

Kansas City Architects Promote Local Artists

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SUMMARY

Art through Architecture (AtA-KC) was created to support artists and the arts community in the Kansas City area and to enrich architectural practices and architect-client relationships by providing architects and clients with incentives and tools to collect, commission, place, and integrate artwork by Kansas City artists into their process and projects.

AN ALLIANCE TO PROMOTE ART

AtA-KC is a partnership between the American Institute of Architects Kansas City (AIAKC) and the Charlotte Street Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the work of Kansas City artists, formed in 2007. A steering committee, of 12 AIAKC members and an art task force, of leading area art professionals, worked together to oversee the development, implementation, and management of this program. This locally developed program seeks to educate and encourage broader community appreciation for and commitment to quality art, design and creative culture, and to serve as an innovative, progressive model of art and architecture collaboration to be promoted to other AIA chapters, arts communities, and organizations nationally.

REACHING OUT TO THE ART COMMUNITY

AtA-KC is committed to actively reaching out to the architectural community and its clients, as well as local artists, in order to engage them in this program, and seeks to encourage dialogue among artists, architects, and clients in a variety of manners.

Such efforts include:

- Educational and outreach programming, such as site visits to completed projects, forums with artists, architects and clients, etc.
- Lunch programs at architecture firm offices to recruit architect and client participation
- Promotion of program and projects to audiences and organizations locally, regionally and nationally
- Ongoing outreach to the Kansas City area art community to promote the program and recruit new artists. An open call is issued to artists annually for consideration in the program.

THE PROGRAM KICKED OFF

One of the first tasks completed, was the development of an online database of more than 70 artists in the region. Each year previous artists are reevaluated and new artists are brought into the system. Each entry contains the artist's name and credentials along with previous work and up to 10 work samples. A website has been established to help clients search through the artist database and begin the process of working with Art through Architecture.

Since launching in late 2008, the AtA program has fostered nearly \$100,000 in new art projects. It has created 12 installations in the community. Recent projects include the National Center for Drug Free Sport video commission and the Missouri Bank Crossroads "Artboards." Art through Architecture has received numerous write-ups in local publications such as The KC Star and Review Magazine.

AtA has hosted speakers, scheduled lunch programs, organized art installation opening celebrations and engaged architecture firms to join the program.

Thousands of people have experienced art in the city thanks to this initiative. Artwork on billboards and drive-thrus has enabled greater citizen interaction with art.

RESOURCES

More Best Practices

The following AIA Best Practices provide additional information related to this topic:

- 22.08.15 Celebrating Architecture, Educating the Public
- 22.08.09 Architects Design Rebirth of a Community
- 22.08.02 Community Leadership in urban Design

Feedback

The AIA welcomes member feedback on Best Practice articles. To provide feedback on this article, please contact bestpractices@aia.org.

Key Terms

- Leadership
- Associations
- Design associations
- Architectural associations
- The American Institute of Architects
- AIA components
- Arts exhibit
- Public art