

Los Alamos County

Presented by Pacific Coast Conservation

Pacific Coast Conservation conducted assessments and conservation maintenance on a large portion of the Los Alamos County's Outdoor Sculpture Collection during the week of August 25-29, 2025. Work was performed by Assistant Conservator Joy Carlsen, Conservator Liv Manfredi, Conservation Technician Meg Driscoll, and Conservation Technician Morrigan Kelley.

The following is a summary of the work that was performed on Los Alamos County's Outdoor Sculpture Collection. For detailed notes on the condition, maintenance, and/or treatment of individual artworks, see the attached spreadsheet. Specific detailed photos are included in the summary below. A complete set of all the treatment photos for each artwork is accessible through the links in the spreadsheet.

Overall, the sculpture collection remains in good condition. All pieces had accretions and soiling that required routine cleaning, but very little new damage was noted.

The largest ongoing issues with the collection are cracking that has occurred in *The Clowns* and vessels in The *White Rock Pottery Project*. There is also concern about two of the pots that have wooden structures beneath, which are rotting. This will need to be addressed in 2026 after discussions with the artists. There continue to be some failing clear coats on *Oppenheim and the General*, *Spirit Dance*, *Apache Harvest*, *Essence of Dance*, *Overdue*, *Touch the Sky*, and *Canyon Watch*. Most do not require immediate attention; however, *Apache Harvest* should be replaced in the next 1-2 years, and as *Oppenheim and the General* are very popular with the locals and tourists, they should also be considered for treatment in the near future. While these are ongoing issues, no significant change was noted between 2024 and 2025 on these sculptures. PCC is currently developing a proposal for repainting *Nexus* after discussing paint with the artist. *Nexus* will require extensive work and will need to be considered, aside from yearly care, in order not to diminish the budget, leaving the rest of the collection uncared for.

Who Me? has significant patina loss and will need to be re-patinated when funding allows. *Spirit Dance* has a failing clear coat as well as loss of some of the paint on the surface of the bronze. The artist should be contacted to see if they are able to repaint the sculpture, or if they wish for PCC to conduct the treatment in the next few years.

Prior to this year's visit PCC met virtually with Los Alamos County staff and discussed the needs and expected work to be performed on each piece. From this meeting, a priority list was created for conservation needs and what PCC would be able to focus on while continuing to perform maintenance.

The artworks received a priority designation when originally assessed. These designations include consideration for stabilization needs and appearance. As time allows, PCC is focusing on conservation treatments that stabilize sculptures and surfaces over appearance, unless the appearance has changed significantly from the original intended appearance.

The following sculptures were treated as a priority during the 2025 maintenance. In addition to regular maintenance on the collection, *Lucky* received a full treatment on the patina to return the bronze to an "elephant grey."

Brown Trout
Lucky
Touch the Sky
The Runaways
Overdue
Pollyanna
Grandmother's Joy
General Leslie R. Groves
Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer
Canyon Watch
Spirit Dance
Golondrina
White Rock Pottery Project: *Ancestral Pueblo Cooking Pot*
White Rock Pottery Project: *Bandelier Black-on-Gray Jar*
White Rock Pottery Project: *San Ildefonso Polychrome Jar*
White Rock Pottery Project: *#4 Black-on-Red Jar*
White Rock Pottery Project: *Black-on-Black Maria Martinez Plate*
White Rock Pottery Project: *Contemporary Black on Sienna Pot*
Strange Trio
Flying Folds
Perspective
Who Me?
Apache Harvest
Essence of Dance
The Scale of Justice

Each of the above sculptures was assessed, washed, and the bronzes were waxed if necessary; otherwise, the existing wax was heated and buffed.

Multiverse
Nexus
Pinon Maze
The Clowns
Maru Fountain
Tranquility
Odetta
Ripples Sphere
Split Infinity
Jellyfish
Table Fountain with Rock
Lumisphere 1, 2, 3. & Asymmetric Bench Club & Loveseat
High Spirits

The above sculptures were photographed and assessed to plan for maintenance and treatment next year.

Treatment:

1. *The Clowns* had one small piece that was dislodged when touched, and another loose piece next to it was removed. Both were reattached to ensure they were not lost.



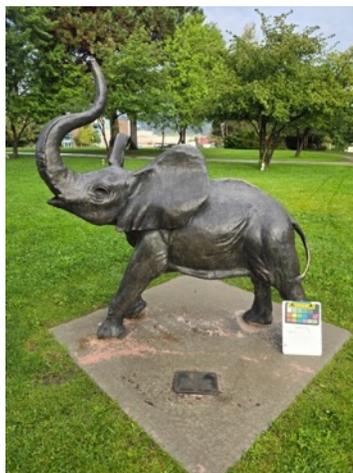
Detail: Before Treatment



Detail: After Treatment

The following artworks needed conservation that pertained to the visual appearance and not for stabilization. Some of these we were able to address entirely or in part during the 2025 maintenance cycle.

4. *Lucky* had an inappropriate black coating on the surface that needed to be removed, and was removed in 2024. *Lucky* was mostly treated in 2024; however, the final patina was not able to be achieved at that time. For the 2025 treatment, the surface was washed and the wax reduced before an entirely new opaque grey patina was applied to the surface overall, especially in the high touch areas. Two colors of grey were applied to give dimension to the surface. Repatination of high-touch areas may need to be done annually. The surface was then coated with a lacquer to protect the new patina. The plaque was treated to bring back legibility and the base concrete was stained to match the existing patches of stain present beneath the feet.



Lucky During Treatment, 2024



Lucky After Treatment

5. *Brown Trout* had a blached failing coating. Testing was done with lacquer and varnish over the failing clear coat in 2024 to determine if the sculpture may be coated without removing the flaking clear coat. Upon inspection, the Golden MSA UVLS varnish was a successful test at covering/integrating the failing coating and providing a protective layer on the surface. All surfaces were washed, flaking areas reduced, and then were coated with the varnish.



Detail with failing coating before treatment.



Detail after application of lacquer.

7. *Touch the Sky* still has some coating left on the surface that should be removed for the appearance of the sculpture. Some coating was removed during maintenance but there is still extant coating that needs to be removed. This will continue to be removed as possible during future maintenances.

Additionally, several other sculptures had some form of conservation treatment or testing to prepare for later conservation treatment.

8. *Grandmother's Joy* - A paint sample was taken from the base for analyzing. The base should be repainted in the next few years.
9. *Overdue* was repatinated on high touch areas, such as the children's hair and shoes. They should continue to be touched up yearly during maintenance, and the clear coat reduced and reapplied as necessary.



Detail: the girl's bun Before Treatment



Detail: the girl's bun After Treatment

10. *White Rock Pottery Project: San Ildefonso Polychrome Jar* was heavily cracked. Cathedral Stone Jahn Injection Mortar M30-#31 was injected into cracks that were larger than a hairline fracture. The liquid silicate was not able to be applied to the cracks this year due to weather conditions. The cracks will be assessed and refilled if necessary next year, and will be inpainted to match.



Detail: Crack that was wide enough to inject



Detail: After injection

11. *White Rock Pottery Project: #4 Black-on-Red Jar* was also heavily cracked. Cathedral Stone Jahn Injection Mortar M30-#31 was injected into cracks that were larger than a hairline fracture. The liquid silicate was unable to be applied to the cracks this year due to unfavorable weather conditions. The cracks will be assessed and refilled if necessary next year, and will be inpainted to match. The surface has a modeled sheen, with some areas of high gloss and others of matte finish. The artists should be consulted to see what products were applied to the surface so that the correct sheen can be recreated



Detail: Cracks in the surface



Detail: Modeled surface sheen

To create more time for conservation treatments, a few sculptures in the collection that were deemed stable and in excellent/good condition were slated to be skipped this year if they were indeed in good condition once assessed onsite. This allowed for more time and funding to be allocated across the

collection for critical maintenance and conservation. Six artworks that did not receive any form of conservation or maintenance this year but were assessed during this maintenance cycle. These are:

Tranquility- This sculpture requires too much time to clean, as waiters need to be picked up and dropped off, the bird poop must be sterilized prior to removal, and 3 staff must be present for 2-3 hours to complete the work. With the hours set aside to do this sculpture, it should only be cleaned every other year.

Corky – This sculpture requires full treatment to remove the paint and re-patinate the surface. This is slated for the 2026 treatment cycle.

Multiverse - The clear coat is failing on the name plaque across the base of the sculpture. This should be reduced and reapplied in 2026 along with a new coating of Permalac® on the back of the copper sheets.

Maru Fountain – The fountain does not appear to be in working condition. The grate that allows access to the water surrounding the sculpture was not in place and the stones that hide it were strewn about. A discussion should take place whether this sculpture will continue to be treated by PCC or if it needs further repair.

The Clowns – There are cracks in the cement and on some of the tiles. The cracks injected in 2024 held up well over the year. Large chunks of concrete have begun to fall out of the right side of the back of the sculpture. The cracks will continue to be injected when possible and the missing sections will be filled in 2026.

Odetta – The sculpture is in good condition and will be cleaned and assessed in 2026.

Ripples Sphere- One of the kinetic pieces has come loose and needs to be reset into place and the nut tightened to hold it. A lift or scaffolding will be needed to do this, as it will require two people.

Split Infinity - Two of the wings were bent in several places. Using the lift rented to repair *Ripples Sphere* an attempt can be made to bend the wings back into place.

Jellyfish - Scratches on some of the upper surfaces have lost coloration and have currently stable corrosion. Using the same lift, the sculpture can be washed, corrosion mitigated, and a clear coat applied to the surface to protect the remaining paint and reduce the chance of new corrosion developing.

Solar Tree – This sculpture is being treated by the artist. PCC will assess it and perform regular maintenance in 2026.

Nexus – See the full treatment proposal. Treatment will commence when the funding is approved.

Flower of Flight – Due to the nature of the artist intent, this sculpture should not be washed where biological growth is occurring. The sculpture will be assessed and washed as needed in 2026.

Lizard – The sculpture will be washed and corrosion mitigated during yearly maintenance.

Table Fountain with Rock – The treatment performed in 2024 held up well, however the surface was scratched again. It is unknown if local wildlife is responsible for the abrasions on the surface or if it is public interaction. The fountain can be repainted again as time permits in 2026.

Sculptural Stones – The stones will be washed and checked for biological growth in 2026.

Lumisphere 1, 2, 3. & Asymmetric Bench Club & Loveseat - The inpainting of the chips/losses from 2024 held up well. The red sphere has faded once again, other methods of returning the color should be tested. The yellow bench continues to be scratched and used for bike jumping and has a few new minor losses in the paint. The orange sphere lighting system is still damaged, and it is unknown if it is in working condition. The artist should be contacted about the lighting system so repairs can be completed.

Fogs and Lizards – The sculpture will be washed and any corrosion mitigated. Staining or corrosion on the steel behind the sculpture will be tested for reduction.

Kinetic Wind Sculptures – A lift will be needed to access and assess these sculptures. In 2024 it was noted that the patina had darkened significantly. Detailed photographs of the original color should be obtained if possible, for reference. If a lift is rented, the sculpture can be repatinated either by PCC or the sculptor.

Piñon Maze - One of the formerly mended areas is broken again along the mend; another broke in a new pattern and the mend held. There were about four new cracks beginning from the corners near where the piece is secured to the wall. The benches were pressed up against the surface causing more paint loss and scratches in the surface. The plaque has shifted and is now gouging the surface of the sculpture. More of the sections have separated from the supporting wall. Other methods of adhesion should be tested and the panels should be secured in more areas for greater adhesion support.

All the above except *Tranquility* will be treated again in 2026 so that they do not go more than 2 years without maintenance.

Conclusion

Overall, the collection looks significantly better after maintenance and treatment. The collection will continue to improve with annual maintenances and treatments, ensuring the greatest longevity possible for each artwork.

Thank you for allowing us to continue caring for the collection, and we look forward to next year!

Signed,

PCC Conservation Team: Alison Leard, Lucinda Linderman, Joy Carlsen, Meg Driscoll, Morrigan Kelley, Liv Manfredi, and Savanna Goatcher.