Donna L. Dobberfuhl is an accredited provider of AIA CE credits, a certified member of the South Central Texas Regional Certification Agency and a contributing member of the Public Art Design Charette for the City of Austin, TX.

Ms. Dobberfuhl’s sculpture works have been featured on CBS’s Sunday Morning, CNN, Fox News, The Discovery Channel and Texas Country Reporter.

Current Commissioned Projects:

- **Fabric of Frisco**©
  City Hall Complex
  Frisco TX

- **Cooter Circle Fountain**©
  Municipal Administration Building
  Inverness FL

- **Longhorn Mosey**©
  Redbird Ranch
  San Antonio TX

Commission inquiries are always welcome • Portfolio available upon request •

Donna L. Dobberfuhl:

MFA, New York Academy of Art
Graduate School of Figurative Art
Austin Artisans
National Sculpture Society
Certified Member: SCTRCA
American Society of Classical Realism

These commissions have all been accomplished for a “public audience” and have included my personal and extensive interaction with project planning committees. Specifically, I have enjoyed working closely with the National Park Service, public art commissions, churches, schools, municipalities and zoological parks.

I enjoy working with the dictates of the site to find the best possible solution for the specific context of the proposed project. I believe a large part of my artistic success has been due to my ability to listen closely to my client’s vision and helping to successfully interpret that vision into a sculpture that continues to reflect and inspire my client’s aspirations.
**Sculpted Brick Murals**

**INTRODUCTION**

Brick sculpture may be designed for either exterior or interior sites. It can be integrated into the wall, be free-standing, or even used as a floor installation. Most any circumstance can be utilized for a successful presentation with maximum effect.

After the project details are decided (location, brick type, square footage, budget, timeline), a specified project contract is signed. The contract’s down payment begins the project’s design phase.

**DESIGN PHASE**

Preliminary designs are developed on paper, based on meetings with the client and/or the client’s architect.

When the design concept is finalized, the order for raw brick may be placed with the chosen brick plant.

Final full-scale design drawings are completed in the Studio. These drawings are used to transfer the design to the raw brick material for sculpting. The actual sculpting takes place at the designated brick plant within the plant’s regular coordinated firing production schedule.

Not all brick plants can accommodate a sculpture project. If the desired brick comes from a plant that has never produced a brick sculpture, special preparations need to be made well in advance. The Sculptor’s knowledge of specific plants that have the capabilities of handling the needs of sculpted brick can provide guidance to the client in this process.

The sculpture’s brick material does not necessarily have to be the same brick material that is used in the overall scheme of a building project. If the two are planned to match, a single material order is placed to ensure that the sculpted and field brick match each other, i.e., they need to be a part of the same run to assure an overall uniformity of color.

**Sculpting Phase**

A floor-standing easel is used for sculpting. The raw brick is delivered to the workroom as needed, then laid onto the easel in the correct bond order. Spacers are used to mimic the bed and head mortar joints. Work has to move at a fast pace because the raw brick is designed to dry quickly. To even out the drying process, the material is covered with plastic during sculpting.

Brick solids are used to allow for the maximum available sculpting depth. Special shapes of upward to a 12” bed depth can be used for dramatic emphasis. Depending upon the size of the planned project, each sculpture design can be from 500-2,000 or more brick handled, each weighing 10-20 lbs to 50 lbs.

**Production Phase**

When the sculpting is completed, the raw brick is taken down from the easel and the individual bricks are numbered for specific placement. The solid bricks then have core holes hand-drilled in them to promote uniform drying. Stacked on drying racks, they are left to air-dry completely and slowly. Once dry, the brick is hand-stacked onto kiln cars and run through a mechanical dryer to expel any remaining pockets of moisture. The sculpted brick then becomes a part of the brick plant’s regular production line. To insure that the hand-dried brick is really ready, it travels through the “drying rooms” twice. From here, the sculpted brick travels directly to the “burn-out” phase (kiln firing).

The brick sculpture will take about five days to travel through the almost 100-yard long kiln. Here the brick is exposed to a constant increase in temperature, reaching a 2,000º maximum at the midway point. From there, the temperature is gradually decreased until the brick are about 400º when they emerge from the kiln.

The fired brick sculpture is once again laid up on the easel to insure there was no damage. If damage did occur, brick material saved from the initial run are sculpted and sent through the kiln for completion.

**Installation Phase**

The completed brick design is then carefully packed and shipped to the designated installation site where the brick masons proceed with the actual installation under the direct supervision of the Sculptor.

The Sculptor stays with the masons, following their work and tooling the mortar joints to complete the “flow” of the sculpture’s design.

Finally, the completed sculpture is inspected, washed down and, if necessary, sealed.

It’s done! WHEW!