



Lisa Grossman/Contributed Photo

**LOCAL ARTIST**  
LISA GROSSMAN'S  
PAINTING of the  
Kansas River will be  
displayed at the new  
LMH West campus.

By Lauren Fox  
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Lisa Grossman had a mantra of solace as she worked on her latest painting. That's because she knew the piece would be going up in LMH West.

"It's such an honor to have work in hospitals and care facilities," the Lawrence-based artist said. "It's kind of a luxury to know where a commission is going. I can be mindful of creating a certain mood."

Grossman's painting, an aerial view of the Kansas River, will be one of about 35 works of art for the new facility. She chose to paint a portion of the Kansas River just

LMH Health teams up with local artists to surround patients with beautiful works:

## Creating a sense of 'peace & solace'

about four miles north of the LMH West facility.

"I was happy to provide an image of the river that is physically about as close as possible to the new building," she said.

Grossman said rivers are highly symbolic and that people may associate

them with the journey of life or their ability to sustain communities. She wants her piece to be "an image of beauty and peace and solace for people walking through the door."

Local artists will be creating all of the permanent pieces for the LMH West

facility. That was a priority for LMH Health President and CEO Russ Johnson, who teamed up with the Lawrence Arts Center to find local artists.

"I think over the last 20 years especially, we've all learned that health is much broader than just

medicine," Johnson said, noting that the environment of a workplace can help bring people peace. "To be able to work with the Arts Center and local artists in this endeavor is just a natural extension of what it means to be part of a healthy community."

Ben Ahlvers, exhibitions director with the Lawrence Arts Center, said the idea to have local artists make pieces for the facility came from LMH Health. "They made it a priority," Ahlvers said.

In addition to the permanent pieces — of which some were commissioned and others purchased from an artist's existing collection — there will also be a gallery space on the second floor of the facility that will rotate works about three to four times a year.

Ahlvers said this has been an interesting project, because he and the artists had to think about

## Art

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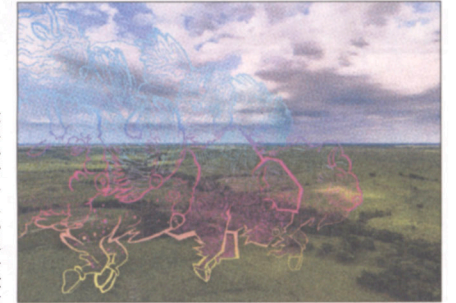
what would be engaging for the facility's clients and visitors. He's used to creating exhibitions for an audience coming specifically for that exhibit. For this project, he had to think about what would be interesting and engaging for people entering the facility who are likely not expecting an artistic experience.

"It's not decoration," Ahlvers said. "We're putting art in there made by local artists that will be experienced (by locals) that maybe gives them a chance to take their mind off something that they or their loved ones are experiencing."

Ahlvers said he toured the facility and learned about the programs within, such as therapy and women's health. That helped him make thoughtful choices about artwork that would fit with specific departments.

Local artists and best friends Adam Lott and Adam Smith were commissioned to do a piece that shows movement for the therapy location. The piece is "very Kansas-centric," they said, and portrays buffalo running on the Kansas Flint Hills.

Their work pairs Smith's photography with Lott's illustrations. Smith said his photo of the Flint Hills was taken with a drone and that he took it specifically for this commission. Lott illustrated running buffalo on top of the image to convey movement and pay tribute to the spirit of Kansas. He said he liked the idea of having them run in the sky and that the numerous colors of the buffalo are also meant to convey a type of movement.



Adam Lott and Adam Smith/Contributed Image

**LOCAL ARTISTS ADAM LOTT AND ADAM SMITH** created this image for LMH West.

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— Ben Ahlvers, exhibitions director with the Lawrence Arts Center

Smith said they are excited to have "a statement piece in a public space" and they hope it will bring them more work in the future. The duo are also happy that LMH Health is investing in the community's artists.

Smith, who said he spent a lot of time in hospitals as a child, said it is "important for the mental well-being of patients to see the care that's being put into making that environment friendly for them."

Johnson said the art budget for the new building was \$225,000, and that they ended up being below budget. He also said he enjoyed meeting and working with the local art community.

"(It's) not that often that the work of a hospital intersects with the work of local artists ... so to be able to do that is just a way to build each other up and strengthen our community," he said.

In addition to supporting local professional artists, Johnson mentioned that LMH West will have photos from employees mounted and hung on the walls. This is something LMH has been doing for years at the hospital on Maine Street. Employees can take pictures around Lawrence or on vacations and submit them for consideration. In LMH West, these photos will be hung in clinic areas and hallways.

The locally commissioned pieces, rotating gallery and employee photos will give the hospital a community feel, Johnson said.

"It's much more beautiful than buying a bunch of stock work that doesn't have a personal connection to anybody," he said.