Buxell donated hundreds of hours of professional design services; neighbors planted gardens and installed benches.

Led by Denise and Judy McLaughlin, the Lookout Park Partnership raised the funds and coordinated the park's construction. As they worked with the City, generous individuals, foundations, organizations and corporations, they demonstrated an extraordinary model of collaboration and commitment to the community.

Also honored at the preservation awards for their work in Community Education were the Ramsey County Historical Society, Sister Joan Kain and Paul Nelson for publication of updated the wonderful book *Rocky Roots* telling the story of our beautiful stone buildings and their gripping geological roots. Sister Joan was an inspiration behind Public Art Saint Paul's 2006 International Stone Carving Symposium and her original book, published in 1978, was sent to artists all over the world before they arrived in St. Paul and was included in all of Minnesota Rocks! education trunks distributed to the St. Paul Public Schools, used by over 3,000 students since it was introduced. This book should be part of every St. Paul household library. To buy your copy contact the Ramsey Council Historical Society. Congratulations!

Summit Lookout Park with New York Life Eagle



THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE PROJECT

By Wing Young Huie



Photo by Wing Young Huie

He was a teenager when he became a refugee, his family hunted like animals for six months in the jungles of Laos. Thirty years later there are Hmong hunted still, which is why he is dragging a 26-pound crucifix along University Avenue in St. Paul, stopping at various politicians' offices to read a one-page statement in the hopes that someone will do something to save the Hmong.

"Nobody knows. Nobody cares," he says. On the cross, written in his own blood is, "Please save my people in the jungle in Laos and Thailand. Now." He had started out that morning on the State Capitol steps, having sent out a press release the day before. Nobody showed. Undaunted, now he was walking all the way to Senator Amy Klobuchar's office in downtown Minneapolis.

As a boy, before all this happened, he had dreams about flying. He then wanted to train as a shaman. He ended up owning a small

grocery store on the east side in St. Paul. In 2004 he gathered a dozen people, including his teenage son, to walk to Washington D.C. to raise awareness. His wife didn't want them to go. It took two months. When they arrived Congress was out of session. "Bad timing," he says.

Some people think that he just wants the spotlight, or that he's crazy. "I just decided to do a strange thing," he says. "I feel good about it. I have the confidence. It has impact."

Wing Young Huie's University Avenue Project will open in storefront windows and public places along the Avenue in 2010. This 4-mile, 6 1/2 month public exhibition is produced and funded by Public Art Saint Paul with support from the Joyce Foundation and contributors to our 20th Anniversary Program Fund.