

Boone DBDA Sculptures On Display

Written by Submitted
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The Downtown Boone Development Association is pleased to present three new public art sculptures in downtown Boone as well as one permanent piece located at the sculpture pad in front of the Jones House Community Center. The three new public art pieces in downtown Boone will be exhibited from June 2014 – May 2015.

The two sculpture pads located at 567 W. King St. adjacent to the Boone Town Hall currently show, "On the Way to the Market," by Alex Palkovich and "Inertia" by Zach Smith Johnson. "On the Way to the Market" depicts a low-country, Gullah woman in mid-stride with a traditional Sweetgrass basket placed on her head. Palkovich, from Florence, SC but originally from the Ukraine, has been commissioned to create veteran memorials, downtown public art pieces, and exhibits his artwork in galleries throughout the southeast. "On the Way to the Market" won the People's Choice Award at the 80th Annual NSS Exhibition in 2013, and the DBDA is delighted to have one of Palkovich's award-winning pieces gracing downtown Boone.

The second sculpture pad at 567 W. King St. is adorned with Zach Smith Johnson's piece, "Inertia." Johnson is a local artist and has shown artwork at the Nth Gallery, which is also located in downtown Boone. Johnson states about his work that "I primarily work with steel and cooper. I hope to give new twists to age old blacksmithing techniques." People have called his pieces whimsical, emphatic, and honest. Johnson derives his work from his love of the woods, gardening, and the expressions of life. The DBDA hopes to continue to show more of Johnson's pieces in the future.

The Jones House Community Center sculpture pad, located in the front of the Jones house, contains a new, permanent interactive public art piece; "A Place for Cognition," by Joe Bigley. This piece consist of two semi-circular benches placed around a table with a chess/checker board painted on top of the table. The Town of Boone's Department of Cultural Resources provides bottle caps to be used as checker pieces for the public to enjoy. Currently, another Bigley piece, "Formal-ly #3," is located at one of the entrances to the Turchin Center for Visual Arts as a part of the 2014-2015 Rosen Outdoor Sculpture Competition Exhibition located throughout the campus of Appalachian State. "Formal-ly #3" was located at the Jones House sculpture pad from December 2013 to June 2014. Bigley is a celebrated local artist but has also shown his work internationally in China and Spain. Bigley installed "A Place for Cognition" the end of June, and, since its arrival, the piece has been a popular spot for visitors and people that work and live in downtown Boone. Bigley, a graduate of Appalachian State, taught in the ASU art department at for the past several years, but will begin his new position as Assistant Professor of Sculpture at Spelman University in Atlanta, Georgia this fall.

The third public art piece of the 2014-2015 exhibit in downtown Boone is Mary Ruden's "Monarch Bench." This colorful, useable bench is located at 664 W. King St., on the corner of W. King St. and Depot St. where Melanie's Food Fantasy is located. Ruden lives in Knoxville, TN where she teaches art at University of Tennessee and currently has a show at the McClung Museum located on the campus of UT. Her artwork focuses on natural subjects such as butterflies, orchards, and musical themes. The "Monarch Bench" is not only a beautiful, bright addition to a poplar intersection in downtown Boone, but also a functional piece that people can enjoy day to day.

"The DBDA is delighted to have rotating public art in downtown Boone," says downtown

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coordinator Virginia Falck. She continues, "The DBDA public art program is designed to provide artists an opportunity to display large-scale work in our downtown and as a way to support local and regional sculptors." Moreover, Falck continues, "the DBDA hopes that the Public Art program will continue to encourage and promote the arts in downtown Boone." The sculptures located at 567 W. King St and 664 W. King St. will be on display in downtown Boone from now until the end of May 2015. The DBDA will begin considering new public art pieces for downtown the beginning of May 2015. If you are interested in learning more about the DBDA's public art program or are interested in purchasing one of the three 2014-2015 public art sculptures please contact Virginia Falck at 828.268.6280 or virginia.falck@townofboone.net. The Town of Boone invites you come and enjoy the new interactive public art benches and chess table at the Jones House Community Center. For more information about the Jones House please visit joneshousecommunitycenter.org or call 828.268.6280.