



Athens Arts Center

Gathering Release

ARTIST: JOHNATHAN BIDWELL

Painted in 2025 on the north wall of The Arts Center, this mural blends fine art with public space, featuring a serene young figure scattering red petals into the wind. Through impressionistic brushwork and rich natural tones, the piece honors Athens' agrarian history while symbolizing renewal, growth, and the future of the community. Commissioned to mark the 45th Anniversary of the Athens Area Council for the Arts and the 20th Anniversary of The Arts Center facility.

Johnathan Bidwell is a Asheville-based muralist and painter who works both in studio and on-location. He studied graphic design, illustration, and painting at East Carolina University. Bidwell's murals span Tennessee, Georgia, and North Carolina, often exploring themes of observation, serenity, and place. His work invites viewers into quiet reflection through refined technique and visual storytelling.

athensartscouncil.org / bidwellmurals.com

326 N Jackson Street, Athens, TN



White Street Market

Great America XX

ARTIST: SAM WELTY

Unveiled on August 20, 2020, this mural commemorates Tennessee's critical role in ratifying the 19th Amendment, securing women the right to vote. Featuring historic figures like Ida B. Wells, Susan B. Anthony, and Harry T. Burn, the mural blends national and local impact with a powerful monochromatic style. A central banner reads "Votes for Women," symbolizing the enduring legacy of suffrage activism. The quote from Ida B. Wells, "The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them," anchors the mural's message of justice and perseverance.

Sam Welty is a regional muralist known for his historically themed public art installations. His Tribute Murals project features large-scale works focused on American history, civic pride, and local heritage. While his work has reached multiple states, his primary influence is rooted in the southeastern U.S.

whitestreetmarket.com / samwelty.com

216 N White Street, Athens, TN



White Street

Great America XIV: The Battle of Athens

ARTIST: SAM WELTY

Installed on August 1, 2017, this sepia-toned mural vividly portrays the 1946 Battle of Athens, a pivotal moment when returning World War II veterans in McMinn County took a stand to defend the democratic process. Asserting the people's right to fair elections, they challenged local corruption in a dramatic showdown. The artwork captures the tension, courage, and unity of that historic day, with a central figure carrying a locked ballot box — a symbol of hard-won integrity in American democracy.

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www.samwelty.com

206 N Jackson Street, Athens, TN



Maddie Mae's Cafe

Tri-Star (Tennessee's Symbols)

ARTIST: MEGAN LINGERFELT

This bold and colorful mural celebrates Tennessee's natural beauty and state identity. Featuring tulip poplar blossoms and two northern mockingbirds—Tennessee's state flower and bird—set against a vibrant gradient sunset, the mural also incorporates the iconic three-star emblem of the Tennessee state flag. The piece is a vivid tribute to regional pride, native species, and the bright spirit of "The Friendly City."

Megan Lingerfelt is an East Tennessee-based muralist and visual artist. She developed her artistic voice in Seattle before returning south. Known for blending structural and botanical forms with dynamic contrast and color, Lingerfelt's murals reflect their surroundings with a site-specific sensitivity. Her work in public art emphasizes local character, nature, and the transformation of everyday walls into vibrant visual landmarks.

maddimaescafe.com / meganlingerfelt.com

10 S white Street / E Bank Street, Athens, TN



Athens Area Chamber of Commerce

Ronald Reagan's Visit to McMinn County

ARTIST: SAM WELTY

Unveiled in 2025 at the corner of N. Jackson Street and E. Washington Avenue, this patriotic mural honors President Ronald Reagan's historic visit to McMinn County on September 24, 1985. With an American flag waving behind him and a soaring bald eagle at his back, Reagan is depicted smiling and waving, symbolizing a moment when the eyes of the nation turned to Athens. The mural celebrates local pride, national recognition, and shared values of freedom and faith in small-town America.

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athenschamber.org / samwelty.com

103 E Washington Avenue, Athens, TN



The Gallery / Hornsby Street

Main Street Athens

ARTIST: JESSICA AND KEVIN LANE

This vibrant mural celebrates McMinn County's agrarian heritage. Set against the rolling purple mountains of East Tennessee, two children walk hand-in-hand through golden wheat fields under a bold orange sky. Oversized, stylized wheat stalks in vivid blues and oranges add a whimsical, modern twist to the rural scene. The Athens city seal—"The Friendly City"—is prominently featured, reinforcing civic pride and local identity.

Jessica and Kevin Lane are collaborative muralists whose work brings color, symbolism, and storytelling to public spaces. Known for fusing vibrant patterns with regional themes, the duo brings a fresh visual language to Southern culture. Their art emphasizes community connection, natural beauty, and heritage with a bold, contemporary flair.

gallery1401.com

122 N Jackson Street, Athens, TN



Walmart Super Center

All About Athens

ARTIST: JILL SANDERS

Located inside Walmart Store #663 in Athens, Tennessee, this mural titled All About Athens honors the city's identity as "The Friendly City." Featuring iconic local imagery—cows grazing, a red tractor, Mayfield Dairy, Tennessee Wesleyan University, and the historic Keith House—the mural blends farming, education, and community into a vibrant composition. With rich colors and detailed illustrations, the piece welcomes shoppers with a celebration of Athens' past, present, and values.

Jill Sanders is a Tennessee-based illustrator and muralist with a passion for storytelling through art. She operates under sandersdesign.com and was selected to represent her community in Walmart's nationwide mural initiative. Her style reflects warmth, realism, and community pride—capturing local culture in a way that is both accessible and inspiring.

behance.net/jsandersart

1815 Decatur Pike, Athens, TN