



Art Theme/Dates

May 26 - 30, 2016

For the 13th year of the event, the 2016 Art Theme was SCIENCE! This year, with a broader yet simplified theme, we found that participants really embraced the art theme more than ever before. Countless people were walking around in artfully decorated lab coats, conducting experiments, and designing scientifically-inspired sculptures.

See the 2016 web, print, and media content imaging here: <http://www.soakpdx.org/>

Location/Community

Once again SOAK returned to beautiful Justesen Ranch in Tygh Valley, OR. Tygh Valley lies in the arid rain shadow of Mount Hood, which dominates the skyline background of Portland. Tygh Valley is rural and served by an all-volunteer fire department, one school, a limited-hours post office, a small diner, and a small general store. We found that our relationship with the small community deepened and we were able to establish more trust and lasting relationships by seeking out local vendors for services such as Porto Potties and Potable Water.

The property itself is an expansive working cattle ranch of over 350 acres, however the event grounds are held on a small irrigated patch of about 65 acres that runs alongside the White River. The White river drains off of Mount Hood, and borders most of the town of Tygh Valley. Justesen Ranch offers a very large parking field area, great views of canyons, ridge lines, and the river. Most of the event is held on two flat fields lined by ponderosa pines, while our Burnable Sculptures (effigies), some large art, and some of the bigger camps are in a large bowl-shaped field.

http://static1.squarespace.com/static/565225d1e4b083936d4f049a/t/573649ab37013b8eeb2421df/1463175597244/Soak_2016_EventMap_sm.png

Teams

SOAK is now comprised of 19 teams including Operations/Producers. Some Teams are broken down into sub departments (Rangers: Sanctuary, and Placement: Mapping, Theme Camps, DPW: Transpo, Fire Safety: Shin).

New this year, was the creation of "Cluster Teams", which is a category for defining teams that work in conjunction with one another serving a similar purpose at SOAK. For example, "The Safety Cluster" of teams includes Fire Safety, Medical, The Shin (conclave), and Rangers. This also served a purpose for reducing the size of the majority of our planning meetings. They had gotten too large for many meeting purposes and spaces, and regularly meeting with teams more directly related to a smaller mission and purpose helped with communication. You can view the department description and cluster roles here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZZK5hf8jz9B8z3NV6HbQRh9_y2rH1HRcxjbXdNZsih0/edit#heading=h.al6ulmhr6nf8

Operations: PNW, SOAK, LLC, RCs, Producers

SOAK, LLC is currently transitioning to a new Non-Profit Entity. It is a long process with huge learning curve, but it is a very accomplishable task. A new board, Precipitation NW, was selected and formed with 5 members.

<http://www.precipitationnw.org/> PNW spent the SOAK planning season shadowing the Operations and Production process, and was involved in conversation, some operational decision-making, and planning meetings. They were also invited to participate in on-site shifts at SOAK. In order to fulfill the requirements of the Outdoor Mass Gathering Permit, we agreed (with the County Sheriff) to staff a certain number of Peer-Security volunteers in conjunction with the paid professional DPSST security crew required by our permit.

The remainder of the Operations Team is comprised of the sole SOAK, LLC member, Thomas McElroy, the three RCs, Tzara Vierck, Xandra Green, and Emily Steadman, and the two SOAK Producers, Melissa Casburn and Chris Schneider. The RCs and LLC work in an advisory capacity, and are the duly authorized agents of SOAK, LLC.

<http://www.soakpdx.org/team/>

Volunteers

- SOAK 2016 had **533** registered participants as volunteers. This means 1/3 of our population either did, or intended to volunteer for the event.

Total Hours in shift work scheduled: **6244.4** ** still compiling data

Total Hours in shift work completed: **5696.4** ** still compiling data

Total Actual Volunteers : **342**

Volunteer HRIS used: <http://volcor.net/>

Population

1405 (on site)

Permit allowed for 1500 on site

On site vendors

- District Security
- CrackerJack First Response (Medical)
- Gem Ice Company - ** provider of ice - did not vend at SOAK
- Columbia River Affordable Portos - ** provider of potties - did not vend at SOAK
- Pape` Rents - ** provider of utility vehicles - did not vend at SOAK
- Tygh Valley Water (did not fulfill their contract) - Mass Gathering Permit requires 5 gallons of potable water per person per day, available on site

Permitting/Insurance

Permit: Wasco County, Oregon Outdoor Mass Gathering Permit (for populations of 2500 and under) - Approved March 28, 2016 by special hearing, Wasco County Board of Commissioners.

Insurance: Gales Creek - \$1M \$ \$2M Aggregate Liability/Indemnity per occurrence, with additionally insured: Burning Man Project, Black Rock City, LLC, SOAK, LLC, Justesen Ranch Recreation, Wasco County Board of Commissioners, members officers, agents & employees.

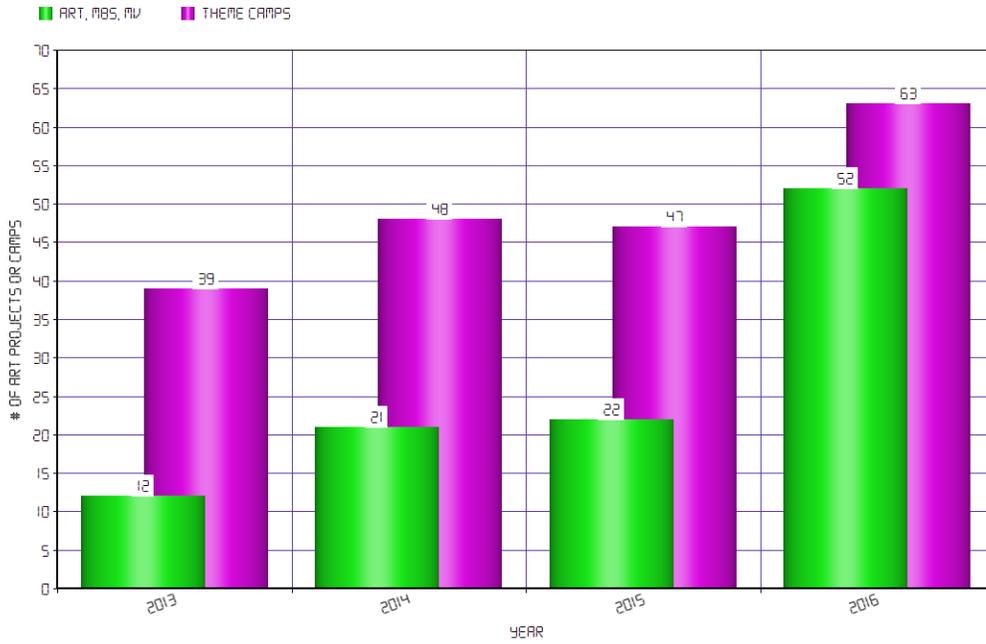
Art Grants

\$6000 donated to Precipitation NW from an anonymous donor for the use of Art Grants. Awards and process can be viewed here: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/miHZv/>

How do Art Grants work? Precipitation Northwest had \$6000 donated anonymously as operating budget for Art Grants. Applicants have a period of time to apply, and once applications are collected into a slideshow, a committee of volunteer peers gather to discuss, consider, and vote on awards. The Committee is open to volunteers through the same channels as other SOAK volunteer opportunities. Two Art Grant Administrators guide the grant process. The Regional Contacts provide a historical, non-voting perspective, to the Committee, who makes the final funding suggestions. Awards are based on interactivity, safety, reliability, creativity, skill, uniqueness, independence, and in consideration of how the project aligns with the Ten Principles.

Art Installations

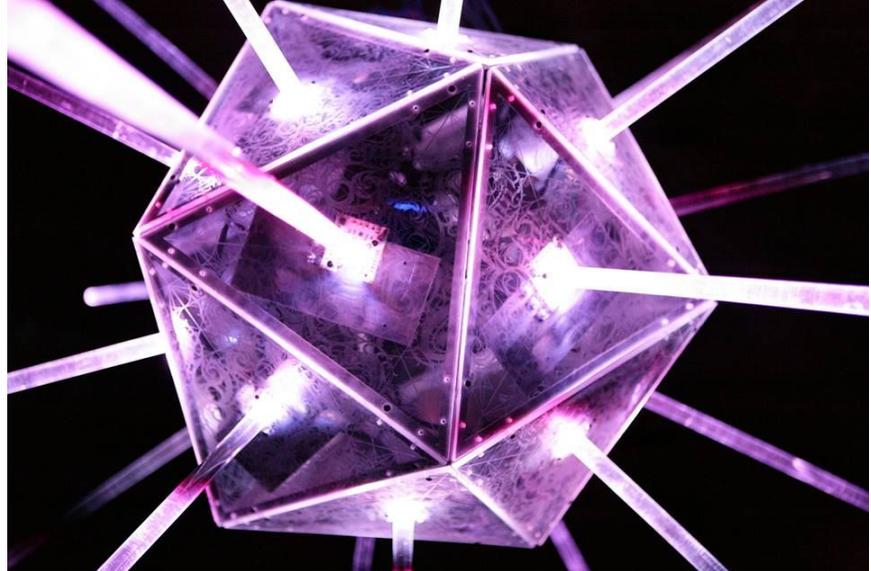
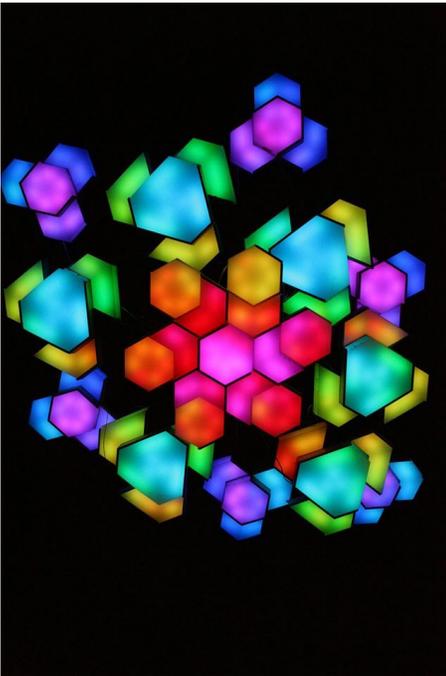
ART & CAMP PARTICIPATORY GROWTH AT SOAK



SOURCE: SOAK ART LIAISON DOCUMENTATION, SOAK PLACEMENT DATA ARCHIVES

52 registered art projects, and a handful of other unregistered guerilla/scattered projects in attendance.

(Source: Sara Greer, Art Liaison/Art Grants Administrator)





Photos (All): Wade Scribner

Theme Camps

There were 63 registered and placed Theme Camps this year, placed, and I believe all but one arrived on site. Several other small unregistered camps also popped up on site, sprinkled into the wooded camping areas.

Photos (All): Wade Scribner



Changes from 2015/New in 2016

SOAK Website: SoakPDX.org - a dumping ground for all relevant information, reports, staffing info, and links to participate. We have been wanting to do this for years and finally our Producers were able to dedicate time to this project. We will be slowly moving away from the Joomla site at www.burningmanportland.com.

Staff Team Re-Org: (See "Teams"). We decided to make the Burnable Sculpture an "official" department to assist with better tracking of hours contributed by the volunteers working on the structure, better reimbursement or allocation of funds, and better volunteer appreciation practices. The new department staffed volunteers pre-event and during the event. In addition, we removed "TSA" and wrapped those duties (traffic tracking, RVs, and mutant vehicles) under the new department, Box Office. Box Office handled the Will Call list, staff ticket distribution, gift ticket distribution, general ticketing, stuffing, and shipping, as well as the Dog Registration process. The new department staffed leads pre-event and regular volunteer shifts during the hours of gate.

In 2016 we recognized the significance and importance of increasing opportunities to reward volunteers with a gift ticket. Increasing the diversity of team positions also gave volunteers more opportunity to find positions that fit their current skills and desire to learn or accomplish new skills. Many have reported back that they were able to use these skills in their everyday professional lives.

HR Proceedings: We upgraded most of our Human Resources proceedings this year. Both in part due to some law changes at the State level, and also for better tracking of decisions, consistency and fairness, policy, and implementation of new and old policy. We track all policy, position decisions, warnings, mediation, and write ups in Google Drive. The SOAK Staff Handbook is still in the development process, but is available by request.

Improved Fire Safety Training: Held pre-event and (2) onsite pre-burn team trainings that included hose team (strike team), suppression, and fire monitoring trainings. Staffed on-radio shifts all hours of the event. Staffed on-radio evening shifts for public fire pit monitor. Worked in conjunction with Tygh Valley Fire Department at an undisclosed location on the venue outside of main festival areas for on-site strike/suppression team trainings. Staffed 24 crew members, which is a HUGE increase from last year.

Still intend to improve our fire apparatus equipment with another hose team, 300 feet of additional hose, heat gear, and better pumping/holding tank.

Porto Vendors/Grey Water Tank Rentals: We switch porto vendors this year. There was a local company, COlumbia River Affordable Portos run by two brothers in Tygh Valley that requested our business. The cost was slightly more, going with a rural provider, but they ordered all new units just before our event, and the service schedule was the same. In addition, we added 7 300-gallon gray water holding tanks to our order, which we then made available for rent to the placed Theme Camps. This experiment worked successfully, in that the risk to participants disposing of gray water directly on the ground was lowered, and the Theme Camps did not have to pay for delivery services. (SOAK absorbed that minimal cost). The new vendor was able to price match the cost of the gray water tanks from last year's vendor. A few drawbacks to this vendor include:

Being overwhelmed by our event. They were not adequately able to service all portos in their distribution location on a daily basis. It came down to a miscommunication and the fact that they forgot where they were placed. They really need to up their game in this area for next year.

They also only have one delivery trailer and one service (pumping) truck, so it took them all day (12 or so hours) to move the units from their staging location outside the gate to their final drop points within the event site. It also took them roughly 6 hours to service each unit every 24 hours. Perhaps this led to their confusion as to where the units were placed?

Increase in Population: This year, we requested from the county a population increase from 1300 to 1800, but decided to only have 1500 on site. This was due to staffing (volunteer shift) limitations, financial conservation, and footprint constraints. Our growth of 200 was the right move. We are uncertain if we will increase again for the 2017 event year, or hold at the same population another year until our volunteer staffing stabilizes.

Useful resources: (see below)

Production ABR:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/11_KeunGNcNbeeMJ7d8TUuw8VisJ7uRzxMU3IXSCVbwQ/edit?usp=sharing

Staffing Documentation:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B4Qi9i_Qof2IYlhqY2d3TFNLOEk?usp=sharing

2016 Safety Plan: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1h1aONqR3wrYVpoO7mGmxJ044e9sRSUc0wZZ7VFh3MLI/pub>

Event Maps: <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/0B8etaui1ANXKRWFsYjFKZmdRV3M>