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A stroke of genius

Green Line creates new wing of growing public art gallery

The December 6 opening of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Rail Green Line means more than just transportation from 15 new locations, it is the addition of 15 new pieces to the transit agency's acclaimed public art collection.

Just as the painter draws from his palette of colors to paint on the canvas, the local station artist and the design professionals draw from the palette of a community's visions to express those visions not on a canvas, but on a station. The article below from the [Fall 2010 issue of Inmotion](#) provides commuter and art lover alike a look at a regional treasure spread among 55 rail stations. For a printed guide to the Green Line Art & Design Program, email kptacek@DART.org. View the guide online at www.DART.org/PublicArt.

The Green Gallery

As you tour the new Green Line, you'll discover the latest installations to DART's growing public art collection - inspiring works in mosaic tile, steel, bronze, brick pavers, glass and mixed-media. Best of all, admission is free.

DART's Station Art & Design Program was launched in 1988 to involve the community in the development of the light rail system that opened its first lines in 1996. Now the Green Line adds another new wing to the "DART Gallery."

Enhancing the Travel Experience

For decades, transit agencies have been incorporating public art into their facilities as a way of creating inviting environments and a feeling of neighborhood ownership. But it's the depth of community involvement and the extent to which each station reflects the surrounding neighborhood that sets DART's program apart from many others.

A Celebration of Community

DART's program approaches each station project in two unique ways. First, neighborhood committees and design artists start working with planners, architects and engineers at the earliest stages of the station planning. Second, the neighborhood committees not only provide input about the history, character and values that shape their neighborhoods, they decide what themes they want to emerge in the station designs. Because of this, the program does not merely create art for public places; it creates the places themselves.



"The stations become front doors to a community, creating a first impression or a sense of place," says DART architect Steven Bourn. "That's why the neighborhood committees are so integral to the art and design process. We want to make sure that the station reflects the community in which it exists; that this is 'their station.'"



Art in its Simplest Forms

Even the basic station components - canopies, columns, pavers, windscreens, fencing and landscaping - become a palette for art and design elements.

Each committee works within a finite budget that can be used to upgrade standard finishes and materials, integrate artwork or create site specific art installations. Frequently columns are clad in tile, masonry or stucco; platform pavers are used to create mosaic-like patterns; or the landscaping may become the focus. Some committees dedicate most of their budgets to signature art commissions.

Occasionally, the station itself provides an opportunity for art. For example, on the Green Line's aerial stations, engineering and design were married in futuristic crescent-shaped power poles that are as much sculptural as they are functional.

Painting the Town Green

Although each station's art and design has many aspects, one element usually stands out as the signature feature.

From the station artist's paintings, Pleasant Grove-based Dal-Tile created six stunning 9-foot diameter medallions in mosaic tile for the platform of the Lake June Station that celebrate pioneer-era farming and agricultural symbols.



At Bachman Station, a photographic image of a 1911 picnic at Bachman Lake is displayed on one side of accordion-folded windscreens. On the opposite side, modern-day members of the community are posed in the exact composition of the historic photo.

On the concourse level of the elevated Inwood/Love Field Station, platform pavers create a maze in the abstracted shape of a brain, representing the path to knowledge.

At Hatcher Station to the southeast, a "community quilt" mural covers a screen wall with original drawings by neighborhood schoolchildren depicting the area's history.



At night, a boldly-colored spiraling sculpture at the entrance of the North Carrollton/Frankford Station is illuminated like a beacon, while the columns of the Burbank Station glow as colored lights shine through perforated metal.

These are just a few of the inspiring works you can discover on a tour of the new Green Line.