

DOWNTOWN OMAHA

art WALK



Presented by the

Omaha Public Art Commission

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Begin the Art Walk at the Omaha Visitors Center, 10th & Farnam Streets, and head north on 10th St. Take the stairs down to the water adjacent to the 10th Street Bridge. Once on the lower mall, turn left (west) and you will see:

1 **Homage to the Welder - David Smith** | 1998 | Les Bruning

- This orange steel sculpture is an homage to the American constructivist sculptor David Smith, based on one of Smith's sculptures titled *Home of the Welder*. Note the factory type windows and variety of tools cut out of the walls. The cut-out figure is from a picture of Smith, executed full-size. It is painted in brilliant construction orange. 15' H x 8' W x 9' D.
- The sculpture was exhibited at Pier Walk in Chicago in 1998, then at the former location of the Nebraska Arts Council at the Joslyn Castle.
- Owned by Nebraska Arts Council at the Burlington Building on permanent loan.

Now continue along the path, up a slight incline and past a pair of slides toward Farnam St. to your right is:

2 **Arches** (building arches) | 1887 | Builder Unknown

- These Ohio bluestone arches are from the former US National Bank building which once stood at the corner of 12th & Farnam. The Bank was constructed in 1887 and is an example of late Richardsonian Romanesque architecture. The arches were reconstructed at this site in 1979 and serve as the visual link between the Old Market and the Central Park Mall.
- Owned by the City of Omaha.

Walk under the arches and look out across the water to find the first of a series of *Wind and Water Sculptures*, a project spanning from 2002-2005.

Wind and Water Sculptures was the first public art exhibit of all-original artwork by Omaha area artists displayed in a public outdoor space. The sculptures created a permanent sculpture garden in the Leahy Mall and the project was commissioned in conjunction with the Summer Arts Festival.





3

3 *Colorful Crescendos* | 2005 | Ron Parks

- Located on the hillside of the mall beside Douglas Street are three tri-colored steel sculptures with a rock base. These sculptures are from Parks's 3-D wedge series. It originated from the study of cones and the interesting shapes they create from different perspectives.
- Owned by the City of Omaha, *Wind & Water Sculpture* Exhibition.

Exit the overlook area and walk west on the sidewalk until you come to a pedestrian bridge. As you cross, look west on the grass before the bridge and you will find:



4

4 *Mangonel II* | 1980 | Sidney Buchanan

- This sculpture is made of welded plate steel with a concrete foundation and has been painted black.
- Located on the grass near the water east of 13th St. Bridge.
- Owned by the City of Omaha.

Continue across the bridge and follow the mall sidewalk up to street level and head west. Located next to the sidewalk and across the street from the Holland Performing Arts Center, you will find:



5

5 *Heritage* | 1984 | Herb Mignery

- This bronze statue with a concrete base depicts a farming pioneer family. It was a gift from the Boy Scouts of America – Mid-American Council Heritage Patrons to the people of Omaha.
- Owned by the City of Omaha.

Heading along the city sidewalk, go west on Douglas St. to the corner of 15th St. Go south on 15th St. to the west entrance of the W. Dale Clark Library and you will find:



6

6 *Totem* | 2004 | Catherine Ferguson

- *Totem* is representative of the earthen effigy mounds left by prehistoric people along the Mississippi River in Iowa before 1300 A.D. Look carefully to pick out 15 shapes of animals that the mounds symbolized. The statue represents the artist's desire to show the lasting beauty of these ancient shapes.
- The sculpture is painted aluminum and is 25' tall and 8.5' wide. It weighs approximately one ton.
- Owned by the City of Omaha and the W. Dale Clark Library. Commissioned by the Omaha Public Art Commission with funds donated by the 2001 J. Doe Project.





Now turn around and head north on 15th St. and turn left (west) on Dodge St. Continue walking west on Dodge until you reach the park on the southeast corner of 16th and Dodge. Here you will find art on all four corners of the intersection.

7 ***First National Spirit of Nebraska's Wilderness Park*** | 2002 | Kent Ullberg

- Working in tandem with *Pioneer Courage Park*, this park features over 50 geese, larger than life size, which weigh approximately 200 lbs. each. The geese are cast in bronze and stainless steel – bronze alluding to Nebraska's history and stainless steel pointing to the future.
- Sitting atop a granite fountain, the geese have been flushed by the herd of bison, stampeding their way down 15th St., who in turn have been startled by the wagon train. The base of the fountain is Absolute granite and the paving stones are Hayton stone, quarried near Valders, Wisconsin. The fountain circulates over 159,000 gallons of water an hour.
- Owned by the First National Bank of Omaha.

Walk east on Dodge St. to 15th St. and turn north. Following the bison, walk one block to Capitol Ave. They will lead you to:

8 ***First National Pioneer Courage Park*** | 2003 | Blair Buswell and Ed Fraughton

- Here you will find several pioneer families bringing to life an integral part of America's history and Omaha's part in our nation's westward expansion. These bronze sculptures have been cast to 1.25 life size. The surrounding landscape consists of 2,500 tons of limestone, also quarried near Valders, Wisconsin.
- Owned by the First National Bank of Omaha.

Head east on Capitol Ave. then head north on 13th St. to Cass St. Turn right at Cass St. (east) and continue to the corner of Cass St. and 12th St. On the northeast side of the intersection, looking west and slightly north you will see the facade/mural of the the Energy Systems Building:

9 ***Fertile Ground*** | 2008 | Meg Saligman

- This mural is a visual impression of the artist's research, interviews and personal impressions about Omaha. It brings the past and present of the city to life. It is the third largest in the United States and is being documented as a "best practice" study in mural technology by the Omaha Mural Project.
- The mural is 70' tall and 328' long. The paint is marine-grade, designed to withstand the wear and tear of time. It is used both directly on the wall of the building as well as on a special non-woven acrylic medium sheet that adheres to the building. The paint was donated by Sherwin-Williams.
- Commissioned by the Peter Kiewit Foundation as a gift to the City of Omaha. The project administration is by the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts.
- Helping on the mural were professional painters, students from Bellevue University and bartenders from the nearby Old Mattress Factory.



Continue walking east on Cass St. towards the Hilton Omaha and in the circle drive of the main entrance you will find:

10 *Untitled* | 2004 | Jun Kaneko

- A grouping of Kaneko's iconic ceramic sculptures is visible in the hotel's parking circle.
- Kaneko, a native of Japan, has employed abstraction to represent the inherent chaos that balances the natural world. Within the interplay of clay and form, surface and pattern, shapes emerge through eastern and western aesthetics to create visible harmony.
- Hand built and glazed ceramic, colored concrete pedestals and paving, approximately 9' high and 35' in diameter.

Enter the Hilton to view additional artwork by various Nebraska artists, located on the main and second level of the Hilton Hotel. Then cross 10th St. to the Qwest Center and head towards the northwest corner of the Qwest Center building. Here you will find works from Art 4 Omaha Artist-in-Industry Steel Collaboration Project with Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Valmont Industries and Qwest Center Omaha:





11

11 *Learning to Fly* | 2005 | Matt Lowe

- Painted steel sculpture.
- Owned by Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts.

Now turn to your right and on the north side of the Qwest Center building you will find:



12

12 *Plant Life* | 2005 | David Helm

- Black steel sculpture weighing 6000 lbs. and 15' tall. Curved metal erupts from a thick latticed base.
- Owned by Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts.

Now turn around and retrace your steps heading south along 10th St. At the front of the Qwest Center you will see:



13

13 *Illumina* | 2007 | Matthew Placzek

- Six bronze statues portray carnival performers, inspired by the 13th Century Carnival of Venice. The statues interact with a 35' stainless steel clock.
- Owned by Metropolitan Entertainment & Convention Authority.

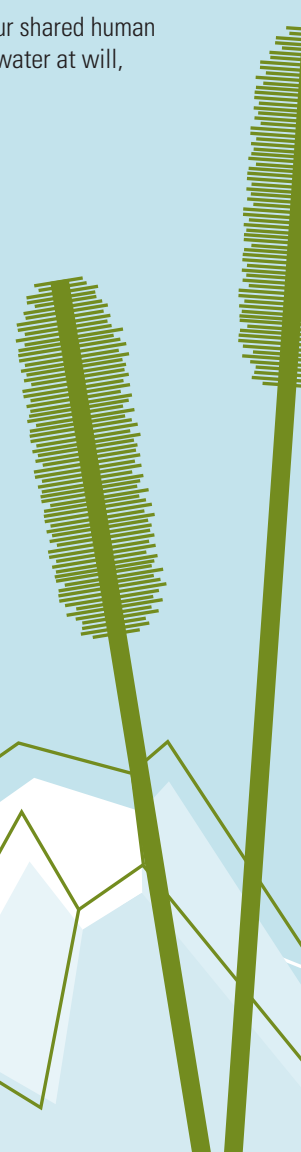
Continue south on 10th St. along the building. Take steps up to the landing on the south side of the Qwest Center. Here you will find:



14

14 *Sky Fin* | 2005 | Catherine Ferguson

- The sculptor of joyful Sky Fin wants to express our shared human fantasy of flying in the sky and swimming under water at will, unassisted.
- Owned by Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts.



Continue walking around to the southeast corner of the building's landing where you will find:

15 *Blue Cube* | 2005 | Justin Stewart & Michael Todd

- Blue and orange painted steel sculpture.
- Owned by Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts.

Now take the overpass to the corner of 10th and Capitol St. Head south on 10th St. until you reach the corner of Douglas and 10th St. Enter the Leahy Mall and you will see:

16 *Shadow Box* | 2005 | Tom Sitzman

- Located next to the water, this piece is designed to look different from every angle. The cutouts shadow and give dimension to the space without filling it and the shadows are as important as the sculpture itself. The artist wants the viewer to be interactive with the art sculpture.
- Blue steel box on steel platform.
- Owned by the City of Omaha, *Wind & Water Sculpture* Exhibition.

Continue east on the path. While crossing the bridge look left and suspended over the water you will find:

17 *"O"mage* | 2005 | Sharon Boynton

- "O"mage is a tribute to Omaha as a dynamic historical and cultural force. The sculpture exhibits iconic strength reminiscent of the red "O" used for promotion of the city. This piece exemplifies Omaha as forging ahead – a force to be reckoned with.
- Welded steel tubing; legs & base are ½ plate steel.
- Owned by the City of Omaha, *Wind & Water Sculpture* Exhibition.

Turn right and you will find a cluster of artwork, both on land and in the water:

18 *Frankie's Pain* | 2004 | Tim Zweiback

- The artist used the discarded material from the old viaduct linking downtown to Union Station, transforming it into something far different than its original intent. Is it an encased cocoon protecting beauty to emerge, or, perhaps an entombed sarcophagus encasing a life long departed?
- Welded steel, brick, aluminum and glass.
- Owned by the City of Omaha, *Wind & Water Sculpture* Exhibition.

19 *Time Capsules* | 2003 | Jim Moser & Rebecca Hermann

- The cattail, a quintessential symbol and survivor of the plains, is the essence of wind and water. Its form has an evolved, aesthetic beauty that serves as a container for complex and diverse information. The artists see them as historical scrapbooks in capsule form.
- Several steel plate and steel tubing sculptures, located in the water.
- Owned by the City of Omaha, *Wind & Water Sculpture* Exhibition.



20 *Thistle Flower* | 2003 | Jim Moser

- The artist draws upon childhood memories for this work, having spent many summer days exploring Rawhide Creek where thistles and milkweed were abundant. The piece tries to capture the competing prickly/soft characteristics of these weeds.
- Acid-aged steel. Sculpture is in the water.
- Owned by the City of Omaha, *Wind & Water Sculpture* Exhibition.

21 *By the Bucket Full* | 2004 | Jamie Burmeister

- Water movement can be anything from calm and tranquil to raging and violent. Water from the Leahy Mall is captured at the top of the waterfall and travels down a meandering stainless steel tube to feed a large bucket. When the bucket fills it loses balance and dumps into the pool.
- Stainless steel and bucket. Located within the waterfall of the south side of the mall.
- Owned by the City of Omaha, *Wind & Water Sculpture* Exhibition.

22 *Tree House with French Doors* | 2003 | Sidney Buchanan

- This angular sculpture is transparent and provides a constantly changing view as one moves around the piece. It took more than four months to construct. The sculpture was constructed initially as a one-inch to one-foot scale maquette to problem-solve the finished size.
- Red welded steel sculpture, concrete base, weighs 10,000 lbs., measures 30' x 13' x 12'.
- Owned by City of Omaha, *Wind & Water Sculpture* Exhibition.

We hope you've enjoyed this introduction to public art and encourage you to explore additional artwork at these sites in downtown Omaha:

- Joslyn Art Museum Sculpture Garden
- Creighton University Campus
- Omaha/Douglas Civic Center
- Heartland of America Park, Lewis & Clark Landing, Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge and Miller's Landing

The Preserve Omaha Public Art Fund was established in 2006 to provide maintenance for city-owned sculptures and monuments. For information please call **(402) 444-5947**.

Donations are welcome and are tax-deductible: Preserve Omaha Public Art Fund c/o Omaha Parks, Recreation & Public Property, 1819 Farnam St., Suite 701, Omaha, NE 68183

Special thanks to:



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