

James Johnson

Norman East Branch Library Artwork

Working Title: *Prairie Wind*

As a sculptor, I have always been concerned with creating works of art that cause the viewer to pause and reflect upon their surroundings and in doing so become more aware of the environment that they are passing through. In addition, each work of art that I have designed and fabricated is a reflection of past experiences that have shaped my life and the interest that I have in ancient cultures, especially the Mayan and Inca that used art as a means of communicating their lifestyles and cultures. Equally important has been my use of the arch as a means of transforming the viewer from a place and time of activity to one of calm and reflection.

The design for the East Branch Library was inspired by several factors: the design of the library, its location and surrounding environment, and experiences I had while living in the wide open spaces of the mid-west. In part, the sculpture is a reflection on my vision of those experiences and the movement of the wind across the prairie. Equally important was to create a work of art that would attract the attention of the viewer from afar and up close. In addition, the sculpture is intended to have an interactive quality. I hope to accomplish this by placing the sculpture in a position where the winter and summer solstice will cast a light through the upper opening of the sculpture on to the front wall of the library. It is my intention to return to Norman for the winter solstice on December the 21st to work out the logistics required to achieve that goal.