

Oh, What 1% Can Do!

By: Teri Zenger

Believing that, "A society that creates art – to express their values, to delight and amuse, to challenge or startle people out of their everyday mindset – is a healthy and vibrant society," Ogden was the first Utah city to enact a Percent for Art program. A 1% allocation of funds spent on city capital improvements is set aside for the purchase and installation of public art. Established in 1997, the ordinance insures that the city will never lack for public art and that its citizens can be startled on a daily basis. Just check out our parks, libraries, public buildings, and roadways. Heck, you can even get a fabulous dose of art when you go to Ogden Justice Court to pay a speeding ticket. And that's just the beginning.

A couple of years ago Ogden City sponsored a Haiku poetry contest. Citizens were asked to submit a Haiku – 3 lines of poetry consisting of 5 syllables, 7 syllables, 5 syllables – with the theme of This is My Ogden. Hundreds of submissions were read and 21 winners received a cash prize and had their poem emblazoned on a metal plaque permanently hung on lower 23rd. Have you seen them? They're fun. Percent for Art made Ogden poetry a sweet reality. There's more.

If you haven't seen enough snow this week, head over to 19th and Grant for a symbolic dusting of the white stuff and see what Percent for Art did there. Located on the banks of the Ogden River, "Water Cycle" is an interactive sculpture depicting the progression of water from snowfall to runoff. Look for the metal sculpture showing a flock of birds. On Winter Solstice at noon, their winged flight, symbolic of snow, creates a giant snowflake shadow on a stone slab at the northern edge of the plaza. Artist, Andy Dufford of Chevo Studios, through Percent

for Art funding, created one of the best pieces of public art Ogden has to offer; an interactive, year round, gathering place connecting nature and us.

Then, if you need a dose of pigment and light check out the fantastic overhead sculpture in the Front Runner Station on Wall Avenue. It's a swath of circular color that will visually lift you right up to the ceiling. Thank you Percent for Art.

Ogden is teeming with art. It's hung on walls, filled with water, at our feet and in the air. Percent for Art has this town covered.

And, it's all FREE!

To really get into the Ogden Art scene, go to ogdencityarts.org. Pull down the Explore tab and see what Percent for Art has brought to O-Town. And while you're there find out what else is hanging, singing, reading, dancing, and playing in our great town. (For a full listing of Ogden Public Art go to publicartarchive.org)

Water Cycle



Photos courtesy of:

Bryan J. Smith

Jeffrey Favero