

# Strolling among sculptures at USD

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The campus of the University of South Dakota has long been a home to public sculpture, from the statue of Doc Farber near Old Main to the recent addition of the coyote outside the Muenster University Center.

Last month, the university continued that tradition when it brought in six new pieces courtesy of SculptureWalk Sioux Falls.

"I'm getting a lot of good comments from campus people," said Larry Schou, D.M.A., Dean of the College of Fine Arts. "I got an e-mail from Clay Hoffman, the vice president of the Student Government Association. He hasn't seen them, but he's heard about them being on campus."

"I think there's going to be a lot of good, positive comments, because classes get started (soon)," he said.

The sculptures, their creators and locations are as follows:

- "Generation Slaps," by Matt Miller, which is between Beacom Hall and the School of Law building;
- "Stream Chit Chat" by Won Choi, which is east of I.D. Weeks Library;
- "Comma," by Lee Badger, which is on the south lawn of the Dean Belbas Center;
- "Meteor," by David Skora, which is located at Clark Street in front of the College of Arts & Sciences building;
- "Relationship Series XV," by Joseph Castle, which is in front of the Andrew E. Lee Memorial

Medicine & Science building; and

• "Manly Springs," by Dana Parlier, which is at North University Street on the south side of the Wellness Center.

Schou acts as chair to the USD Sculpture Committee, a position for which he was chosen by President James Abbott.

The committee also includes Cathy Wagner, director of planning and construction, and Laura McNaughton, executive assistant to the president.

Schou worked with Jim Clark of SculptureWalk Sioux Falls, who in turn put out an international call for proposals for pieces, ultimately receiving around 30. It was from these that the final sculptures were chosen.

"We didn't want representational art like the coyote statue and the Doc Farber statue. We wanted contemporariness," Schou said.

The criteria for selection was "pretty wide open," he said.

"All I said was, '(The artists) need to know it's at the University of South Dakota campus,'" Schou said.

The sculptures were placed in various locations around campus. Schou said each piece fits its respective place, playing off its surroundings in size, shape and color.

"These new six sculptures ... are kind of branching out across campus," he said. "We tried to spread it out so, number one, people would actually walk the whole campus and see the great landscaping going on and

see other buildings in other parts of the campus."

While the actual process of placing the sculptures went well, it was time-consuming.

"We wanted the quartzite bases that SculptureWalk Sioux Falls has," Schou said. "We also needed cement below the stone so it's level and it's not going to sink into the grass. ..."

"They actually had to dig about five feet deep to put in footings to secure the area," he said. "The base of cement isn't five feet, but I think they put stones in or sand to level it, make sure it's secure and won't move around."

Once the cement was poured, it had to cure for a week. After that, the quartzite was laid and the sculptures were brought in.

"We're just finalizing now, just finishing off some paver blocks to go around each sculpture so the mowers won't have a difficulty of mowing around the grass," Schou said.

USD is leasing the current sculptures for a

period of two years, after which time they will be replaced with new ones.

The committee is now in the process of creating a brochure that will list the sculptures, and provide an artist statement and biography, along with a map.

When they are completed, the brochures will be available online, across campus and the community in general.

"We'll put them all over town," Schou said. "Then if people want to come in and take a tour of campus and walk the SculptureWalk, they'll have a chance to do that."

Schou said he is grateful for the opportunity to work with Jim Clark and Sioux Falls SculptureWalk.

"I'm glad the University of South Dakota could network and work with that group up there to bring some of that great artwork down here for our community," he said. "I think this is going to help advance the concept in the Vermillion community of, 'More public artwork is a good thing.'"



"Comma," by Lee Badger, is on the south lawn of the Dean Belbas Center, and is one of six pieces now on the campus of the University of South Dakota.

(Photo by Travis Gulbrandson)

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