Safeguarding our $46m, 50-year investment

Washington has invested more than $46 million in artworks that improve K-12 schools, college and university campuses, and state agency facilities. These artworks now comprise one of the most significant statewide collections of public art in the country. Much of the artwork has appreciated in value. However, there has never been a proportional investment in the care of the State Art Collection.

Background

The State Art Collection includes over 5,000 artworks in more than 1,200 locations statewide. They require specialized maintenance that cannot be done by custodians. ArtsWA needs a team of technicians that understand art materials and techniques. Without these specialists, the state risks losing irreplaceable artworks. The State has already removed almost 250 artworks from the Collection due to damage.

Operating Budget Request

2023-2025 Biennium $853,298

What does this fund?

ArtsWA will hire two collections technicians to maintain and repair artworks across the State, as well as commensurate administrative support, for a total of 3 additional FTEs. These positions will:

- Establish a regular maintenance schedule
- Address deferred maintenance needs
- Repair, install, and de-install artworks
- Document artwork condition and location

Our history of underfunding the care of the Collection makes it impossible—at present—to address all but the most immediate demands. If funded, however, this request will complete our collection care staffing needs.

Maintenance projections

Maintenance/repair target: 476 artworks per year

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<th>Artworks maintained</th>
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<td>Current capacity</td>
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<td>Capacity with half requested resources</td>
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<td>Capacity with requested resources</td>
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Graph: Partial funding neglects 20% of artworks, leaving nearly 1,000 artworks vulnerable to damage or loss.

Top: Dick Elliott’s Circle of Light is the largest artwork in the State Art Collection. These and other works need consistent maintenance to preserve the financial investment behind their construction or acquisition.

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