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FAIRMOUNT PARK ART ASSOCIATION WINS FIRST PLACE SOS! ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Save Outdoor Sculpture! (SOS!), a national project to preserve our nation's public sculpture, has awarded the Fairmount Park Art Association a first-place SOS! Achievement Award. The \$1,000 first-place prize was awarded in recognition of the Art Association's Outdoor Sculpture Conservation and Maintenance Program, and efforts to promote conservation awareness in the creation of new works of public art.

Concern about the condition of the city's outdoor sculpture and the effects of acid rain led to the Art Association's creation of a pilot sculpture conservation program in 1982. With generous support from the Mabel Pew Myrin Trust, twenty-five sculptures of historic and artistic significance were identified – such as *Abraham Lincoln* [1871] by Randolph Rogers, the *Cowboy* [1908] by Frederic Remington, and *Three-Way Piece Number 1: Points* [1964] by Henry Moore – to receive initial conservation treatment by a professional conservator. These sculptures are now part of the Art Association's ongoing maintenance plan (one of the first of its kind in the country) that was established to arrest further deterioration and improve their aesthetic appearance.

“America's outdoor sculpture and monuments were created to honor the spirit, individuals, events, and beliefs that have helped shape our nation and enrich our lives,” said SOS! Founding Director Susan Nichols. “Today, this collection – an important part of our heritage – is endangered from weathering, deferred maintenance, and vandalism. The SOS! Achievement Award recipients have made an enormous impact on preserving local sculpture and fostering awareness about deterioration and the need for ongoing care.”

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The 1999 SOS! Achievement Awards recognized 12 outstanding sculpture preservation and awareness projects across the nation. Cash prizes to all first-place and honorable-mention winners help further advance their sculpture preservation and maintenance goals, thereby advancing the goal of SOS! to preserve America's outdoor sculpture for the new century.

Since 1990, nearly 7,000 SOS! volunteers have reported on the history, location, and condition of approximately 32,000 publicly accessible outdoor sculptures. The volunteers' findings reveal that fifty percent of America's collection of outdoor sculpture is inadequately cared for and in need of some preservation – either treatment or maintenance. More information is available on-line from the Inventory of American Sculpture at www.siris.si.edu.

Chartered in 1872, the Fairmount Park Art Association is the nation's first private, non-profit organization dedicated to integrating public art and urban planning. The Art Association works to promote the appreciation of public art through advocacy efforts and programs which commission, interpret, and preserve public art in Philadelphia. Additionally, the Art Association is the local coordinating agency for SOS!, a program jointly sponsored by Heritage Preservation and the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American Art.

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