



# THE *Original* DENTON DISTRICT

## ARTISTIC ASSETS

Denton is a community rich in culture, but the Original Denton District is where much of Denton’s cultural assets are curated and concentrated. With such a diverse and lively artistic scene, culture abounds on every street throughout the District. Dozens of music and art events, some of which are held monthly, take place in the District. Many happen in non-traditional venues, such as coffee shops, restaurants, retail stores, and on the Courthouse lawn. Traditional museums exist, but the community is also supportive of nontraditional exhibitions as well and many retailers and business owners offer wall space for rotating exhibits, or a corner stage for budding musicians. On a typical night, District visitors can see and hear the vibrancy emitting from the area; music, dance, yoga, even ghost tours, take place in this 24/7 entertainment district. While the list below is long, it is not an exhaustive list of the assets of the cultural district. Every week, new shows, music, and art makes its way to the Original Denton District.

**Denton’s Historic Downtown Square:** Denton’s Historic Downtown Square, or The Square as it is known locally, is the social, artistic, and cultural hub of Denton. Shops, restaurants, bars, event venues, and more line the streets and invite visitors to take part in the unique and original Denton environment. Historic architecture has been preserved or restored, with most of the area holding a place on the National Register of Historic Places. There is something for everyone in this neighborhood: art, music, history and more touch every corner. Murals and sculptures decorate walls and walkways, while buskers entertain pedestrians as they stroll in and out of stores, museums, galleries, and restaurants. Most days, scores of people can be found enjoying a picnic or a sweet treat from a local ice cream shop on the Courthouse lawn, taking in the sights and sounds of Denton’s beloved Square.

**Patterson Appleton Arts Center:** Known as the “arts engine of Denton,” this beautiful space is located between the downtown Square and the emerging innovation district and is at the center of ODD. Home to two large galleries, the 5,000 square foot Festival Hall event and exhibition space, an art studio, dance rehearsal hall, and a sculpture garden, the PAAC presents more than 20 exhibitions and welcomes more than 15,000 students per year. The PAAC is also home to the Greater Denton Arts Council and is the meeting space for the Council’s 40 nonprofit member organizations.



**Greater Denton Arts Council:** For almost 50 years, the Greater Denton Arts Council (GDAC) has supported Denton's artists and community art organizations through creative and innovative programs, events, education, and community connections. GDAC's primary mission is to support its member organizations and it has distributed more than \$1.5 million in grants since 1980. GDAC works collaboratively with more than 40 arts organizations, offering extensive support to art and artists across Denton. More than 500,000 attend a GDAC sponsored event each year.

**UNT on the Square:** UNT on the Square is a 2,400 square foot arts gallery and meeting space devoted to presenting UNT arts programming to both students and the community at large. Located on the historic downtown Square, this vibrant facility hosts numerous arts related events, music and concerts, and exhibitions year round. UNT on the Square is also home to UNT's Institute for the Advancement of Arts.

**Campus Theater:** The Campus Theater's art deco marquee is a beacon for residents and visitors along Hickory Street during visits to the downtown Square and is one of the most recognized visual and architectural elements in Denton. Originally built as a grand movie house in 1949, the Campus Theater underwent major renovations over the years and reopened to the public in 1994. The Theater is now home to the Denton Community Theater company and Music Theater of Denton (among other performance companies), and plays host to multiple theatrical productions, concerts, and other events throughout the year. In addition, the Campus Theater serves as a screening location for local film festivals.

**Denton Community Theater:** Since 1969, the Denton Community Theater (DCT) has presented theatrical experiences and served as a home for the performing arts in the Denton community. Each year, DCT presents 14 to 20 different productions, including traveling and competition shows, theater school classes, children's theater, special events, fundraisers, showcase productions, festivals, and more. DCT operates the Campus Theater on behalf of GDAC.

**Music Theater of Denton:** Also housed in the Campus Theater, the Music Theater of Denton is dedicated to producing top quality musical theater productions. Through engaging, rewarding, enjoyable experiences, MTD invites Dentonites to sit back and sing along with showtunes and stage classics we all know and love.

**Denton Music and Arts Collaborative:** Denton Music and Arts Collaborative (DMAC) was formed to preserve, promote, and continue the unique and culturally significant musical and artistic heritage of Denton through programs aimed at improving the lives and livelihoods of local musicians and artists. DMAC also encourages new musicians and artists to thrive and put down roots in Denton. DMAC offers members many resources to help artists and musicians, such as healthcare support and medical resources.



**Fine Arts Theater:** The iconic Fine Arts Theater has set empty for many years, serving as a reminder of the golden age of cinema in downtown Denton. However, recognizing the historic value and community support for preserving history, the Fine Arts Theater was sold in late 2018 to new owners who are working to revamp the Theater into a new live performance space. This single auditorium theater will be updated to host movie screenings as well, with new lights, screens, and projection technology. The Fine Arts Theater was originally built in 1877 as the Graham Opera House, but was repurposed as the Texas Theater in 1935. It became the Fine Arts Theater in 1957 and operated under that name until a fire in 1982. Until 2014, the space was used intermittently, but then sat vacant for a few years until it was purchased in 2018.

**DCT/NCTC Black Box Theater:** Denton's most experimental and independent theater is the Black Box Theater. Here you'll find up-and-coming writers, actors, directors and other performers featured in an intimate theater space.

**Denton Arts Walk of Fame:** East Hickory Street is home to the Denton Arts Walk of Fame, a celebration of artists, architects, musicians, literary icons, and performers who have left their mark on the Denton community. Inductees include Norah Jones, Brave Combo, Ray Wylie Hubbard, Midlake, Tom "Pops" Carter, O'Neil Ford, Jesus Moroles, Karla K. Morton, Carlotta Corpron, and many more. Take a stroll down Hickory Street and celebrate the many individuals who helped make the Original Denton District the cultural destination it is today.

**DentonRadio.com:** Broadcasting live from the Discover Denton Welcome Center on the Square, DentonRadio.com is the place to find original Denton music and programming.

**KUZU Radio:** KUZU 92.9 FM is Denton's community radio station, housed in a tiny mural covered building on Elm Street. The station features an eclectic mix of music and shows that draw in listeners and fosters artistic collaborations and supports the local music scene. KUZU brings listeners modern composers and local acts, mixed in with international acts and more. Rock, country, pop, gypsy jazz, German electronica...you name it, KUZU plays it.

**Leil Nahar Mid-Eastern Dance Troupe:** "Leil Nahar" is Arabic for "night and day," because the troupe members are as different as night and day. Founded in 1983, this dance troupe delights audiences throughout DFW at schools, senior centers, and festivals. They are regularly featured on Denton stages, such as at the Arts & Jazz Festival.

**Visual Art Society of Texas:** The Visual Art Society of Texas (VAST) is one of the many organizations housed in the Patterson Appleton Arts Center. VAST offers bi-annual artist workshops, demonstrations, monthly critique groups, invitational exhibits, mini-competitions, and more.



**SCRAP Denton:** Local nonprofit SCRAP Denton was formed to inspire creative reuse and environmentally sustainable behavior by providing educational programs and affordable materials to the community. SCRAP offers upcycled workshops, summer art and craft camps, and more. Local artists find low-cost supplies that inspire them to create in the shop, while SCRAP Denton also features art work in the Re:Vision Gallery, where art made out of 75% or more reused or recycled materials is on display. SCRAP also hosts the TRASHion Fashion Runway show at the annual Redbud Festival.

**Keep Denton Beautiful, Inc.:** For nearly three decades, KDB has partnered with Denton neighborhoods, businesses, community groups, and families to achieve their vision of a clean, beautiful, and vibrant city. KDB supports local artists through their mural programs, designed to beautify Denton.

**Courthouse on the Square Museum:** Built in 1896, this iconic structure is one of Denton County's most celebrated buildings and is the centerpiece of the downtown Square. The museum features lectures, exhibits, and community events to celebrate the storied history of Denton and the people who have called it home.

**Bayless Selby House Museum:** Located in the Denton County Historical Park, the Bayless Selby House Museum pays tribute to the history of Denton and the families who helped build the community in the 19th and 20th centuries. This 1898 Queen Anne style home is open to visitors and features the Daugherty Collection of hand-painted porcelain, along with other exhibits and teacher workshops.

**Quakertown House Museum:** Built in 1904, the Quakertown House Museum also sits in the Denton County Historic Park and is a reminder of the racial struggles of 20th century Denton. The home was originally built in an area known as Quakertown, just north of the downtown Square. In the 1920s, the Denton City Commission chose Quakertown as the site for a new park and civic campus, and the prominent African-American community was relocated east of the railroad tracks (to what is now known as Southeast Denton). While Quakertown disappeared, this home survived the move and was relocated to the Historical Park. Today, the Quakertown House Museum is a reminder of Denton's divided history.

**Denton Firefighters Museum and Memorial Bell Tower:** Located inside Denton's Central Fire Station, the Denton Firefighters Museum tells the story of triumph, tragedy, and local heroes. The museum is home to 19th and 20th century firefighting exhibits and walks visitors through the history of the fire service in Denton. The newest addition to the museum is a signature piece of art made from steel beams from the World Trade Center, the 9/11 Firefighters Memorial Bell Tower. The 30-foot tall steel twin towers honor the firefighters who gave their lives at Ground Zero and was co-designed by Mille Giles, City of Denton Public Art Committee Member and UNT art professor, and local architect David Robinson.



**Music Friendly City Designation:** Denton was certified as a Music Friendly Community by the Texas Music Office in 2018, and was the third city in the state of Texas to be granted the designation behind Forth Worth and Austin. This designation helps the City promote the community's music and music resources and leverage Denton's thriving music sector in its economic development strategies. Brandon Anthony, head of the Texas Music Office stated at the celebration event, "Denton is absolutely one of the most vital music communities in our state. The history of Denton is so rich with folks who have literally changed the world through their art." This designation led to Denton participating in Make Music Day, a world-wide annual event to celebrate music.

**Film Friendly City Designation:** Denton was named a Film Friendly City by the Texas Film Commission in 2018. This designation makes it easier for filmmakers to find local resources and recognizes the contributions filmmaking has to a communities' economic development and tourism programs. Numerous student and professional films are produced in Denton every year, but some of our more famous films include "Benjie," "What's Eating Gilbert Grape," and the TV series, "Walker, Texas Ranger."

**Acoustic Lawn Jam:** This unscheduled but regular event takes place every Saturday morning on the Square. Everything from spoons to banjos to saxophones can be found at the informal jam session and all levels of musicians are welcome.

**Original Denton District Art:** The Original Denton District is covered with art, including murals, paintings, sculptures, and more. Here is a small sample of art lining the sidewalks, covering buildings, and delighting visitors throughout the District.

- Discover Denton Welcome Center mural. Artist Dan Black
- A Creative Art Studio mural. Artist Mick Burson.
- The Bearded Monk mural. Artist Roy Warren Lunt
- Fuzzy's Taco Shop Mural. Artist Cut Throat.
- Recycled Books Mural. Artists Denton High School Students
- Oak Street Draft House mural. Artists Dan Black and Mick Burson
- Andy's Bar mural. Artist Dan Black
- Authentic Yoga Life mural. Artists Erika Tolbert
- B&O Service mural (McKinney Side). Artist Dan Black
- Lane Real Estate mural. Artist Dan Black
- Denton County Brewing Company murals. Artists Katie Montgomery, Melanie Gomez Smith, Sanford Black, Wails Worety, Shelly Denning, and Shay Haas
- Denton Depot/Greater Denton Arts Council mural. Artist Bailey and Ayrton Chapman
- Untitled/Greater Denton Arts Council mural. Artist Mick Burson
- Studio One16 mural. Artist Travis Sykes



- Mini Mall covering. Artist Kelsey Anne Heimerman
- Second Hand Sports Mural. Artist Mick Burson
- Denton Vacuum Center mural. Artist Eric Mancini
- La Estrella mural. Artist unknown
- LSA Burger Downstairs. Artist unknown
- LSA Burger Patio. Artists Zarina Kay, Gracie Piper, Matthew Long, ARTLAB3000, Malcolm Byers, and Dan Black
- KUZU Radio mural. Artist unknown
- Inspire Yoga mural. Artist Kate Colin
- Rubber Gloves Rehearsal Studio mural. Artist Nevada Hill
- SCRAP Denton mural. Artist Mick Burson
- Veronica's Café mural. Artist Eric Mancini
- Historic Quakertown/Civic Center. Artist Paula Collins
- Man of Integrity/City Hall East. Artist George Cadell
- November Devil/Downtown Square. Artist David Isles
- Untitled Light and Glass/City Hall. Artist Carlotta Corpron
- Untitled Flowing Light Variation. Artist Carlotta Corpron
- Ecco Homo/City Hall. Artist Octavio Medellin
- Untitled/Emily Fowler Central Library. Artist Coreen Mary Spellman
- The Slide/Emily Fowler Central Library. Artist Coreen Mary Spellman
- Pops Carter/Patterson Appleton Arts Center. Artist Christie Wood
- Fountain Monolith sculpture/City Hall. Artist Jesus Moroles
- 9/11 Firefighters Memorial Bell Tower. Artist Mille Giles
- Seeing Around The Thorn Vine sculpture. Artist James Surls
- Festival in Motion sculpture. Artist unknown.
- O, Be Joyful/Quakertown Park. Artist Rosie Sandifer
- For the Mayor, Three Graces, Faith, Hope, and Charity/City Hall Courtyard
- The Mill/Emily Fowler Library
- Woman of Justice/City Hall East
- Urban Composition/Central Fire Station
- Children's Play Wall/Quakertown Park
- Karla K. Morton Poem/Arts Walk of Fame