



# CONVENTION CITY HIGHLIGHTS

## Explore Shreveport's murals, street art

If you are wanting to explore Shreveport while you're in town for the 74<sup>th</sup> National Square Dance Convention<sup>®</sup>, something that is relatively low-cost other than a little time and gas money is to go on your own scavenger hunt. Shreveport has some beautiful murals and quirky street art. One of the largest publicly-funded masterpieces in the nation is right here and mural hunting has been such a popular activity the Shreveport Downtown Development Authority (SDDA) even created a blog titled "A Driving Tour of Shreveport Common's Murals."

The city's largest painting is the "Once in a Millennium Moon Mega Mural" on the side of the AT&T Building, located at the corner of Cotton and Marshall streets. At 14 stories tall and covering 30,000 square feet it is easily visible as one drives down Interstate-20. Researched and designed by Philadelphia-based muralist Meg Saligman in 1999, it involved 2,500 community collaborators, according to the artist's website. It took approximately two years to complete and 1,500 gallons of donated paint. The mural scene is a time capsule featuring the people of Shreveport. There is a viewing station with a paint-by-number grid that describes the painting, which also wraps around the building's walls on Cotton Street.



Once in a Millennium Moon Mega Mural

Another popular and distinctive streetside painting is "The Call to Action" mural at Crockett and Spring streets by artist Ali Bahler. The painting illustrates the area's local activities, festivals, music and more. A really unique feature? It also lights up at night with colorful neon added by Logan McDaniel.

The SDDA's blog, "A Driving Tour of Shreveport Common's Murals," highlights several artworks in what is referred to as Shreveport Common, a nine-block area on the western edge of downtown Shreveport. Since the blog was written in 2020, be aware that a few of the masterpieces have been removed due to renovations in the area (<https://downtownshreveport.com/featured/uncommon-murals/>).



A Call to Action Mural

To begin the driving tour, the SDDA advises you to start at the intersection of Cotton and Louisiana streets. From there you can view the "All There Is" mural by artist Tama Nathan on the back wall of the Korner Lounge. Then turn around and face the northeast corner of Cotton and Common streets to see the falling marionettes in the "Unstrung" mural by creator Lynn Laird on the back of Fairmount Apartments. Just around the corner to the southeast was the mural "Imprints" by Leslie Marshall but it was removed during a recent renovation of the Andress Arts & Entrepreneur



Center. Depending on your vantage point at the site of the missing “Imprints,” if you look to the left to the northwest corner of Common and Crockett streets you should see the unusual “Given Enough Rope” wall painting by Jeormie Journell. It features a carrot man walking a tightrope. Across Common Street from “Given Enough Rope” is the “Abstract 178” mural by MC Rollo.



Enough Rope Mural

Next, head to the 800 block of Crockett Street to see the colorful mandalas by Brett Malone titled “Mandala Parade.” They’re located across the street from Central ARTSTATION and the gigantic Dalmatian sculpture, whose name happens to also be Art. From your viewpoint at the mandalas, one could once see at the 800 block of Texas Avenue the mural “I’ll Fly Away” by Taffie Garsee, but it disappeared when the garage door upon which it was painted was removed. The best vantage point to see Lisandra T. Di Liberto Brown’s striking billboard painting

“Brown/Marron,” depicting giant eyes watching over the city, is at the 800 block of Crockett Street. The “Non-Binary” by Kathryn Usher has been damaged over time and the adjacent “Red Star of Fate” by James Marks was moved to make way for Caddo Common Park. Since you’re here at Caddo Common Park, look east toward downtown to see “Home” on the side of the Providence House in the 800 block of Cotton Street. It was created by artist Whitney Tates. Don’t miss the black and white mural “Frog Prince” by J. Ben Moss on the west wall of the Datastor Building adjacent to the Church of the Holy Cross in the 800 block of Cotton Street.

More recently, numerous other paintings have appeared along the stretch the SDDA has labeled the Marshall Mural Mile. One of those is “From Shreveport with Love” by Whitney Tates, Ben Moss, Linda Moss, Ka’Davien Baylor and Lindsey Simpson. With its postcard design, the mural is at the corner of Crockett and Edwards streets and was funded with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. For reference in locating the Marshall Mural Mile, the towering “Once is a Millennium Moon” masterpiece faces Marshall Street at the 700 block.

Among the newer murals appearing on this colorful stretch are “Bridges of Hope” and “Ascension Underpass.” Designed and painted by artist Eric Francis, the “Bridges of Hope” honors Ruby Bridges and signifies the end of racial segregation in public schools. “Ascension Underpass,” with its brightly painted columns is located at the Marshall Street underpass of Interstate-20. “Ascension Underpass” was designed by Ka’Davien Baylor, who was joined by artists Eric Francis, Ben Moss, and Willie A. Love to complete the multi-column scenes. Muralist Ka’Davien Baylor and collaborators also painted the “Leaders of Tomorrow” at 1533 Marshall Street. Artist Chris Opp recently finished a stylized skyline mural of Shreveport sitting on an open bible on the side of the Mersatech building.



Blowing Bubbles Mural

Not to be outdone, neighboring Bossier City has its own collection of murals and street art, including “Live Oak Avenue” painted by Buddy West and Abby Fowler at 601 Barksdale Blvd. and the delightful “Blowing Bubbles” painting on the back



wall of the Bossier Arts Council by artist Chris Opp. "Blowing Bubbles" is large enough to be seen from along I-20.



Art the Dalmatian

But back to our convention city, Shreveport's unique artworks are not just limited to its streetside murals. Take for instance, Art the Dalmatian. At more than 19-feet tall he stands guard at Central ARTSTATION. Art was fabricated from fiberglass by Junoworks, and Academy Award-winning local animators William Joyce and Brandon Oldenburg designed his LED color changing spots. During the day the sculpture appears to be white, but at night his spots come to life. Also visible from Art the Dalmatian, and best viewed at night, is The Flame, a 20-foot tall LED sculpture designed by Bruce Allen and Jim Hayes. The Flame tops the

Kallenberg Artist Tower at 801 Crockett Street.

Another piece of quirky Shreveport art is the approximately 9-foot tall rooster at the corner of Hope and Texas streets near the police station, or hunt for the bicycle racks around town that look like what they're designed to hold - bicycles. The bronze Elvis Presley statue in front of the Shreveport Municipal Auditorium gets mentioned a lot, but something else there at the corner may get overlooked and lends to the streetscape. It's the metal guitar and street sign with the King of Rock n' Roll's likeness at the corner of Elvis Presley Avenue. And dedicated to the oil and gas wells of Northwest Louisiana is the sculpture at Edwards and Texas streets titled "Turning to the Right," created by artist Patrick Miller.

Make sure to also find the towering aluminum roses that sit atop pedestals along the Red River in Shreveport RiverView Park at 601 Clyde Fant Pkwy. Roses are a symbol of love and perhaps a nod to the city's roots as the home of the American Rose Society headquarters. The metal roses light up to help illuminate the city's skyline at night, along with the Bakowski Bridge of Lights over the Red River at Texas Street.

There really is art all around the city. Just slow down a bit as you rush to and from the 74<sup>th</sup> NSDC to enjoy it, but don't try to climb the pedestals in Riverview Park to, um, "smell" the roses.



Metal Roses in Shreveport  
RiverView Park

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