

CITY OF NORTHVILLE'S PUBLIC ART

Take a stroll through downtown Northville and explore the richness of this charming city. Browse the shops, enjoy the restaurants and discover the art along the way. The journey begins. . .

Boy With a Hoop

Mill Race Historical Village, 1992

This sculpture at the entrance to Mill Race was designed by renowned local sculptor David Barr in 1992 and alludes to the Victorian Era represented in the architecture of Mill Race. It represents a Victorian-era boy at play with a stick and hoop.

Robert's Rock

Ford Field, 2006

Atlanta-based artist Zachary Coffin is known for his "spinning rocks" - huge boulders that appear to float over the ground. Using precision engineering for the supporting cylinders and bearings, these natural sculptures are smooth and silent when spinning. Installed in Ford Field in August 2006, the piece was generously donated by the Van Buren family with the intent of creating a beautiful and interactive space for the citizens of Northville, especially children.

American Flag

Marquis Theatre

Jeff Von Buskirk is a painter and art designer from Northville, Michigan whose murals appear in residences and commercial establishments. His work can be seen locally, nationally and internationally. Jeff's most recognizable piece of art in Northville is the five-story American flag commemorating 9/11 draped across the rear face of the Marquis Theatre.

Treble Clef

Northville Town Square, 2002

Missouri artist Charles Strain's elegant, stylized musical symbol impressed the jury and was selected over several outstanding candidates. "Treble Clef", a bronze sculpture (approximate dimensions 6'x6'x6'), was originally installed at the former band shell on May 28, 2002. The Treble Clef has been re-installed and is now located in Town Square toward the back. Throughout the summer, hundreds of people gather on Friday night to hear open air concerts and the piece alludes to this musical summer tradition.

City Hall Fountain

Northville City Hall

In the early 2000's the Beautification Commission commissioned local resident, Tom Holleman, to improve the front of City Hall. Tom's design included the fountain which he created as well as the surrounding granite pavers and restful benches provided by Gardenviews, a local garden store.

Skydance at the Western Gate

Northville Public Library, 1998

The Northville District Library Board of Directors commissioned internationally acclaimed fiber artist, Gerhardt Knodel, to create a textile artwork for the new library's 54-foot clerestory. With major funding from the Friends of the Northville District Library, Inc., the artwork took a year-and-a-half to produce from concept to completion and is the artist's first commissioned piece for a public library. *Skydance at the Western Gate* represents the intersection of thoughts past, present and future. The origin of the idea is the ancient Silk Road along which material goods, ideas and people from far-away civilizations passed each other en route to their destinations. It is the place where strangers meet, or where their products come together, that inspires this work.

Engauged

Northville Public Library, 2003

This unique sculpture in the library's Reading Room was designed by Rose Wunderbaum Traines using scrap metal parts. The whimsical portrayal of a girl on a swing was presented to the library by local resident, Mary Ware, in memory of her husband, Donald. Be sure to notice the nearby fireplace with its handmade tiles from Detroit's historic Pewabic Pottery.

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The Bookshelf Mural

Northville Public Library, 2005

Viewed from a distance, this “trompe l’oeil” painted mural almost looks real. It honors donors to the Endowment Fund during the 5-year start-up campaign from 2001-2005. It was painted by local artists Karri and Mike Mohr.

The Friendship Quilt

Northville Public Library

Squares in the shapes of book spines feature embroidered names to honor donors in this colorful quilt hanging near the central window on the main floor. A local quilting group, Hands All Around, produced this work with help from the Northville Stitching Post as a fundraiser for the library.

Puppet Theatre

Northville Public Library

This colorful, child-size theater located in the Youth Room was painted with fairy tale imagery by Janisse Lahti Larsson of Northville and has delighted hundreds of children.

Annie

Northville City Dog Park, 2004

Shawn Mulville was a chef and baker where he learned to carve ice with a chainsaw. With the Emerald Ash Borer catastrophe in full swing in Michigan, he decided to try his hand at carving wood and has since carved many trees in the surrounding area. This carving of an Airedale, owned by a Dog Park member, is actually a replacement to one of a Dalmatian which was donated to the City of Northville during the summer of 2004. Dal was recently attacked by carpenter ants and needs hip replacement surgery! Both models have enjoyed watching over the dogs at play in Northville’s dog park on Cady Street.

Coasting the Baseline

Center & Eight Mile Roads, 2003

World-renowned local sculptor, David Barr, volunteered to design and create this monument which commemorates the history of Base Line Road (aka Eight Mile Road in many places!). Made of alternating gray and white granite, it is in the shape of an obelisk, an ancient symbol of civilization. Base Line Road stretches across the state of Michigan. Surveyors walked this line before the Civil War and Michigan townships were plotted off the grid system created by the east-west axis of Base Line and Meridian, a north-south axis. In the early days of the nation, Michigan was the first state that used this surveying method which was later used as a model for other states. Quotes, designs and symbols alluding to the history of the area are engraved into the granite.

Leaves of Grass

Northville Square, 2005

This sculpture by Brian Ferriby employs the abstraction and repetition of trees and flowers and draws inspiration from these natural forms. Its title is drawn from the volume of poems by Walt Whitman.

Northville Art House Sign

Northville Art House, 215 Cady Street, 2005

Made from found metal, this impressive piece by Paul Vertrees serves as both a work of art and a welcome sign to the Art House at 215 W. Cady Street. Paul is a former Assistant Director of Public Works for the City of Northville, who now works as an artist in the area. Local artist, Darcel Deneau, contributed to the original design of the piece.

Man in the City

Northville Art House, 215 W. Cady Street, 2020

John Sauvé created the Man in the City International Sculpture Project in 2008 as a metaphor for life that transforms the skyline and encourages people to look around. In the discovery process one becomes aware of their own sense of place. The project is comprised of 60 sculptures located on the rooftops throughout the City of Detroit and Windsor, Canada.