Public Art Archive Launches New Website to Make Public Art Available for All

Denver, CO (January 12, 2023) — The Public Art Archive™ (PAA) announces the launch of an expansive new website designed by digital agency Bilberrry. A project of the Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF), a US Regional Arts Organization, the PAA is a singular platform for connecting with public art in any community. The site, publiccartarchive.org, includes a public art documentation database with interactive maps, bringing thousands of public artworks to visitors across the country and beyond. The newly redesigned website increases accessibility and user-friendliness within the resource built to discover the history, context, and meaning behind each work.

As general interest in public art has expanded, the site’s user experience needed to evolve from a platform designed as a visual library database — where users often know what they’re looking for prior to visiting the site — to a site that feels welcoming to the general public. The new platform is entirely device-responsive, allowing users to explore collections from desktops, tablets, and mobile devices. Through intuitive search filters, grid-view map results, and premium exhibition spotlights, users can now navigate the site with an optimized visual experience. Artwork record pages have also been revamped to enhance the way media, video, audio, and PDFs are displayed, including exclusive access to artworks not on view.

“Understanding that art, accurate data, and public engagement are central to the project, we wanted users to be immersed in curated art from the moment they land on the home screen — from dynamic rotating images to featured collections, ‘Art Near Me’ and ‘Popular Art’ sections, and a surprise ‘Art Roulette’ that surfaces random pieces for endless discovery,” said Arthur Shwab, Bilberrry Head of Product and Digital Strategy.

The Public Art Archive has seen expansive growth since its creation in 2010. As one of the largest active databases of public art, it houses over 50,000 images and multimedia elements and nearly 20,000 artwork records representing the work of over 6,000 artists. Records spanning lived experience, geographic boundary, subject matter, and worktype are united into a centralized resource where street artists appear alongside prolific sculptors and ephemeral experiences alongside traditional monuments.

“With the PAA, our mission is to capture, index, and inventory every piece of public art in the country, and eventually the world, and make its discovery a delightful experience that is free and universally accessible — sort of the ‘IMDb for public art’,” said WESTAF Executive Director Christian Gaines. “This dramatic redesign brings us closer than ever to realizing that dream.”

With the mission to make public art more public, PAA aims to be the essential, authoritative resource for discovering and learning about public art, engaging and simple to use with
something for everyone, from art curators, historians, researchers, and urban planners to casual users like public art enthusiasts and cultural tourists.