



# **PAUL PAPPAS**

## **Public Sculpture**

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### **DEDICATION**

10:AM • SATURDAY • OCTOBER 14, 1989  
MONROE PARK (Broadway and Monroe)  
Eugene, Oregon

# LANE Arts

Issues  
Insights  
Information

June 1989

## LANE REGIONAL ARTS COUNCIL

### SCULPTURE: WHAT PLACE IN THE CITY? UPDATE.

Remember the February issue of Lane Arts, when a number of items regarding sculpture on the local scene were noted? Well, things happen...

ITEM: Jan Zach's monumental "Can Can" is now "irretrievable" (read destroyed) according to Meier and Frank's Portland architect that oversaw the recent remodeling of their Valley River Center Store. The 50' stainless steel kinetic piece (though the plug was pulled years ago by the store) was commissioned in 1968 for the huge new space designed for it.

ITEM: Paul Pappas' steel and wood sculpture will be permanently placed in Monroe Park in early summer. Eugene Mayor Jeff Miller was instrumental in cutting through the "city process" that had tied up a siting decision for months. Paul's work is on exhibit through June in the Hult Center gallery. The large outdoor piece outside the Hult is one part of the sculpture that will be assembled in Monroe Park. Paul also has been invited to construct a large outdoor sculpture at Lane Community College this summer. Harold Hoy, Dottie Chase and Sessler Steel have been very helpful.

ITEM: Pete Helzer, of Eugene, has been commissioned by the City of Eugene's Visual Arts Commission, which oversees the percent for art program, to produce five bronze animal sculptures to grace the area around the children's playground located on Broadway on the Downtown Mall. The \$13,000



"The work I liked best was the abstract construction-sculpture. Paul Pappas's assemblages of steel and bone parts, some of them free floating, exhibit a strong formal intelligence but equally compelling are the man and machine metaphors his found objects call to mind."

- Irving Sandler, 1987

commission will enable Helzer to complete the work by September. The Downtown Commission played a major role by contributing extra funds and assisting with selection.

AND YES, the City still intends to return the Tom Hardy bronze fish sculpture to the Park Blocks Fountain...



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411 High Street Eugene, Oregon 97401

Address Correction  
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Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
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Eugene, Oregon 97401

John Rose  
1041 Lawrence St.  
Eugene, OR 97401



## CITY/REG

Eugene, Oregon, Friday, September 1, 1989

Northwest news/5B  
Dear Abby/7B  
Business/8B

## DON BISHOFF



## Sculpture stirs artistic debate

**THE FIRST** dispute is over: Paul Pappas' sculpture is going to Monroe Park. Now stand back for the second fuss — about the sculpture itself.

That's it in the photo, behind Pappas at his studio at 422 Blair Blvd. It's, well, it's an impressive piece of work. Intriguingly crafted of scrap steel and driftwood, it weighs several tons, is 25 feet tall, and has a balanced top part that sways in the wind.

But I suspect it will trigger the biggest local art debate since a sculpture symposium a number of years ago left us with the big red dog bone under the Washington-Jefferson Street Bridge and a mini-Stonhenge in Alton Baker Park.

Pappas' untitled work is to be moved to the park early next month. It very nearly didn't make it.

More than a year ago, Pappas got a \$900 grant of city room tax money through the Lane Regional Arts Council to create a piece of "outdoor public sculpture." He's a self-trained local artist who put several large-scale pieces in public parks while working in New York City.

Pappas wanted to put this one in his westside

neighborhood, somewhere between the Lane County Fairgrounds and the Willamette River. It's not a pretty area, he said, and has more than its share of crime, drugs and prostitution.

"My idea was to try to find a site for it to focus attention and bring some other kinds of energy to bear on this overall problem," he said. His first choice was a triangle at West Sixth

**Paul Pappas**

*Risky business?*



Avenue, Blair Boulevard and Adams Street.

But the city rejected that as too expensive. Months passed, and Pappas grew impatient. He said he didn't know what he was going to make until he knew where it was going to go.

He had a winter meeting with Mayor Jeff Miller and Councilman Shawn Boles, who lives on the west side. They delegated site selection to the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department. After meetings with the Westside Quality Project neighborhood group and Friends of Monroe Park, it was decided to put it in the park — even though Pappas had no design to show anybody.

"We agreed to buy a pig in a poke, so to speak," said Mary Bentsen, a Friends of Monroe Park member.

**MEANWHILE, PAPPAS DID** a stint in Eugene schools as an artist in residence and had a show at the Hult Center. A large piece still outside the Hult today was originally intended as part of a two-part park sculpture. Then Pappas decided to use only the second piece — the one shown here — for the park.

But city officials greeted it with, well, muted enthusiasm. The Risk Services office — which tries to keep the city from getting sued — said someone might get hurt climbing on it. Pappas said he was also told that Ed Smith, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services chief, didn't like the work.

John Etter, assistant parks superintendent, said neither he nor the man from Risk Services liked it, either. "But we decided to not consider that, to look just at the risk factor," he said.

Pappas had a call from Etter this week that he believed was a final rejection of his piece — although Etter denies that. Boles heard about the dispute and went to see what the fuss was about.

"There's no more risk attendant to that piece than to any set of monkey bars in the park," Boles said after looking at it. "We commissioned the artist to site a piece in the park, and I intend to see that come to fruition."

He called a meeting Thursday morning with city staff members, Bentsen and Pappas and got agreement to put the piece in the park on a trial basis. Shrubs and signs will be put around it to discourage climbers.

**THE RISK SERVICES** people were still worried. And Boles said, "I recognize there is some risk in a society where there are more lawyers than rats." But he contends that getting more art into the west side is worth taking some risks.

"We're going to leave it in place some six to 12 months to see what the response of the neighborhood is," he said. If the response is "Yuk!" the sculpture will come out.

Monroe Park has already had its share of controversy — over drugs, drinking, vandalism and racial issues. Pappas said his work reflects that.

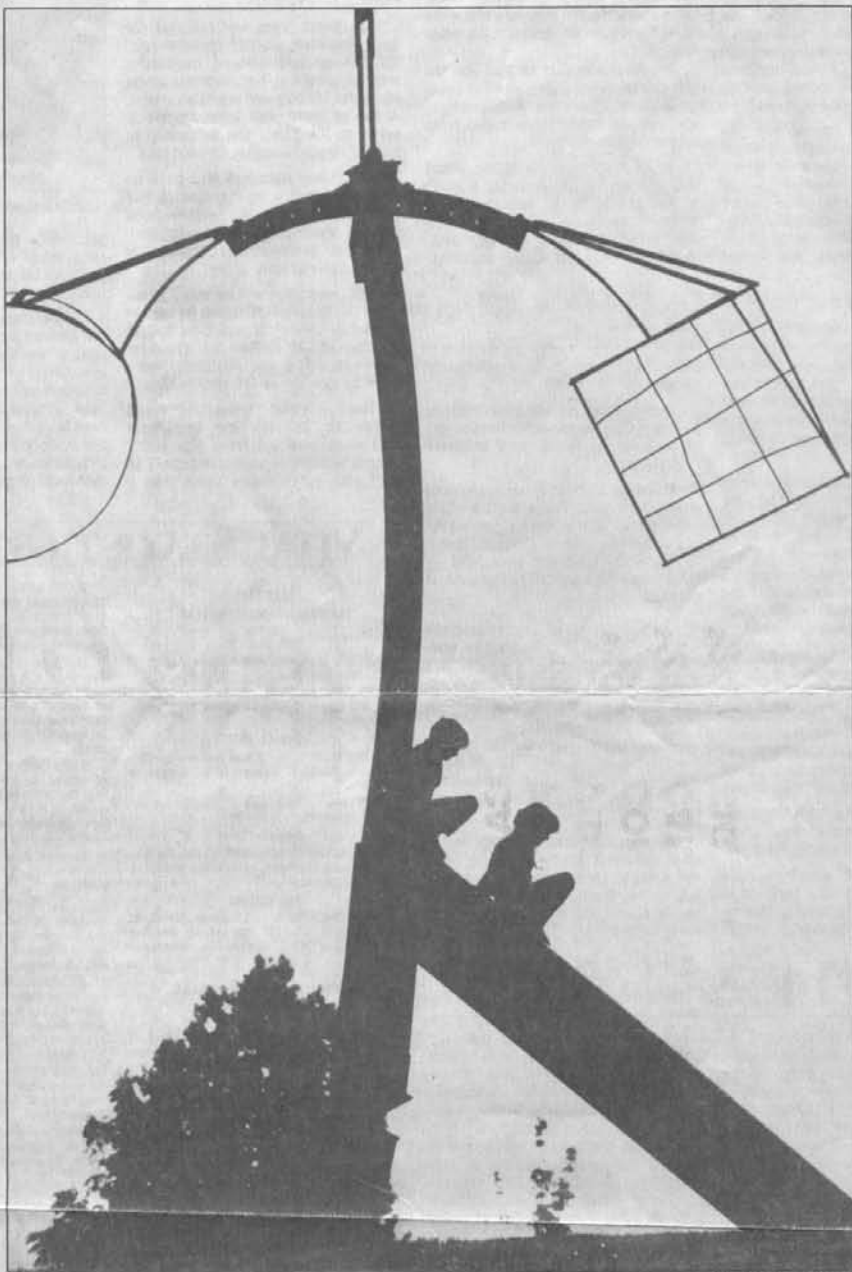
The balancing part, he said, "has to do in my mind with the racial issue, a sort of balancing and evening out of differences." If that seems a bit vague, don't worry.

"The other important part of what it means is not what I say, but what it comes to mean in your own experience," Pappas said. Look at it after it's in place, he said, and decide what you think it means.

Some may decide that whatever it means, it doesn't look so great. But Douglas Beauchamp, executive director of the arts council, says too many of us think visual arts have to be pretty.

"Most dynamic art is provocative, and sometimes makes you very uncomfortable . . . as good theater or good writing does," he said. "There's no reason why visual art has to function in a kind of decorative ornamental way that makes you feel better."

No risk of that with Pappas' piece. Given its history, he just might want to title it "Provocation."



Staff photo by Paul Carter

Sculptor Paul Pappas says it's safe for children to play on his Monroe Park sculpture; neighbors aren't so sure

# Sculpture called unsafe

## Creator says real debate is over aesthetics

By ANN PORTAL  
The Register-Guard

Eugene's newest piece of outdoor sculpture already is drawing barbs from neighbors who say it poses a danger to children.

Paul Pappas' untitled work, a 25-foot monument of scrap steel and driftwood, was placed two weeks ago on the highest hill in Monroe Park.

Reaction was swift.

"I have very strong feelings. I have very negative feelings. I don't care for it at all," said Delynn Crossman, who

said she can see the sculpture "from most of my house" across the street from the park.

Crossman said she complained to the city that the sculpture is unsafe, especially because of its proximity to the park's wading pool. In the summer, when children get out of the pool, "they're slippery and wet" and likely to fall if they try to climb the steel posts and weathered wood, she said.

Crossman's son suffered minor injuries recently when he climbed to the top of the sculpture, where a metal square and circle are suspended from opposite ends of a

Turn to SCULPTURE, Page 2C

...ty bridges, at a condition better. Currently, 65 percent of the fall beneath that level, as fair, 21 as poor and critical.

To maintain all bridges, except red spans, above the federal "sufficiency rating" level at which they become eligible for federal repair or replacement funds. A sufficiency rating is calculated with a complex formula that considers areas such as structural adequacy, safety, roadway layout and traffic volumes. Under that rating system, 25 county bridges are in poor

said might need costly repairs or replacement in the next five to six years.

Those bridges, which have treated wood substructures and prestressed concrete superstructures, should last at least 30 to 40 years before requiring major repairs or replacement, according to state officials and national bridge experts. The county stopped building bridges of that design in 1974.

Public works officials say the construction of the wood-concrete bridges was basic: Wood pilings were driven into the ground and massive 20-foot-long solid timber "caps" were placed on top of the pilings. Prestressed concrete slabs were placed on top of the caps, and an asphalt seal was poured

In the wood-concrete bridge design, holes were drilled into the timber cap and wooden pins inserted to keep the concrete slabs from shifting. Those holes also attracted moisture and were often "pockets of decay," Snowden said.

Snowden also said he had learned that it was common practice for county crews that built the wood-concrete spans to use materials salvaged from other bridges.

At its Nov. 25 meeting, the board also is scheduled to consider a study by the public works department on whether the county could potentially save money by hiring a bridge engineer rather than retaining consultants.

The board is expected to approve appointments to the committee which is charged with presenting recommendations to the district's committee in January.

Applicants were not solicited by the committee, district spokeswoman Liz Cawood said. Instead, candidates were suggested by her, Supervisor Margaret Nichols and board members. A list of those who have agreed to serve on the panel will be shown at tonight's board meeting, Cawood said.

Committee members will have a fiduciary interest in the district. The list will include parents, neighborhood leaders, senior citizens and representatives of business and community groups, Cawood said.

The committee will be asked to address the financial dilemma facing the district in 1990-91: a projected shortfall of \$3.7 million that could require reducing the district's workforce by as many as 130 employees.

The potential reduction could match the 127 full-time employees who were trimmed from this year's payroll because of budget deficit staff cuts, representing more

## SCULPTURE

Continued from Page 1C

pole that sways in the wind. Her son "was hanging from the top of it" and fell, she said. She was not present or she would have told him to get down, she said.

"I really feel like something is going to happen," she said. "I'd hate to see the city sued."

Pappas said Tuesday he believes that the real problem is that Crossman doesn't like the appearance of the sculpture. "That's clouding the issue for her as far as safety," he said.

He said he designed the sculpture knowing that children might crawl around on it, and he encourages them to do so. "I certainly didn't build it to be a piece of playground equipment, but it's appropriate that people be around it," he said. "I suppose if somebody's bent on it, they can find some way to abuse the intent of the piece."

He said there are many risks to children in Eugene that are "more worthy of discussion," such as crossing Sixth and Seventh avenues. But "to debate this (sculpture) in public as an aesthetic issue I think is really healthy and a real good thing."

Pappas, who received a \$900 grant of city room tax money to create the

sculpture, said he's leaving it up to the public what to make of the black metal tripod with hunks of driftwood secured to what could be a seat. On top of a skinny pole, a flyswatter-shaped object catches the wind.

John Etter, assistant parks superintendent, said Tuesday that he has received objections about the sculpture's aesthetics but is not aware of any complaints about its safety.

The city is going to plant evergreen shrubs around the sculpture this fall and flowers next spring to discourage climbing. A sign also will be posted.

"We haven't chosen the wording yet," Etter said. "Something to the effect of, 'Do not climb.'"

Unless city officials decide that the sculpture poses an obvious hazard, they intend to wait six months before taking testimony on whether it should stay in the park, he said.

Various visitors to the park Tuesday afternoon said they love the sculpture, hate it or don't understand it.

"I think it's great," said Richard, a neighbor of the park who declined to give his last name. "It has a certain — whatever that thing is that sculptures

have that make them aesthetically pleasing."

Richard said he saw kids climbing on the sculpture and told them to get off because he found their behavior "disrespectful."

Maynard Hanson, a beer salesman sitting on a park bench for an afternoon break, said the sculpture isn't really to his taste, but he's glad it's there. "I made the comment to myself — 'That's art,'" he said. "It's just nice. It makes people think."

Gary Rousseve of Eugene said the sculpture is ugly. "I'm trying to wonder what it represents," he said. "It's bad looking. It's a waste of time, energy and money. What's folks going to do to it, except vandalize it?"

Tina Braley, a 21-year-old Eugene woman, said, "Looks like they're trying to join nature and civilization." Visitors seem to like the sculpture, she said.

"There was some people jumping on it the other day — climbing on it and hanging from the round part, posing, laying down — acting like models," she said. "They were having fun, doing flips off of it."

## VITAL ST.

### Births

**SACRED HEART HOSPITAL**  
Eugene  
Oct. 15, 1989

**ANKER** — Allena and Andrew A. 295 E. 29th Ave., Eugene, a daughter.

**MURPHY** — Peggy Warren-Murphy and Dennis Murphy, of 1175 Lawrence St., a daughter.

Oct. 14, 1989

**ROMB-ROBINS** — Susan Romb and Robins, of 85476 S. Willamette St., Eugene, a son.

**TANAKA** — Fern and Al Tanaka, of Eugene, a daughter.

Oct. 13, 1989

**PETRAKIAN-CHAPMAN** — Christa and Philip Chapman, of 1038 Ash St., Eugene, a daughter.

Oct. 12, 1989

**SEATON-RHOADS** — Charlene Seaton and Rhoads, of 5335 Daisy St., No. 147, Springfield, a daughter.

Rhoads Sr., of 767 W. Eighth Ave., Eugene, a son.

OCT.  
89

# Give sculpture a trial

A few people in the Monroe Park neighborhood, following the lead of Eugene's Risk Management Department, have objected to a new piece of sculpture in the park on the basis that it's dangerous. The safety issue is a red herring. The real question is whether the sculpture has aesthetic merit. That's a debate that should not be rushed to a conclusion.

Some people will automatically reject any non-representational work of art, and Paul Pappas' 25-foot kinetic sculpture certainly fits that category. But a piece of sculpture can have important qualities — meaningfulness, for example, or a capacity to inspire thought — without looking like anything except itself, and even without being attractive. Indeed, art whose sole ambition is to be beautiful often succeeds in being nothing but boring. A powerful, ugly piece of art deserves more praise and attention than a pretty bit of decoration.

Whether Pappas' sculpture deserves such praise and attention, however, is an open question. On first impression, it conveys puzzlement instead of meaning, and ungainliness instead of power. It's a massive work of steel and driftwood. It has a mast-like column that supports a teetering pole with a couple of semaphore-like members attached. The untitled piece stands atop a minor promontory in the park, an object of some curiosity and much head-shaking. But first impressions aren't a sound basis for permanent decisions, such as whether to remove a work of public art.

Neighbors and city officials have expressed concern about the danger

to children who will climb the sculpture. But the sculpture is no more dangerous than playground equipment or trees. There's certainly no reason to fear that frisky children will damage the sculpture — it looks indestructible. If a similarly imposing work of unquestioned artistic merit had been installed in the park, the issue of safety would not have been raised.

Setting safety concerns aside means there's no rush to decide the sculpture's fate. The city owes the work a chance — city officials and neighborhood representatives agreed to place a work by Pappas in west Eugene without reviewing design proposals. In effect, they commissioned the sculpture sight unseen.

Now that the sculpture has been placed, the city has said it will remain in the park for six months. That's a prudent plan — one that gives people control of their park environment without caving in to Philistinism. Six months will provide enough time for people to get acquainted with the work, discuss it, form opinions and reach a consensus about whether it should remain. It's possible that fondness will come with familiarity. It's also possible that opinions against the work will harden.

After giving Pappas' work a chance, people in the neighborhood will deserve an opportunity to express their judgments. Monroe Park is a neighborhood park, and those who live nearby shouldn't have to live with an artwork they don't like. But first they should give themselves time to find out whether they like it or not.



# How do you like the art in the park?

By ANN PORTAL  
The Register-Guard

APR. 19, 1990

What do you think? Should we keep it?

Seven months after a controversial piece of sculpture was placed in Monroe Park, the city is following through on a promise to check with the public to determine its fate.

Created by Eugene artist Paul Pappas, the 25-foot steel and driftwood sculpture has been alternately praised and jeered since its debut on the northeast slope of the central city park on Monroe Street between Broadway and 10th Avenue.

The neighborhood organization, the city parks department and Pappas agreed when the sculpture was installed that they would ask for public comment this spring on whether the artwork should remain on a long-term basis.

So, here's your chance. Parks officials say they want members of the public to share their "attitudes, observations and experiences" with the sculpture.

They also want to know whether people have experienced or seen accidents or near-accidents involving the artwork.

Some neighbors have complained that the sculpture is unsafe for children, while others "have expressed delight in it," parks officials say.

Bonnie Beck, coordinator of the summer playground program, is among those concerned about the safety of the sculpture. She has asked the city to reconsider whether it will be safe for children participating in the playground program, which begins June 18, to be playing near the artwork. Between 30 and 40 children participate each day.

Because of its design, the sculpture seems to encourage children to play on it, Beck said. But "it's not standard play equipment. I worry about the sculpture itself and its ability to withstand that kind of punishment, and I also worry about the children harming themselves," she said.

She worries in particular about a metal square and circle that are suspended from opposite ends of a pole at the top of the sculpture. Children "have used it as a teeter-totter," she said.

If the sculpture remains and any accidents result this summer, Beck said she will recommend moving the playground program to another park in the area.

Assistant Parks Superintendent John Etter said he is

Assistant Parks Superintendent John Etter said he is aware of only one accident involving the sculpture but doesn't know how serious the child's injuries were.

The city's risk services manager, who evaluates potential dangers, told parks officials last fall that he was concerned that someone might get hurt climbing on the sculpture, Etter said.

As part of the review this spring, the risk services office will take another look at whether children are climbing on the artwork, he said.

"We're trying to just get good comments," Etter said. "If there's a heavy leaning toward saving it, that would probably be a factor in whether or not we accept some large risk, for example.

"Any strong sentiment might tip it one way or the other," he added.

The parks department will consider the public comments before forwarding a recommendation to the Westside Neighborhood Quality Project. The Eugene Joint Parks Committee, which is scheduled to discuss the issue at a May 16 meeting, will decide whether the sculpture stays or goes.

Comments are due in writing by May 2 at the Eugene Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department, 22 W. Seventh Ave., Eugene, Ore., 97401.



**EXAMINATION REPORT AND PROPOSAL**

**CACC # 2014.03**

**OWNER/AGENT**

OWNER'S ID NUMBER

EXAMINER

DATE OF REPORT

City of Eugene/Public Art Program

Artwork ID: None

Robert Krueger

January 8, 2014

**ARTIST/MAKER (Owner Attribution)**

SIGNATURE and its LOCATION

TITLE ("") or DESCRIPTION

DATE OF OBJECT

STRUCTURE

DIMENSIONS (H x W x D)

ACCESSORIES

LABELS/DISTINGUISHING MARKS

Paul Pappas

None Found

Untitled

1989

Steel and wood

~21 x 19 x 13 feet

None

None

**PRE-TREATMENT PHOTOGRAPHS**

A1 Front, Normal Illumination

A2 Right, Normal Illumination

A3 Left, Normal Illumination

A4 Right, Normal Illumination

**MATERIALS ANALYSIS**

SAMPLE and LOCATION

ANALYTICAL METHOD

FINDINGS

N/A		
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**I. DESCRIPTION**

**• THE OBJECT**

Large steel and wood sculpture.

**• HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

Little was found on the artworks of Paul Pappas, although his work was included in the inaugural exhibition at the Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City, Queens, NY from September 28, 1986 to March 31, 1987.

**• FABRICATION**

The artwork is largely made of steel, with one large wood element. The steel sections are mostly I-beams, pipe or cylinders, angle iron and sheet stock.

**II. CONDITION**

**• OBJECT DESCRIPTION**

The artwork has 4 points of contact with the ground, with a fifth close to the ground. The left side of the sculpture rests on a base of three pieces of large I-beams welded together, two sections of which are angled down and away at roughly a 45° angle from a horizontal cross section. Attached to the top of the horizontal I-beam is a section of vertical I-beam and a smaller, taller angle iron. The angle iron has been cut and welded to add a curve to the piece. From the intersection of the top where the vertical I-beam attaches to the angle iron, a large cylinder extends toward the left and



down at a ~45° angle until it reaches the ground. Attached to the upper side of the cylinder, near where it meets the ground, there is a large U channel extending vertically, which has been altered to arch toward the back of the sculpture. Upon the U channel piece are two custom mounts which cradle a large chunk of abstract shaped tree trunk, which may also be a piece of drift wood. Attached near the top of the arch is an I-beam which has been cut and welded to form an arch. It appears as if the two ends of the arch were meant to make contact with the ground. The base of one end of the arch is floating just above the ground, with a detached steel plate just below it on the ground. A similar steel plate may be found in other locations where the artwork meets the ground.

### • EXAMINATION

According to the Art Inventories Catalog, Smithsonian American Art Museums<sup>1</sup> the artwork is made of steel and wood with a concrete base. During the examination no concrete base was found, however it could be under the grass. The sculpture appears to mostly be sound, however there is one element at the very top of the sculpture that is damaged, and is at risk of falling. The section containing the damaged piece is attached to an arched support beam, held to the main structure of the artwork through pillow block bearings. It is difficult to determine the condition of the bearings, however it is assumed that the bearings are in need of lubrication or replacement. No movement of the kinetic section was noticed during the examination.

Overall the artwork appears to be settling into the earth beneath it. The steel is rusting, however the rate of deterioration is slow and does not pose a risk at this point. The artist must likely have known the artwork would rust, and this is likely a desired appearance. The large wood object is badly decayed due to fungal attack (commonly referred to as dry rot) and has largely lost its internal strength. The Kinetic section appears as if it was once painted white. The paint is now failing, and rust is showing through the paint. There are also several graffiti marks on the sculpture.

### III. PREVIOUS TREATMENT

- Save Outdoor Sculpture (SOS!), Oregon survey, 1993

### TREATMENT PROPOSAL

1. Perform written and photographic documentation before, during and after treatment.
2. Determine if there is a footing. If not, one should be added.
3. Remove damaged kinetic section of sculpture and bearings in order to repair damage, assess and repair bearings (if needed) and re-paint.
4. Address the poor condition of the wood. This may mean replicating the wood in steel (casting) or other material, or infusing the wood with epoxy resin to replace the strength of the wood, and prevent further fungal attack.
5. Remove graffiti
6. Re-install kinetic section
7. Clean sculpture

### FACTORS INFLUENCING TREATMENT

As with any conservation treatment, there is the possibility of unforeseen circumstances, which may influence a change in the proposed treatment. Any changes in the treatment which would alter the general approach or take the treatment beyond the bid cost will result in consultation with Client.

### ANTICIPATED RESULTS OF TREATMENT

The artwork will appear well cared for and more in keeping with the intent of the artist.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://collections.si.edu/search/results.htm?q=Paul+Pappas>



A1, Front, Normal Illumination



A2, Right, Normal Illumination





A3, Back, Normal Illumination



A4, Left, Normal Illumination



Description	Total
Perform written and photographic documentation before, during and after treatment. Preparation for conservation.	500.00
Paul Pappas Sculpture Conservation	6,625.00
•Determine if there is a footing. If not, one should be added.	
•Remove damaged kinetic section of sculpture and bearings in order to repair damage, assess and repair bearings (if needed) and re-paint.	
•Address the poor condition of the wood. This may mean replicating the wood in steel (casting) or other material, or infusing the wood with epoxy resin to replace the strength of the wood, and prevent further fungal attack.	
•Remove graffiti	
•Re-install kinetic section	
•Clean sculpture	
sand blast and Paint top section	1,500.00
transportation of sections	1,000.00
Epoxy for wood	1,500.00
lift	2,000.00
weld	500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13,625.00</b>