

About Us

The UrbanArt Commission (aka UrbanArt) is an award-winning, independent non-profit organization committed to enhancing the cultural vibrancy of our community through the development of public art. We celebrate diversity in everything we do. UrbanArt, founded in 1997, is committed to improving the quality of life, to excellence in developing public art, best practices and integrative design. A substantial public art collection of more than 140 public artworks has been created working closely with our partners and the City of Memphis. Projects to date have been completed by talented local artists, as well as by nationally and internationally recognized artists. Memphis public art is unique because works by minority and women artists account for more than half of the collection. Local artists created 70 percent of the works.

Partnerships

The UrbanArt Commission works with partners to engage artists and the broader community through installation of new works of public art, the maintenance of the existing collection, education and outreach. UrbanArt manages the City of Memphis Public Art Program, established in 2002. The organization is also affiliated with the Memphis Area Transit Authority, Shelby County Schools and other public and private partners. UrbanArt's public art consulting and design services are tailored to each project for a variety of client types, including commercial, residential, municipal, and community groups on a fee-for-service basis.

Outreach & Education

UrbanArt is committed to bringing together people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities in the creation and presentation of public art. Committee meetings, community presentations, workshops and exhibits are scheduled in conjunction with individual public art projects. Moreover, UrbanArt hosts educational programs led by recognized experts. Past programs developed public art production skills, cultivated professional practices for artists pursuing public art careers, and informed citizens in the lessons of arts advocacy.

Public art community outreach program: UrbanArt develops low-cost, high-impact works completed entirely with the help of volunteers in neighborhoods throughout Memphis. Annually, over 100 volunteers of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities complete new murals.

Services for artists and professional development opportunities: UrbanArt provides artists the opportunity to create online artist portfolios on the UrbanArt Commission's website. Registered artists receive a weekly listserv of public art opportunities. The organization offers public art training programs for studio artists and internships related to the field of public art.

South Main Street Area



W.C. Handy, 1960
W.C. Handy Performing Arts Park
200 Beale Street

Leone Tommasi
(Pietrasanta, Italy
1903 – 1965)
8-foot bronze with
4-foot marble pedestal

Internationally renowned Italian sculptor Leone Tommasi was commissioned to create the full-length portrait of W.C. Handy (1873 – 1958), the African-American blues composer and musician. W.C. Handy, also known as "Father of the Blues", remains one of the most influential American blues songwriters. Handy and his band played the blues on Beale Street from 1909-17. Then, he and his music publishing company moved to New York City.



Modern Hieroglyphs, 2008
Central Station
545 South Main St

Anthony D. Lee - acrylic paint, 750 feet long

The mural, located in the historic South Main Arts District, depicts a variety of symbols. It covers the exterior of a 700-foot railroad tunnel, historically used for loading freight trains. Visual icons are a part of every culture and society. Which symbols represent 21st century living? The original inhabitants of both Memphis cities in Tennessee and Egypt used symbols, or simple drawings, to chronicle their activities in a time before text. Anthony D. Lee is a well-known Memphis artist.

Mississippi Riverfront on Mud Island



Zephyr, 2008
Mud Island Traffic Circle
A.W. Willis Avenue and Island Drive

James Russell
stainless steel

Zephyr greets at the roundabout as an entry point to Mud Island. The title refers to the Greek god of the West wind, Zephyrus, believed to bring about a wind of good fortune. Abstract artist James Russell of Lomita, California, specializes in stainless steel sculpture.



Bike Rack
Mississippi Greenbelt Park on Mud Island, Parking Lot Island Drive

Jill Turman
Painted steel

UrbanArt on behalf of the Downtown Memphis Commission and the Downtown Neighborhood Association commissioned Jill Turman to design, fabricate, and install three functional, yet whimsical, bicycle racks around Downtown Memphis. Another bike rack is located at the 505 Tennessee Street loft building. Turman also created the beloved Cooper-Young Trestle and a series of interior wall sculptures at the Hollywood branch library. The Memphis-trained blacksmith today lives in the California Bay Area.



Additional information on featured public artworks and the citywide Memphis Public Art Collection online at www.urbanartcommission.org/gallery or www.culturenow.org – search for "Memphis"

www.urbanartcommission.org

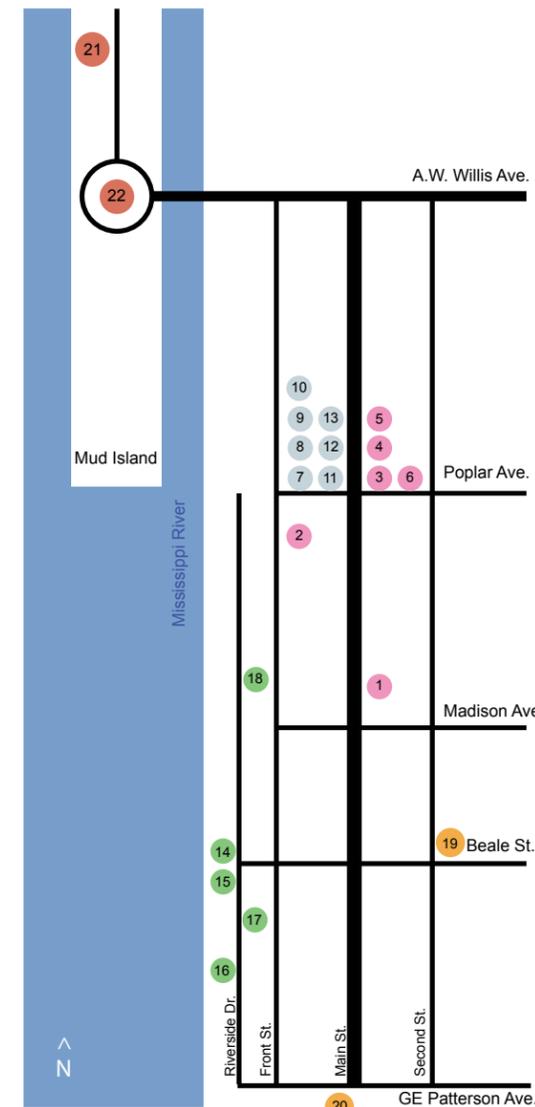
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UrbanArt Commission programs are supported by the City of Memphis, and by grants from ArtsMemphis and the Tennessee Arts Commission.



Memphis Public Art Tour



Map is not to scale

NORTH MAIN STREET

- 1 Hebe Fountain Court Square Park
- 2 Quiltsurround
- 3 I've Been to the Mountaintop
- 4 Muse
- 5 The River
- 6 Osiris Fountain

CANNON & COOK CONVENTION CENTERS

- 7 Roof Like Fluid Flung Over the Plaza
- 8 Shadow Screen
- 9 Untitled
- 10 Confluence
- 11 Recognize
- 12 No Wonder
- 13 Coordinates

MISSISSIPPI RIVERFRONT

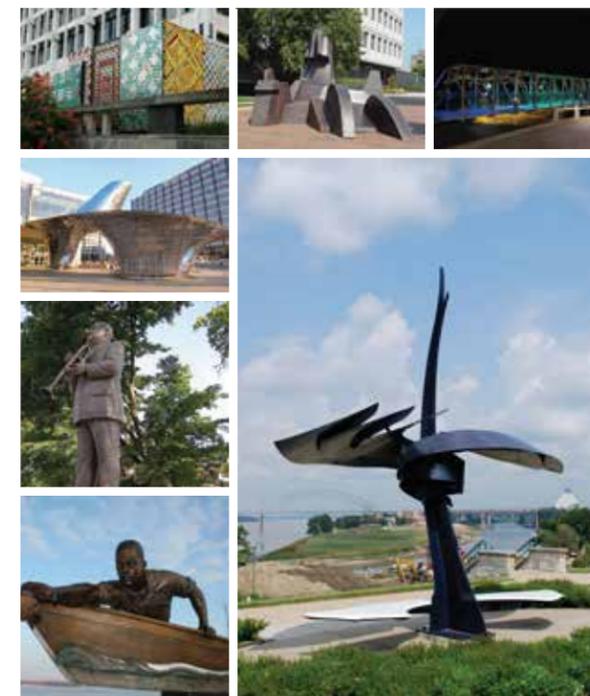
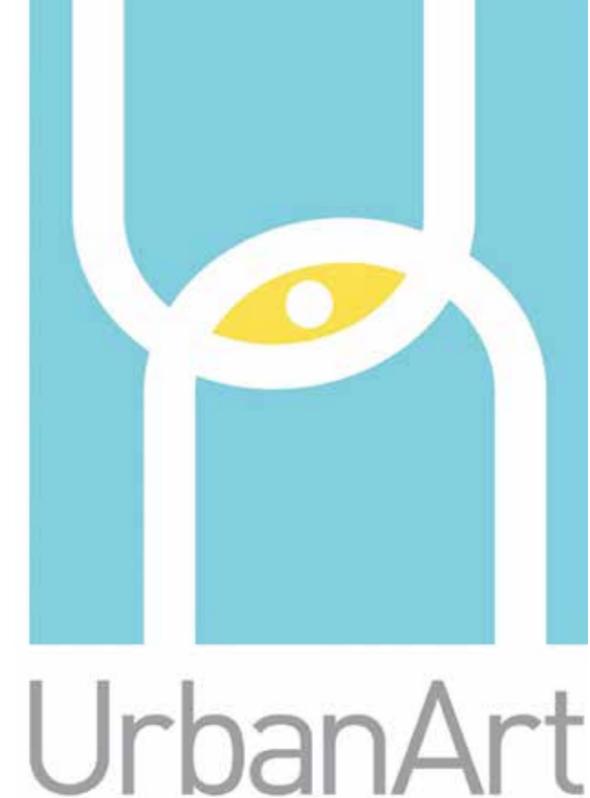
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SOUTH MAIN STREET

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MISSISSIPPI RIVERFRONT ON MUD ISLAND

- 21. Zephyr
- 22. Bike Rack



Memphis Public Art Tour

Trolley Loop

Select works along Main Street and the Mississippi River in downtown Memphis, 38103

North Main Street



Hebe Fountain, 1876
62 North Main St

Copy after Italian sculptor Antonio Canova (1757-1822) cast iron, 20 feet high x 35 feet diameter

In Greek mythology Hebe was the Cupbearer to the Gods. Donated to the City of Memphis by city leaders,

the neoclassical, ornamental Hebe Fountain is sited in the center of Court Square Park. Court Square was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.



Quiltsurround
equipment screen, 2009
City Hall Plaza
125 North Main

Greely Myatt
recycled street signs

Originally strictly utilitarian, quilts were used as warm bed covers. The quilt patterns of the City Hall

equipment screen were inspired by the artist's upbringing in the countryside of Mississippi. Greely Myatt recalls watching women sewing quilts of various colorful patterns from scraps of cloth, in the process turning discarded pieces of fabric into a thing of beauty. Greely Myatt is professor of art at the University of Memphis.



I've Been to the Mountaintop, 1977
N. Main St Mall at Poplar & Cook Convention Center
220 North Main St

Richard Hunt
steel

The work was inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech before his assassination in Memphis on April 4, 1968. Vigorously futuristic, yet stolid, the massive work hugs the walkway, then thrusts skyward in a muscular analogy of Dr. King's spiritual struggle and his determination, through non-violent means, to move the mountains of civil injustice and social intolerance.

Richard Hunt, born 1935, is a nationally renowned sculptor.



Muse, 1976
220 N Main St

John McIntire
poured concrete

Muse offers the chaste cubist abstraction of a tall female form. The work was a Bicentennial gift to the City from Memphis College of Art. Sculptor John McIntire

received his Master of Fine Arts from Cranbrook Academy of Art. He taught sculpture at Memphis College of Art from 1961 to 1985.



The River, 1976
220 North Main St

John Seyfried
steel

Two abstract shapes, rigid on the outer sides, face each other with sinuous rhythmic forms down which water gently trickles to the pavement. The title and the form refer to the Mississippi River, which flows south just a few hundred yards west.

Artist John Seyfried, a former Memphian, now lives in Hot Springs, Arkansas.



Osiris Fountain, 1972
Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Plaza
200 North Main St

Nicholas Vergette
bronze

The Osiris Fountain enlivens the Federal Reserve Bank Plaza. The work is named after the Egyptian god of the afterlife, regeneration and rebirth. Water itself is a

universal symbol of change. Often, water is a sign of life or symbolizes life. This is an apt reference in Memphis, the city named after the famous, ancient Egyptian capital. Artist Nicholas Vergette was Professor of Art at Southern Illinois University from 1960 to 1974.



Roof Like Fluid Flung Over the Plaza, 2003
Cannon Center for the Performing Arts
N. Front St at Poplar Ave

Vito Acconci
stainless steel, mirrored Plexiglas

Marking the entrance to the Cannon Center, the

wavelike curves of world-renowned artist Vito Acconci's sculpture establish a counterpoint to the geometry of the building's architecture. The form was inspired by the eddies and currents of the Mississippi River as seen from the bluffs of Downtown Memphis. The conical elements of the sculpture are acoustically sound to invite the interaction of street musicians, thus honoring the important music tradition of Memphis.



Shadow Screen, 2003
Cannon Center for the Performing Arts, Atrium
N. Front St at Poplar Ave

James Carpenter
dichroic glass

The world-renowned artist James Carpenter was commissioned to create his work Shadow Screen for the main lobby of the Cannon Center for the Performing Arts. The

sculpture is suspended from the ceiling and was fabricated using dichroic glass, which undergoes a color change in varying lighting conditions. Sunlight from the large lobby windows is refracted by the glass and fills the lobby with colored light.



Untitled, 2001
Cannon Center for the Performing Arts, Restrooms
N. Front St at Poplar Ave

John Salvest
powder-coated aluminum

John Salvest has created a memorable series of sculptures. The stacked toilet paper sculptures

offer an element of surprise and humor as people enter the women's or men's rooms on three floors of the building. The work plays with our visual and tactile senses, while celebrating the mundane and everyday. John Salvest has gained national notoriety through his site-specific installations, object-based and performance art. He is professor of art at Arkansas State University.



Confluence, 2003
Cannon Center for the Performing Arts, Mezzanine
N. Front St at Poplar Ave

Dolph Smith and Kay Lindsey - steel

Kay Lindsey, formerly from Memphis, and Dolph Smith of Ripley, TN, collaborated with the Metal Museum to create Confluence.

Lindsey's poem The Origin of Applause was the inspiration for the sculptural river designed by Smith. The wall-mounted work was designed to flow in and out of the space and is meant to interact with the anatomy of the building.



Recognize donor plaque, 2003
Cannon Center for the Performing Arts, Atrium
N. Front St at Poplar Ave

Terri Jones
neon, glass and Plexiglas; 40 feet tall

Memphis artist Terri Jones designed the donor recognition artwork at the Cannon Center for the Performing Arts. The

backlit artwork honors contributions to the Greater Memphis Arts Council, now known as ArtsMemphis, for the arts endowment campaign. The donor wall is a "wall-drawing" that lists all contributions at the \$10,000 or higher level. The artwork can be viewed from the lobby, the balconies and the eastern staircase. Jones is a Memphis artist and is represented by David Lusk Gallery.



No Wonder, 1991
(installed 2009)
Cook Convention Center West Concourse
255 North Main St

Greely Myatt
reclaimed metal, wood, paint

Greely Myatt's whimsical play with scale zeros in

on the importance of size hierarchies when looking at our environment. While the monumental glass pyramid on the Memphis riverfront commands the surrounding cityscape, its colorful model shrinks within the chair sculpture constructed of recycled bedsprings. Greely Myatt is professor of art at the University of Memphis.



Coordinates, 2003
(installed 2009)
Cook Convention Center West Concourse
255 North Main St
Memphis, TN 38103

Kim Beck - fiber

In this wall-hung, knotted tapestry, an airplane flies overhead, referring

to the international outlook and audiences of the convention center. The casual glance upward directs the view past a utility mast. Power lines diagonally cross the image in a dynamic rhythm. Kim Beck's work is included in the collection of the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, among other notable art institutions. She is professor of art at Carnegie Mellon in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Mississippi Riverfront



Meander, 2014
Beale St Landing
251 Riverside Dr

Evan Lewis
kinetic sculpture; stainless steel, concrete; 57 feet high

The large-scale kinetic sculpture consists of two tripod towers

standing on concrete columns of different heights. The artwork is shaped like a pavilion with a pair of wind-powered elements on top. Chicago sculptor Evan Lewis graduated from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.



Walkway Paving, 2014
Beale St Landing
251 Riverside Dr

Gary Moore
brick pavers

The title of this work is paraphrased from John Fogerty's 1969 song Proud Mary. The colorful patterns of the pavers

mimic the sparkling Mississippi River and its colorful reflections in the sun. Florida artist Gary Moore is known for his large-scale, fully integrated public art installations throughout the United States.



Tom Lee Monument, 2006
Tom Lee Park South
Riverside Dr

David Alan Clark
bronze

On May 8, 1925 the steamer M. E. Norman capsized just south of

Memphis. The bronze sculpture shows Tom Lee in the heroic act, when he saved the lives of 32 people from the waters of the Mississippi River. From his skiff, the Zev, Lee ferried the survivors to shore, built them a fire, and notified local authorities. Figurative bronze sculptor David Alan Clark maintains his studio in Lander, Wyoming. The Tom Lee Obelisk, installed in 1953, rises a few hundred yards north.



Whirl, 2001
Vance Park
Riverfront Bluffs
Vance Ave & Riverside Dr

John Medwedeff
forged and fabricated steel and aluminum

John Medwedeff's sculpture Whirl mirrors the currents of the Mississippi River. The

work provides visitors with a shaded seat and a fantastic view of the river from atop the Chickasaw bluffs in Vance Park. The sculptor's studio is located in Murphysboro, Illinois.



Lightspan, 2010
Court Avenue Pedestrian Bridge between N. Front St & Riverside Dr

Electroland (Cameron McNall and Damon Seeley)
RGB light fixtures, 27 sensors along 180-foot bridge

Memphis' first permanent work of new media public art introduces cutting-edge public lighting design to the city. Motion sensors react to passers-by, launching an infinite sequence of dynamic color effects across the pedestrian bridge, which is part of the Downtown bluff walkway that overlooks the Memphis waterfront. Electroland, comprised of Cameron McNall and Damon Seeley, is a nationally acclaimed public art studio located in Los Angeles, California.

notes

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