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'MAGIC SHADOWS'

Catapult's 'Magic Shadows' spellbinds Jorgensen Center

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UConn should listen to the Gampel family

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MEN'S BASKETBALL

Solo Ball cleared for full-contact practice

Mansfield Public Library collaborates with local artists for display



Derri Owen hosts her pieces for Art on the Square, the event that she proposed. The event took place in Downtown Mansfield on Oct. 10.
PHOTO COURTESY OF AUTHOR

SPORTS EVENTS OF THE WEEK

WOMEN'S SWIM
Nov. 17-20 | Iowa City, IA

MEN'S BASKETBALL
Nov. 18 | 9 p.m. | Tuscon, Ariz.

MEN'S HOCKEY
Nov. 19 | 7 p.m. | Storrs, Conn.

WOMEN'S HOCKEY
Nov. 20 | 6 p.m. | Burlington, VT

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
Nov. 20 | 8 p.m. | Hartford, Conn.

MEN'S HOCKEY
Nov. 21 | Durham, N.H.

WOMEN'S HOCKEY
Nov. 21 | 3 p.m. | Burlington, VT

FOOTBALL
Nov. 21 | 3:30 p.m. | East Hartford, Conn.

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Mansfield Public Library is collaborating with a local artist who is working to get fine art from the area more accessible to the community through public events and a showcase dedicated to other artists.

The idea for the library showcase and public art events like Art on the Square came from Derri Owen, owner of Windy Skies Studio in Willimantic. She began her art journey 40 years ago.

"When my second child was two, I picked up a paintbrush and I just couldn't put it down," Owen said.

With that desire to paint came Owen's hope for improvement.

"I just couldn't stop painting, and, finally, I felt like I needed to do something to get better," she said.

Owen recalled starting to paint without the knowledge that she needed water for watercolor, so her pieces looked similar to acrylic work in the way that it was "thick and sticky."

When debating if she should attend art school at 36, a professor at the University of Connecticut, Roger Crossgrove, told her that art school is for the 18-year-old who needs to be molded, whereas she was "so far down her path" on her own.

"I'm not realistic, I don't look at anything when I paint," Owen said about her painting process.

Owen said she primarily paints her memories and dreams. One example she gave was a piece of her dream house with a realistic twist, focused on price and a "fixer upper" element to it.

Owen said her pieces carry a lot of the emotions she feels.

"I had to do a painting on the saddest thing I could think of," which Owen said resulted in her piece of a fallen angel.

"What I'm trying to say, really, about life [is there's] brightness behind all that we suffer," Owen said about her work.

Owen said she's also occupied by hobbies and roles beyond painting.

"I volunteer helping farm animals that have been rescued off bad farms and it's my other passion," Owen said about her volunteer work and interest in animal rights advocacy.

When it comes to her art, Owen said she's shocked at the local reaction and appreciation she gets for those pieces, which she likes to include in her art.

Owen said she used to teach but now focuses on her work at art exhibitions and getting local community members involved in art.

This led Owen to call the Mansfield Public Library with the hope of exhibiting local art there for the community. The library was on board and had an idea to repurpose a 40-foot wall that was covered with children's toys.

"We could take all the toys down, and paint it," Owen said. Since then, every month has featured a new artist's work on the wall for the community to observe and appreciate.

Owen said she partnered with the library's director, Devon Andrews, to complete the wall for local art exhibitions which was launched in April 2025.

"Derri was the catalyst in getting the conversation started," said Andrews.

Since the transformation, the wall has showcased all kinds of local artists on a monthly basis. Artists range from local elementary school kids to pieces from the library's staff, Owen said.

"It's been great because some people come to the library to see the art, they might not already be visitors, and then some people already are," said Andrews. She described the wall and community interaction as a "win-win" because the community is connected to local art in different ways, and the library gets to play a hand in that.

This upcoming month's wall will feature local artist Ann Williams. The display will be paintings among other art forms. Williams' work has been featured in previous exhibits at the Mansfield Community Center and other museums.

The Mansfield Public Library sign. The library is located in Mansfield Center.
PHOTO BY JONATHAN MORKOS, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



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MEME OF THE DAY

