



WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY



Weber State brings 2 new exhibits to Dumke Arts Plaza

April 6, 2023

OGDEN, Utah — Weber State University and Ogden City are making contemporary art exciting and accessible to the local community with new, video game-inspired sculptures and a video exhibition at the Dumke Arts Plaza.

The plaza will celebrate this new exhibition with a Season Kick-off on April 7 from 6–9 p.m. at 445 25th Street. The exhibition is curated by Weber State’s [Mary Elizabeth Dee Shaw Gallery](#) and features art from Utah artists.

An arts-focused community space, the Dumke Arts Plaza represents a special collaboration between WSU and Ogden City. The Shaw Gallery and a committee of Weber State faculty work to develop the plaza’s programming, taking into consideration artistic practices, technologies, and ideas of contemporary artists.

“On behalf of Weber State University, and with the support of the Matthew S. Browning Center for Design, it’s been a pleasure for the Shaw Gallery to lead curatorial programming efforts at the Dumke Arts Plaza,” said Lydia Gravis, director of Art Exhibitions & Public Programs at the Shaw Gallery. “We’re pleased to continue a strong tradition of programming world-class art right here in Ogden.”

Created by Michael Whiting over the course of 15 years, the plaza’s newest free-standing exhibition “Level Up” features sculptures inspired by the pixelated art of retro video games. The sculptures are constructed using steel and automotive paint and are placed throughout multiple levels of the plaza.

The plaza will also host “Cauldron,” a video exhibition curated by Tyrone Davies that includes 10 short works by eight video makers.

Gravis said the Shaw Gallery is excited to showcase the work of talented artists so close to home.

“As we continue to bring visibility to public art in Ogden, we invite the community to join us in celebrating the creative energy of this dynamic outdoor space,” she said.

Matt Choberka, director of Weber State’s Matthew S. Browning Center for Design, said it’s rewarding to be involved in a project that brings the university and community together.

“The city has been very ambitious in the establishment of the Nine Rails Creative District, recognizing that the arts not only enrich and educate, but are also major drivers of economic development and community revitalization,” he said. “The plaza is in the heart of Nine Rails, and so provides a focal point for creativity and community.”

Choberka said the curation committee is working on bringing a “very exciting range of art experiences to the plaza.”

“I’m looking forward to seeing how the plaza and Mike Whiting’s new pieces interact,” he said. “I think much of the public has yet to really see how much the plaza can offer and how much of a true public space it has become.”

The plaza also represents the continuing philanthropy of the Dr. Ezekiel R. and Edna Wattis Dumke Foundation, the main funder of the project. Since its founding, The Dumke Foundation has gifted over \$40 million toward the betterment of communities in the Intermountain West.

“Weber State and Ogden City have benefited enormously from the vision and generosity of the Dumke family,” Chokbera said.

The Foundation, Ogden City, RAMP, Weber State and Ogden Contemporary Arts, along with community stakeholders, collaborated closely to develop the vision for the Dumke Arts Plaza.

Friday’s kickoff event will feature performances by Tribal Love and Infusion Rock, and is a part of Ogden’s monthly First Friday Art Stroll.

More information on the upcoming exhibit is available on the [Shaw Gallery website](#) and more on the Dumke Arts Plaza can be found on [Ogden City’s website](#).

###

Author:

Jessica Kokesh, social media editor
801-626-7316 • jessicakokesh@weber.edu

Contact:

Bryan Magaña, public relations director
801-626-7948, bryanmagana@weber.edu