
The Kansas City Star

Public art catches people's attention, beautifies the metropolitan area - and leads to healthy debates over age-old questions such as: "Is that really art?"

Fortunately, Kansas City and Jackson County have "one percent for art" programs, which require spending 1 percent of a project's design and construction costs on public art. Johnson County officials have discussed similar requirements. This week Kansas City officials unveiled the two finalists for art displays at the downtown Sprint Center. Chris Doyle's appealing entry includes pocket parks, landscaping, water elements and outdoor video screens. Dennis Oppenheim's design includes metal trees and a huge basketball hoop attempting to evoke a tornado (perhaps not the most appealing idea for this part of the country).

Decisions on public art are not and should not be made solely by artists. Other people should be encouraged to get involved as well. That will help Kansas City's art scene thrive.