

TOWER OF CODE V. Skip Willits, Comanche, IA South Park, west side, northeast corner

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THE SPRING FLOODS by my studio on the river islands bring a display of branches and driftwood, each marked by nature's artistry. I infuse these river relics with my own art, marrying nature's work with human creativity. From childhood welding lessons with my father to creating public sculptures and commissions worldwide, my journey is as rich and varied as the Mississippi River where I work and live, with my art weaving through it all.

Willits began welding at age 10 under his father's tutelage, learning about metals and welding techniques. Since his first public sculpture was installed in 1983, he's been active in creating public art commissions across North America and Europe. Based by the Mississippi River, his work is a tangible reflection of his life and identity.



THERETHERE Suzan Hampton, Lawrence, KS Prairie Park, 2730 Harper St

IKE THE 8,000-YEAR-OLD PRAIRIE

L_____ it sits within, *ThereThere* is an evolving gateway to nurture human connections with nature. A reusable structure holds native clay perennial seed pods. Over time, the seeds disperse with wind, rain and animal (including human) interactions to land in a bed of black biochar from burned invasive plants harvested at the site and inoculated with local mycorrhizae (fungi) that improve soil health. This symbiotic relationship reflects the beauty of humans helping plants, plants helping prairie, and prairie helping humans.

Suzan Hampton is an environmental designer and PhD student in architecture at KU whose work focuses on site-specific installations that foster a deeper understanding of place and of self by connecting people's visceral memories with sensory experiences in three-dimensional space.



David Vertačnik, Lawrence, KS Theatre Lawrence

ARKS ON A LANDSCAPE is a large, IVI freestanding form that suggests aspects of time, place, and gesture. The implied movements of the mark-making scribe along with the thrust of the auger convey a gestured stance. The form of the sculpture originated while the artist was pruning in his orchard when an inverted felled limb looked to be alive. He recreated the form as a linear armature in steel rebar. After the glass insulators and other selected found objects were installed, he covered the piece in fiberglass resin. The upper section of the sculpture appears to be in the process of being severed. The artist is addressing the practice of "out with the old in regenerating the new" as a commonly repeated cycle found in life.

David Vertačnik received his Master of Fine Arts degree from the New York State College of Ceramics At Alfred University in Alfred, N.Y., in 1975 and his Bachelor of Science degree from Indiana State University in 1972. David has taught at the University of Kansas since 1979.

Otocast narrated audio guides are used for exploring, navigating and discovering more about your surroundings, wherever you are in the world. Audio commentary for each artwork or point of interest is provided by people intimately familiar with the location, whether it is the artist who created a public art piece, an architect who designed the structure, or a local resident who knows the history of a particular place.



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Some sculptures may be available for sale. For information, contact Porter Arneill, 785-832-3449

The Outdoor Downtown Sculpture Exhibition was founded in 1987 by Jim Patti and the Kansas Sculptors Association.

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WELCOME TO THE ANNUAL **OUTDOOR DOWNTOWN SCULPTURE EXHIBITION!**

Lawrence is known as an arts & culture town and we are thrilled to present seven extraordinary artworks—and an encore work at Theatre Lawrence-carefully selected by the Cultural Arts Commission, to grace our community through spring 2025. Each piece, crafted by talented local and regional artists, brings a unique flair in a diverse array of styles and media, enhancing the vibrant tapestry of our city.

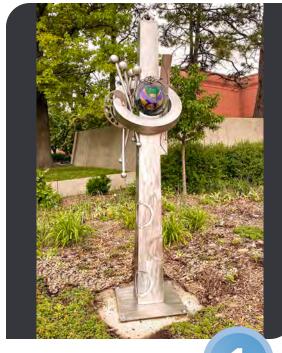
We invite you to explore these inspiring creations using this guide along with the accompanying Otocast app. As you tour, enjoy the myriad other sights and experiences our wonderful city has to offer.

On behalf of the City Commission, I offer heartfelt thanks to the Cultural Arts Commission and the Lawrence Parks, Recreation, Arts, and Culture Department for their unwavering commitment to enriching our community through this cherished annual event. We also honor the memory of James Patti, who founded the Outdoor Downtown Sculpture Exhibition in 1987. His vision continues to make a lasting impact, ensuring that this program remains a beloved highlight in our unmistakable community!

- Mayor Bart Littlejohn

SCULPTURE LOCATIONS





BIRD'S NEST Rollin Kara, Kechi, KS 6th & Mass, southeast corner

D IRD'S NEST features a stainless steel column, Delegantly adorned with sculptural willows and spirals, capped by a "bird's nest" that encircles a blown glass satellite within a unity circle

Rollin Karg—with over 40 years' experience working as an artist—initially focused on unique glass sculptures before expanding to include metals and creating large-scale public art pieces. His works incorporate elements like steel ribbons, tusks, and hieroglyphs in their bases, with hand-blown glass satellites and other artistic elements that form the tops of the structures. These elements combine to form striking sculptures that can be found across the United States, from his home state of Florida to his adopted state of Kansas, each piece reflecting a profound beauty and a nod to his Kansas heritage.



SAILING SHIPS Kristin Garnant, Comanche, IA Buford Watson Park, south side near 7th St.

CAILING SHIPS features a collection of U delicate vessels, each crafted with a steel frame wrapped in grapevine and fabric sails that sway gently in the wind. Small brass bells add a soft, melodic sound, creating an enchanting effect as if the ships are sailing through the trees.

According to Garnant, "My background in graphic arts enriches my metalwork, where the unique properties of steel offer a canvas reminiscent of layered handmade papers. This fusion of traditional graphic techniques and metal allows me to give new identities to ordinary forms, and I find joy in the unexpected and evolving nature of these creations."

every session.

WE ARE ONE John Hachmeister, Oskaloosa 8th & Mass, northeast corner

I E ARE ONE is a sculpture featuring five **VV** intricately carved stones symbolizing unity. Shaped into a hand from vibrant marbles from Portugal, the U.S., Italy, and Spain, the structure rests on a 6-foot Kansas limestone pedestal, stands 9 feet tall, and weighs 5200 pounds. The inscription "We Are One" underscores its themes of unity, inclusion, and diversity.

Schachter started sculpting in 1995 under the tutelage of renowned KU Professor and artist Eldon Tefft. He worked as an assistant in Tefft's bronze foundry where he was introduced to stone sculpting. He and Professor Tefft then started biannual workshops in stone carving, which has continued for 24 years with about 50 attendees at



that rotate at varying speeds thanks to synchronized ball bearing spindles and a belt drive system, activated by a hand wheel on the base. This setup allows passersby to manipulate the sculpture, creating diverse visual effects and combinations.

Retired master mechanic and visionary Renaissance man, Pat Slimmer is also the creator of the infamous "Flying Saucer" Art Car. This signature vehicle seen in Lawrence's annual the Art Tougeau parade has also traveled to many exhibitions and has been featured in several books. Pat's public art has been exhibited in Topeka's NOTO Arts District, in Manhattan KS and as part of Lawrence's annual Outdoor Downtown Sculpture Exhibition.



THE FARMER Mara Strayer, Lawrence, KS Carnegie Building, southeast side

HE FARMER is a 9-foot steel sculpture that celebrates Kansas agricultural history and the dedication of our farmers. Symbolizing Kansas's farming heritage with wheat elements and an antique wheel, this sculpture's rusted finish and blend of humor combine with industrial and natural motifs and reflect both time's passage and Strayer's unique artistic style.

Strayer, a University of Kansas graduate in graphic and jewelry design, has explored various creative avenues, with welding as her current focus. Running a one-woman shop, she takes great pride in crafting large metal sculptures. Reflecting on her work, she shares, "My mom often says, 'Mara, you're a hard worker!" This sentiment echoes her favorite stories those of characters overcoming adversity, much like her own choice of the demanding skill of welding, which, based on her mom's perspective, is fitting.