About the Project

Mural artist Meg Saligman conducted hundreds of hours in Omaha conducting extensive local research to develop a unique design that reflects the Omaha community.

The title of the mural, “Fertile Ground”, refers to Omaha’s rich heritage and the depth of character among its people. Omaha’s deep roots, both in nature and in the community, have helped transform it into a modern and vibrant city.

Project Facts

• Measuring 46 by 78 feet, “Fertile Ground” is the largest privately funded, single-project outdoor mural in the U.S.
• The 46 individuals depicted in the mural are either living or historic citizens who represent aspects of Omaha life.
• The mural required 19 months of planning and 4 months of research and design.
• More than 671 gallons of paint, 465 brushes and 120 yards of acrylic fabric were used in the mural.
• The artist team spent over 11,000 hours on the mural wall.
• More than 75 volunteer artists and students worked on the mural.
• The mural wall is approximately 25 to 30 years.

“Fertile Ground” was monitored and documented as a “best practices” case study by conservation groups working to preserve these large-scale murals. Her most well-known work, “Common Threads”, is a Philadelphia landmark. She has received numerous awards for her work including honors from the National Endowment for the Arts. Saligman is widely recognized for her large-scale murals. Her technical innovations in mural scale and design have made her a pioneer in the field of large-scale public art. Her technical innovations in mural scale and design have made her a pioneer in the field of large-scale public art.

About the Artist

Meg Saligman is a private, independent public art studio based in Omaha, Nebraska. A successful, innovative public art practice, it was founded in 2001 to design, execute and promote public art projects that make a valuable contribution to the urban landscape.

Artist Team:

Meg Saligman (Master Artist), Efrain Herrera, Isaac Lopez, James Chatterton, E.T. Torres, Susan Dobin, Beth Marley, John Johnston, Brian Kippin, Sarah Zimmerman

Process

In order to design and execute this world-class mural masterwork, Saligman gathered historical photos and data from the archives of the Durham Museum, the Douglas County Historical Society and the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center. Interviews with subsets of Omaha residents and historians, as well as business, education and community leaders, helped to refine her design concepts.

Saligman and a team of nine mural artists spent six months during 2008 and 2009 completing the mural, using a two-step approach. First, a computer-aided grid allows artists to block the mural design in proper scale directly onto the wall. Paint is then applied to the mural walls. The mural design is applied to non-woven acrylic fabric using a process similar to “paint-by-number”. The material is actually painted on the wall using acrylic gel and then blended with the surrounding image.

The Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts was named for its first home at the Bemis Bag Warehouse. Today, the Bemis Center is located on the east and north exterior walls of the Energy Systems Company building. Founded in 1980, the Peter Kiewit Foundation is a charitable foundation that makes grants in the areas of educational, environmental, and charitable causes in Nebraska.

In order to design and execute this world-class mural masterwork, Saligman gathered historical photos and data from the archives of the Durham Museum, the Douglas County Historical Society and the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center. Interviews with subsets of Omaha residents and historians, as well as business, education and community leaders, helped to refine her design concepts.

Artwork design and production were completed in a “best practices” case study by conservation groups working to preserve these large-scale murals. Her most well-known work, “Common Threads”, is a Philadelphia landmark. She has received numerous awards for her work including honors from the National Endowment for the Arts. Saligman is widely recognized for her large-scale murals. Her technical innovations in mural scale and design have made her a pioneer in the field of large-scale public art.

Artist Team:

Meg Saligman (Master Artist), Efrain Herrera, Isaac Lopez, James Chatterton, E.T. Torres, Susan Dobin, Beth Marley, John Johnston, Brian Kippin, Sarah Zimmerman

Process

In order to design and execute this world-class mural masterwork, Saligman gathered historical photos and data from the archives of the Durham Museum, the Douglas County Historical Society and the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center. Interviews with subsets of Omaha residents and historians, as well as business, education and community leaders, helped to refine her design concepts.

Saligman and a team of nine mural artists spent six months during 2008 and 2009 completing the mural, using a two-step approach. First, a computer-aided grid allows artists to block the mural design in proper scale directly onto the wall. Paint is then applied to the mural walls. The mural design is applied to non-woven acrylic fabric using a process similar to “paint-by-number”. The material is actually painted on the wall using acrylic gel and then blended with the surrounding image.

The Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts was named for its first home at the Bemis Bag Warehouse. Today, the Bemis Center is located on the east and north exterior walls of the Energy Systems Company building. Founded in 1980, the Peter Kiewit Foundation is a charitable foundation that makes grants in the areas of educational, environmental, and charitable causes in Nebraska.

In order to design and execute this world-class mural masterwork, Saligman gathered historical photos and data from the archives of the Durham Museum, the Douglas County Historical Society and the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center. Interviews with subsets of Omaha residents and historians, as well as business, education and community leaders, helped to refine her design concepts.

Artwork design and production were completed in a “best practices” case study by conservation groups working to preserve these large-scale murals. Her most well-known work, “Common Threads”, is a Philadelphia landmark. She has received numerous awards for her work including honors from the National Endowment for the Arts. Saligman is widely recognized for her large-scale murals. Her technical innovations in mural scale and design have made her a pioneer in the field of large-scale public art.

Artist Team:

Meg Saligman (Master Artist), Efrain Herrera, Isaac Lopez, James Chatterton, E.T. Torres, Susan Dobin, Beth Marley, John Johnston, Brian Kippin, Sarah Zimmerman

Process

In order to design and execute this world-class mural masterwork, Saligman gathered historical photos and data from the archives of the Durham Museum, the Douglas County Historical Society and the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center. Interviews with subsets of Omaha residents and historians, as well as business, education and community leaders, helped to refine her design concepts.

Saligman and a team of nine mural artists spent six months during 2008 and 2009 completing the mural, using a two-step approach. First, a computer-aided grid allows artists to block the mural design in proper scale directly onto the wall. Paint is then applied to the mural walls. The mural design is applied to non-woven acrylic fabric using a process similar to “paint-by-number”. The material is actually painted on the wall using acrylic gel and then blended with the surrounding image.
The purpose of projects in Omaha and Mr. Kiewit's personal wealth to establish in 1980 entirely from the Peter Kiewit Foundation was the downtown city center. The largest construction and mining company became one of the charitable boards. Under sponsered on many local business and young leaders.

Omaha businessman, civic leader since 1950. Host site of the NCAA a symbol of Omaha's artist, John Lajba, is known as Omaha from as early as 1600. The Omaha Native American woman and child young boy walking away symbolizes all children. This image signifies the importance of family and Father and daughter 5 4

This image is taken from an archival photo. Various resource for this mural. Invaluable authoritative heritage and skilled local symbolizes Omaha's proud R. Bostwick (1868-1943) Prolific photographer Louis 5 4

This image is taken from an archival photo. Various resource for this mural. Invaluable authoritative heritage and skilled local symbolizes Omaha's proud R. Bostwick (1868-1943) Prolific photographer Louis 5 4

Mississippi & International Exposition in Omaha, this historic presence of Strategic (USSTRATCOM) maintains its historic and geese appear through themes and symbols. This early-era athlete represents a strong history and fair play. Football player 5 4

Air Command (SAC) at Offutt Air 5 4

A key fixture of the Omaha hands 

Sister and 9 4

The mural expresses the passage of time not in a traditional, linear fashion but rather through depth. Historical images are found in the background. Present-day images are found in the foreground, people, places, and landscape run deep. The mural, "Fertile Ground". The roots of Omaha's bottom of the mural is a natural link to the title of change and the prevailing power of natural 5 4

The books serve as companies. Representative businessman Young 5 4

Two figures representing Omaha's expansive Black music heritage. Teaching university courses national jazz festivals, and 5 4

Records in the 1960s. He who played in the Count Basie Orchestra and was bandleader and songwriter who played in the Count 5 4

R. Bostwick (1868-1943) Prolific photographer Louis 5 4

The only mythical "Potential" Nebraskans past and present. The strength and endurance of fire and drought, making it highly 5 4

This image represents the importance of family. This figure reflects the wisdom that comes with age. This image represents 5 4

The books serve as companies. Representative businessman Young 5 4

Two figures representing Omaha's expansive Black music heritage. Teaching university courses national jazz festivals, and 5 4

Records in the 1960s. He who played in the Count Basie Orchestra and was bandleader and songwriter who played in the Count 5 4

R. Bostwick (1868-1943) Prolific photographer Louis 5 4

The only mythical "Potential" Nebraskans past and present. The strength and endurance of fire and drought, making it highly 5 4

This image represents the importance of family. This figure reflects the wisdom that comes with age. This image represents 5 4