



Downtown Kansas City, Kansas *Avenue of Murals*

The Avenue of Murals Project was initiated in 2004 with the goal of adding quality public art to downtown Kansas City, Kansas, to bring people together, to educate ourselves about one another, and to involve local high school youth in arts programming. Under the guidance of professional artists-in-residence, eight outstanding murals were completed and installed in a four-block long corridor along Minnesota Avenue. Each mural celebrates the history and culture of Kansas City, Kansas and the unique groups within the community. Over 30 creative and energetic high school students were involved in the four-year project.

A mural tour map is provided to encourage residents and visitors to walk or drive the tour and enjoy these tremendous examples of mural art and learn something new of the history and culture of our community.



1207 N. 7th St. ◀

Dawning of a New Day, 2004, Artists: Joe Faus and Alisha Gambino, 1,500 sq. ft.

Sponsors: Kansas Arts Commission, Bank Midwest

Honoring the importance of generations, family and culture in the African American community, the left side of the mural emphasizes the cultural legacy of African art, dress, architecture

and textile patterns. The right side of the mural mirrors the African skyline with an urban American skyline, and features portraits of people who have left a significant legacy in American society, many with connections to Kansas City. The middle section features the seven principles of Kwanzaa and shows the hope of children and the future.



751 Minnesota Ave. ◀

Facing the Past, Looking to the Future: A Kansas Hmong Storycloth, 2005, Directing artists: Joe Faus and Alisha Gambino, 3,000 sq. ft.

Sponsors: Greater KC LISC, Kauffman Foundation

Patterned after an embroidered Hmong story cloth, this mural represents modern and traditional Hmong

culture through mirror images of work, play and celebration. The border design around the outside edges is inspired by traditional stitched patterns. The dominant colors of the mural are blue — common to story cloths and green — for the lush green landscapes of Hmong villages.



826 Minnesota Ave. ◀

El Baile de la Vida (The Dance of Life), 2004, Artists: Joe Faus and Alisha Gambino, 2,900 sq. ft.

Sponsor: Bank of America

A tribute to Mexican *folklórico* dancing, this mural portrays, in vivid color, dancers in costumes from 19 different Mexican states. They surround a scene of modern day dancers of all ages. The

mural includes familiar Mexican images, including *La Virgen de Guadalupe*, skeletons from Day of the Dead celebrations and the Mexican coat of arms. A longtime youth *folklórico* instructor and parents with young children at nearby Douglass Elementary helped design the mural.



1118 N. 7th St. ◀

Pandatopia: Somewhere Over the Rainbow, 2005, Directing Artist Joe Faus, 1,600 sq. ft.

Sponsor: Kauffman Youth Advisory Board (YAB)

Painted on the north side of Pandarama Pre-School, the mural is about the learning and discovery unlocked by books and play. One of the teen artists

is an alumnus of Pandarama and another worked there over the summer. Pandarama teachers have taught thousands of children in their urban classrooms since 1976.



932 Minnesota Ave. ◀

Avenue Chronicles, 2006, Directing Artist: Joe Faus, 908 sq. ft. Sponsors: Kauffman Foundation YAB, Kansas Arts Commission

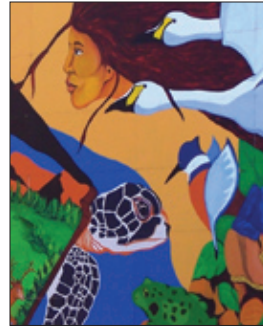
This mural represents a century on Minnesota Avenue — once the retail and commercial heart of Kansas City, Kansas. The design was conceived entirely by high school students after studying historic photographs and talking with community leaders. The mural design is woven together by a filmstrip in honor of the reopening of the Granada Theater in the summer of 2006. It also features various cameras and vantage points — a movie camera at the left, a news camera around the time of the 1951 flood, and in the final scene, the artist with his camera phone and portraits of the youth artists who worked on the mural.



947 Minnesota Ave. ◀

Up and Down Round and Round, 2007, Directing Artist: Joe Faus, 1,650 sq. ft. Sponsors: Kansas Arts Commission and Kauffman Foundation YAB

Inspired by listening to and reading the life stories of a senior citizen writing class at the Shepherd Center, high school students created the design for this mural that depicts the up and down unpredictability of life. Using the carnival as its storytelling theme, the mural portrays a young girl going through the amusement park and growing up as she reaches the end. Through the roller coaster, she experiences ups and downs and finally hitting her target of maturing and discovering what she wants in life.



636 Minnesota Ave. ▶

Wyandot Echoes, 2007, Artists: Duane Dudley, Joe Faus, Alisha Gambino, 1,440 sq. ft. Sponsors: Kansas Arts Commission, City Vision Ministries

In July 1843, hundreds of members of the Wyandot Nation were forced to leave Ohio, Michigan and Ontario, and came by steamboats to “Indian Country” where they were to receive land. Despite great difficulty, they built a prosperous town that would grow into what we know today as Kansas City, Kansas. The Wyandots are the namesakes of the county and their cemetery sits in the middle of downtown.

The mural represents two migrations. First, the Wyandots’ journey from Ontario to Ohio to Kansas and to Oklahoma and the second, a spiritual journey back to the past, gaining strength from memory and ancestors. This second journey is represented by the Conley sisters, whose fight to preserve the cemetery went all the way to the Supreme Court in the early 20th century. Lyda Conley was one of the first female attorneys to argue before the Supreme Court. <http://www.wyandot.org>



901 N. 8th St. ▶

Kansan Printer, 2006, Artists: Joe Faus and Alisha Gambino, 615 sq. ft. Sponsor: City Vision Ministries

This mural is in the style of WPA murals and shows a printer at a handpress. It was designed with the help of retired printers who worked at the *Kansas City Kansan* newspaper. It honors the history of the building that housed this community’s newspaper for 80 years in the heart of downtown.



- ▼ 1 - 1207 N. 7th St.
- ▼ 2 - 1118 N. 7th St.
- ▼ 3 - 636 Minnesota Ave.
- ▼ 4 - 751 Minnesota Ave.
- ▼ 5 - 901 N. 8th St.
- ▼ 6 - 826 Minnesota Ave.
- ▼ 7 - 932 Minnesota Ave.
- ▼ 8 - 947 Minnesota Ave.