St. Catherine University Outdoor Sculpture Care Project

Measurable Outcomes:

We have many measurable outcomes with which to evaluate this project and the affect it has had on our Fine Art Collection, specifically its outdoor sculpture, in terms of its care, its use as an educational tool, and its capacity for creating an aesthetic experience. The measurable outcomes we specifically discuss below include: objects we have been able to add to our online collection as a result of the project, trends in online usage both before and after those additions, the results of our online survey, and analysis of those results. We also include, when possible, probable next steps we can take in order to make progress in the areas outlined above.

Online collection usage in relation to outdoor sculpture care project and data trends noted

Since 2007, St. Kate's has employed CONTENTdm to maintain a digital collection online. The University has over 3,000 objects in its Fine Art Collection, with 800 of those in the digital online collection and digitization work ongoing. Using the Reports interface in CONTENTdm, we are able to produce reports that show us page views[i], searchable by month and year.

The table below shows page views from January 2022 to February 2024 for the five pieces of outdoor sculpture within the Fine Art Collection that are currently online. It also provides the month and year that the work was digitized and added to the collection. We could have gone back even further in terms of years in terms of the data collected, but since only two outdoor sculpture works were online prior to November 2023, such a small pool is of less value for identifying overall trends.

Artwork name	**Month and Year digitized**	**Page views**		
		2022 (Jan-Dec)	2023 (Jan-Dec)	2024 (Jan-Feb)
Our Lady	January 2007	0	0	0
St. Francis of Assisi	January 2007	9	4	0
Venus on the Road Again	November 2023	NA	8	0
[Pair of Lions]	December 2023	NA	1	0
Zerogee	January 2024	NA	1	0
Total page views		**9**	**14**	**0**

Data trends:

- As mentioned above, prior to November 2023, there were only two outdoor sculpture works in our online collection. As of January 2024, we now have five, which is a 250% increase, and a positive step

towards sharing more of this part of our collection online. This increase is due entirely to the OSC project.

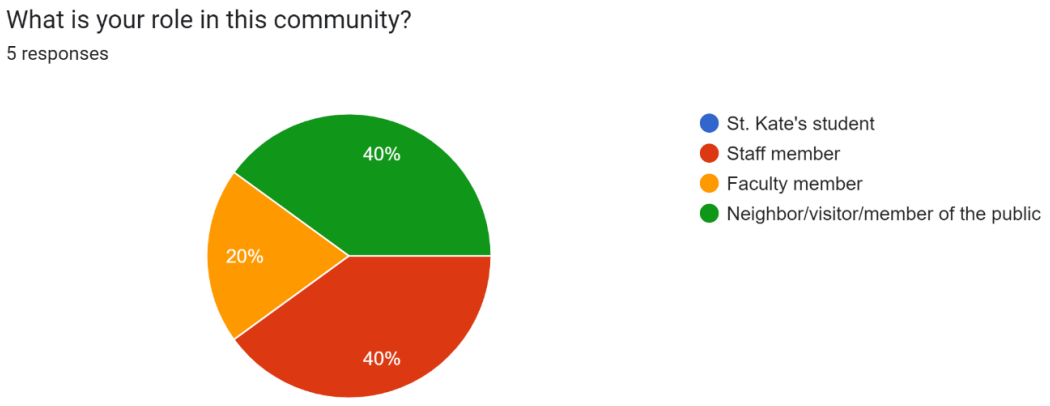
- When we compare the span of January 2007 to December 2021 to the span of January 2022 through February 2024, we can see that page views went up from 9 views total to that of 14, a 155% increase, (with the proviso that only 2 outdoor works were viewable online before November of 2023). That said, it is positive to see an increase of page views after November of 2023, and that these views span four different artworks, rather than being focused on just one, given our desire to have a variety of works in our collection be viewed by the public versus just one or two.
- Perhaps unsurprisingly, there are no page views during Jan-Feb 2024 for all five works. However, given the very recent addition of sculpture works to the online collection, we are hopeful that we will accumulate page views over the course of the year, especially as more community members become aware of the OSC, and as its membership continues to grow.

OSC survey data and analysis

Online survey:

- The survey was made using Google Forms and contains 7 questions total.
- The survey became live as of September 2023, and remains open at this time.
- We have had five survey respondents thus far.
- Results from this survey and analysis of its data and trends has been reported to the campus community via the gallery website (http://gallery.stkate.edu/collection) where it will remain archived in perpetuity.
- Because our pool of respondents was fairly small, it is difficult to draw too many conclusions from the data. That said, some interesting patterns can be seen and are explored below along with the data generated by the survey for each question.

Question 1:



Question 1 data analysis:

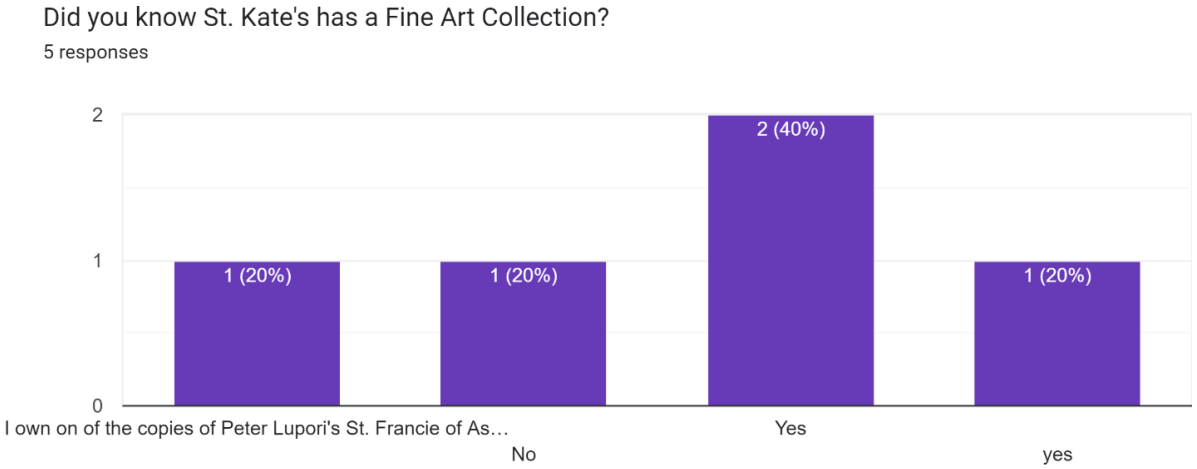
The graph for Question 1 shows that 60% of were faculty (20%) and staff members (40%), and 40% were a neighbor/visitor/member of the public. It also shows that there were 0 student responses. Whileit is both expected and pleasant that some members of faculty and staff took part in this survey, it is disappointing that students did not.

Factors that could explain this lack of student engagement include the fact that the weather was a bit turbulent and/or colder during some of the work days. During our work days, students were more likely to be indoors and less likely to venture near the work that we were doing on campus, and as a consequence, less likely to interact with the informational signs (with a link to our online survey) we posted near the artworks being treated.

The data from Question 1 is valuable as it tells us that we can do more to improved student engagement going forward, as well as to improve overall participation in our survey. We have used this data to consider ways to increase likely student engagement:

- **Tabling Events in our Student Center:** capitalizing on the high-traffic area of our student center, OSC members could invite students to take part in some sculpture care indoors at a tabling event where students could trying cleaning methods on a small sculptural object supplied by our Fine Art Collection. We could also provide an iPad and QR code that links to our digital collection and survey, and encourage students to learn more and/or fill out the survey while at the table.
- **Narrative didactics installed with the outdoor sculptures:** research, write and install artwork labels with information about the sculptures and the OSC, and provide the QR code linking to the survey.
- **Outreach:** increase outreach to faculty and their classes and offer tours of the outdoor sculptures, provide information about the OSC and request their feedback via the survey.

Question 2:



Question 2 data analysis:

We received 5 responses to Question 2, though one was related to inquiries about donating to the collection, so in actuality we only received four responses that answered the question. Also, due to formatting issues, the yes votes were split into two different columns in the graph shown above. In actuality we received 3 yes answers and 1 no answer, so that means 60% of respondents knew that we have an online collection, which is positive. That said, this number also shows us that we have more work to do around increasing the percentage of people who are aware of the collection, both on and off of campus. Like question 1, with more respondents, we will have better data to analyze, and a greater understanding of community awareness of our online collection.

Question 3:

Question 3 data analysis:

3 out of 4 respondents (75%) said they view the outdoor sculpture collection for enjoyment (plus 'honor' for one respondent), while a fourth only stated that they view these works while walking around campus, which while containing no particularly glowing sentiments, does at least impute some usefulness. The overall tenor of the answers to Question 3 would seem to support the argument that outdoor sculptures add to the visual interest and beauty of the campus by providing its community and its visitors with a pleasurable experience upon viewing, as opposed to inducing an indifferent or unpleasant response.

We might also posit that the sentiment expressed in this data bolsters the argument that if we were to increase the number of outdoor artworks on campus, it would enrichen the campus experience.

Question 4:

Do you have any requests for future sculptures? Artist, medium, style, etc.?

Note: Only two of the five responses to this question actually answered it, while two others were off topic and contained personal information, and one was marked as n/a. So, rather than a screenshot of the answers we received, a summary of them is shown here:

Do you have any requests for future sculptures? Artist, medium, style, etc.?
• Interactive sculpture.
• More sculpture in common areas such as the quad or outside buildings.

Question 4 data analysis:

Despite the fact that there were only two actual responses to Question 4, the fact that one (50% of answers) requested that we increase the number of outdoor sculptures would seem to further strengthen our argument within the Question 3 data analysis that if we were to increase the number of such works on campus, it would enrich the campus experience.

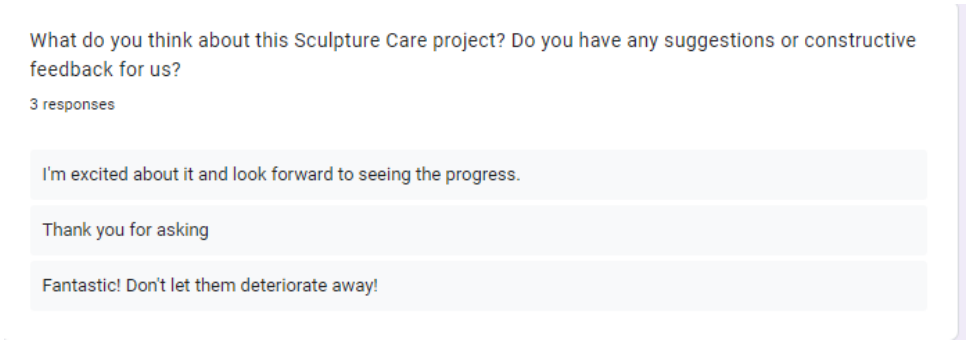
The interest in interactive sculpture by the other respondent to Question 4 is a helpful catalyst for exploring what sort of interactive sculptures are possible and how one might function on the St. Kate's campus.

Question 5:

Question 5 data analysis:

2 out of the 4 respondents were aware of our digital fine art collection, and one wasn't sure if they knew about it. We see it as a positive that at least 50% were aware. This data also shows us we should continue to seek new ways to increase awareness and usage of this collection by both the campus community and the greater public.

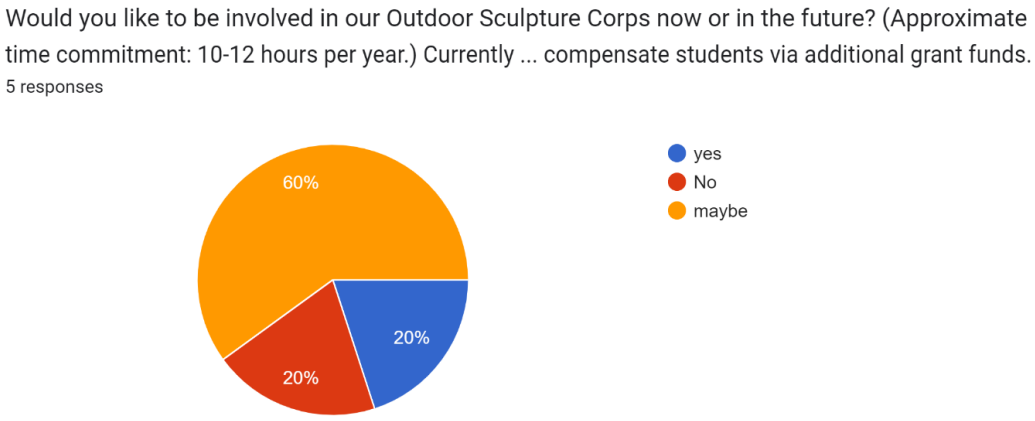
Question 6:



Question 6 data analysis:

Of the three responses received, two (60%) were extremely positive about the OSC project and the third politely thanked us for the question. Though a limited pool from which to ascertain trends, the mostly positive nature of these responses tells us that this was a worthwhile project. The comment about deterioration also underlines the fact that this sort of work is vital to protecting campus resources and that the members of the campus community and/or the public also value that resource.

Question 7:



Question 7 data analysis:

20% of respondents said they were interested in taking part in the OSC in the future, while 60% were undecided and 20% said no. This reticence can likely be assigned to the fact that, as seen in the Question 1 data, 40% of the respondents are members of the neighbors, public, or visitors to campus and not current staff, faculty, or students. These respondents would be less likely to take part in a University project because they are not part of

the campus community, perhaps giving the impression they do not meet the qualifications for being in OSC. Whatever the reason for this lack of interest, the data in this graph demonstrates that we should continue to think about how to increase participation in the OSC. We have done some brainstorming around this and the following ideas might be helpful:

- Clarify who can participate as members of the OSC, and how that membership would work depending on the community the volunteers is coming from.
- Obtain internal or grant funding so student members of the OSC can be paid for their work. From an ethical perspective, we would prefer our students be paid for their labor. We'd likely also increase student involvement, as students wouldn't necessarily have to pick a paying job over a commitment to the OSC. Additionally, since we're offering valuable professional experience for this work, students will likely prioritize this kind of opportunity over another paying job that is less related to degrees.
- Look into allowing members of the public such as neighbors to also take part, and to make that opportunity clear to them in our survey and any other outreach we do.

This project has been financed in part with funds provided by the State of Minnesota from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the Minnesota Historical Society.

[i] According to verbiage on the OCLC website, "Any view of a CONTENTdm Item (single item or compound object) counts as a Pageview.[…]Landing pages and search pages are not counted.[…]Viewing the different components of a compound object does not add to the Pageview count for that object. […]Reloading the item from the same URL counts as a new Pageview."