

Legacy NC: 100 Murals in 100 Counties by Max Dowdle

In partnership with Larry Wheeler, Director Emeritus of the North Carolina Museum of Art, NC Mainstreet, and the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners

Art has the power to inspire, heal, and bring people together. It has the ability to transform communities and impact people's lives in meaningful ways. That is why I am passionate about this statewide art project I would like to propose creating - 100 murals for 100 counties, commemorating historic and modern legends, luminaries, and unsung heroes. This project will not only add beauty and creativity to our state, but also provide a platform for visual public relations and creative placemaking.

The murals will be strategically placed in public spaces to create a sense of pride and ownership among communities. They will serve as a visual representation of each county's history, culture, and values, and will provide a backdrop for community events and gatherings. The project will create a unifying thread that ties all 100 counties across the state together and creates a shared cultural identity as North Carolinians.

As a partner, you have the opportunity to be a part of something truly special. By supporting this project, you will not only help bring beauty to our state, but also contribute to the development of local economies and support of the arts. By creating this fantastic collection of public art we will attract tourists, and stimulate economic growth, all while enhancing the quality of life for residents through a major art initiative. This project is an investment in the future of our communities, and will leave a lasting legacy for generations to come.

Murals are a powerful tool for telling stories, and this project will give communities the chance to tell their stories in a visual and public way. As a seventh-generation North Carolinian with a broad portfolio of public art across the state, and a history of successful community engagement with past projects, I will bring creativity and vision to the project, while engaging local municipalities in the design and installation stages to ensure that each mural is rooted in the history and culture of the community it serves. An overview of my public artwork can be found at **NCPublicArt.com**.

This statewide art project has the potential to make a significant impact on our state, and will bring value to communities and investors alike. By supporting this project, you will be contributing to the cultural richness of our state and investing in this meaningful and lasting art project. I hope you will join me in making this vision a reality and supporting this incredible opportunity to bring art to life.

In further developments Chapel Hill has committed to host the very first mural, as the representative for Orange County!

Notes from NCACC Presentation, General Public Art Talking Points:

1) Public art plays a pivotal role in cultivating a sense of identity within communities by reflecting their values, history, and aspirations. Through its presence, public art fosters a shared connection among residents, reinforcing a collective pride in their unique cultural heritage and shared experiences. By turning public spaces into dynamic canvases, public art sparks dialogue and allows individuals to see themselves as integral parts of a larger, culturally rich narrative.

2) Public art serves as a catalyst for meaningful dialogue within societies, offering a platform for diverse perspectives and discussions. By provoking thought and sparking conversations, public art installations encourage individuals to engage with complex social, political, and cultural issues. These artistic interventions in shared spaces foster an environment where people can exchange ideas, challenge assumptions, and build a deeper understanding of the world around them.

3) Public art possesses the remarkable ability to transform ordinary shared spaces into vibrant, thought-provoking environments. Through innovative sculptures, murals, and installations, these spaces gain new dimensions of beauty and meaning, inviting interaction and contemplation. By infusing creativity into urban landscapes, public art reimagines the mundane and turns it into a source of inspiration and wonder for all who encounter it.

4) Public art becomes a collaborative endeavor that engages the community in its creation, fostering a sense of ownership and connection. From concept development to execution, involving local residents in the artistic process encourages a deeper relationship with the artwork and the space it inhabits. This participatory approach not only enriches the final piece but also strengthens community bonds as people work together to shape the cultural landscape of their surroundings.

5) Public art serves as a platform that amplifies diverse voices, narratives, and perspectives, enriching the cultural tapestry of a community. By featuring artworks informed by voices with various backgrounds, cultures, and experiences, public spaces become inclusive forums that challenge stereotypes and broaden understanding. This celebration of diversity through art not only reflects the complexities of society but also encourages dialogue that fosters empathy and mutual respect.

6) Public art empowers youth by offering them a creative outlet to express themselves and contribute to their communities. Through workshops, collaborative projects, and mentorship programs, young people gain a sense of agency and self-confidence as they see their ideas materialize in public spaces. This engagement not only nurtures artistic skills but also instills a lasting sense of pride and ownership in shaping the environments they inhabit.

7) Public art serves as a visual storyteller, capturing the essence of a society's history, struggles, and triumphs for all to see and appreciate. These artistic installations narrate collective experiences, preserving cultural heritage and fostering a connection between past, present, and future generations. By sharing our stories through art, public spaces become dynamic repositories of shared memory and identity.