

# Art on the Waterfront Brings Inspired Outdoor Art to South Baltimore

Four new public art installations have popped up at the Baltimore waterfront, but they're not at the popular Inner Harbor, or Harbor East, or Federal Hill neighborhoods as you might expect.

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The works of art are on display at Middle Branch Park, south of the Inner Harbor on the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River, in Baltimore's Cherry Hill neighborhood. Some of the installations are interactive and others are utilitarian, but each is worth an evening visit.

On the 4th of July, the Art on the Waterfront opening at Middle Branch drew in dozens of people eager to see the new additions to the park's landscape, while live music by DJ GrownMan and Jonathan Gilmore pulsed from the stage.

Placed up the hill from the park's path, Number 24 of Matthias Neumann's "Basics" art series serves multiple functions as an installment. The wooden cube constructed from parallel banks of two-by-four is an abstract sculpture to catch the gaze of passersby, and it's also a space they can sit in. Beautiful from a distance, it serves as an excellent bench.



Matthias Neumann's "Basics" Number 24.  
Photo: Charlie Youngmann

As an artist and architect, Neumann explores the usage of everyday building materials to create abstract and interactive forms through his "Basics" series.

The colorful sails that make up Becky Borlan's pop-up "Prisms" installation form an array facing the water. Designed for deployment in a number of landscapes, the vibrant hues chosen for "Prisms" are meant to stand in direct contrast with the natural landscape. Evocative of sailing imagery, "Prisms" references Baltimore's significance as a historic port town, though

the installation has been previously featured in Brentwood, Md.

Stretched between two waterfront trees, Graham Coreil-Allen's Baltimore Banner represents both the city's past and future. The translucent piece portrays a potential neon skyline for the city, complete with the proposed Baltimore-Washington maglev train and a flying saucer for good measure. Half-submerged in the water sits Ross Winans' "Cigar Ship," originally constructed in 1858.



Environmental artist Ashley Kidner with his "Pollinator Hexagon IV." Photo: Charlie Youngmann

If a visitor sits at the marked seat at the park's surrounding fire pit, they can line the banner up to the existing Baltimore skyline and take in the transformed landscape.

Ashley Kidner's installation serves a more practical function. Comprised of native species of plants, Kidner's "Pollinator Hexagon IV" acts as a hub for birds, bees, butterflies, and other local pollinators. While the concentric

hexagonal patterns of stone give the garden structure, it's the arrangement of color in the flowered plants that really brings the piece to life.

"This one specifically was meant to draw awareness to the fact that we need our pollinator plants and we need our pollinators like bees," Kidner said. "Especially around the Chesapeake Bay, that's for sure."

A landscaper by trade, Kidner has been working with environmental art for nearly 18 years. He's previously helped to install educational rainwater gardens throughout the Baltimore area.

Art on the Waterfront is on display at Middle Branch Park from now until September 28.

*-Charlie Youngmann*