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Donny & Marie **CHRISTMAS IN GREENSBORO**

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Taking art to downtown streets

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JERRY WOLFORD/News & Record

Ed Miller, wearing his Cyclops Bird Business Man head, leads Members of Megan Marlatt's Big Head Brigade on Friday as they march along South Elm Street in Greensboro as part of Art in Odd Places 2013. The Big Head Brigade is a collective of artists who create, wear and perform in giant heads inspired by the Spanish folk art tradition of "capgrossos" (or big heads).



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Want to go?

What: Art in Odd Places

When: noon-9 p.m. today

Where: South Elm Street, from Lee Street to Market Street. One performance involving honking car horns is scheduled for 7 p.m. in the Davie Street parking deck at Davie and Market streets.

Admission: Free

Posted: Saturday, November 2, 2013 11:30 am

By Dawn DeCwikiel-Kane dawn.kane@news-record.com

GREENSBORO — Atlanta artist Terry S. Hardy created a patterned field of flowers near the downtown South Elm Street railroad tracks.

Across Elm Street, local sculptor Jim Gallucci displayed a steel work decorated with highway signs, symbolic of life's varied paths traveled each day.

A few blocks north, Swiss saxophonist Laurent Estoppey performed in a store alcove. Virginia artists wearing cast papier mache heads marched by.

On Friday evening, more than 40 artists from as far as Colorado and Minnesota brought new visual and performance art downtown to South Elm Street.

In the stretch from Lee Street to Market Street, they exhibited their talents in the first Greensboro appearance of the New York-based festival Art in Odd Places, or AiOP.

"There are going to be so many surprises

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Information: www.artinoddplaces.org/greensboro for a complete list of artists and their work and a map.



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for folks," said Harriet Hoover, a UNCG art instructor and AiOP project coordinator.

She and other AiOP organizers from UNCG were relieved when rain gave way to dry skies. The event will resume today from noon to 9 p.m.

On Friday, artists found a ready audience among crowds attending First Friday and N.C. A&T homecoming festivities.

Visitors saw 35 music, sound and dance performances, art installations, video projections, drawings and book art — all illustrating the assigned theme of

"number."

"It's a good way for the everyday person to get bombarded with different art experiences, outside the gallery, outside the museum," said Hardy, the Atlanta artist.

AiOP organizes an annual October festival on 14th Street in Manhattan. This year, Australia also hosted its own version.

UNCG's art department worked with the Weatherspoon Art Museum, Downtown Greensboro Inc. and the Southeastern College Art Conference to bring the art program to Greensboro.

Sheryl Oring, who teaches art at UNCG, and Xandra Eden, Weatherspoon curator of exhibitions, curated the local project. They hope it will return in the future.

New York artist Ed Woodham, founder of Art in Odd Places, wanted to see the artistry displayed against Elm Street's historic buildings.

"Art in Odd Places is not just about the art, but about the architectural details of Greensboro and looking at your city with a fresh perspective," Woodham said.

He stopped for a saxophone performance by Estoppey, who lives and works between Greensboro and Switzerland.

Estoppey based his 10-minute personalized concerts on British composer Charles Dakin's "Tarot de Marseille," 22 short pieces of music connected to the major arcana of the tarot.

Sam Knights, a UNCG graduate, drove from Raleigh to view a friend's art. She also wanted to see Out of Gas, a performance in which Adam Moser drove up and down Elm Street until he ran out of gas.

"I like seeing all the people out in Greensboro," Knights said.

Some art displayed a sense of humor. Other art addressed serious themes.

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Hardy arranged discarded graveyard flowers in a traditional African quilt pattern. He titled it "10,000 Flowers for Willie Grimes," in memory of the N.C. A&T student whose death brought international attention to the city's racial instability in 1969.

"I hope people will take a little time to learn about Willie Grimes' story," Hardy said. Noting that AiOP coincided with A&T's homecoming, he added, "Maybe if he had lived, he would be here, too."

Contact Dawn DeCwikiel-Kane at (336) 373-5204, and follow @dawndkane on Twitter.

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ARTS

TAKIN' IT TO THE STREETS

UNCG brings famed NYC arts festival to downtown Greensboro

October 28, 2013



On a third-floor hallway in Gatewood Studio Arts Building, Stacy Bloom Rexrode sits on a stool in front of her latest creation, carefully looping cranberry-colored yarn through a crochet hook.

She's a second-year MFA student at UNCG, and sculpture is her preferred form of expression. But this piece, it's different. Personal.

"My grandparents, they had a farm. All day my grandmother would work in the barn, and at night she would come in and work on a real delicate doily or afghan," she recalls. "Everyone in my family has one of my grandmother's afghans.

"I learned how to crochet when I was a child. I don't always work in it, but I keep coming back to it."

Later this week, Rexrode's crochet sculpture will be one of 36 pieces of visual and performance art featured in Greensboro's first "[Art in Odd Places](#)" public art festival along South Elm Street downtown. Anyone who fancies themselves an artist – or not – can add to her piece, which will be woven into the vines alongside the building that is home to Thousands O' Prints.

"I really had to get out of my comfort zone and try something completely new."

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In keeping with the theme of the festival, local and national artists were asked to explore the poignant and provocative ways in which numbers populate daily life. Rexrode's piece – "TAG! You're It!" – features statistics impacting women. Viewers can write a personal story on a manila shipping tag and place it within the piece using a diaper pin.

The tags incorporated in the piece thus far tell a staggering story:

"97% of rapists will never go to jail."

"44% of sexual assault victims are under the age of 18"

"3 of my family members have been raped"

"I'm hoping it will be an impetus for healing and awareness," Rexrode says.

Artist and assistant professor [Sheryl Oring](#) is the impetus for bringing AiOP to Greensboro. In 2010, Oring participated for the first time in the popular New York City festival founded by artist [Ed Woodham](#). Two years later, she met Woodham at a conference and learned he planned to stage a version of AiOP at a college in Massachusetts.

They clicked.

"I had just come to UNCG and I felt like Greensboro was a place that really supported the arts," she recalls. "I thought it would be really exciting to find a way to bring this festival to UNCG and to Greensboro."

Lawrence Jenkins, head of the [Art Department](#), proved to be an enthusiastic supporter. When Oring mentioned the idea to him, Jenkins countered: "How can we do that?"

In Jenkins' mind, bringing AiOP to Greensboro calls widespread attention to the fact that UNCG is a strong advocate for educating art students in social practice. And it's a collaborative effort that brings different constituencies in our community into the dialogue that is contemporary art.

"It's not the older idea of public art which says, here is my art and I'm going to put this on the street corner and you are going to enjoy it," he explains. "What social practice does is reach out to communities and give them a voice through the art-making practice. It's important because it gives contemporary art a real relevance and purpose."

Oring, a co-curator of the festival with Xandra Eden of [Weatherspoon Art Museum](#), is excited about the opportunity AiOP gives young artists like Rexrode.

"It helps build their portfolio, it helps them understand some of the challenges that go with creating work that is being presented in a public realm," she says. "It's a real, hands-on learning opportunity for them."

With Oring's support, and a little prodding, Rexrode took on the challenge and hasn't looked back.

"She has been a tremendous mentor to me as well as a teacher. It was Sheryl who encouraged me to put together a proposal for AiOP. Previously my work was object-based, either as paintings or traditional sculpture. I really had to get out of my comfort zone and try something completely new."

There's no denying the influence of Rexrode's grandmother on this project, too. The broomstick stitch from her afghans. The circular patterns she used to create her doilies.

But this piece, it's different.

"I let it grow organically. It's not planned out," the artist explains. "I've actually learned that here in school. I would have an idea and be really rigid. I've learned to react to the piece, not dictate what the piece should become."

Art in Odd Places, which will take place Nov. 1-2, is made possible with support from the Southeast College Art Conference in collaboration with Downtown Greensboro Inc. and Elsewhere Collaborative. For more information, visit <http://www.artinoddplaces.org/greensboro>.

Story by Betsi Robinson, University Relations

Photography by David Wilson, University Relations

UNCG Now story posted by Betsi Robinson (msrobin2@uncg.edu)

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