



Photography by Wolf Matthewson

HANGING COURTSIDE AT PROVIDENCE'S NINTH STREET COURTS

BY LAUREN CLEM

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Early in his career, New York City-based artist Sanford Biggers created elaborate dance floors for breakdancing artists from hand-cut rubber tiles. So when My HomeCourt reached out to him about crafting a mural on the pavement of Providence's Ninth Street Courts, the work seemed like a perfect fit. Biggers based the design on his "Codex" quilt series, which draws inspiration from the disputed history of quilts as possible signposts on the Underground Railroad. "I started thinking of Harriet Tubman as an astronaut reading the stars and navigating on her path up north seeing quilts," he says. Artists from Lawrence, Massachusetts-based Elevated Thought transferred the design to the basketball and tennis courts, and the work was unveiled last month. The project is the fifth completed by My HomeCourt, a nonprofit that partners with the Providence Parks Department and Providence College Galleries to bring art to under-resourced city parks. Executive Director Kate McNamara says local parks offer a more accessible canvas than a gallery or a museum. "To encounter art somewhere you play basketball feels like an interesting opportunity and opening for conversation," she says. Biggers sees the murals as a natural progression of his artwork, one he hopes inspires local residents to get out and enjoy the park. "They're great to look at, but they're even more beautiful when people are active on them," he says.