

Bison-tennial art



PHOTO PROVIDED

UPCYCLED: Intern Luke Winer, center, stands with Mayor Scott Long, Assistant to the Mayor Bev Vanderpool and representatives from Visit Wabash County next to the bison he painted that now sits outside City Hall.

City recycles bicentennial statues into public art

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Bison are roaming Wabash thanks to Visit Wabash County and the City of Wabash.

According to a press release from Visit Wabash County, Intern Luke Winer steered the ship for The Bison Project, a public art installation that gave new purpose to several of the cement statues.

The bison were a gift from the Town of North Manchester to the City of Wabash and were chosen as a salute to Indiana celebrating its 200th birthday.

Historically, massive herds of bison, also known as the

American Buffalo, roamed Indiana until 1810 and still remain a rich part of our history, the press release said. Visit Wabash County's vision, along with Mayor Long, was to showcase local artist's talent by repainting the bison in bright, vibrant colors and having them installed in high vehicular traffic locations throughout the City of Wabash, expanding the public art initiative.

"Paying tribute to our history and deploying public art throughout the city is another reason why Wabash is recognized throughout the region as a leader in community development," said Mayor Scott Long. "I am thrilled that this project was led by a student-intern and am grateful to the Town of North Manchester for gifting them to the city."

Winer took the lead on getting the bison repainted and found locations throughout

the city to display them. He coordinated the artists, host locations and worked closely with Sam Frazier with Big City Paints.

"With this project, I wanted to bring public art to different places around the city of Wabash," said Winer. "It's also an awesome opportunity to let local artists make an impact on their community. I hope this inspires people that love art and want to make it into a career to get active in their community through these types of projects."

Six local artists were chosen to design and paint the bison. John Proffitt, who specializes in "pour" painting and runs JP Studio Designs, used his unique method to create a mixed palette. John's bison is located at the Field of Dreams.

Winer, a Southwood High School senior and a self-taught artist who specializes in sketching and colored

pencils, placed his bison at City Hall.

Susan Stewart, owner of Sneaky Kitten Studio, specializes in glass, wire, and copper works. Susan's bison is located at the entrance of the Wabash City Park.

Kaleigh Middelkoop is a photographer who is heavily influenced by fairy tales and the slightly strange. Kaleigh's bison is located at the Wabash City Pool.

Kristy Church is a self-taught artist who gets her inspiration from landscapes, animals, and the people in her community. Kristy's bison is located at the Wabash Veterinary Hospital.

Local tattoo artist Roger Price from Filament Tattoo gets inspiration from colors, geometric patterns, culturally recognizable symbols, and anything that is bold and hard to avoid. Roger's bison is located outside of Brandt's Harley-Davidson.