

To prepare you for real-world success
MBA for the Real World
 425-5562 | www.oc.edu | Oklahoma Christian | mblba



TULSA METRO'S ONLY INDEPENDENT NEWSWEEKLY

UTW READER COMMENTS | HAS SOMETHING MADE YOU MAD? TELL US!

Search... **GO**

- Cover Story**
- News**
- Columns**
- Just Your Style**
- Sports**
- Arts**
- Arts Experienced**
- Theater**
- Music**
- Cinema**
- Cuisine Scene**
- Events**
- Departments**
- Classifieds**
- Special Issues**
- Issue PDF**
- Contact Us**
- Facebook**
- UTW Myspace**

[Home](#) » [Arts](#) » [Arts Experienced](#)

[RSS](#) [XML](#)

[My Profile](#) | [My Settings](#)

MARCH 7, 2007

Starving for Art?

Or maybe just looking for someone at City Hall with imaginationNorth Tulsa artists strive to revive a neighborhood with a sense of history

BY HOLLY WALL

No, people, it's not a naked statue, but there is a piece of art going up soon in the Brady Heights Neighborhood, called Tulsa Spirit.

The neighborhood, between the Osage Expressway and OSU-Tulsa, has been, historically, a racially diverse neighborhood in a very divided city, and in the past, there was a lot of criminal activity, including shootings, prostitution and drug deals, said Margaret Aycock, president of the Brady Heights Neighborhood Association and one of the coordinators an artists working on the Tulsa Spirit monument.

Aycock said when her children were small, she and other neighbors were concerned about the heavy traffic flow along the neighborhood's main boulevard, North Denver. They asked the city for a solution, in the form of stoplights, stop signs, speed bumps and speed traps.

"Because of the nature of our street as a main artery into the city, we were unable to obtain anything more than police service to catch speeders, until we approached the city with one more idea that seemed to work in other cities," said Aycock.

"We wished to place traffic calming devices in the form of raised circular structures in the middle of the street. I am sorry to say that I can't remember who actually came up with the idea of placing sculptures on these devices, but I do remember that it got full neighborhood support."

In 2006, the neighborhood association decided on the theme "Tulsa Spirit" and began searching out artists and art (as well as funding) that would depict their ideas about the spirit of Tulsa.

In early January, city councilman Jack Henderson was of the impression that a statue of a naked figure had been proposed for the spot, rather than an obelisk covered in artwork that children at Emerson Elementary will help create. Henderson called the nude statue "ridiculous." Brown said she thinks Henderson attended a meeting some years ago where mention of a nude statue may have been made, but there has been no talk of such a thing since then.

Brady Heights received Vision 2025 funding for two of the obelisks, as well as a license from the city to put artwork on the sites and grants from the Tulsa Women's Foundation, Spirit Bank and the Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition to do so.

The neighborhood also held a fundraiser called the Tin Roof Art Show at Living Arts, in which artists donated work created from salvaged tin roof tiles.

The initial designs for the artwork to be placed on the monument came from research of Tulsa's historic Art Deco architecture, quilt patterns, images from Black Wall Street and Tulsa history in general.

Aycock, an oil painter, designed two panels to represent the pioneer and pre-statehood days as well as the 1920s through the 1940s. The pioneer panel has images of a Creek Nation ancestral quilt, handprints, friendship quilt patterns, a covered wagon and a basket.

The 1920s to 1940s panel shows symbols from the Oil Boom, the Arkansas River, art deco, music and growth.

- Comments (1)
- Mail Article
- Print Article
- Add to favorites



Caryn Brown and Margaret Aycock are holding workshops at the Madonna House, as well as Emerson Elementary; as part of the process of creating the art that will be displayed on a large obelisk in the Brady Heights neighborhood.
 Jeremy Charles

ALSO IN ARTS EXPERIENCED

- [Art Cornucopia](#)
- [La Vie Boheme](#)
- [Oh, The Shark Bites](#)
- [More \(126\)...](#)

ALSO IN ARTS

- [Pretty Little Lies](#)
- [Better Hang On](#)
- [A Hostage Situation](#)
- [More \(34\)...](#)

OPERATION BOOT CAMP
 30-day fitness program
 nutritional support
 all fitness levels
 operationbootcamp.com
 1 888 734 8669

Get your home or business
CLEAN TO THE MAX!
 Call 918-406-7784
 www.maxwellcleaningservice.com

ARTS & HUMANITIES
 COUNCIL OF TULSA
 2210 S MAIN ST
 TULSA, OK 74114

BALLROOM DANCING

Caryn Brown is a mosaic artist who recently relocated back to Tulsa after spending a few years living and working in Kansas City. She and Aycock were introduced through a mutual friend, and Brown designed the panels that would signify the 1950s to the present and the future of Tulsa.

Her 1950s-present panel includes images of Cain's Ballroom, auto and air travel and Route 66. The future panel symbolizes interest in retaining historic buildings while shaping the future.

"It also embodies our hope for a clear, clean river and a bright, sunny future for our city," Aycock added.

Brown was classically trained as a painter but became interested in mosaics in college.

While establishing a professional career as a Sales Associate, working her way up to Sales Director at Urban Tulsa Weekly during the early-mid '90s, she continued honing her interest in mosaics. After leaving town to satisfy her desire to enjoy life in the "big city," she and her husband came home to family and to raise children in Tulsa.

(article continues below...)

advertisement

"I found a niche in this market since my mosaics are different in that they are very shaded and painterly -- a direct result from my fine arts training," Brown said.

"My challenge is translating these designs into mosaic patterns and materials that will weather time and still be clearly translated from the high vantage point of the 13-foot obelisk."

Brown and Aycock began working on the designs in the fall and plan to have them finished by this April or May. The obelisk should be finished by summer, the artists hope.

In addition, the artists are holding workshops with Emerson Elementary, the Madonna House at Catholic Charities and the Brady Heights Neighborhood Association.

"One of the moms on the PTA at Emerson found out what we were doing, and I helped her get a piggyback grant for her school that will have us partnering on some of the presentations in their school and will have us involved in some side projects that help the children get involved in their community," said Aycock.

"I have agreed to be on the board for these upcoming projects, as has our (Brady Heights Neighborhood) Association president, Michelle Barnett."

Aycock said Barnett has also been instrumental in the project by acting as a liaison with the city of Tulsa, engineering, grant writing and even coordinating.

Brown said the classes also involve neighbors in the project by allowing them to create sections of the mosaic panels.

"That way, when the obelisk goes up, they can be proud of this beautiful addition to their neighborhood and know they had a hand in it," Brown said.

To those who may think the money spent on this project could be better spent elsewhere, Brown replied, "I think any time you are creating something beautiful it is a worthy cause."

As the artists work to complete the project, one of their main focuses is selling bricks with inscriptions that will be built into the landscaping around the monument. The bricks are \$75, and more information about purchasing them may be found at the Brady Heights Neighborhood website, www.bradyheights.com.

Once the Tulsa Spirit is complete, Aycock says the neighborhood will begin Phase II of the neighborhood beautification project, a bronze sculpture of children running and dancing in a circle.

Aycock has already contacted several sculptors about the possibility of working on the project and would like to see Wanda Armour's movement class at Emerson be the models for the sculpture.

"We have come a long way from our vision of a couple of stop signs," Aycock said.

COMMENTS

1 comment posted for this article

[Post a Comment](#)

anthonyclark (anthonyclark@kw.com), Downtown, Brady Heights

6/ 6/2007 - 9:05pm



For those of you who haven't seen renderings, visit www.bradyheights.com! It's going to be beautiful and something that the residents of BH as well as the rest of Tulsa can be proud of.

I'd challenge Tulsa icons (such as Cain's which will be featured on the monument) to contribute to the funding for the project. Anyone can donate by buying a brick for only \$75!

[Report this comment](#)

Post a comment

[Preview Comment](#)

MORE BY HOLLY WALL

La Vie Boheme

Tulsa Opera presents the original bohemian tale [\[OCTOBER 1, 2008\]](#)

Broken Promises

Race Riot memorial still on hold as building commission seeks funding that state legislature neglected [\[SEPTEMBER 24, 2008\]](#)

Carrying Tradition

Tulsa's Greek community celebrates its 48th Holiday Fest this weekend [\[SEPTEMBER 17, 2008\]](#)

[More \(152\)...](#)

[Subscribe](#) • [Archives](#) • [Contact Us](#)

Powered by [Gyrosite](#) © Copyright 2008, [Urban Tulsa Weekly](#) [RSS](#)