

Ground Ball

Nashville, Tennessee

From its very beginning, Nashville, Tennessee grew from a foundation built on music. Music has been the common thread connecting the life and soul of the city and its people. Visitors have ventured there to experience the music that weaves such a fundamental pattern in its cultural, business, and social fabric. But “Music City” has become much more than just music – Nashville’s art scene is booming with art galleries, festivals, art crawls and more. Art is everywhere and there is something for everyone to enjoy.

Metro Nashville Arts Commission, or Metro Arts, is the arts and cultural division for the City of Nashville. They believe all Nashvillians should participate in a creative life with the arts driving a more vibrant and equitable community. Art, culture, and creativity reflect a city’s spirit and values — they are its pulse. Although music is most known throughout Nashville, arts and cultural

participation have been central to Nashville’s history and economic livelihood. Metro Arts is the designated driver and facilitator of programs, policies and practices that support arts and cultural vibrancy in Nashville. As part of the city’s green and healthy living initiatives, Metro Arts commissioned local and regional artists to design bicycle racks to be installed in downtown Nashville and adjacent neighborhoods. The program began in 2010, and has resulted in dozens of creative, engaging bike racks placed across the city. The majority of these bike racks were galvanized, increasing the awareness of galvanizing to the millions of people that see and use these pieces of art. This has given the galvanizing market a huge potential for growth as other artist and architects discover the look and benefits of galvanizing. Phase III of this program was completed in 2017 with the final bike rack known as Ground Ball located at First Tennessee Park, home to the Nashville Sounds, a Triple-A minor league baseball team.

First Tennessee Park opened its doors on April 17, 2015 to a sellout crowd of 10,459 and welcomed a total of 565,548 visitors in 2015. Ground Ball is more than a bike rack – it is also a public art installation. Because of its location outside of a new baseball stadium, and potential for large crowds, Ground Ball is designed to appeal to the non-cycling visitors to the ballpark as engaging public art. The fabricator and galvanizer were challenged to maintain the artist’s vision that incorporates movement, whimsy, and the universal appeal of baseball for people of diverse ages, languages, and backgrounds. Fabricated solely from a drawing on an 8x10 sheet, Ground Ball was a complex design. The glove and ball were custom made using 10 gauge sheet steel with the



ball fabricated in a spherical shape with stitches and seems welded to the exterior. Since the art installation has a dual purpose as a functioning bike rack, there is an increased potential for damage to the painted surface in the form of chip and scratches. To prevent rusting of the underlying steel, and discoloration of the art, resulting from chipping of the painted surfaces, the entire piece of art was hot-dip galvanized prior to painting.

The underlying galvanized steel will help maintain the original appearance of the bike rack/art piece installation for years to come. Preventing corrosion from use and time is essential to extend the life of design. As an added touch, the installation was powder coated after galvanizing to create a smooth texture as part of the artist’s vision. The artist kept the gray color as the top coat, so the color of the zinc would blend in as the paint chips, the color will also keep the gray theme of the surrounding building and Sounds Stadium appearance. ■

Galvanizer

AZZ Galvanizing - Nashville

Fabricator

Bellex Incorporated

Specifier

Nashville Metro Arts Commission



Duplex Systems

