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For more information about this
Music Park & the 8-County
Music Park Trails



Kinston Music Park

*Celebrating
Our African
American
Music Heritage*

KINSTON, NORTH CAROLINA



THE KINSTON MUSIC PARK

was created in partnership with the N.C. Arts Council, the N.C. Department of Transportation, Community Council for the Arts, City of Kinston, and Golden LEAF Foundation with generous contributions from Kinston-Lenoir Co. Parks & Recreation, Kinston-Lenoir Co. Tourism Development Authority/visitkinston and many additional public and private funding partners.

The park is located in the Sugar Hill district of Kinston that once was the vibrant hub of African American music venues where musicians including Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong played. The site is owned and operated by the City of Kinston and is located where once stood a thriving tobacco warehouse. This warehouse, as many others served as performance venues for local musicians as well as those of renown.

The signature element of the park is a 12-foot high, 23-foot wide sculpture with images of famous jazz, rhythm and blues, soul and gospel musicians from Kinston and surrounding communities. Created by the sculpting team of *David Wilson* and *Brandon Yow*, *INTERSECTIONS* consists of glass panels that feature historic photographs, vintage maps and original artwork that all pay tribute to Kinston's African American musical community.



There are additional public art works, including five 5-foot high and 3-foot wide mosaics which were created by participants attending a local after-school program known as the Gate. Working with professional artists/educators, these teenage participants helped to create the mosaics in the style of *Romare Beardon*, Charlotte, NC. The mosaics depict musicians with roots in the Kinston/Lenoir Co. community who made a musical mark either in education or performance. This project was under the direction of the Kinston Community Council for the Arts and received funding support from the North Carolina Arts Council. Artists/educators *September Krueger* and *Ann Brennan* directed the project.

As you roam through the park you will be able to sit or stand near digital recorders that give additional information about the park and musicians. These three recorders are located at various sites in the park near entranceways and sound mounds.

Interpretive signs are located throughout the park to guide visitors. These signs give the viewer information about individual musicians and/or the rich roots music that was composed and performed by musicians hailing from Kinston/Lenoir Co. and the region beyond.

This music park is a key element of the *African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina* developed by the North Carolina Arts Council, a State agency of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources in Raleigh, NC. There are eight eastern North Carolina counties involved in the trail. They include: Nash, Edgecombe, Wilson, Greene, Lenoir, Jones, Pitt and Wayne.

There is a book entitled *AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC TRAILS OF EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA*. This book is available for purchase at the Community Council for the Arts, 400 N. Queen Street, Kinston, NC, and at other sites throughout North Carolina. The book draws on interviews with more than 90 musicians from trail counties with new and historical photographs. The CD, included with the book, features 17 recordings performed by many of the region's outstanding artists.

Additional information about the local project and/or the regional 8-county trail can be found in the North Carolina Arts Council trail map, *African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina*, and the Community Council for the Arts brochure, *Mrs. J. S. Brody Public Art Trail*. These brochures are free and located at numerous sites throughout the community including the Arts Center, 400 N. Queen Street; Lenoir County Tourism Center, Highway 70 and Queen Street; and the Kinston-Lenoir Co. Tourism Development Authority/[visitkinston](http://visitkinston.com), 301 N. Queen Street, Kinston, NC.

Other artworks associated with the *African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina* project are located in Pearson Park — on the riverfront, approximately five blocks from the Music Park in downtown Kinston — where one will note the artistically designed canopy of the stage. The image used for the book cover is depicted as a mural on the eastside entrance of the Arts Center, home of the Community Council for the Arts, located at 400 N. Queen Street. These artworks and many others are included as part of the *Mrs. J. S. Brody Public Art Trail* of the cultural compilation of artworks available 24-7 to the public.

Additional works celebrating the African American music heritage of this community will be developed in the near future at the *Kinston Music Park: Celebrating our African American Music Heritage* and throughout the community.

For more information contact the Community Council for the Arts at (252) 527-2517 or our website at www.kinstoncca.com.



Rental arrangements for use of the park can be made by contacting the Kinston-Lenoir Co. Parks and Recreation Department at 252-939-3332.