

LOCAL & STATE

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MURAL MAKER | MARK ADAMANY



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PHOTOS BY AMY J. VAN HORN | ROCKFORD REGISTER STAR
Mark Adamany sits on a ladder beneath a painted sectional mural that has been installed on an inside wall at Rock River Ford in Rockford. The mural depicts auto scenes throughout Rockford's history.

Rockford artist tells big stories with big murals

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of our customers bought these cars when they were brand-new."

The dealership hopes to host an open house for the local Mustang club in the spring to come and see the new artwork, an idea born of Anderson owner Brian Anderson.

"Brian's real proud of the city and has a real love for Rockford," Beale said. "He wanted to find a way to tie in the history of Ford and the history of the city."

Beale said Adamany has done such a good job that customers are asking if the dealership bought the new art pieces from Ford.

Adamany said he enjoys helping businesses express themselves and get their messages across in his art.

"I remember on my first mural job for BeefaRoo back in 1992," he said. "It was this '50s theme that I did on the outside of the one on South Alpine Road. I was out there, playing '50s music and people were getting into it, stopping by and saying, 'Oh, what are you doing?' and 'That looks great.' And I thought to myself, 'Wouldn't this be a cool thing to do for a living?'"

Today, Adamany is that full-time artist, working almost exclusively in murals. He said he likes the challenge of big art.

"There's a real skill to it," he said. "To taking this image and painting it to that kind of scale. I've just always liked it. The public nature of it kind of promotes itself."

Staff writer Corina Curry can be reached at ccurry@rrstar.com or 815-987-1395.

Life's work of art

Rockford artist tells big stories with big murals.

By Corina Curry
ROCKFORD REGISTER STAR

ROCKFORD — Rockford mural artist Mark Adamany's latest installation spans 392 square feet and tells the history of Rockford and the Ford Motor Co. without saying a word.

The images of cars — everything from the Model T and Fairlane to the Cobra and Mustang — and historic Rockford landmarks from the Coronado and Midway theaters to the Rockford Speedway and Geri's Hamburgers — now grace a 32-by-7-foot wall and four 6-by-7-foot spaces high above the showroom at Rock River Ford, 224 N. Alpine Road.

Adamany, whose massive, wall-sized artwork can be seen at about 30 lo-



A vintage Ford 427 Cobra, by Rockford artist Mark Adamany, is painted on a mural at Rock River Ford in Rockford.

cations in the Rock River Valley and in nine states, was commissioned to bring the walls of the newly renovated Rock River Block showroom to life in March. The 41-year-old Rockford College graduate added the piece to his portfolio of work at restaurants, bars, banks, fitness centers, movie theaters, resorts,

corporations and churches in October.

"It's always neat to meet people who don't know what I do and hear them say, 'Oh, my God. I've seen that' when they ask about what I do and where my work is," Adamany said. "It's extremely satisfying to put this huge painting out there for the world to see. The majority of my work is not hidden away in someone's living room."

Adamany has painted the illustrated map of Africa at the Kalahari Waterpark Resort in Wisconsin Dells and an American flag and bald eagle on the exterior wall of a Pepsi distribution center north of Madison, Wis. He's also done a number of movie theaters, including award-winning work at the Star Cinemas in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The piece, an Egyptian and science-fiction theme that was named in Signs of the Times maga-

zine's 2008 International Sign Design competition, covers more than 6,000 square feet and features a 3,100-square-foot dome. He also painted a Caribbean seascape in the pool area of Peak Fitness and a number of murals, both inside and outside, for BeefaRoo, Big Al's Bar in Giovanni's and now, a car dealership.

The dealership underwent an interior renovation this year, replacing brown wood paneling with more modern dark gray walls. The artwork, which features Ford model cars from 1910 to the 1970s, looms high above the new sports cars and SUVs on the showroom floor.

"It's a conversation piece. It makes people feel good, seeing the old cars," said Rick Beale, Anderson Automotive group chief operating officer. "A lot

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