

Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2023
To: Honorable Members of the Visual Arts Committee
From: San Francisco Arts Commission, Civic Art Collection Staff (Mary Chou and Allison Cummings)
Re: Disposition of existing dragon sculpture for the renovated Chinatown Public Health Center

BACKGROUND/PROPOSAL

The Chinatown Public Health Center (CPHC) has served its community since 1929, offering primary care for adults and children, prenatal care, behavioral health, pediatric dentistry, community health education, Women, Infant & Children Nutrition Services. The current building opened in 1968 and there have been no significant upgrades since then. The Department of Public Health (DPH) has prioritized a seismic upgrade and modernization of CHPC. A full seismic upgrade will make the building safer during earthquakes, and mechanical systems upgrades are necessary to replace old equipment and improve the existing ventilation and poor air quality. The project will also remove hazardous materials from the building. The full gut and remodel of all clinic interior spaces will create space to co-locate primary care and mental health services; increase the number of exam and consultation rooms; expand the dental clinic; make the building accessible to people with disabilities; and make the building fully electric – providing significant benefits against climate change.

The art enrichment for the renovated building is \$691,461 and the Arts Commission (SFAC) is working closely with DPH and Public Works (PW), the architects for the project, to develop the program for new art commissioned for the site. The project plan will be presented to the Commission for review and approval in early 2024. See Appendix A for proposed locations that have been presented to the community for input and feedback. The current building has an existing sculpture of a dragon located on the eastern façade of the building directly above the eastern entrance into the Broadway Tunnel. The design of the renovated building includes removing the wall where the sculpture is currently installed and replacing the wall with windows to allow for natural light and views into what are planned to be dental patient rooms. Commissioners will make a recommendation to either relocate the sculpture on the renovated building or remove the sculpture from the building and place in storage.

EXISTING ARTWORK DESCRIPTION

Artwork: *Dragon Relief*, 1970
Artist: Patti Bowler (1932-1992)
Medium: bronze and brass
Dimensions: 114 (H) x 672 (W) x 30 (D) inches
Credit Line: Collection of the City and County of San Francisco; Purchased by the San Francisco Arts Commission for Health Center #4

Location: Public Display: Chinatown Public Health Center (Health Center #4): East side building Façade (facing Powell Street): over Broadway (Robert C. Levy) Tunnel entrance (Health Center Building address is 1490 Mason Street)

Accession #: 1970.31

Dragon Relief was commissioned in 1969 and installed on the eastern façade of the Chinatown Public Health Center (CPHC) in 1970. The Art Enrichment Ordinance requiring city building projects to include public art was passed in 1969, so this artwork was one of the first pieces commissioned under the new law. In the early years of the implementation of the Art Enrichment Ordinance, the Arts Commission worked closely with project architects to select artists for commissions. Often the architect team would select the artist and the Arts Commission would have final approval. This was the case for other city projects at that time, including artworks that were acquired under the ordinance for Candlestick Park, San Francisco General Hospital, and the North Beach Police Station to name a few. The lead architect of CPHC was Clarence Mayhew and he recommended artist Patti Bowler to the Arts Commission for this project.

Patti Bowler's design proposal for the artwork was approved by unanimous resolution at the September 2, 1969 public meeting of the Arts Commission. The budget was set at \$27,500 for design, fabrication, and installation.

Upon completion of the installation in the summer of 1970, the Arts Commission accepted and approved the artwork by resolution on September 8, 1970.

The sculpture is hollow and made of brass and bronze with a matte brown color patina. The scales are brass and the body bronze, to which a matte brown/black patina has been applied (color "Liver of Sulfate"). At the time, the artist was directed not to make the sculpture a "shiny bronze" because there was concern that the reflection of the sun off the sculpture would distract the drivers passing into the tunnel below. The sculpture is made up of 23 individual sections. *Dragon Relief* was pre-fabricated in Santa Rosa by Wade Lux of Lux Metals. The piece is 56 feet long, 9 feet 6 inches tall, and 2 feet 6 inches in depth. Wade Lux (Oscar Wade Lux III) started Lux Metals in 1970. Lux passed away in 2008, but his company still exists today as Lux Metals Inc. in Santa Rosa, CA.

The "surface mounted sculptured mural panel", including a mosaic patterned background, was installed by the artist, Patti Bowler. A document from October 10, 1969 indicates that Bowler planned to secure the exterior artwork to the building with "back-up plates welded to metal studs behind the artwork and will add a few intermediate studs as required". Northwest Construction company was contracted to place metal studs in the east façade between the 1st & 2nd floors of the building for the artwork.

After the artwork was completed and installed in the summer of 1970, the Arts Commission approved the artwork as installed and accepted it into the Civic Art Collection by resolution at their September 8, 1970 public meeting.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

The Arts Commission has limited information about the artist Patti Bowler (1932-1992). The biography record on file states: "Born in San Francisco 4/21/32. Studied at University of Oregon. Exhibitions in many local galleries. Works in private collections. Mural commissions in Denver, Los Angeles, Reno, Nevada, and Phoenix, Arizona. Died 11/15/92." A note in the file from a previous SFAC collections manager lists a family member named Jaque Carson Bowler. They were last contacted in May 1995, when staff requested they send a resume and other information about the artist. That documentation is not in our files. Jaque Carson Bowler was the artist's husband, and he died in 2013; the artist died in 1992. According to his obituary, they had no children (see Appendix E).

There are no other works by Patti Bowler in the Civic Art Collection, and we are unaware of any other public works by the artist in the Bay Area.

OPTIONS FOR DISPOSITION OF SCULPTURE

The replacement of the eastern wall of the building with windows has necessitated the relocation of *Dragon Relief*. PW architects proposed the location of the building rooftop as their preferred relocation site during the first presentation of the building design at Civic Design Review in September 2022. Approval of CDR Phase I and 2 for the building in October 2022 was provided contingent upon further consideration of the location of the dragon sculpture with Arts Commission staff. As an artwork in the Civic Art Collection, its relocation is reviewed by the Visual Arts Committee prior to approval at Full Commission.

Arts Commission staff worked with ARG Conservation Services to assess the current condition of *Dragon Relief* and evaluate the methodology for deinstallation from the building (report attached in Appendix E). The sculpture is in good condition overall, although there is surface soiling throughout and areas of green corrosion streaks especially on the upper half of the work. The metal itself is in very good condition, with no observed signs of pitting or loss. The conservators confirmed that the work is made of discrete units that are bolted as expected to the building. These discrete units facilitate a smooth and efficient deinstallation and allow for possible reconfiguration without damage to the sculpture.

Arts Commission staff worked closely with PW architects to research a number of options for the return of the sculpture to the building, including reorienting the layout of the sculpture and changing its patina. SFAC and PW staff also conducted an informal review of these options with Commissioners from the Visual Arts Committee and Civic Design Review for their input and feedback. Staff conferred with the City Attorney advised that there is no known legal barrier to the proposed alterations, and after further review by SFAC and PW staff, the options deemed most viable were presented to the community for review and input both through a survey and an in-person community meeting. A summary of meetings is included in Appendix B. The options presented:

- A. Return to building on roof with original brown patina.
- B. Return to building on roof with new gold patina.
- C. Return to building on Mason St. side, reoriented with original brown patina.
- D. Return to building on Mason St. side, reoriented with new gold patina.
- E. Relocate to storage.

Historically, if a large public artwork like the dragon is not reintegrated into its current site it is very difficult to find a new location for it. In the last 20 years, the Arts Commission has removed 12 large scale public pieces that could not be returned to their original sites. We have only successfully relocated one of these pieces to another city property. The rest remain in storage.

Dragon Relief was created specifically for its current location as a wall-mounted architectural relief and similar site conditions for relocation on another city property have not been identified. If the dragon sculpture is not returned to the health center, the future of the artwork is unknown.

SUMMARY OF OUTREACH RESULTS

SFAC worked with InterEthnica, a local marketing and community engagement consultant, to seek feedback on the dragon sculpture; this process included a survey and a community outreach meeting. The survey was conducted over a period of 39 days from August 4 to September 11, 2023 and included in-person surveys conducted in English and Chinese languages at Self Help for the Elderly, Portsmouth Square and Willie “Woo Woo” Wong Playground as well online surveys sent to the Chinatown Public Health Center staff and the broader community including the SFAC newsletter. We received a total of 455 responses. The survey and results are attached as Appendix C.

The data from the community survey shows support for the placement of the dragon on the side of the building, and support for keeping the dragon on the building, rather than removing it. There were some comments that the survey questions were biased as it did not represent all options equally. SFAC also received feedback from some community organizations that the dragon is not appropriate for the site as it’s not culturally relevant to the Chinatown community and therefore should not be installed back onto the building. Many expressed a preference for changing the color of the dragon to a golden bronze patina, though some noted that this was not the artist’s original intent. Below is a summary of comments, organized into pros and cons, for the different locations and options. Comments from DPH and PW are attached as Appendix D.

Location on top of Building

- Presentation allows for preservation of original horizontal layout of dragon
- Presentation allows for keeping its eastern facing orientation

- The context on the eastern side is more appropriate due to the lively retail environment on Broadway and the abundance of street signs, graphics and public art in the Chinatown and North Beach neighborhoods along the Broadway corridor
- Maintenance is easier than its current location over the tunnel.
- Does not reflect original intent of the artist
- Location does not appear integrated with the re-design of the building; it feels like an afterthought and reads as billboard or signage
- Concern about increased difficulty in viewing the project as it is further away from ground level and will read as a silhouette against the sky; the vertical supports are a distraction
- Appears as a dark omen on top of public health center
- Concern about the view from the backside of the sculpture; how to build a backing to the sculpture as it is anticipated its current configuration does not include a back and is hollow

Side of the Building

- Dragon is presented on a solid background, more consistent with the original design
- Curve makes it more recognizable as a dragon.
- Its current location above the tunnel does not give it a lot of public attention. It gets lost in the surroundings and the traffic and the tunnel. The move to the side of the building gives some visibility to those that approach the public health clinic.
- Maintenance is easier than its current location over the tunnel.
- Dragon reconfiguration to S-shape is a deviation from original artist's design.
- Fewer people will enjoy it as its tucked around the corner of the building and not very visible
- It will be facing residential uses.
- The size and scale may be overwhelming if you are underneath it or looking at it from the adjacent residences.
- The dragon may draw tourists and crowds for photo opportunities, which may impact the privacy of clinic clients and staff
- The size and scale may overwhelm the new exterior public art opportunity

Removal from Building

- Work is culturally irrelevant and inappropriate for the site; the dragon is not a Chinese dragon and does not represent the Chinatown community
- The selection process for this artwork did not engage the community, and there is no known connection between the artist and the Chinatown community
- Current artwork is not recognizable as a dragon and there is question of why it is there
- Dragon was not an integral part of the health center and appears dark and shadowy

Keeping on the Building

- Dragon is a symbol of luck for patients in the building
- Important to keep dragon as it represents culture and history
- Keep it as is in original location, true to artist's original intent

Cost Considerations

For capital improvement projects with existing artwork, SFAC guidelines state that the larger capital improvement project budget covers the cost of deinstallation, storage and reinstallation of the artwork, with SFAC being responsible only for the cost of its conservation. SFAC is responsible for conserving the artwork regardless of it is returned to the building or not.

For relocation onto the building, SFAC would propose investigating the option to change the patina; the cost of this is unknown and would be assessed through testing after the artwork is removed from the building.

For relocation on top of the building, PW has assessed the design and structural needs and has determined that the installation is feasible and straightforward. PW has not assessed relocation to the south-facing Mason Street façade and had indicated that this will require additional structural evaluation and may result in replacement of the existing precast concrete panels due to the number of penetrations; PW adds that this will have a significant impact on cost and possibly delay the schedule.

If permanently removed from building, the cost to store the artwork is estimated at approximately \$600 per month.

Next Steps

The location of *Dragon Relief* needs resolution so that the design can be incorporated into the building's construction documents. The funding for the renovation of the CPHC is on the ballot for November 2024. If the bond measure passes and funding is secured, construction is anticipated to start in Spring 2025 with a duration of two years. Based on the above considerations, SFAC staff is proposing two motions for consideration by Commissioners:

Motion: Motion to approve the relocation of the sculpture *Dragon Relief*, 1970, by Patti Bowler, from its current location on the east side building façade of the Chinatown Public Health Center, over the Broadway Tunnel to (location TBA at meeting) on the renovated Chinatown Public Health Center and to investigate the option of changing the patina of the sculpture to a golden bronze color.

Or

Motion: Motion to remove and place in storage the sculpture *Dragon Relief*, 1970, by Patti Bowler, located on the east side building façade of the Chinatown Public Health Center, over the Broadway Tunnel. This action is taken after completion of the process described in Section 7 of the Guidelines of the Civic Art Collection of the City and County of San Francisco, regarding "Collections Management: Removal, Alteration, Destruction and Deaccession Policies and Procedures," upon determination that removal of the artwork is appropriate under the criterion that the work "No suitable site for the work is available, or significant changes in the use or character of design of the site affect the integrity of the work."

Appendix A: Proposed locations for new art to be commissioned with renovation.

Appendix B: Meetings regarding public art at CPHC

Appendix C: Survey and survey results

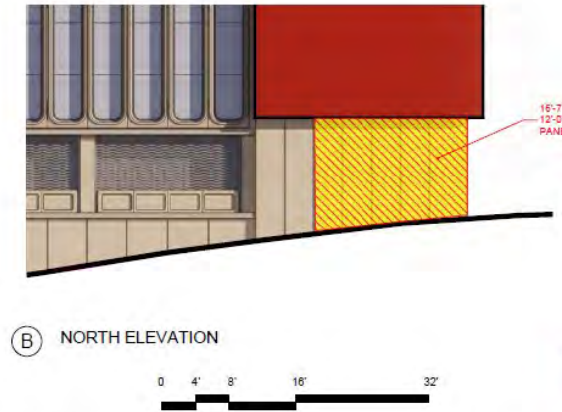
Appendix D: DPH/PW comments

Appendix E: Supporting Documents:

- Image of *Dragon Relief* from SFMTA archive, 1982
- Hiding in Plain Site: The Dragon Sitting on Top of S.F.'s Broadway Tunnel by Rae Alexandra for KQED. October 14, 2021.
- Obituary for J. Carson Bowler, artist Patti Bowler's husband.
- Feasibility Study for *Dragon Relief*, from ARG Conservation Services.

New Artwork Opportunity

- Exterior walls on corner of Mason Street entrance and Broadway
- 159 SF (west) + 199 SF (east) = 358 total SF
- Medium: mosaic or ceramic tile treatment
- High visibility for users, staff, and public



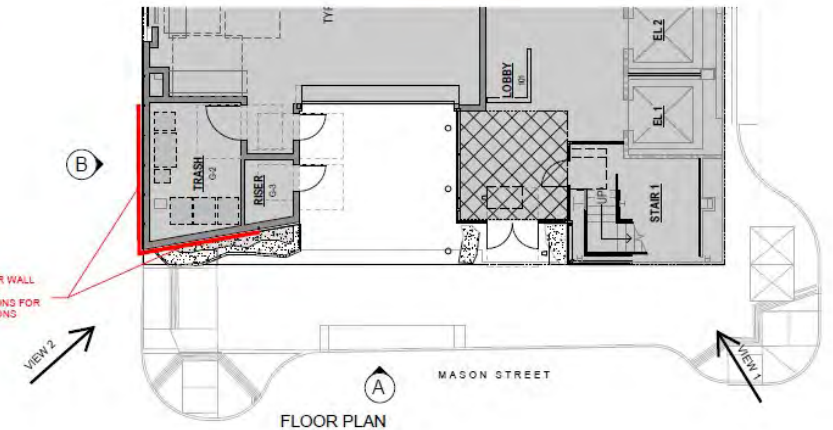
CPHC EXTERIOR ART ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES 2023.07.21



VIEW 1



VIEW 2



Artwork Opportunities Floor 1

- Art Walls located by lobby

POSSIBLE ART LOCATIONS
1ST FLOOR



1 LOBBY

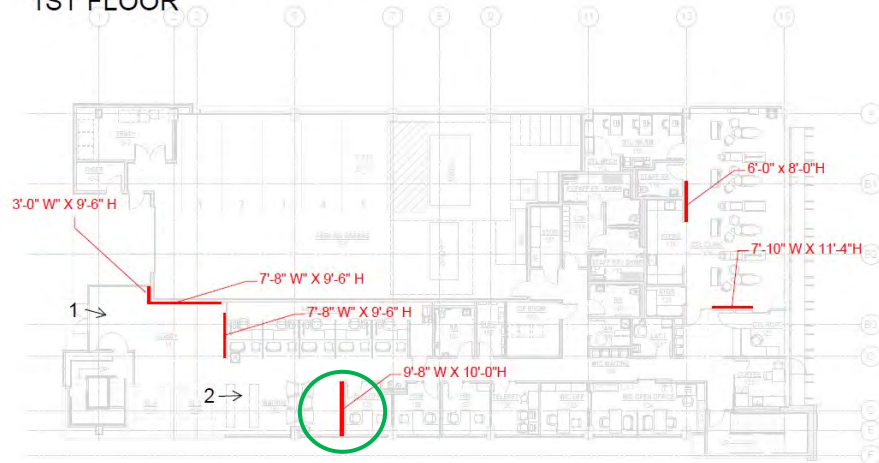
Artwork Opportunities Floor 1

- Art Wall located by patient registration and waiting area



2 PATIENT REGISTRATION
AREA AND WAITING

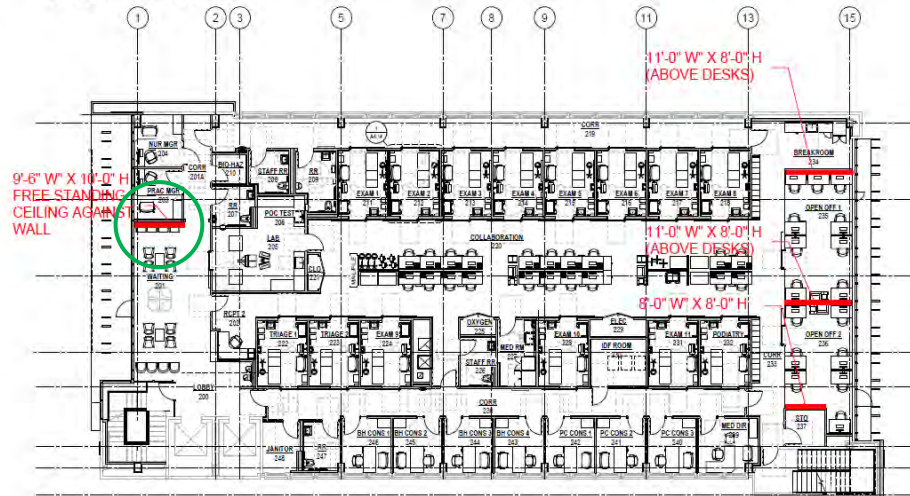
POSSIBLE ART LOCATIONS 1ST FLOOR



Artwork Opportunities Floor 2

- Art Wall located by patient waiting area

POSSIBLE ART LOCATIONS 2ND FLOOR

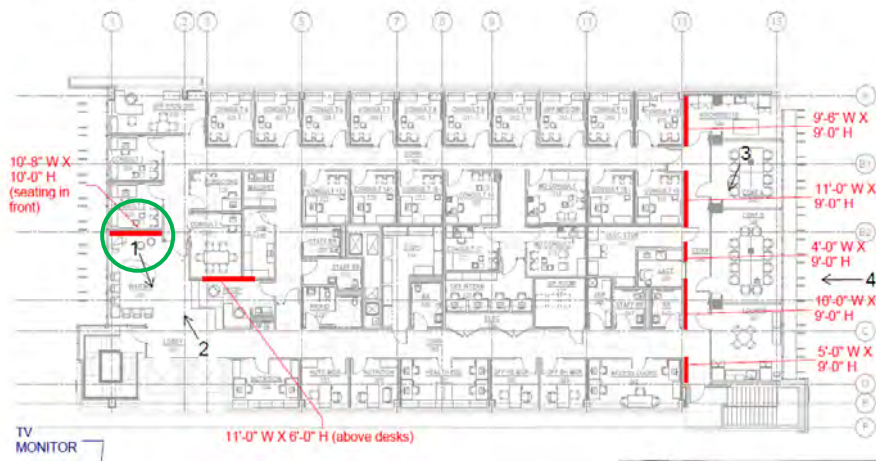


1 PATIENT WAITING
AREA

Artwork Opportunities Floor 3

- Art Wall located by patient waiting area

POSSIBLE ART LOCATIONS 3RD FLOOR



2 PATIENT WAITING AREA

- **Art Budget: \$350,300**
(inclusive of artist fee, design, insurance, fabrication, installation, and contingency)
- All five art wall opportunities will be covered under the art budget
 - Exterior Wall (1) / First Floor (2) / Second Floor (1) / Third Floor (1)
- Any remaining art budget funds may go to 2D artwork purchases for CPHC available walls

**POSSIBLE ART LOCATIONS
3RD FLOOR**



Community Engagement Timeline

- CPHC Public Art Working Group Meeting - January 26, 2023
 - Participants included CCDC & CCC
- Virtual Presentation to CPHC Staff - February 7, 2023
 - Presentation of Public Art Opportunities
- CPHC Community Meeting #2 at CPL - February 9, 2023
 - Presentation of Public Art Opportunities to the General Public



Project Timeline

- Project out to bid by October 2024
- RFQ releases early 2024
- Construction begins Summer 2025

Appendix B

Jan. 6, 2023 – Community Working Group Meeting

SFAC and PW Working Group Meeting with CCC and CCDC.

February 7, 2023 – DPH Staff Presentation

Presentation to DPH staff on public art opportunities

February 9, 2023 – Public Meeting on Building Design and Art

Community presentation with PW architects and SFAC PM at Chinatown Public Library. The presentation included the dragon on top of the building and new opportunities for public art at renovated site.

May 22, 2023 – VAC/CDR Informal Meeting

VAC/CDR informal meeting with PW, DPH and SFAC staff to consider many options for the placement of the dragon. SFAC Commissioners in attendance included Hakimi, Liu, Schnair and Carney participated in this meeting. It was determined that the best next step would be to get feedback from the community on the options.

September 10, 2023 – Public Meeting

Community presentation by SFAC with InterEthnica. SFAC presented options for dragon placement and results of survey conducted by InterEthnica about the dragon.



CHINATOWN PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER SURVEY

INTRO: Hi, my name is _____, I am not selling anything. Do you have a few minutes to take a survey?

In 1969, artist Patti Bowler was commissioned by the City and Country of San Francisco to create the sculpture titled *Dragon Relief* for the Chinatown Public Health Center. In 1970, *Dragon Relief* was installed over the Broadway Tunnel.

The San Francisco Arts Commission is responsible for the care of the City's Civic Art Collection. With the planned redesign and renovation of the Chinatown Public Health Center, the original location of *Dragon Relief* is no longer viable. SFAC would like your help in determining the new placement of the artwork on the building.

1. Which one of these answers best describes you? (Mark all that apply)

- a. I live or work in the neighborhood.
- b. I work in the Chinatown Public Health Center

2. How familiar are you with *Dragon Relief* on the Chinatown Public Health Center?

- a. Very familiar
- b. Somewhat familiar
- c. Not familiar at all



3. What are your thoughts on *Dragon Relief*?

- a. I love it and think it should remain as it is.
- b. I like it, but some changes could improve it.
- c. I have no opinion about this sculpture.
- d. I am not too fond of it and prefer significant changes.
- e. I dislike it, and efforts to alter it will not change my mind.

Renderings A and B show two possible locations where *Dragon Relief* may be re-installed. Mark the one you like.

4. Would you prefer the sculpture placed at location A or B?

a. On the roof

b. On the side of the building facing Broadway



These images are conceptual designs which are not finalized but for visualization purposes only.

The original color of *Dragon Relief* is dark brown, but it could be treated to have a gold finish.

5. Looking at the renderings below, do you prefer the dragon's original color or the gold finish?

a. Original

b. Gold



These images are conceptual designs which are not finalized but for visualization purposes only.

6. When given the choice, should *Dragon Relief* remain at the Chinatown Public Health Center in a new location, or be removed?

a. Keep it

b. Remove it

c. Undecided

7. Do you have any additional comments, suggestions, or concerns about *Dragon Relief* or its potential changes?

INTERVIEWER ONLY

Interviewer: _____

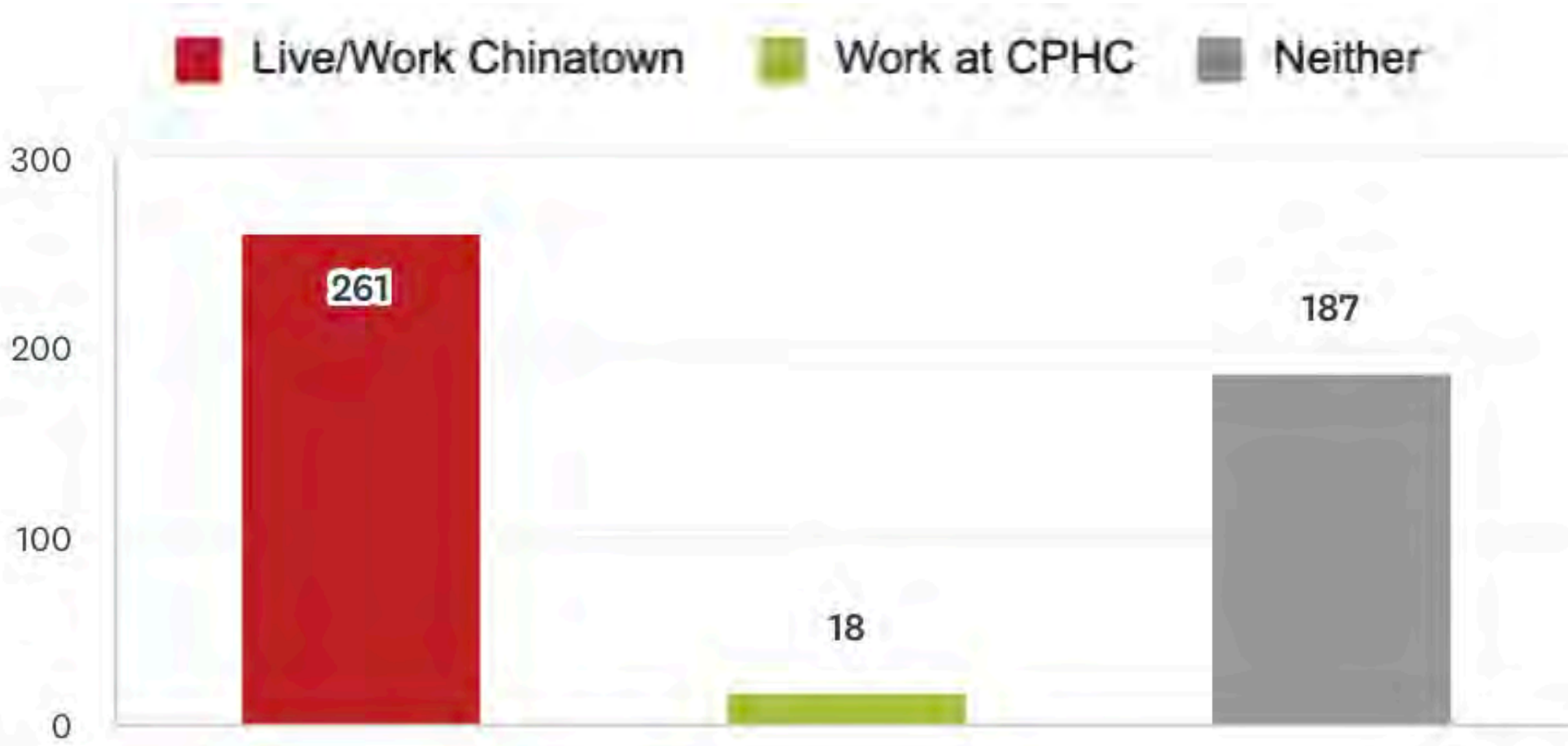
Date: _____

Language: _____

Location: _____

Survey code: _____

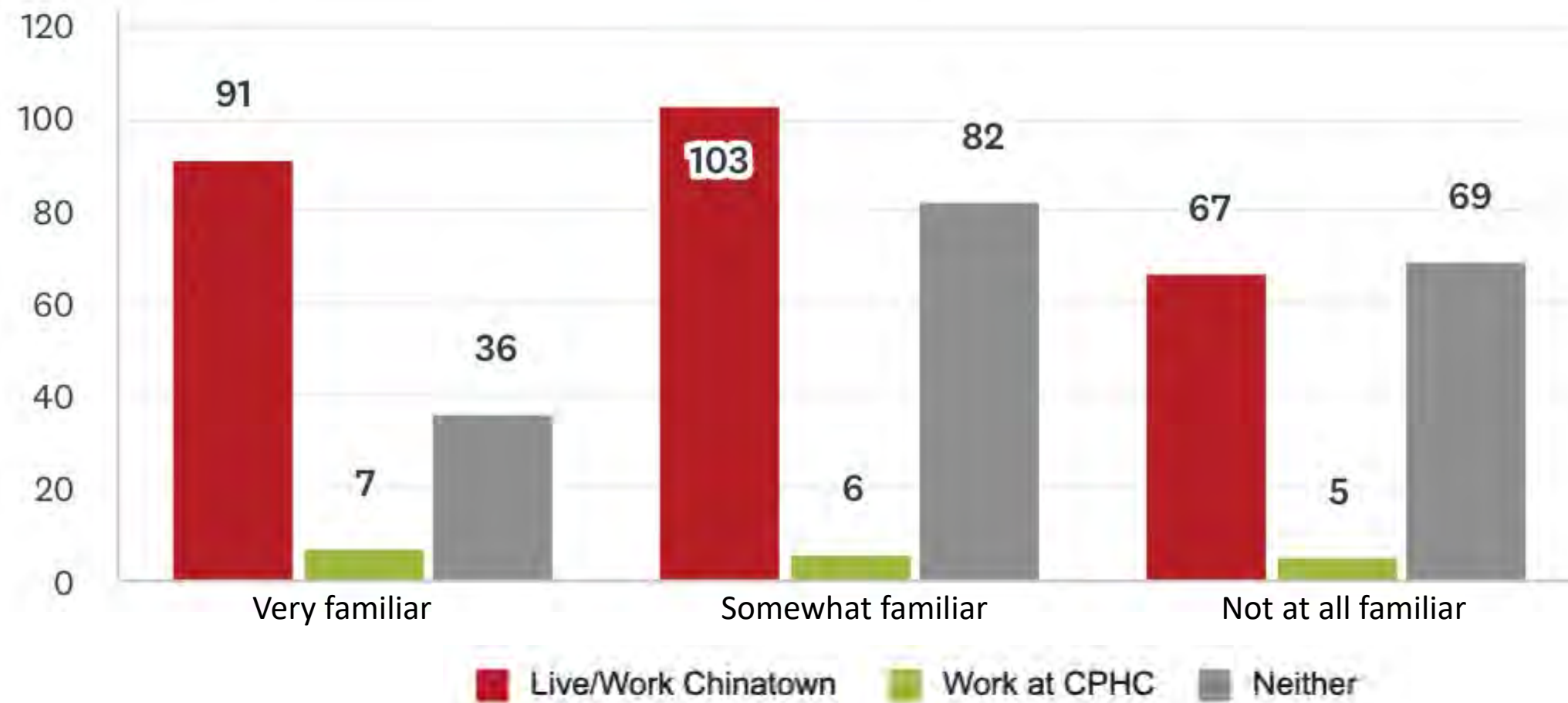
Dragon Relief Survey: Respondents



Responded: 455
Multiple Select

Dragon Relief Survey: Responses

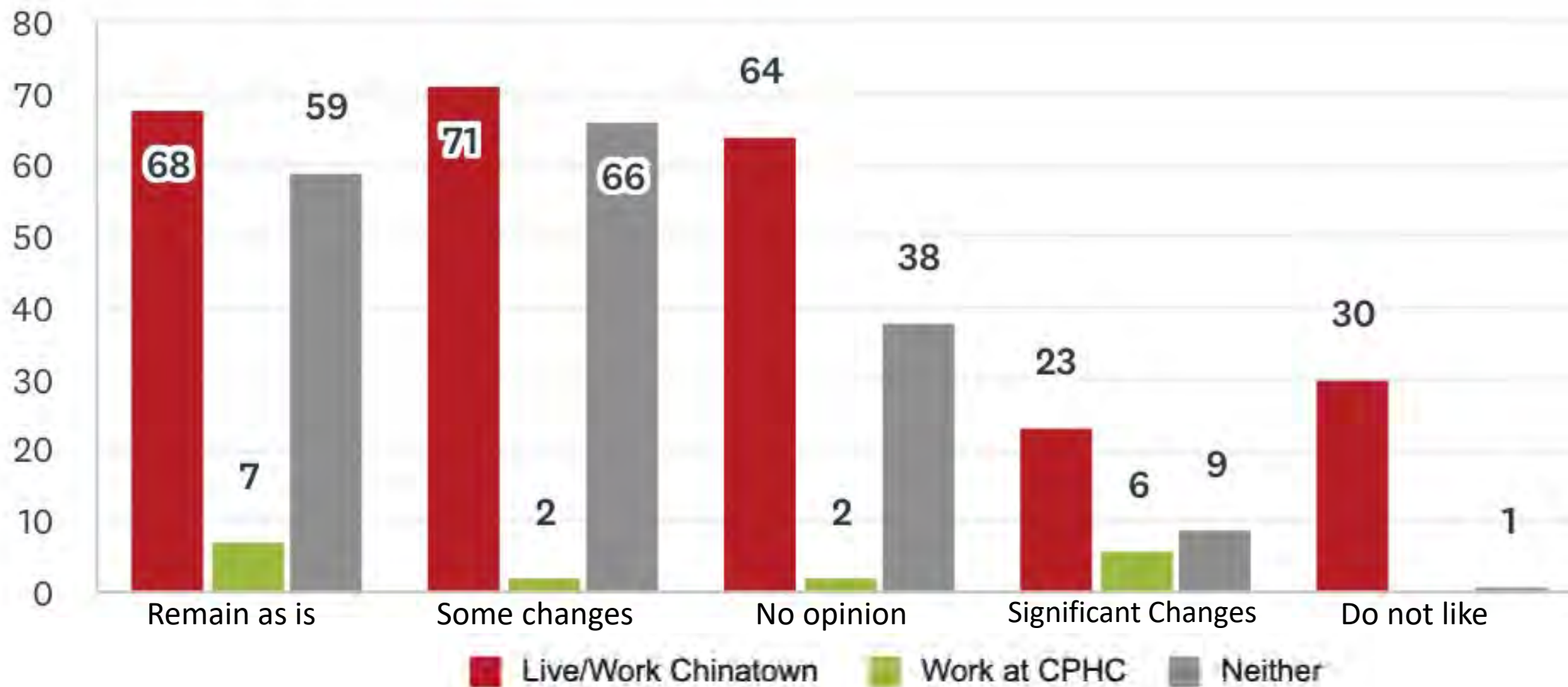
How familiar are you with Dragon Relief on the Chinatown Public Health Center?



Responded:
455

Dragon Relief Survey: Responses

What are your thoughts on Dragon Relief?



Responded:
436

Dragon Relief Survey: Responses

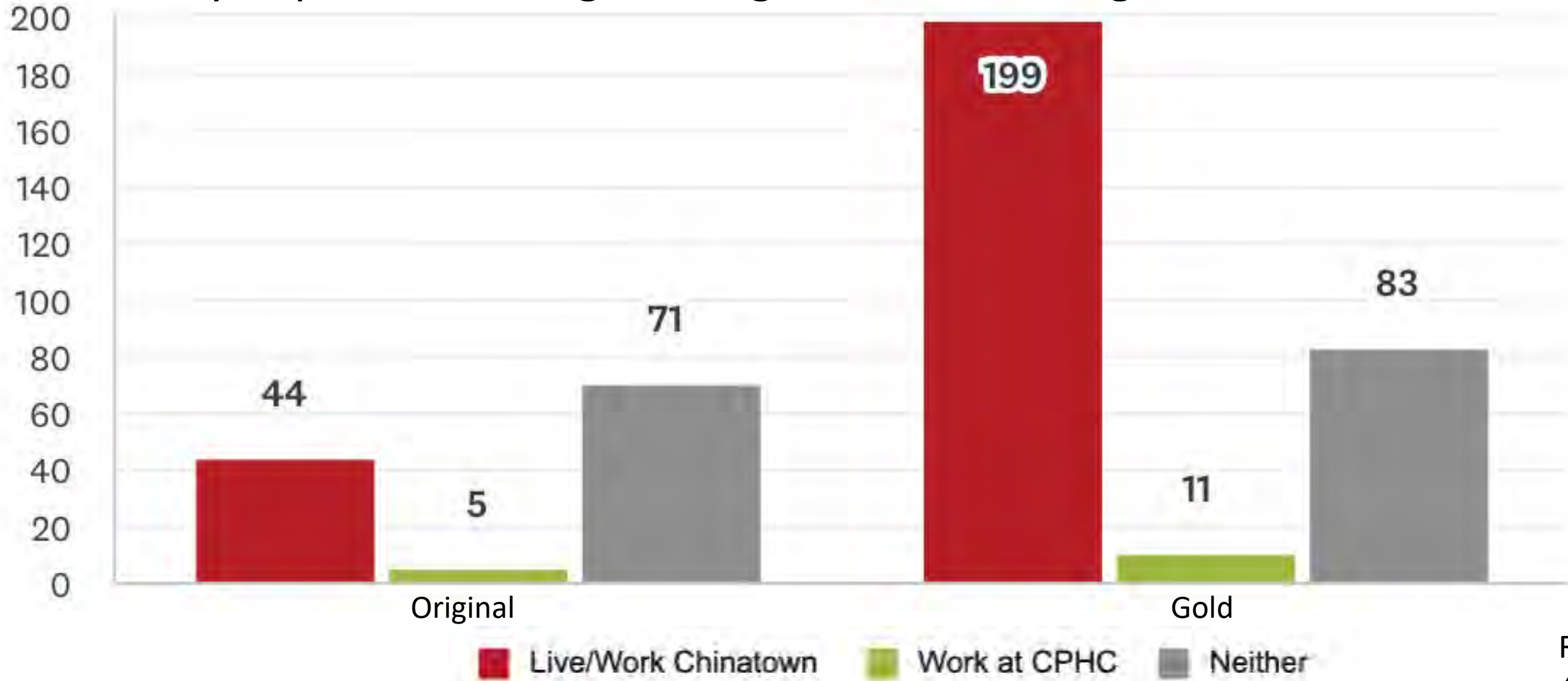
Would you prefer the sculpture placed at location A or B?



Responded:
424

Dragon Relief Survey: Responses

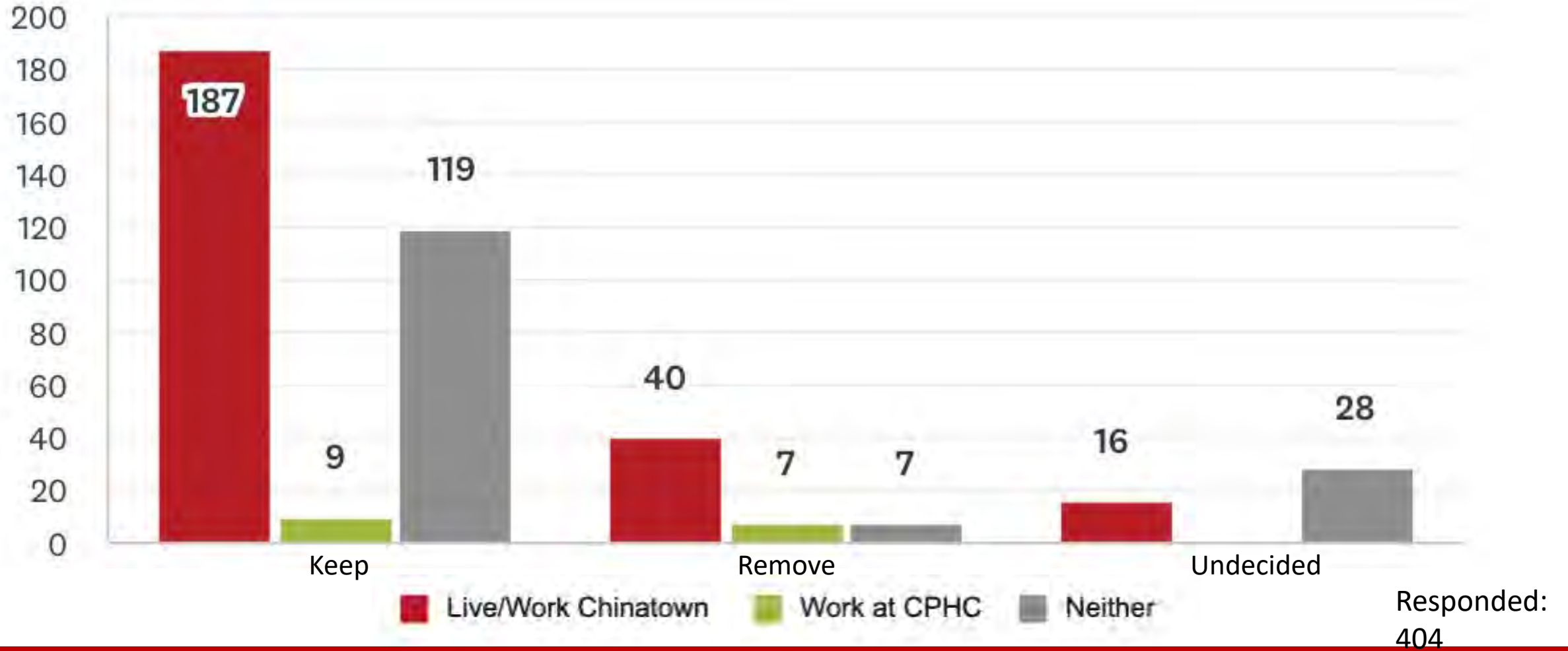
Do you prefer the dragon's original color or the gold finish?



Responded:
404

Dragon Relief Survey: Responses

Should Dragon Relief remain at the Chinatown Public Health Center in a new location, or be removed?



Survey Responses: Comments

可以設計一條新的五爪金龍嗎？

translation: Can you design a new five-clawed golden dragon?

Not representative of our culture; would rather the budget be spent on culturally-appropriate art.

I LOVE the way it appears in the rendering on the side of the building...makes for a very striking, eye-catching artwork.

Use a more culturally appropriate design

有沒有可能弄一條中國龍？

translation: is it possible to get a Chinese dragon?

Key Themes:

- Artwork Visibility, Location, and Appearance
- Cultural Representation and Authenticity
- General Aesthetics and Artistic Preferences
- Respecting Artist's Original Intent and Design

Themes from Open-Ended Survey Responses

It's important to note that these themes are derived from a combination of direct comments and inferred sentiments. Some comments might touch on multiple themes, and this summary tries to capture the essence of the comments.

All comments, except for two comments, were provided by respondents who do not live or work in the community or work at the Chinatown Public Health Center. Therefore, the themes below are derivative of sentiments from an overwhelming majority of respondents who are not residents or local workers in Chinatown. This is an important notion to keep in mind when interpreting the information below to inform the project processes and decisions.

Respecting Artist's Original Intent and Design (25 comments)

- Maintaining original design, configuration, or color.
- Keeping the artwork's initial implementation.
- Incorporating the artist's input if they're still alive.

Cultural Representation and Authenticity (19 comments)

- Ensuring representation of the community and its heritage.
- Preference for artwork by Asian or local artists.
- Dragon symbolism and its relevance.
- Thoughts on non-Asian artists depicting Asian themes.

Artwork Visibility, Location, and Appearance (38 comments)

- Opinions on the sculpture's relocation, either on the side or roof.
- Thoughts about the sculpture's current visibility.
- Coloring (black vs. gold) and its impact on visibility and interpretation.
- The dragon's recognizability and abstractness.

Artwork Historical Value and Preservation (12 comments)

- Recognizing the sculpture's historical significance.
- Preserving older public art.
- The relationship between the artwork and its environment.

Cost Consideration and Art Budget (8 comments)

- Allocation of funds for public art.
- Prioritizing the health center's art budget.
- Concerns about spending money on relocating or modifying the artwork.

Feedback on Survey Design and Community Input (11 comments)

- Issues with the survey's design or options provided.
- Requests for more community involvement and feedback.

- Importance of informed decisions by specialists

General Aesthetics and Artistic Preferences (27 comments)

- Personal preferences on the artwork's appearance.
- Recommendations on modernizing or updating the artwork.
- Thoughts on the dragon's current patina or gold treatment.

Appreciation and Positive Feedback (13 comments)

- Gratitude for seeking public opinion.
- Expressions of admiration for the artwork.
- Positive remarks on the sculpture's design.

Miscellaneous Comments (13 comments)

- Various other opinions or statements that don't fit into the above categories.

All Open-Ended Responses from Survey

Do you have any additional comments, suggestions, or concerns about Dragon Relief or its potential changes?
Open-Ended Response
有沒有可能弄一条中国龙 ? (translated: Is it possible to get a Chinese dragon?)
a better design would be good
A bronze gold finish would be my first choice preference.
A revitalized dragon looks good!
A sign of the name of the sculpture and the artist.
Addressable led lighting could simply and cost effectively add enormous dimension and possibility. Some basic programming and hardware could give this sculpture a whole new life and create
all things change . it could be reconstituted to stay at location ; roof was impressive but more people will likely see it on the side . it's also a new era , one in which chinese american artists from san francisco could be commissioned for a re do or complete re imagining .
Apply funding to new, culturally sensitive and relevant art by an API artist instead please.
By what authority would you move, reconfigure and change the color of a commissioned work of art? The only one of these that I would consider would be moving it, but not if that meant
Can we collect more community feedback?
Do not move this beloved piece of artwork from its current location! Restore in place.
Does not look like a dragon.
Has the artist or an art historian been consulted? I would urge the commission to inquire with a art historian consulate at least.
I appreciate the thoughtfulness of SFAC in preserving and relocating the sculpture. It's an important part of SF history and artistic legacy. I hope the artist and/or their estate can be consulted so that the intent of the original work is honored, maintained, and perhaps expanded.
I assume that Dragon Relief was done specifically for the structure. Including it in any renovation of the health center should respect it's original intent and space.
I can't recall whether there is a plaque on the current building that explains the sculpture and the artist. If not, it would be nice to see this on the new building.
I did not realize it was a dragon. In my 50+ years of living in San Francisco, I didn't know that was a sculpture. I lived for 15 years in that neighborhood, and went by the Broadway tunnel weekly, and Dragon Relief never stood out. My suggestion would be to place it where it is recognizable as a dragon, as a piece of art, as a sculpture, and to enhance its potential if needed.
I don't like it. It's a bad design. I would have no idea it was a dragon if you didn't point that out.
I don't really like either proposed change of location
I feel mixed feelings about it because on the one hand, it is a dragon that often symbolizes fortune in Chinese/Asian cultures. However, on the other hand, it was created by an artist that was not Asian/Chinese and not from San Francisco, Chinatown. My preference would be to display artwork that was created by a Chinese/Asian American that was from San Francisco.
I have long admired this artwork and hope that a decision is made which most effectively respects the artist and the original intent of the work.

I have never seen it but from seeing the photo, I was impressed by it and think that should remain as originally designed.

I have never seen signage for the sculpture. It would be great to have more information about the public work of art somewhere near it.

I like the initial implementation and I think sticking with the artist's original intent is a good idea if it still works / looks good, which it does.

I love the s shape idea. Also, these concept photos look great.

I never knew it was dragon. And I've lived and worked here for over 20 years.

I originally thought red could look good, but I may like the gold even better!

I think it is important to respect the artists intent. I think it's charming and I like the idea of putting it on top of the building because it is in a simpler layout from the original and because it looks cool in a city that has many fun building "hats".

I think it would be nice to keep the structure in Chinatown.

I think it would look better on the side of the building, but you don't have an image of how the black vs. gold would look there. In any case relocating it will bring it a new life and it mostly just needs to get regular cleaning wherever it is. I love that I always liked the work but never read it as a

I think that painting gold will uplift more people and be very beautiful. It's relatively abstract so I would not know that. It's supposed to be a dragon unless someone told me.

I think the current location, where the sculpture is incorporated in to the wall, is a big part of its appeal. Thus, I prefer the option of a new location that maintains that, rather than positioning it atop a roof. (SF native and granddaughter of a sculptor, if that gives my comments a bit of

I used to work in that building, and have passed by it numerous times each month, but never knew that it was a dragon. I think it would be best to do away with the design and replace it with

I would defer to her on these matters if the artist is still living. If not, I don't see why you would change her intentions of configuration or color. Regarding the siting, the Broadway placement is a problem for two reasons: 1) it would change the configuration, and 2) it would be located on the side of the building where it would be dramatically less visible.

I'm Chinese American, I personally find this sculpture does not represent our heritage.

I'm just really sad the original cool midcentury facade/windows of fine building are going to change. It's sad that they're not retrofitting but keeping the original design of the building. Modern buildings look so out of place and jarring and we're losing so much history when old buildings are modernized. It's depressing to see a bunch of shiny glossy metal and glass buildings all over sf with no contextual urbanism (building new stuff that respects and matches the context/surroundings).

If it stays and is put on the side of the bldg (Option B), then it should be refinished in a different color. If it's refinished in gold, then a Complementary, Analogous, or Triadic color should be chosen for the building to make it more visible and less bland. Personally, I'd prefer a new public art RFP process to be generated featuring an Asian artist, and the Dragon Relief piece re-allocated to a

If possible the artists original intentions for the Layout and arrangement of the piece, while taking the new site into consideration. I don't believe it should be reconfigured.

If the dragon is on the roof, I'm concerned that glare will make it difficult for people to see the texture on the scales, which is an essential component for understanding that it's a dragon. The image would likely read as a silhouette.

If the relief would be installed on top of the roof, the color should be changed to gold so to coordinate with the red tiles. Otherwise, color should remain the same.
If the sculpture has historical significance I would prefer it be kept but if there's no historical or other real reason for keeping it I think it would be better to have new art made thereby supporting a current artist and creating a new artwork that works better in the suggested location.
If we're modernizing our public health facility, why don't we modernize our public arts too. Using dragons to symbolize Chinatown and Chinese community has become a cliché. I think SFAC can commission new installation or re-purpose existing piece as a symbol of renewed vision of the
It is a beautiful and iconic sculpture and the only reason I don't care for it on the roof is I feel the rendered supports detract from the original design which is graphic and clean.
It is a great piece of art and it should remain at the Chinatown Public Health Center. I never liked the location above the Levi Tunnel and would prefer a change to the top of the building in a shiny gold finish, to fly above the center.
It is more striking without the sky behind it.
It is so dirty that I did not realize it was a meaningful piece of public art
It needs more colors
It seems historical and interesting.
It should be kept as the artist intended, but it looks like it needs a good cleaning. If it needs to be relocated, it should still be situated similarly to how the artist intended it to look. If the artist is still alive, they should be involved.
It's a gorgeous piece. Thank you for reaching out for public opinion.
It's nice to keep a cultural art piece but changes to make it feel more modern would be nice
it's very important to keep this dragon..it represents our culture and history.. very meaningful one from historical perspective.. we need to respect our history..and culture
It's appalling to me that the city thinks it can make aesthetic decisions about a work that was made as intended. Or by opinion poll. This is sickening.
It's beautiful and part of the past history and style. Love it! Gold might be a nice update for modern times and receive the attention it deserves.
It's current location does not give it a lot of public attention. It's simply gets lost in the surroundings and the traffic and the tunnel. The move to the side of the building, at least gives at some visibility to those that approach the public health clinic.
It's not that great
its really a tough choice. i do love the original patina but since its getting modified anyway perhaps a gold treatment is appropriate. either way, its a cool sculpture, i love the graphic quality, its quite striking. i'm glad SFAC is figuring out a way to keep it and give it a new life.
Love this
Maybe now, in a different time, a piece of art by a culturally-linked artist could be considered--and the gold-covered dragon could be moved to the end of Grant and Broadway to mark that end of
Move it to the Portola!
Needs in-person community feedback - survey is easy to miss. Final changes should be reviewed with community.
no
no

No black dragon
None, thanks 😊
Not all of the options I would prefer are offered in the survey. While I think it is nice to offer a survey, I prefer that this be worked out at the SFAC among those in charge who are specialists and should be making educated decisions. What I like or don't like may not include important history or other information. What are the cost considerations? What are the ethical decisions? What is the value (financial or cultural) of the piece? What other locations, including inside the building,
Not representative of our culture; would rather the budget be spent on culturally-appropriate art.
paint it gold and relocate to the Broadway and Grant to create a photo stop, so Grant Ave will have the gate on one end and the golden dragon on the other end. I strongly believe that the dragon art has NOT be appreciated. As a staff I could not see the dragon and learned that the dragon art only collect bird droppings since installation.
Paint it gold. Place at Grant/Boardway to create another photoop landmark "Dragon Gate". In doing so, frees up more funds for art at the CPHC. This would be a "win-win". Leaving it at the CPHC would be a "lose-lose"---lose more funds/art for CPHC, lose opportunity for creation of
Pay more Chinese artists from San Francisco Chinatown, instead of giving the local money to
Phrasing of question 6 is a bit confusing. I think the artwork should remain at the location, if possible. Otherwise, located somewhere in Chinatown. The artwork should not be demolished.
Place it where is can be visible and not on top of any structure.
Placing it higher on the building will bring more attention and give more gravitas. I much prefer the 'curvy' orientation of the sculpture vs the linear, and makes it read more as "dragon". The current placement, and the new option of placement on top of building look more like "signage gone
Please remove Dragon Relief. It's a terrible idea to spend another dime to keep it at CPHC. Great work shouldn't cause its constituents great burden.
recommend that the patina be restored black with highlights of gold
Remove it
Should commission a more modernized piece of art that symbolizes healing and wellness for the Chinese community.
Thanks for the hardwork
The dragon should be relocated to another location. The renovated health center has a limited budget allocated for community art. Reinstalling the dragon would siphon off a large amount of this money (according to the SFAC from a previous meeting). The art budget money should be used to create art that enlightens, educates, and integrates with the spirit and purpose of the
The more public art the better
The view of it on the side of the new building is very striking and engaging. While the gold color is attractive, I think over time the brown is more powerful and will hold up better than the gold. I LOVE the way it appears in the rendering on the side of the building...makes for a very striking, eye-catching artwork. It feels lost in a way in the version along the top of the building. It's a cool piece and I think it will serve the SF public art collection well to keep it in the art collection.
The work was created as site specific. It works so well with a traffic going into the tunnel. The image of dragon works with energy flow. The idea of new location lacks this interesting relationship with physical space. I think it's a mistake to relocate. You should spend a money to

This survey is biased, such as the question requiring an answer about placing the dragon on the roof or on the side. I am of strong opinion that it is culturally irrelevant, disrespectful and inappropriate. Please remove it completely, from the community.

Unless the artist is deceased, he/she should have equal say about any alterations to their original commissioned artwork.

Use a more culturally appropriate design

Use funds to create and install a new artwork that represents holistic healing and what constitutes community health.

Very glad to know that the City values it's collection of older public art, and attempts to find appropriate sites for reinstallation :)

We should have an artist that is part of the community create new art work for the center to reflect the changing times. This is an opportunity for new artists to showcase their work.

Would be better if made by Asian American...the abstraction is okay, but it's not very representative of the community.

Yes. I think that some of my survey choices are not mentioned. I think questions related to cost, history - the piece itself and of the work commissioned by the SFAC, value of original modernist piece, etc. need to be included in such a discussion otherwise the "solution" to what to do with the piece becomes very short sighted and related to only those who participate. The staff and commissioners of the SFAC should be authorities on these matters and make the hard decisions

You need to have options to remove it in the questions about the coloring and the placement.

保持文化及代表 (translated: Maintain culture and representation_

可以設計一條新的五爪金龍嗎？(translation: Can you design a new five-clawed golden dragon?_

Appendix D: Comments submitted by DPH and PW on location of Dragon Received October 31, 2023

Dragon on the roof facing East:

- The Dragon has always been on the Broadway side facing east.
- Locating the Dragon to the roof on Broadway keeps the Dragon in public view.
- This location keeps The Dragon sculpture intact and allows for ease of regular maintenance.
- The Structural anchorage/bracing of the Dragon is simple and straightforward. Support structure has already been engineered and designed
- The context on this side is more appropriate due to the lively retail environment on Broadway and the abundance of street signs, graphics and public art in the Chinatown and Northbeach neighborhoods along the Broadway corridor .

Dragon reconfigured to an S-shape on the Southwest corner:

- In this location fewer people will enjoy it as it is tucked around the corner of the building and not very visible
- It will be facing residential uses
- The size and scale may be overwhelming if you are underneath it or looking at it from the adjacent residences.
- Placing it in this location will require substantial redesign and reconfiguring into an S-shape
- There is the question of who will reconfigure it, as DPW are not public artists or reconfiguration specialists
- It will require additional structural evaluation and may require replacement of the existing precast panels due to the number of penetrations
- It will likely add significant cost and possibly delay the schedule as the this location has not been engineered.
- Dragon reconfiguration to S-shape is a big deviation from original artist's design.

No Dragon in the building

- Community voice needs to be heard and artwork in the building needs to be culturally appropriate for Chinese people. Some community members feels strongly that this Dragon art piece is not traditional Chinese Dragon, so they rather remove it from the building and install new artwork by Chinese artist.

Appendix E - Supporting Documents





News Politics Science Education Housing Immigration Criminal Justice

BAY CURIOUS

Hiding In Plain Sight: The Dragon Sitting on Top of S.F.'s Broadway Tunnel



By [Rae Alexandra](#) Oct 14, 2021

Save Article



San Francisco-born artist Patti Bowler designed "Dragon Relief," a metal sculpture hanging above the Broadway tunnel. *(Google Street View)*

Stretching 56 feet across the Chinatown side of the Broadway Tunnel is a bronze and brass sculpture of a dragon, silently towering over the cars rumbling below. It's been poised there —

a stoic sort of guardian — since 1970. Bay Curious listener Sandi Sewell asked us to find out more about how it got there.

The dragon was designed by San Francisco-born artist Patti Bowler, and lovingly constructed by Santa Rosa metal worker Wade Lux. Sandi, our question asker, grew up with the Lux family and recently found out about the commission from some old photos. She was charmed to learn her old friend had a hand in making such a prestigious piece of art.

BAY CURIOUS

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The San Francisco Arts Commission says the imposing piece was one of the first public artworks to result from the city's Art Enrichment Ordinance. The 1969 ordinance required every civic construction project in the city to dedicate two per cent of its budget to a piece of public art.

When the city approved the Chinatown Public Health Center to sit above the Broadway tunnel, architect Clarence Mayhew nominated Bowler to design the accompanying \$27,500 artwork. (Mayhew's judgment in such matters was trusted, thanks in part to his seat on the board of the SFMOMA.) The piece would be titled simply, "Dragon Relief."



A dragon relief guards the Broadway tunnel and Chinatown Public Health Center that sits above. (Courtesy Johnny Dismal)

At that time, Bowler was a fashionable and forward-thinking mixed media artist and designer, whose most talked about pieces were created using a new kind of paint she had invented. Bowler manipulated her special combination of polyester resin and dry pigments using brushes and bamboo. The end results were three-dimensional, multi-colored and abstract works that were on regular display in galleries around the Bay Area.

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In 1961, the San Francisco Examiner wrote that Bowler's "striking designs" were "unusually dynamic, lucid and handsome." Pennsylvania's Republican and Herald newspaper once described Bowler as an "exceptionally talented artist ... that seems to thrive on hard work." Bowler had experience working on large-scale murals and construction projects too, so the size of the dragon wasn't a source of intimidation. After she had finalized the design, it was up to Lux — a self-described "tin-bender" — to build something that would last, scales and all.

There is, however, a small twist in this tale—Bowler's design might never have graced the tunnel if not for a dash of nepotism. It turns out that Clarence Mayhew — the architect who chose Bowler to helm the project — was both a friend and former employer of Bowler's architect husband, J. Carson Bowler. Mayhew gave Mr. Bowler his first major architecture job, just two years after the Bowlers were married. By awarding the "Dragon Relief" commission to Patti Bowler, he offered his protégé's wife a hand into the big leagues as well.

Regardless of how it ended up there, Bowler and Lux's dragon continues to guard the Robert C. Levy tunnel today, beneath the tall windows of the health center. And while their creation has outlived them both, it remains a testament to Patti Bowler's artistic vision and Wade Lux's

impeccable metal skills. It also, rather helpfully, serves as a symbol of strength and luck for all of the patients being treated above.

WHAT'S YOUR QUESTION?

What do you wonder about the Bay Area, its culture or people that you want Bay Curious to investigate?

0/220

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J. Carson Bowler

When you walk into a house designed by J. Carson Bowler, you know it, his friends said. Big, open main rooms; few interior walls; |

SEAN SCULLY

SEAN SCULLY

February 26, 2013

When you walk into a house designed by J. Carson Bowler, you know it, his friends said.

Big, open main rooms; few interior walls; small, galley-like kitchens; windows that recall those on a ship's bridge; exposed pilings and posts like a dock; and bare redwood, inside and out, create an effect that echoes the ships and wharves of his beloved Sonoma Coast.

Bowler died Feb. 4 at his home in Laguna Beach. Before retiring, he spent most of his life on and around the Sonoma Coast, working out of his house high on the bluffs over Bodega Bay.

"He woke up every single day with that ocean view," friend and real estate broker Scott Adams said Monday. "I don't know if that can help but influence your architectural style."

Bowler, 81, died after a brief illness, friends said. He designed residential and commercial buildings throughout the North Coast and as far north as Oregon.

"He was always thinking about the coastal environment, about how a building would fit there," said longtime friend Doug Murray, a Sebastopol-based architect.

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His buildings "were like pieces of sculpture that someone would do in that spot if it were not a house," Murray said.

Real estate agent George Capone, who has handled the sale of many Bowler-designed buildings, agreed.

"His architecture reflected the Sonoma Coast," he said. "He took advantage of that to bring the views inside."

Bowler designed many of the houses at The Sea Ranch. He is also responsible for several of the signature commercial buildings in Bodega Bay, including the Lucas Wharf Restaurant, The Inn at the Tides, Pelican Plaza, and The Yacht Harbor Clubhouse.

He also designed Bodega Bay's post office, which is nestled into a hill below Highway 1, designed not to block the view from the iconic road.

Personally, Bowler was quiet, professional and unassuming, friends said.

"He enjoyed a good laugh; enjoyed going to parties," said Adams, who had known the architect since the mid-1960s.

"He was very intelligent and soft-spoken."

Bowler liked to design houses the way he lived. Adams said a typical Bowler house was similar to the architect's own place on the bluffs. He favored idiosyncratic, open designs, to the point of creating master bedrooms that had no walls and were open to the rest of the house.

Bowler's Bodega Bay house is still standing, but it is unoccupied. It is one of several houses high above Gleason Beach that are in danger of falling down as the bluffs suffer blows from winter storms.

Bowler was born Sept. 6, 1931, in Pasadena. He graduated from the University of Oregon School of Architecture in 1955 and took a job in the San Francisco office of Clarence Mayhew. He moved to Bodega Bay in 1964 and formed a joint practice with architect John Cook in 1969. They remained business partners until Cook's death in 1999.

Bowler and wife Patti were married from 1953 until her death in 1992. He married Carol Olds in 1994; the couple moved to Laguna Beach after his retirement in 2005.

He is survived by his wife; brother Doug Bowler and sister Marilyn Johnson, both of Laguna Beach; stepchildren Jeffrey Olds and Michelle Kovarik; and several grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

A memorial service is planned in Northern California sometime this spring, but the family is still working out details, Murray said. Bowler was buried at sea off Southern California, he said.

-- Sean Scully

Dragon Relief Sculpture

Feasibility Study for Deinstallation



Prepared for: Ms. Allison Cummings
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CS22064

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ARG Conservation Services (ARG/CS) was contracted by the San Francisco Arts Commission (SFAC) to conduct a feasibility study for the deinstallation of the Dragon sculpture which is currently located above the east entrance of the Broadway Tunnel (or Robert C. Levy Tunnel) in San Francisco, California. Constructed of brass and bronze sheet metal, the Dragon sculpture is an abstract high relief of a dragon that spans the entire wall above the entrance of the Broadway tunnel which is also part of the Chinatown Health Center (Health Center). To conduct the feasibility study, ARG/CS conducted a partial visual evaluation via a boom-lift to investigate construction detail and evaluated historical documents provided by the city.

In addition to the feasibility study for the best method to deinstall the Dragon sculpture, SFAC requested that ARG/CS also provide recommendations for the storage and conservation treatment of the Dragon sculpture. In sum, this report documents the onsite evaluation and recommended methods for the deinstallation of the Dragon sculpture as well as recommendations for its storage and conservation treatment.

PROJECT TEAM

CLIENT

San Francisco Arts Commission

Mary Chou, *Civic Art Collection and Public Art Director*

Allison Cummings, *Senior Registrar*

ARG CONSERVATION SERVICES

Jennifer Correia, *Principal*

David Wessel, *Principal*

Dena Kefallinos, *Project Manager*

Erik Sandell, *Conservator*

ROBINSON AND TUAN STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING

Eugene Tuan, *Principal*

BACKGROUND

SFAC contracted with ARG/CS to evaluate the feasibility of deinstalling the Dragon sculpture prior to a project planned to re-design the Health Center, located above the Broadway Tunnel where the Dragon Sculpture is located. San Francisco's Department of Public Works (DPW) is the lead agency to plan and design a renovated structure for the Health Center.

DOCUMENT REVIEW

Constructed of patinated brass and bronze sheet metal, the sculptural dragon decorating the east entrance of the tunnel is part of SFAC's collection and under their purview. Prior to construction of the Health Center, SFAC plans to deinstall the artwork, store it off site, perform conservation work, and then work with DPW to reinstall the artwork. ARG/CS is currently tasked with evaluating the feasibility of deinstallation and providing a plan for conserving the artwork.

SFAC provided background information from their historical records about the sculpture's history for this evaluation, see Appendix B. SFAC's records did not reveal much about the assembly and installation of the Dragon Sculpture, but rather more about its fabrication, material composition, and finish. SFAC created a summary of known information that states the following:

The sculpture was commissioned in 1969 and installed in 1970. This would have been at the very beginning of San Francisco's Art Enrichment Ordinance, and at that time the building architect played a significant role in choosing the project artist. So the piece was commissioned by the City and County of San Francisco upon the recommendation of the architect, Clarence Mayhew. The design was approved by the Arts Commission on September 2, 1969 and the budget for design, fabrication, and installation was set at \$27,500. Upon completion of the installation in the summer of 1970, the Arts Commission accepted and approved the artwork on September 8, 1970.

The artwork is made of sheet brass and sheet bronze. The scales are brass and the body bronze, to which a matte brown/black patina has been applied (color "Liver of Sulfate"), and the sculpture is hollow. The artist was concerned that the artwork "not be polished and remain matte so that light does not reflect from the piece to the drivers below." The piece was pre-fabricated in Santa Rosa by Wade Lux of Lux Metals. The piece is 56 feet long, 9 feet 6 inches tall, and 2 feet 6 inches in depth. Wade Lux (Oscar Wade Lux III) died in 2008, his company, Lux Metals started in 1970, still exists today as Lux Metals Inc. in Santa Rosa, CA. [Lux Metals: Custom Metal Fabrication & Machine Shop in Santa Rosa](#). The company is aware of the artwork but does not have any materials relating to it in their archive.

The artist, Patti Bowler, installed the "surface mounted sculptured mural panel", including a mosaic patterned background. A document from Oct 10, 1969 indicates that the artist planned to secure the exterior artwork to the building with "back-up plates welded to metal studs behind the artwork and will add a few intermediate studs as required". Northwest Construction company was contracted to place metal studs in the east façade between the 1st & 2nd floors of the building for the artwork (unclear if this was how it was built or just the original plan).



Image 1: Oblique view of *Dragon Relief*, ARGCS January 2023.

SITE EVALUATION

On Tuesday, January 24th of 2023, ARG/CS conservators mobilized onsite to visually inspect the Dragon via a boom lift. SFAC coordinated the inspection with DPW, so that ARG/CS could stage their boom lift in the street during a planned night closure. ARG/CS was able to inspect the sculptural elements above the east-bound traffic side of the tunnel, thus only the right half of the sculpture could be assessed at close range. In select areas of the sculpture, ARG/CS managed to insert a borescope camera in select areas for viewing of the interior of the sculpture to better understand the artwork's assembly. Field notes from the inspection have been transcribed to a condition assessment drawing which is included in Appendix A of this report.

Despite only being able to conduct a visual assessment of only part of the sculpture from a boom lift at night, ARG/CS conservators were able to determine details about the construction, installation, and overall condition of the artwork:

- Overall soiling on the surface of the artwork. There is accumulated debris and soiling on the horizontal surfaces of the artwork.
- Corrosion on the surface of the artwork. Vertical patterns of staining streak the surface of the artwork – especially on the upper half.
- Bird netting has been installed over the artwork to prevent birds from nesting and sitting on the sculpture. In addition, this netting likely helped to alleviate the amount of corrosion staining resulting from the acidic bird feces.
- Other than the conditions noted above, the metal appears to be in good condition. Conservators did not see any signs of pitting or losses in the metal. Although, this inspection was visual, and conservators could not access all elements of the sculpture.
- The artwork is clearly separated into discrete units.
- The artwork is likely bolted to a hanging system mounted on the tiled wall above the tunnel.
- Two types of rivets were observed – finish rivets (decorative rivets that match the metal that is visible on most of the artwork) installation rivets (silver rivets that were likely used to secure each individual unit of the artwork).
- Conservators also investigated the interior connections of the artwork with a boroscope via existing weepholes in two locations. Photographs are included in this report. Anchor bolts and interior view of the rivets were documented.



Image 2: View of the sculpture's surface details looking southwest. Documents state that the scales are brass sheet metal and the body is bronze sheet metal. Conservators did not see a visual difference in these details; however, there is accumulated surface soiling and pollution that may be obscuring visual differences.



Image 3: View of the sculpture from a 45° aerial boom lift, ARGCS January 2023. Conservators were able to access the sculpture using the westbound lanes of traffic, that were closed for night cleaning by San Francisco Department of Public Works, ARG/CS January 2023.



Image 4: Overall view of the sculpture, Department of Public Works, ARG/CS January 2023.

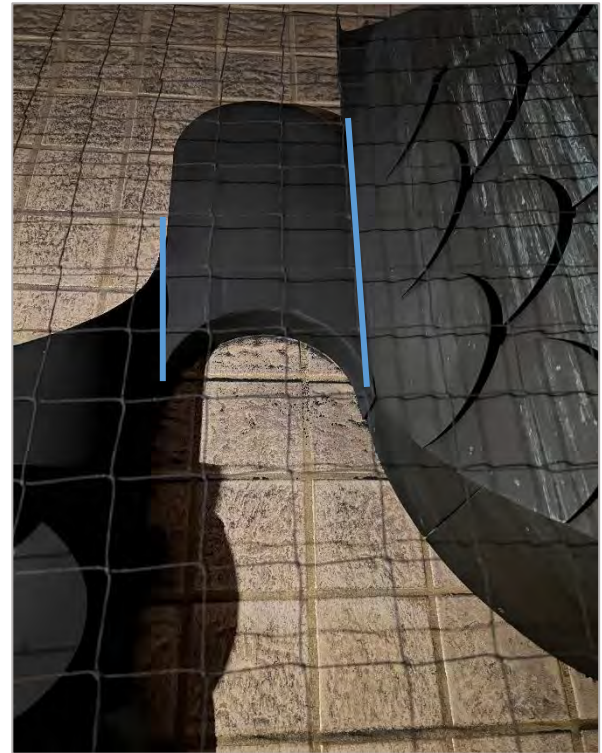


Image 5: During the investigation, it was confirmed that the sculpture was composed of discrete units (see blue lines), which will facilitate the process of deinstallation, ARG/CS January 2023.



Image 5: Conservators inspecting the right (north) side of the sculpture, ARG/CS January 2023.



Image 6: Detail of the scales. Overall, it appears that the scales are well attached, ARG/CS January 2023.

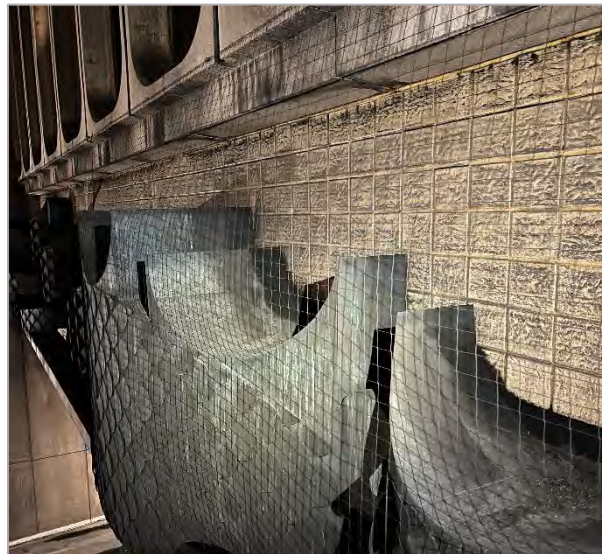


Image 8: Oblique view of the sculpture's upper horizontal surfaces. There is accumulated debris from atmospheric soiling, pollution, and possibly guano. The bird netting prevents birds from nesting and perching on the sculpture. There is also increased corrosion on the upper portions of the sculpture, visible as greenish/white streaking, ARG/CS January 2023.

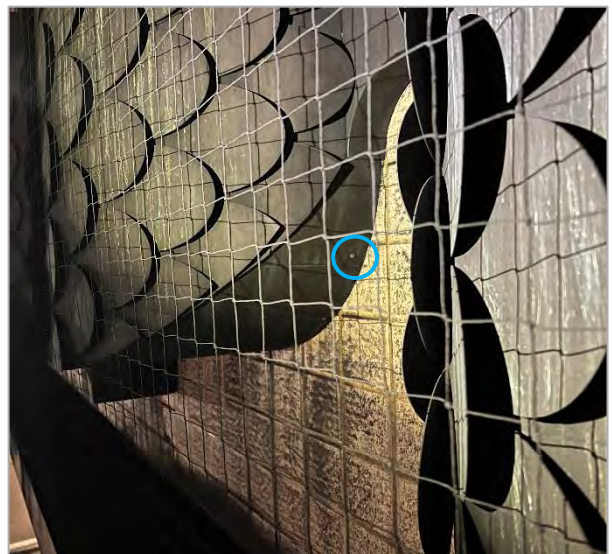


Image 9: Detail of the lower panels that were likely installed after mounting the sculptural units. The blue circle highlights a pop rivet, which can be removed (drilled out) during the deinstallation process, ARG/CS January 2023.



Image 10: During the investigation, conservators employed the use of a boroscope to attempt to confirm connection details and determine statement from the summary documents. Above is an interior view of the pop rivet, ARG/CS January 2023.



Image 10: Above is a detail of a bolt, which supports the information that the sculptures were attached to horizontal channels mounted on the building prior to the sculpture's installation, ARG/CS January 2023.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Upon analysis of the collected field data, ARG/CS determined that it is feasible to deinstall the sculpture. ARG/CS recommends the following deinstallation process for its removal:

1. ARG/CS conservators will team with an art rigger to deinstall the artwork and secure it in crates for transport to an off-site facility. ARG/CS assumes that their team will be able to access the artwork from scaffold installed by the City.
2. Art rigger will construct crates prior to removal of artwork. ARG/CS condition assessment drawing documents the individual units of the artwork (see Appendix A) with approximate dimensions of the artwork to facilitate construction of crates prior to the removal. Crates should be designed with padding that account for the weight, dimensions, and shape of the individual units.
3. The deinstallation team, via scaffolding will unbolt the internal bolts that connect the sculpture to a hanging system that mounts the sculpture to the wall of the tunnel. To access the internal bolts of the sculpture, the team will first remove the pop rivets on the lower access panel of each unit.
 - a. ARG/CS conservators will be photo-document and label the units and associated hardware during deinstallation. The labeling system will be critical to understand during the reinstallation design process. Ideally, each unit can be removed intact. Although, it is possible that some adjustments will need to be made in the field to deinstall each individual element. Additional time will be allowed in the schedule to account for unanticipated conditions that will require the team to adjust the deinstallation approach.
 - b. The team will first proceed with removal of lower units.
 - c. Each unit will be removed from the wall by hand, loosening internal bolts. SFAC records indicate that the bolts were secured to internal horizontal bars/channels, secured to the tiled wall above the tunnel. Unfortunately, the bars/channels could not be viewed during the investigation, and the exact configuration cannot be confirmed until the lower panels are removed during deinstallation.
 - d. Team assumes that hardware allows for easy removal and reinstall of artwork. Depending on where and how this artwork is being reinstalled, it may be possible to reuse some of the hardware for reinstallation. Upon deinstallation, there will need to be a design process for reinstallation for the new location.
4. A material hoist will be used to more easily move removed units into the pre-fabricated crates. The system will need to be designed for the scaffolding system planned for the construction project.
5. Upon placement of removed units into crates, they will be transported to storage for conservation treatment.

Recommendations for Conservation:

ARG/CS assumes that the Dragon sculpture will receive conservation treatments while in storage, so it is important that the selected storage space also provide working space for treatment. The conservation treatment will involve cleaning the sculpture with conservation-grade corrosion removers and detergents, as well as coating all its surfaces with a protective lacquer or wax coating that will be determined by mockups. It is important to note that this sculpture was chemically patinated to appear a matte brownish. This finish was specified during the original design process, and direction was given to maintain a finish that would not distract drivers. A detailed breakdown of recommended conservation treatment is as follows:

1. Clean all surfaces with warm pressurized hot water.
2. Apply conservation-grade corrosion removers and cleaners to surfaces of metal and be sure to rinse away with water all residual removers/cleaners.
3. Perform mockup of desired finish or exterior coating. There has been discussion about goals for the finish, which will be evaluated during the mock-up process.
 - a. It is possible that a hot waxing treatment will be able to achieve the finish desired by the city. During this process, chemical patination treatments, which can alter the color of the dragon, can also be explored. It is important to note that this sculpture was chemically patinated to appear a matte brownish color, thus ARG/CS recommends that SFAC consult with the artist for the desired mockup finish.
4. Execute selected mockup of desired finish on entire sculpture. Please note that the cost of treatment can vary depending on the selected finish – for example chemical patination will be more costly than simply waxing the sculpture or applying a clear lacquer coating.
5. After conservation treatment, the sculpture's units will be re-crated and protected for storage prior to reinstallation.
6. It is likely that touchups will need to be performed after the sculpture is installed.

APPENDIX A – CONDITION DRAWING

GENERAL NOTES

OVERALL GENERAL SOILING WITH HEAVY ACCUMULATED POLLUTION AND DEBRIS ON HORIZONTAL SURFACES.

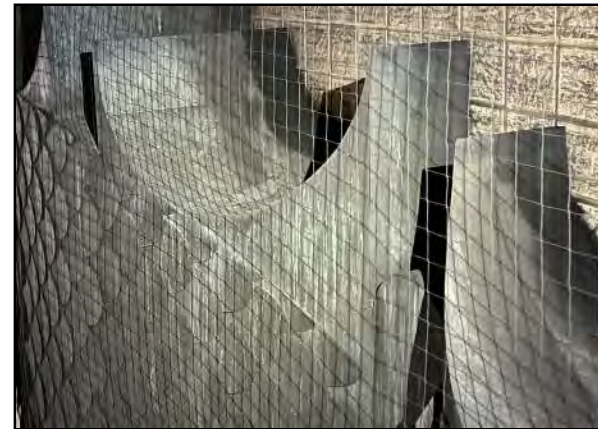
ALL METAL SCALES ARE INTACT WITH NO VISIBLE LOSSES.

EXISTING WEEP/DRAINAGE HOLES USED FOR INTERIOR INVESTIGATION WITH BORESCOPE.

APPROACH FOR REMOVAL WILL BE TO DEINSTALL EACH INDIVIDUAL UNIT USING THE INSTALL RIVETS.

OVERALL DIMENSIONS OF SCULPTURE IS 9.5' x 56' x 2.5'

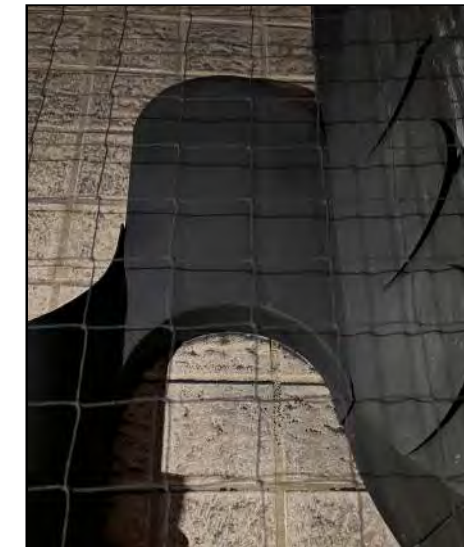
SCULPTURE IS 23 INDIVIDUAL UNITS.



ACTIVE CORROSION STAINING, TYP.

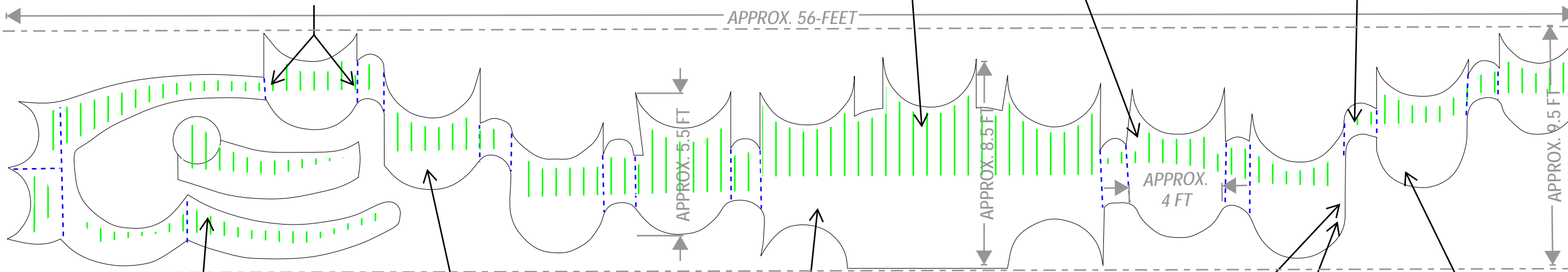


EXT. FINISHED RIVETS, TYP.

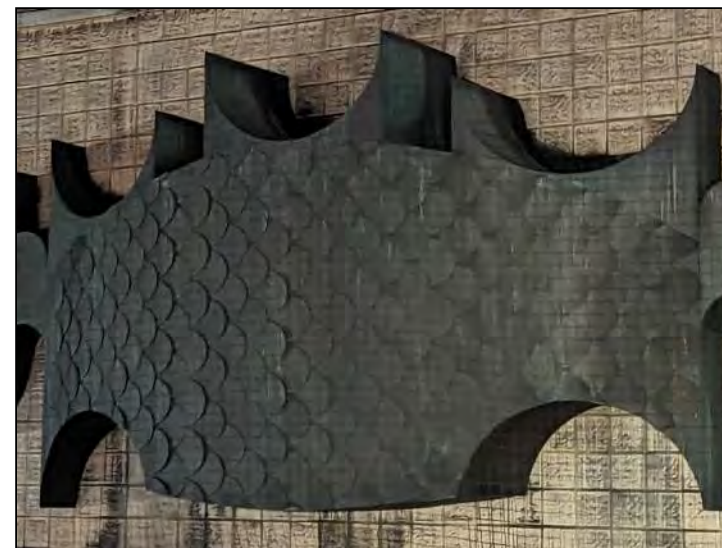


DISCRETE UNIT, TYP.

METAL SEAMS, TYP.



OVERALL VIEW OF CENTRAL BODY.



EXT. VIEW OF RIVET, TYP.



INTERIOR VIEW OF RIVET, TYP.



INT. VIEW OF BOLT, TYP.



OVERALL VIEW OF DRAGON HEAD.



INTACT SCALES, TYP.

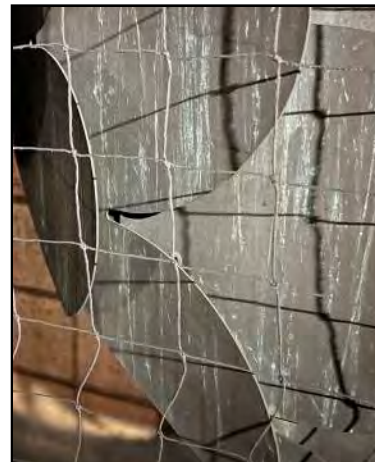


Fig 9, The Embarcadero - San Francisco, California
45504245x | fax 455-422044 | www.argcs.com

NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE
REVISIONS		

DRAGON RELIEF

INVESTIGATION & CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

CHINATOWN
PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER #4
1490 MASON STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

SHEET TITLE
INVESTIGATION & CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

ISSUANCE

DATE
MARCH 2023

PROJ. NO.
CS22064

DRAWN
DK

CHECKED
JC

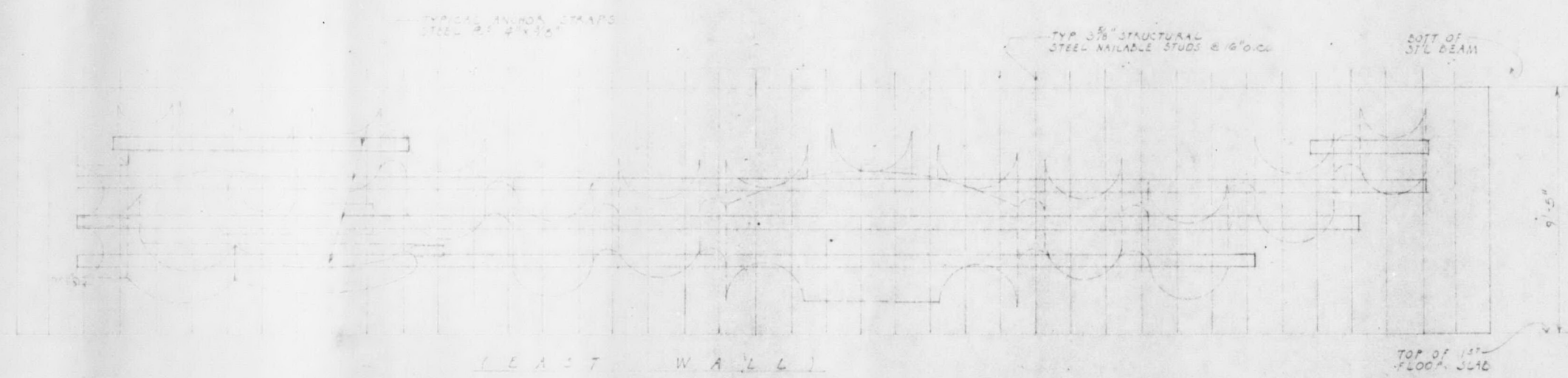
DRAWING NO.

A1.1

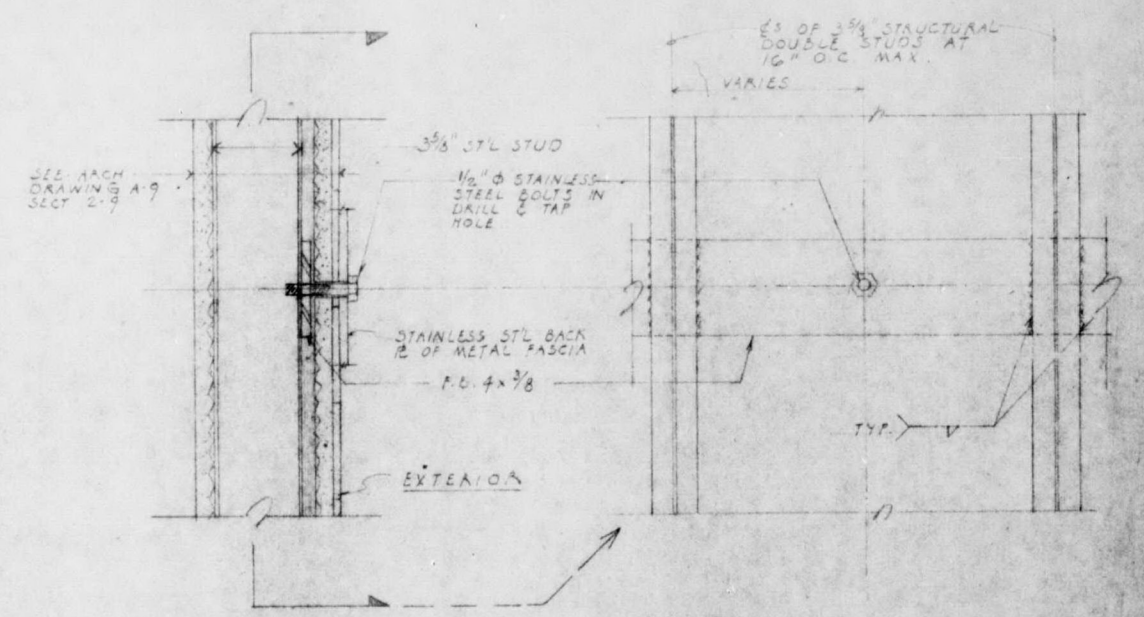
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11"x17" SHEET SIZE. IF SHEET SIZE IS SMALLER, THEN DRAWING HAS BEEN REDUCED.

APPENDIX B – BACKGROUND DOCUMENTATION



ELEVATION OF ORNAMENTAL FASCIA ANCHOR STRAPS $3/8" = 1'-0"$
 NOTE: LOCATIONS OF ANCHOR BOLTS SHALL BE DIRECTED BY THE ORNAMENTAL FASCIA DESIGNER AND EACH ANCHOR BOLT CARRIES A MAXIMUM VERTICAL LOAD OF 63 LB.



TYPICAL ORNAMENTAL METAL FASCIA ANCHOR CONNECTION DETAIL $3/8" = 1'-0"$

DISTRICT HEALTH CENTER NO. 4 FOR CITY & COUNTY OF
 SAN FRANCISCO MASON @ BROADWAY S.F.
 ORNAMENTAL METAL FASCIA SUPPORT DETAILS

B. L. NISHKIAN
 CONSULTING ENGINEER
 822 H. WARD STREET
 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94103
 JOB NO. 35426 12/2/69
 Wilbur P. Gayler 2/7/70

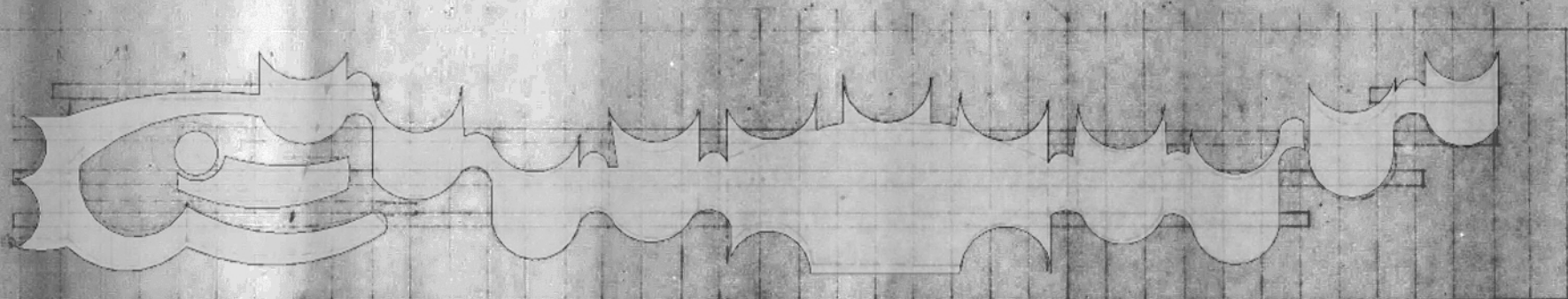
355198-3



TYPICAL ANCHOR STRAPS
STEEL @ 4" X 3/8"

TYP 3/8" STRUCTURAL
STEEL AVAILABLE STUDS @ 6" O.C.

BOFF OF
STL BEAM



9'-5"

(EAST WALL)

TOP OF 1ST
FLOOR SLAB

ELEVATION OF ORNAMENTAL FASCIA ANCHOR STRAPS

3/8" = 1'-0"

NOTE: LOCATIONS OF ANCHOR BOLTS SHALL BE DIRECTED BY THE ORNAMENTAL FASCIA DESIGNER AND EACH ANCHOR BOLT CARRIES A MAXIMUM VERTICAL LOAD OF 63 LB.

BAY CURIOUS

Hiding In Plain Sight: The Dragon Sitting on Top of S.F's Broadway Tunnel



By Rae Alexandra Oct 14, 2021

Save Article



San Francisco-born artist Patti Bowler designed "Dragon Relief," a metal sculpture hanging above the Broadway tunnel. (Google Street View)

Stretching 56 feet across the Chinatown side of the Broadway Tunnel is a bronze and brass sculpture of a dragon, silently towering over the cars rumbling below. It's been poised there — a stoic sort of guardian — since 1970. Bay Curious listener Sandi Sewell asked us to find out more about how it got there.

The dragon was designed by San Francisco-born artist Patti Bowler, and lovingly constructed by Santa Rosa metal worker Wade Lux. Sandi, our question asker, grew up with the Lux family and recently found out about the commission from some old photos. She was charmed to learn her old friend had a hand in making such a prestigious piece of art.

BAY CURIOUS

Bay Curious is a podcast that answers your questions about the Bay Area. Subscribe on [Apple Podcasts](#), [NPR One](#) or your favorite podcast platform.

The San Francisco Arts Commission says the imposing piece was one of the first public artworks to result from the city's Art Enrichment Ordinance. The 1969 ordinance required every civic construction project in the city to dedicate two per cent of its budget to a piece of public art.

When the city approved the Chinatown Public Health Center to sit above the Broadway tunnel, architect Clarence Mayhew nominated Bowler to design the accompanying \$27,500 artwork. (Mayhew's judgment in such matters was trusted, thanks in part to his seat on the board of the SFMOMA.) The piece would be titled simply, "Dragon Relief."



A dragon relief guards the Broadway tunnel and Chinatown Public Health Center that sits above. (Courtesy Johnny Dismal)

At that time, Bowler was a fashionable and forward-thinking mixed media artist and designer, whose most talked about pieces were created using a new kind of paint she had invented. Bowler manipulated her special combination of polyester resin and dry pigments using brushes and bamboo. The end results were three-dimensional, multi-colored and abstract works that were on regular display in galleries around the Bay Area.

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In 1961, the San Francisco Examiner wrote that Bowler's "striking designs" were "unusually dynamic, lucid and handsome." Pennsylvania's Republican and Herald newspaper once described Bowler as an "exceptionally talented artist ... that seems to thrive on hard work." Bowler had experience working on large-scale murals and construction projects too, so the size of the dragon wasn't a source of intimidation. After she had finalized the design, it was up to Lux — a self-described "tin-bender" — to build something that would last, scales and all.

There is, however, a small twist in this tale—Bowler's design might never have graced the tunnel if not for a dash of nepotism. It turns out that Clarence Mayhew — the architect who chose Bowler to helm the project — was both a friend and former employer of Bowler's architect husband, J. Carson Bowler. Mayhew gave Mr. Bowler his first major architecture job, just two years after the Bowlers were married. By awarding the "Dragon Relief" commission to Patti Bowler, he offered his protégé's wife a hand into the big leagues as well.

Regardless of how it ended up there, Bowler and Lux's dragon continues to guard the Robert C. Levy tunnel today, beneath the tall windows of the health center. And while their creation has outlived them both, it remains a testament to Patti Bowler's artistic vision and Wade Lux's impeccable metal skills. It also, rather helpfully, serves as a symbol of strength and luck for all of the patients being treated above.

WHAT'S YOUR QUESTION?

What do you wonder about the Bay Area, its culture or people that you want Bay Curious to investigate?

0/220

Your contact info

We'll be in touch if we look into your question.

Name

Email address

Phone number (optional)

