Leading DEI Change Through Public Art

Jarica Walsh
Director of Visual and Public Art
Oklahoma Arts Council

“Indigenous Brilliance” by Joseph Erb (Cherokee Nation), First Americans Museum, Art in Public Places program project
# Oklahoma Political Landscape

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Current Officer</th>
<th>Since</th>
<th>Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governor of Oklahoma</td>
<td>Kevin Stitt</td>
<td>January 14, 2019</td>
<td>Republican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieutenant Governor</td>
<td>Matt Pinnell</td>
<td>January 14, 2019</td>
<td>Republican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
<td>Brian Bingman</td>
<td>January 14, 2019</td>
<td>Republican</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Auditor and Inspector</td>
<td>Cindy Byrd</td>
<td>January 14, 2019</td>
<td>Republican</td>
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<td>Attorney General</td>
<td>Michael J. Hunter</td>
<td>February 20, 2017</td>
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<td>State Treasurer</td>
<td>Randy McDaniel</td>
<td>January 2, 2019</td>
<td>Republican</td>
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<tr>
<td>State School Superintendent</td>
<td>Joy Hofmeister</td>
<td>January 12, 2015</td>
<td>Democrat[^a]</td>
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<td>Labor Commissioner</td>
<td>Leslie Osborn</td>
<td>January 14, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insurance Commissioner</td>
<td>Glen Mulready</td>
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<td>Corporation Commissioner (by length of tenure)</td>
<td>Bob Anthony</td>
<td>January 9, 1989</td>
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<td>Corporation Commissioner</td>
<td>Dana Murphy</td>
<td>January 12, 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corporation Commissioner</td>
<td>Todd Hiett</td>
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<td>Republican</td>
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### The Oklahoma House of Representatives

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<tr>
<th>Affiliation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Republican Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
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<td>Seat Vacant</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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### The Oklahoma Senate

<table>
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<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Members</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seat Vacant</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>48</strong></td>
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Oklahoma Political Landscape

2020 United States presidential election in Oklahoma
Broadening access and representation in Oklahoma’s public art sector

1. Collections and Exhibitions at the Oklahoma State Capitol

2. Public Art Program (% for Art)

3. Oklahoma Public Art Network (OPAN)

“Touch to Above” by Bill Glass, Jr. and Demos Glass (Cherokee Nation), First Americans Museum, Art in Public Places program project. Photo by James Pepper Henry
Oklahoma State Capitol

1. Capitol Renovation Project: Public Art Project (% for Art)

2. Capitol Galleries: Rotating Exhibitions (18-20 per year)

3. Oklahoma State Art Collection
Capitol Art and Art in Public Places Project and Master Art Plan

• Conducted a comprehensive, data-driven analysis of the art in Capitol

• Listening sessions with various community leaders statewide.

• Visited with stakeholders including House and Senate leadership and other key contacts in Capitol

• Invited Native artists and community members to contribute ideas for new commissions and review the curatorial plan
Capitol Art Concept and Plan

• Chronological and thematic progression
• Breadth and depth of Oklahoma’s unique history
• Visitor-centric and educational focus
• Maximizing use of funds
The New Visitor’s Entrance

Emphasis on our state’s Native American history

• **Welcome** by Oklahoma’s original Indigenous/Native peoples
  • Artworks that emphasize historical Indigenous presence
  • Greeting Video utilizing Native Languages

• **Center of Commerce**: Oklahoma Dawn (Spiro mural)

• **Connection to Traditions**: Caddo pottery

• **Origin of State Name**: Bronze bust of Chief Allen Wright

• **Maps**: Showing the history and changes in Oklahoma
Visitors Entrance and Ground Floor Lobby Area: Pre-Statehood and Native American History

People of the Great Sky, Constellations of the Land
by Dr. Jessica Moore Harjo (Otoe/Osage/Pawnee/Sac and Fox)
Visitors Entrance and Ground Floor Lobby Area: Pre-Statehood and Native American History

Final Concept for Visitors Entrance Lobby Suspended Sculpture by Jessica Moore Harjo

- Suspended sculptural design of laser cut brass panels
- Incorporating geometric designs and botanical motifs
- Laser cut brass panels mounted to interior of skylights
- Creating complimentary shadow art projections slowly shifting during daylight hours
Visitors Entrance and Ground Floor Lobby:  
Pre-Statehood and Native American History

Final Concept Visitors Entrance Lobby Ceramic Artwork

The Resonating Memory of Red Earth  
by Anita Fields  
(Osage/Muscogee
Visitors Entrance and Ground Floor Lobby Area: Pre-Statehood and Native American History

_Oklahoma Dawn_ (working title) - Spiro-themed mural

by Yatika Starr Fields (Osage/Cherokee Nation/Muscogee)
Visitors Entrance and Ground Floor Lobby Area: Pre-Statehood and Native American History

Kadohadacho
Traditional Caddo Pottery

Artist: Chase Kahwinhut Earle (Caddo)
Visitors Entrance and Ground Floor Lobby Area:
Pre-Statehood and Native American History

Chief Allen Wright
Bronze bust

Artist: LaQuincey Reed
Visitors Entrance and Ground Floor Lobby Area: 
*Pre-Statehood and Native American History*

Visitors Entrance

Greeting Video

Production Team: Buffalo Nickel

Executive Producer: Sterlin Harjo

On set, filming Indigenous Greetings
Ground Floor Rotunda: State Motto Suite

*Labor Omnia Vincit*

Four Panel Mural Suite

by Lucas Simmons
Ground Floor Rotunda: State Motto Suite

*Labor Omnia Vincit*

Concept Sketches by Lucas Simmons

SW panel of *Labor Omnia Vincit* Mural

SE panel of *Labor Omnia Vincit* Mural
Ground Floor Rotunda: State Motto Suite

*Labor Omnia Vincit*

Concept Sketches by Lucas Simmons

NW panel of *Labor Omnia Vincit* Mural

NE panel of *Labor Omnia Vincit* Mural
The First Floor Rotunda

Emphasis on our state’s African American history

• **Center of Commerce**: Black Wall Street
• **Civil Rights Movement**:
  • Katz Drug Store Sit-in
  • Portraits of Benjamin Harrison Hill, Roscoe Dunjee, Green Curran
  • Paintings of Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher and George Washington Carver
• **Women in Leadership**: Bronze busts of Clara Luper and Hannah Atkins
First Floor: African American History in Oklahoma

Clara Luper
Bronze Bust

Hannah Atkins
Bronze Bust

Artist: LaQuincey Reed
Second Floor: Hall of Governors Lunette Mural

Artist: Sara Scribner, examples of previous work
Second Floor: Hall of Governors Lunette Mural

Artist: Sara Scribner, final design concept, color study

Shannon Lucid  Opaline Wadkins  Wilma Mankiller  Sen. Maxine Horner
2nd Floor, East Side:
Oklahoma’s Cultural Treasures

Doc Tate Nevaquaya
by Nocona Burgess (Comanche)
Second Floor: Hall of Heroes

*Anumpa Luma Anumpuli*
by Dylan Cavin (Choctaw)

Choctaw Code Talkers of World War I
Fifth Floor: Economic Development

Wilma Mankiller portrait
Concept Painting by Starr Hardridge
Proposed size: 36” x 30”

“Cherokee Nation” in syllabary at the top of the painting

Translation of gorget:
Medicine, Education, Prosperity
Pathway to Hope Public Art Trail

- The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) dedicated funds for artwork to be added to the underpasses of the Interstate 244 Inner Dispersal Loop near the existing Pathway to Hope project.

- ODOT elected to work with the Oklahoma Arts Council’s Art in Public Places program to manage the public art project.

- We did extensive research on the Tulsa Race Massacre, the history of Greenwood District development, the history of growth of commerce on Black Wall Street, rebuilding after the Tulsa Race Massacre and construction of the IDL.

- We developed a project proposal designed to maintain focus on the people of Greenwood and North Tulsa.

- We spent several months vetting the project proposal with members of the community, and incorporating their suggestions for modifications.
Pathway to Hope Public Art Trail

Underpass Artwork Themes

- Main Street – Creativity
- Boston Avenue – Resilience
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard – Vision
- Detroit Avenue – Justice
- Elgin Avenue – Hope
- Greenwood Avenue - Remembrance
Pathway to Hope Public Art Trail

• The Selection Committee was carefully built, staying focused on who would fill the seats at the table and the importance of community representation and buy-in

• The Request for Qualifications opened September 2021

• Artist Assistance Appointments were held in person in Tulsa October 2021, and virtually November 2021

• Dedicated three staff members for Artist Assistance Appointments, booked space at a local community space, Greenwood Cultural Center

• Prioritized support and development of local artists with the Artist Assistance Appointments

• Required community engagement as element of the project, but established parameters to protect the community

• Reserved project funds to provide honoraria to a cohort of knowledge bearers that can contribute perspective for the proposed artwork

• Reserved project funds to provide honoraria to community consultants that reviewed the project proposal
First Americans Museum

Left: Joseph Erb (Cherokee Nation) “Indigenous Brilliance”
Center: Jeri Redcorn (Caddo/Potawatomi) “Ayo Wahdut Kuku (Sky Earth Water)”
Right: Demos and Bill Glass, Jr. (Cherokee Nation) “Touch to Above”
Jeri Redcorn (Caddo/Potawatomi)
Ayo Wahdut Kuku (Sky Earth Water), 2021
Illustration, Venetian Plaster, 14’ x 65’

Artist Collaborators on Project:
Marwin Begaye (Dine/Navajo) and Starr Hardridge (Muscogee)
Artist Jeri Redcorn
(Caddo/Potawatomi)
Oklahoma Welcomes You by Alexander Tamahn at Tulsa International Airport

Additional Commission: Ribbonwork by Lisa Rutherford (Cherokee Nation)

Dedication ceremony and reception held July 7, 2021
Welcome to Oklahoma by Rhiana Deck (Choctaw) at Will Rogers World Airport

Additional Commissions: Ribbonwork by Lisa Rutherford (Cherokee Nation) and Beaded Collar Necklace by Sarah Adams-Cornell (Choctaw)

Dedication ceremony and reception held November 22, 2021
Broadening access and representation in Oklahoma’s public art sector

Presentations by:

Yatika Fields
Rachel Hayes
Robbie Kienzle
romy owens
Marilyn Artus
Donald Lipski

Deborah Aschheim
Courtney Brooks
Vinnie Bagwell
Alex Pentek
Lee Running
Alexandra Kirshbaum
Questions?