

SPORTFOLIO

It's been awhile since a visit to the stadium was accessorized by nothing more than a dog and a beer. Posh bistros and interactive gaming areas were a start, but these days, teams are turning up the cultural heat with some highbrow browsing. Fine art in the arena? That's right, you lughead. Try not to deface it with your foam finger.

-DALE BRAUNER

"It's a different experience painting in front of 1,200 New Jersey construction workers or listening to a fire alarm test for three straight hours as you try to paint a giant nose on a hockey player. It challenges your creative focus."

-TOM MOSSER

1. COWBOYS STADIUM, ARLINGTON As part of his Cowboys Art Program, Jerry Jones commissioned 14 contemporary pieces by renowned artists to hang in his new Colosseum. "My piece came on TV during the home opener," says Gary Simmons, referring to his Blue Field Explosions installation. "Within 30 seconds, I'd gotten a ton of texts and tweets. You don't get that kind of response if your stuff is hanging in a museum."



2. PRUDENTIAL CENTER, NEWARK The main draw at the Devils' art-laced home is a 200'x30' painting dubbed The Mural. Pittsburgh-based Tom Mosser finished the mammoth depiction of Devils and Seton Hall sports history in six weeks by using his ambidextrous impressionism technique. Yes, he painted with both hands at once.



3. CONSOL ENERGY CENTER, PITTSBURGH The Penguins hired Oakland-based artist Walter Hood to fancy up

their new joint, and his Curtain Call—a 15-foot-tall, stainless steel drape embedded with thousands of color photos—will grace the walkway to the arena when it opens, in 2010.



4. LAND SHARK STADIUM, MIAMI The murals of internationally renowned Romero Britto spice up the stadium's helixes and entrances, and more are planned for the future. Says Dolphins majority owner Stephen Ross, "Britto's art is unequalled and representative of our diverse region. It's a perfect fit for us."

"Curtain Call celebrates the people who lived and worked in the Hill neighborhood. I'm hoping fans experience it as a sculpture that inspires them."

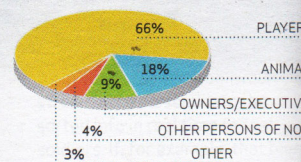
-WALTER HOOD



GOOD WITH FIGURES

As any keeper of one of the 33 statue-graced pro venues can attest, nothing says "howdy" louder than a frozen facsimile of a legend.*

STATUES, BY TYPE:



*Or a giant stallion. At 27 feet, Invesco Field's Bucky Bronco is sports' tallest stadium sculpture. He was built in 1975 from a model of Roy Rogers' trusted mount, Trigger.

PLAYERS HONORED WITH STATUES AT TWO VENUES:

- Ty Cobb Comerica Park, Detroit; Turner Field, Atlanta
- Hank Aaron Miller Park, Milwaukee; Turner Field, Atlanta
- Wayne Gretzky Rexall Place, Edmonton; Staples Center,



Q+A When owners want to add a veneer of sophistication to their venue, they call Tracie Speca, founder of Sports & the Arts, a stadium-curating firm.

HOW EXACTLY DOES ONE CURATE A STADIUM?

You want art that elicits a response from fans. But you also have to work with scale—these venues are large—and there's the matter of putting the art in spots where it can attract viewers but still be out of harm's way. When we plan designs, we aim to capture the community flavor. So we use local artists and look closely at the team's history. Initially, the Yankees just wanted photography in their new stadium. So we researched over 60,000 images and targeted certain historical themes that would carry throughout the venue. But as you continue to work, you find new gems and the project evolves.