**Transcript of Virtual Capstone Video:**

If you’ve ever been to an art museum you have probably been reminded not to touch the art.

But why? Why can’t you touch it? What if no one is around to tell you not to, then can you touch it?

In art conservation, we preserve and care for art and cultural artifacts. We are the ones who repair the broken ceramic vase or clean the dirty painting. We are also the ones that deal with artwork when it has been touched or cared for inappropriately. You may not know it – but your fingers can be incredibly damaging to artwork!

My project focuses on the conservation treatment and long-term preservation of Louise Nevelson’s sculpture titled *Dawn’s Image, Night*.

Dawn’s Image Night is a 24 by 8 foot sculpture created in 1969. The artwork is made of wood spray painted with a very matte black paint. Maybe you’ve seen this piece and never realized it was art. Or maybe you didn’t even know it was there. Or Maybe you touched it.

*Dawn’s Image, Night* hangs low to the ground in Rockwell Hall with no protective barrier. Making it a prime subject for interaction from people in the hallway. When I first started my project, the sculpture had dust, graffiti, white paint splatters, and greasy fingerprints all over.

Using scientific analysis, I was able to determine what the black paint was. Exhaustive archival research gave me a better understanding of Nevelson’s approach to art making and the history of this particular sculpture. I was able to design a way to successfully remove the dust and address the white paint splatters. But unfortunately, the fingerprints are not able to be removed. The grease from hands is forever ingrained into the surface of the paint.

I investigate the obstacles of treating a large monochrome sculpture hanging in a public hallway and deal with the ethics of removing original nail components in regard to safety considerations. My research looks at Nevelson’s original intent for this sculpture in tandem with the inherent nature of the materials, location, and age of the piece.

I have provided clear instructions for the routine cleaning and care of *Dawn’s Image Night* for the future. I include recommendations for a protective barrier to be installed in front of the sculpture. Also, I will be hanging an informative label on the wall so people can learn more about Nevelson and this amazing artwork.

My project incorporates many of the common concerns that emerge during the conservation of large modern and/or contemporary sculpture. Careless paint splatters, graffiti, and fingerprints are unfortunately problems for artworks everywhere. So, the next time you see this wonderful sculpture or are in an art museum, please remember – don’t touch the art!