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**PARKING LOT BLOWOUT**  
3 legendary local bands reunite!  
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the a-list  
**345**  
THINGS TO DO  
THIS WEEK

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# Public ART WALK

14 of the best murals and sculptures  
on the streets of Columbus

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cover story:

# A WALK OF ART

BRIEANNA KRESS • SHELLEY MANN • PHOTOS BY JODI MILLER



## Take a stroll and take in Columbus' oft-overlooked murals and sculptures

The field of corn and the sideways Mona Lisa get all the glory, but Columbus is filled with countless pieces of public art. Some have been around for ages; others are brand new. Some are massive; others are smaller in scale. Some are the work of renowned artists; others were created by the community.

But they're all neat surprises to stumble upon during a busy day — a nice reminder that beauty can be found in the most unexpected of places.

We picked 10 of our favorites within walking distance of each other, narrowing our focus to Downtown and the Short North. And there were many more great pieces we had to leave off the list to keep it to just 10 (Pearl Alley mural, our apologies).

### DOWNTOWN:

1

#### GARBO & GILBERT MURAL

*South Grant Avenue & Oak Street, Discovery District*

This stunning black-and-white mural depicts silent film stars Greta Garbo and John Gilbert. It's a scene from their 1926 movie "Flesh and the Devil," and it captures the amazing chemistry of one of early Hollywood's most famous couples — the two fell in love in real life while filming "Flesh" and had moved in together by the time production was finished.

Local artist Jason Cho is one of four people behind this painting, located just a block from the Columbus Metropolitan Library and dedicated to the Columbus Academy's graduating class of 1997.

#### TOPIARY GARDEN

Old Deaf School Park

*South Washington Avenue & East Town Street,  
Downtown*

2

The only topiary garden in the world that's shaped in the likeness of a painting? We've got that. The topiary garden at Columbus' Old Deaf School Park was designed and is maintained in the image of George Seurat's painting "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte." In it, tree-people, -cats and -dogs stand stoically next to a real pond.

3

## "WA" MURAL

Canzani Center  
Cleveland Avenue & Gay Street,  
Discovery District

Outdoor art abounds at CCAD (especially if you count the students' sketchbooks), but the 3-D mural alongside Canzani Center, an administration building, gets lots of second glances from those walking along the campus' main thoroughfare. Kaname Takada, an associate professor of fine arts, created the pastel-colored, graphic ceramic mural in 1995.



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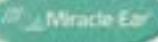
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**"A STREET CALLED HOME" MURAL**

*Washington Avenue & Boone Street, Discovery District*

**4**

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then the meticulous recreation of a mural from beloved Columbus artist Aminah Robinson by CCAD students is — well, exactly that. The bright blue wall and colorful burst of figures parading behind a State Auto office parking lot is a breath of fresh air in an otherwise-boring alley, even if the employees don't seem to notice it. You should.

**"THREE-PIECE RECLINING FIGURE: DRAPED"**



**5**

Columbus  
Museum of Art  
480 E. Broad St.,  
Discovery District

The distinctive bronze sculpture sitting in front of the Columbus Museum of Art is by British sculptor Henry Moore, whose abstract pieces are found as public art around the world. In fact, seven castings were made of this particular sculpture, said museum spokeswoman Nancy Colvin. Others can be found at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as well as at museums in Denmark, Sweden and Tehran.

Reclining figures were a favorite subject for Moore, who completed this one in 1975. Meant to convey a feeling of serenity, the figure is composed of several separate pieces. Moore once said of his work: "Sculpture should always at first sight have some obscurities, and further meanings. People should want to go on looking and thinking; it should never tell all about itself immediately."

# SHORT NORTH:

## "CLIFF DWELLERS" MURAL

Burgundy Room

6541 N. High St., Short North

Although this mural is likely the tallest one in the Short North, it features a quiet, dreary building facade and so it gets scant attention. But we noticed it.

Couple Michelle Attias and Curtis Goldstein created the piece in 2004 in the look of artist and Columbus native George Bellows, a realist painter known for his urban street images. Shadowy people congregate and hang laundry between apartment windows in a scene that could've come straight from a blighted period in the Short North.



## MAGNOLIA THUNDERPUSSY MURAL

1159 N. High St., Short North

This one is a recent addition to the street art scene. Jon Stummel, a 2009 CCAD grad, brightened up the northern end of the Short North with this and a coordinating mural across the street on the side of The Garden. Googly-eyed creatures throwing up rainbows often appear in Stummel's work, and the Magnolia mural is no different. As if straight out of a dream, characters of all different shapes and colors cavort in a crazy smorgasbord.

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### LIMESTONE SOFA

1159 N. High St., Short North

8

This is a useful piece of art, which is cool unless you really wanted a comfy place to sit. The 10,000-pound limestone sofa was created by University of Akron professor Robert Huff and placed in the Short North in 2004 as the winner of a public-art contest. These days, well — if you want to pose for a photo (or flop down for a rest) on it, remember that it's just as dirty as, if not dirtier than, the sidewalk.



### MONA LISA MURAL

742 N. Pearl St., Short North

Short North developer Sandy Wood is the guy responsible for this piece, now synonymous with the neighborhood. It's a little off the main drag, on the side of a 1920s Pearl Street building once home to an auto body shop and now called, fittingly, the Mona Lisa Condominiums. Leonardo da Vinci's distinctive 16th-century portrait was reinterpreted by Brian Clemons, owner of Optic Nerve, a local commercial art company that creates large-scale murals and other works. He painted the sideways mural in 1990, and it's been restored twice, in 2001 and 2005.

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## Outlying Art

The city's urban core is definitely the place to be when it comes to public art. Down there you can see plenty with nothing but a good pair of shoes. Other stuff takes slightly more advanced transportation to enjoy. Here are two public pieces to see by bike and another pair to visit in the car.

—JOHN ROSS



#### BY BIKE:

### FOUR SEASONS MURAL

Weinland Park Community Garden

East Sixth Avenue and North Fifth Street, Weinland Park

Wooden flowers and colorful recycled materials dot this thriving community plot outside the Godman Guild, but the centerpiece is a mural shining brightly among the tomatoes, peppers, herbs and wildflowers. Four panels depict seasons and some of the goodies harvested on site. It isn't the biggest mural in town, but it captures the garden's awesome come-together spirit.

JOSH MILLER PHOTO

### NEIGHBORHOOD MURAL

Rice Paddy Motorcycles

1454 N. Grant Ave., Weinland Park  
This long, colorful mural just west of the Ohio State Fairgrounds remains a work in progress. Slowly but surely, community members have filled in a blank cinderblock wall with vibrant scenes from the neighborhood — waving people, vintage houses and pretty green spaces. Even with a few empty spots, the painting evokes the blocky charm of Henri Matisse.

# 10

## SHORT NORTH GOTHIC

714 N. High St., Short North

Sandy Wood, the same developer who commissioned the *Mona Lisa*, asked local artists Steve Galgas and Mike Altman to create another mural a decade later in the same vein — an iconic piece given a quirky twist. The pair tackled Grant Wood's "American Gothic," a 1930 painting depicting a farmer and his daughter. In this version, completed in two weeks in 2002, the daughter is turned upside down. A little hand in the upper left corner, an addition made by the artists, points the way to more shopping.



### BY CAR:

## DANUBE RIVER MURAL ▶

The Blue Danube

2439 N. High St., North Campus

Europe's most storied river comes to life on the north side of this popular Campus eatery. More specifically, local painter Andrew Kern captured an amazing vantage of the bridge that links the Hungarian cities of Buda and Pest. The Dube turned 70 years old last month, and its new outerwear is every bit as timeless.



## "FIELD OF CORN"

Sam and Eulalia Frantz Park

4995 Rings Rd., Dublin  
Working a piece of land in Dublin for nearly 30 years, farmer Sam Frantz came up with many important strains of hybrid corn. Today his plot has sprouted a completely different type — 109 ears cast from concrete and standing about six feet tall. People have been arguing about the merits of Malcolm Cochran's sculpture since it went up in 1994.



KATE MILLER/DISPATCH PHOTO

## GET A MAP

The Columbus Public Health Department recently published a guide to public art and architecture in and around the Discovery District. The Statehouse and Arena District areas are coming up next.

What's health-y about public art displays? Walking between them. The department is hoping its new Art Walks campaign will encourage residents to get up, move around and take in some public art through its planned walking tours, according to coordinator Christine Godward Green.

At each location, people can call a number and enter a code from the Art Walks map to hear more about the art or building. Pick up copies of the map at 240 S. Parsons St., or find it online at [publichealth.columbus.gov/artwalk.aspx](http://publichealth.columbus.gov/artwalk.aspx).