

THE  
KANSAS CITY  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

# Art & other treasures:

**A WALKING GUIDE**

*Selections from the Kansas City  
Public Library's Collection on view  
in the Central Library.*






# The Library's Collections:

Did you know that the Kansas City Public Library collects not only books, periodicals, historical documents, and e-media, but it also collects visual works of art? This guide will help you find several works on view at the Central Library and perhaps inspire you to learn more or create your own!





Artwork that has been loaned, donated or collected over the years is showcased throughout the Library's ten locations and the entire collection of art and other treasures is cataloged, and posted on the Library's website at [kclibrary.org/art-objects](http://kclibrary.org/art-objects).

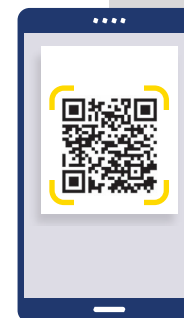
The Central Library, itself a work of art, displays objects from the collection on each of its five floors. This guide presents several notable examples throughout the building, each with a QR code to scan for object information. Feel free to follow along in the order shown here or explore the building and collection on your own.

## Have some fun!

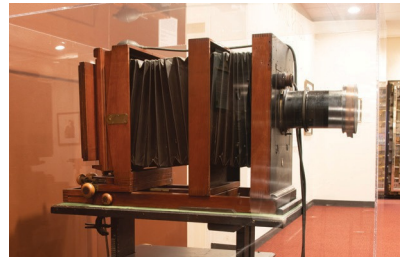
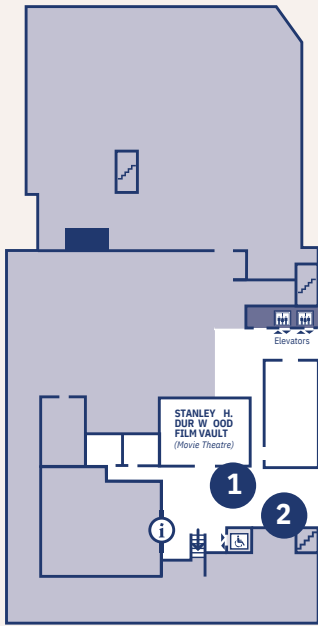
-  How many works in this guide are examples of functional art, art that serves an everyday purpose?
-  Can you find a dog in one of the works of art? Hint, look for a sculpture.
-  Which works include text? Have you ever considered the cover of your favorite book to be a work of art?

## LEARN MORE BY SCANNING QR CODES

-  Find an object with a QR code on the label.
-  Approach the object's label with your smartphone camera app open.
-  Focus on the QR code and click the link that appears.
-  You are now on the webpage of the Library's art database and can read more about the object in front of you.



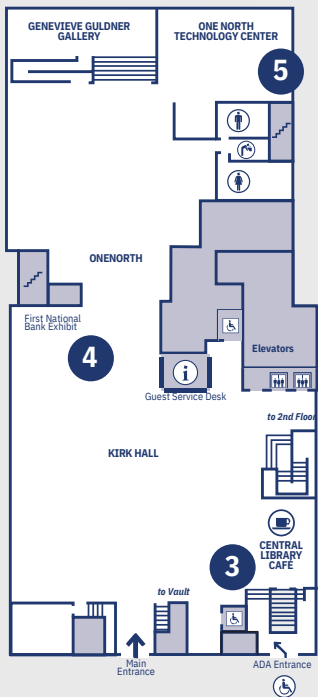
## VAULT LEVEL



### 1: Sliding Carriage Eastman Kodak Camera *Eastman Kodak Company*

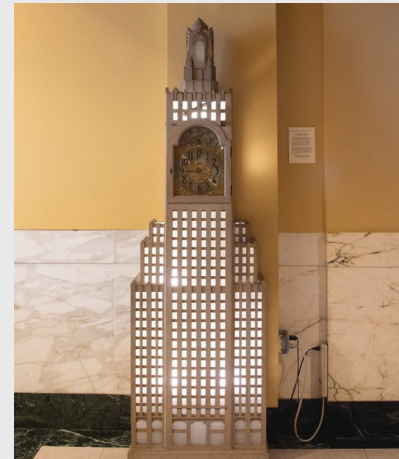
This large format sliding carriage studio camera was used by Kansas City photographer Orval Hixon late in his career. It features a Packard-Ideal shutter and bellows which allow the lens to be moved with respect to the focal plane for focusing. Hixon's descendants donated nearly 150 prints to the Library in 2008. Portraits are featured throughout the Vault Level and periodically rotated in and out.

## 1ST FLOOR



### 2: Portrait of Eddie Cantor *Orval Hixon*

Eddie Cantor, born Edward Israel Iskowitz, became a show business legend who excelled on stage, in radio, film, television, and in the nightclubs. He also gained acclaim for his records and books. White lines sketched across the developing photographic material create a wake off the top of Cantor's hat personalizing the photo and perhaps even suggesting the buzz he created in the radio and film industry.



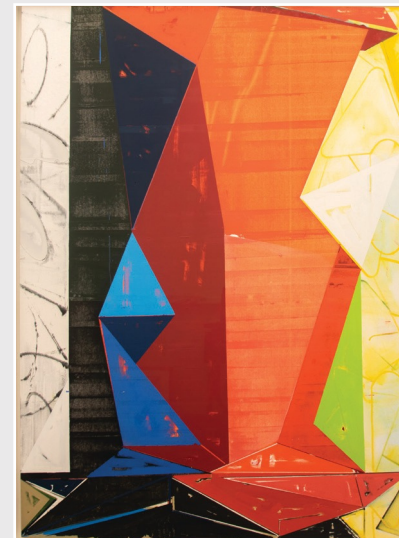
### 3: Power and Light Clock *Power and Light Building Engineering Staff*

This unique clock is thought to have been built in the 1950s by the Power & Light Building's engineering staff in appreciation of the iconic Kansas City landmark located at 14th and Baltimore. For more information about this landmark, visit its entry on [TheClio.com](http://TheClio.com).



### 4: Portrait of Taylor S. Abernathy *Adrian Lamb*

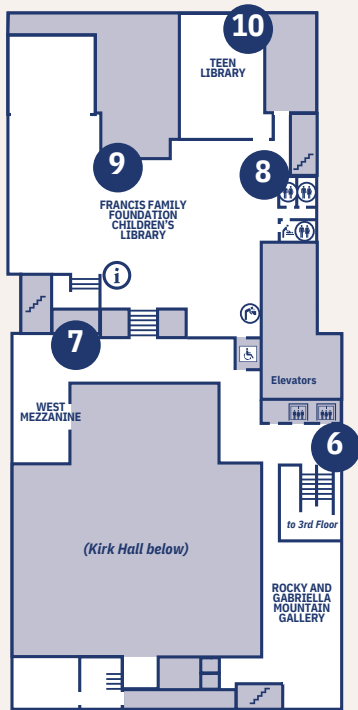
This portrait, rich in russet tones of red and yellow, depicts Taylor S. Abernathy, former President of First National Bank of Kansas City, which was housed in this building.



### 5: Uncommon Behavior *Warren Rosser*

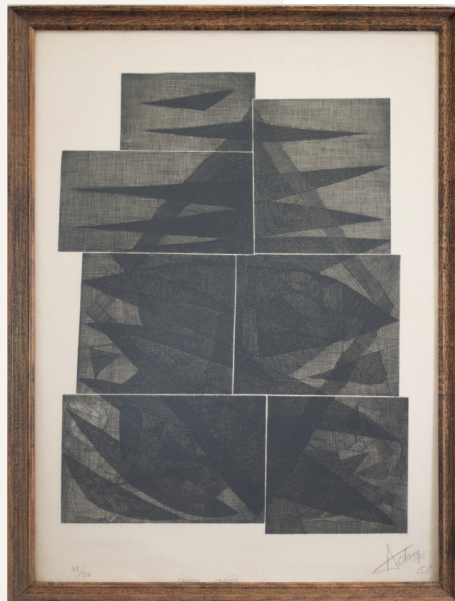
This oil painting explores dimensionality through color and evokes different geometric forms as the viewer moves around the work.

## 2ND FLOOR



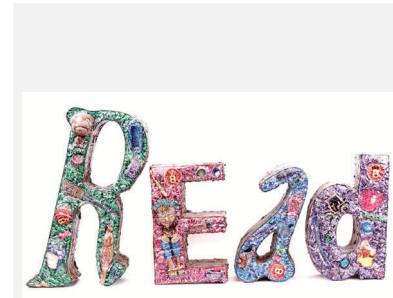
### 6: James M. Greenwood Memorial Chair

The white marble and reserved ornament of this commemorative chair conveys the sense of honor and distinction given to James M. Greenwood (1836–1914), a lifelong contributor to Kansas City's educational institutions, and founder of this Library.



### 7: Ombres Gravées Henri-George Adam

“Ombres Gravées” translates roughly to “serious shadows”, which offers a fitting analysis of this print by 20th century French engraver Henri-George Adam.



### 8: Leighton Letters Richard J. Hinger

Leighton Letters is a series of works created for public libraries worldwide by found object sculptor Richard J. Hinger. Works from Leighton Letters named after the artist's Pennsylvania birthplace are on exhibit in London, New York City, Paris, Washington D.C., and 60 other public libraries.



### 9: Victorian Birdhouse Unknown

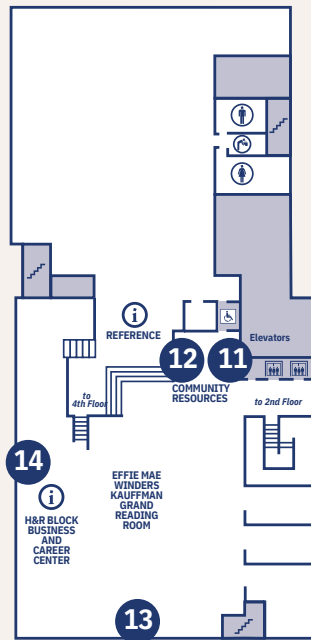
This birdhouse was modeled after Victorian architecture with a tight, heightened layout that features a tower, multiple roof lines, gabled windows with window boxes, and a ground level porch. Circular 1 inch cutouts on the left and right sides of the house provide entry suitable for smaller bird species.



### 10: Spiderman and the Incredible Hulk: Chaos in Kansas City Unknown

“Chaos in Kansas City” was the title of a twenty-page comic that was a 1982 supplement of The Kansas City Star. This enlarged poster print of the comic's cover depicts The Amazing Spider-Man, The Incredible Hulk and Kraven the Hunter battling it out in front of the historic Jones Store, located in downtown Kansas City, Missouri.

## 3RD FLOOR



### 11: Spirit of Industry

*Harold 'Tuck' Langland*

A miniature bronze maquette representing the Spirit of Industry. In her right hand is a sheaf of wheat, a symbol of agriculture, and in her left hand, a distaff representing manufacturing.

### 12: Spirit of Commerce

*Harold 'Tuck' Langland*

A companion to "Spirit of Industry," the bronze maquette titled "Spirit of Commerce," holds the torch of progress in her right hand and the caduceus of Mercury in her left hand.



### 13: KCPL Commemorative Plate

*Irma Starr*

Commissioned by the Kemper Family, this ceramic plate was created for the Library by Kansas City based, but world-renowned, ceramicist Irma Starr. Starr's process is modeled after the 17th century slipware style of pottery.

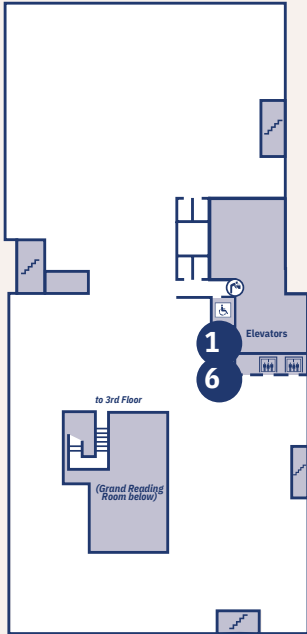


### 14: Panoramic View of West Bottoms

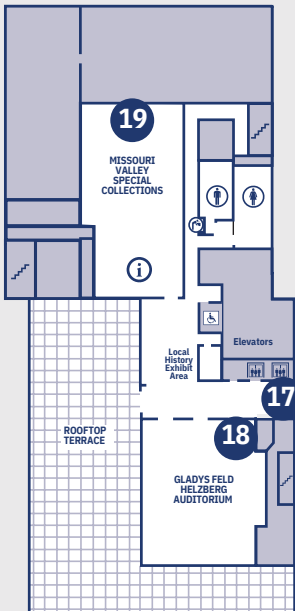
*Augustus Koch*

While informational, this map also conveys the vitality of the West bottoms district in the early history of Kansas City, emphasizing the area as a confluence point of trade and commerce.

## 4TH FLOOR



## 5TH FLOOR



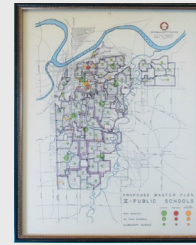
**15: American Architect and Building News, Grace Church**  
*Heliotype Print Co. Boston*

This print of the October 1887 cover of American Architect and Building News features an entry for the 1887 design competition for Grace Church in Kansas City, Missouri. The design ultimately chosen was created by Frederick Elmer Hill, and the church exists on 13th Street.



**16: American Architect and Building News, New England Building**  
*Heliotype Print Co. Boston*

This drawing illustrates a street view of the New England Building, located in downtown Kansas City, and designed by the architectural firm Bradlee, Winslow and Wetherell from Boston, Massachusetts. The New England Building still exists today in the Library District of Downtown Kansas City, Missouri, located at 112 West 9th Street.



**17: 1946 City Plan Commission Maps**  
*Kansas City Planning Commission*

These reproduction prints feature elements symbolizing existing and proposed parking arrangements, public spaces, housing, businesses, industrial areas, and more. Each element is color or pattern coordinated and corresponds to a legend in the lower right-hand corner of each map.

**18: Grandfather Clock**  
*Bulova*

The San Carlos Grandfather clock is adorned with three weights, a pendulum, and a choice of Westminster, Whittington, or St. Michael chimes. This is one of seven grandfather clocks on view in the Central Library.



**19: Lewis and Clark Expedition**  
*Eugene L. Daub*

Created by American contemporary figure sculptor, Eugene L. Daub, this work depicts the Lewis and Clark Expedition team who appear cautious, yet brave, as they look out to the uncharted Frontier, in the space around the sculpture.



*To learn more about the Central Library's history and architecture visit our entry on [TheClio.com](#).*

Kansas City Public Library  
14 W. 10th Street  
Kansas City, MO 64105  
[www.kclibrary.org](http://www.kclibrary.org)

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