

Leonard Knight was born on November 2, 1931, and grew up with five brothers and sisters on a thirty-two acre farm near Shelbourne Falls, Vermont. He attended a one-room grammar school and dropped out of high school after the tenth grade. He went to work repairing automobiles until he was drafted. He was sent to Korea and was promoted to acting sergeant. After the war he alternated periods in Vermont with travel back and forth across the United States, living in whatever vehicle he was driving and supporting himself with odd jobs. Along the way, he became converted to evangelical Christianity. He spent five years building a hot air balloon nearly three hundred feet high, carrying the message that God is Love, and trying, unsuccessfully, to fly it. He finally gave up when the fabric of the balloon rotted, found himself in the desert near Niland, California in 1985 and went to work creating Salvation Mountain.

Currently Leonard hosts fifty to one hundred visitors to his mountain each day. In all, thousands of visitors from all over the world have made this out of the way journey to visit Salvation Mountain. Leonard is still happily at work painting and sculpting this enormous work in progress.

Leonard Knight and Salvation Mountain made the Congressional Record of the United States of America Wednesday, May 15, 2002.

Leonard Knight's work has been featured on television and cable programs:

CNN, BBC, The Learning Channel, The Discovery Channel,
Canal Plus, CBC, Huell Hauser of The California Gold Show,
Nova Inc., ABC Evening News, UCLA

Leonard Knight's work has been featured in the following books:

Self-Made Worlds, Aperture (1997)
Salvation Mountain, New Leaf Press (1998)
Fantasy Worlds, Taschen (1999)
Salt Dreams, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque (1999)
Eccentric America, Bradt (2001)
Outsider Art, Thames & Hudson (2001)
Art Cars, Lark Books (2002)
Eccentric Style, Taschen (2002)

Leonard Knight has appeared at:

Hennessey & Ingalls (Santa Monica, CA 1998)
The Outsider Art Fair (New York, NY 1999)
The Small Press Center (New York, NY 1999)
The New Museum (New York, NY 1999)
Los Angeles Times Book Fair (Los Angeles, CA 1999)

Leonard Knight's work has been shown at:

The Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, Santa Barbara, CA (Sept. - Oct. 1995)
The American Visionary Art Museum, Baltimore, MD
(Oct. 1996 - June 1997; May 1998 - May 1999)
Sheppard Art Gallery, Reno, NV (Oct. - Dec. 1996)
The Nevada Institute of Contemporary Art, Las Vegas, NV (Jan. - Feb. 1997)
Palm Springs Desert Museum, Palm Springs, CA (June 1998)

Leonard Knight's work has appeared in print in the following magazines and journals:

Detour Magazine (December 1995)
Raw Vision Magazine (England) (Fall 1996)
Santa Barbara Magazine (Fall 1997)
Orion Magazine (Spring 1998)
Folkways Newsletter (Spring 1998)
Orange County Register (July 10, 1998)
Time Magazine (August 17, 1998)
Raw Vision Magazine (England) (Summer 1998)
Art Forum Magazine (November 1998)
Al Weber's Newsletter (1998)
Los Angeles Times (March 4, 1999)
Los Angeles Times Sunday Magazine (March 28, 1999)
Men's Journal (March 1999)
Speak Up (Italy) (April 1999)
Folk Art Messenger (Spring 1999)
Lay of the Land Newsletter (Spring 1999)
The Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine (June 6, 1999)
Folk Art Messenger (Summer 1999)
Ames Gallery Newsletter (Fall 1999)
Al Weber's Newsletter (1999)
Washington Post (January 15, 2000)
Folk Art Messenger (Fall 2000)
The Outsider (Winter 2000)
Al Weber's Newsletter (2000)
The New York Times (February 18, 2001)
Chrismon Plus (Germany) (June 2001)
Al Weber's Newsletter (2001)
Trailer Life (February 2002)
Los Angeles Times (April 11, 2002)
Cape Cod Times (May 9, 2002)
The Modesto Bee (May 13, 2002)
The Sun (July 2, 2002)
Reader's Digest (July 2002)
Svenska Journalen (Sweden, 2002)
Al Weber's Newsletter (2002)
EZ Magazine (Japan)
Roadside USA (Japan)
Abspann (Switzerland)
Los Angeles Magazine (April 1999) (*not shown*)
Los Angeles Reader (*not shown*)
Metropolis Magazine (*not shown*)
Westways Magazine (*not shown*)
Die Woche (Germany) (*not shown*)