



WINDHAM REGIONAL ARTS COUNCIL ARTSPECTRUM

Volume #61 Issue #3 Fall 2022

Promoting the arts in Windham and surrounding regions.

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Sara Rogers / Dan Thomacos

Michelle Welles

Lorraine Williams

Message from the President

Warm greetings to all WRAC members and friends. I hope everyone had a very restful summer. As I write this, I am enjoying a few days in northern Maine. The temperature is 70°, even though it was 38° at wakeup time. Such is the weather in New England. We have been treated to a palette of beautiful fall colors, which is always inspiring to the inner artists in all of us!

We began and ended the summer season with two major events. On June 24th we hosted a performance by the Windham Concert Band at the Shaboo Stage. The band played an array of patriotic favorites, show tunes, and European traditional folk arrangements. The appreciative audience brought their blankets and chairs to enjoy the beautiful music and the great weather.

We closed the summer season with our first outdoor art show at Jillson Park on September 3rd. I don't know if we are just lucky, but it was possibly the best weather day of the whole summer. Many thanks to our loyal members who attended one or both events. It was great to see old friends and make new acquaintances.

We have great plans in store for the 2022-2023 season. Please read more about them in this issue. I would also urge everyone to check out our brand new website. You will find new conveniences, like reading Art Spectrum in a beautiful digital format, and new tools for making online payments for membership and donations.

Thank you all for your continued support to WRAC. We look forward to seeing you at our many events this year. I wish you a joyful and healthy Autumn season!

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Cathy Shires, WRAC President



Congratulations go out to Scott Rhoades for his award winning painting "My Dad's Glove" taking honors in the Fall issue of *The Best of Acrylic* magazine.

Newest WRAC Board Member – Dan Thomacos



I started my love for the Arts back in the early 1980s working backstage for my sister's ballet programs. I remember working on the scenery that had to be on cue for set changes. I then worked with electronics on sets in high school, working with sound and lights.

In 1988 I was part of a very short-lived TV pilot series Connecticut On Location doing camera work. I've always been good at pantomiming so in 1998 I taught myself puppetry. With help from the Jim Henson Company, the Blue Man Group and a wink from David Letterman, my wife and I created The Not So Late Night Show and teamed up with Robert Laughlin, a professional puppeteer. Since we were breaking new ground, we threw ourselves into the shows production by building sets, scenery, props and even puppets. Our show branched off to include The Not So Late Fright Show which gave us the opportunity to build full size magic coffins to cannons that blew confetti into the entire audience and building one of the first ever toilet paper guns for our live shows.

We also created three haunted houses, Evil Clowns, Biohazardville, and Night of the Scarecrow that was free to children of all ages. Nearly all of the props for the haunts were built by us.

During this time, I met a vacuum form master in Rhode Island who worked on a couple of Star Wars props, who offered me a piece of equipment for vacuum forming. I spent a few days with him learning all the tricks of the trade. I was hooked seeing what vacuum forming could do. The vacuum form Master has now passed but I carry on his legacy creating amazing props for the world to see.

Windham Hospital Corridor Gallery

Upcoming shows at the Windham Hospital Gallery will feature:



October - Frietha Lawrence
(*Zentangle, Watercolors, Oils & Colored Pencils*)

November - Nancy Bergeron
(*Watercolor prints*)
Micky Welles
(*Realism in Various Media*)

December & January -
W.R.A.C. Members
Small & Affordable Show
Varied Media (9x12 or smaller)

Any artist or artists who would like to exhibit their work please contact Karen Olson at (860) 423-1287

In Memoriam

Dean Williams 1934 – 2022

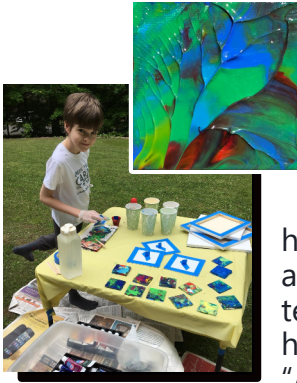
We are saddened at the news of the passing of Dean Williams, who was a member of WRAC for many years. His devoted and loving companion, Shirley Mustard was a member of WRAC's board of directors in the early years of its incorporation. Together, Dean and Shirley maintained their membership together and attended many WRAC events.

Dean's obituary describes him as a true Renaissance man who enjoyed art, jewelry making, illustration, gem cutting, antiques and home remodeling. In addition to being a voracious reader, he authored three books. We offer our sincere condolences to Shirley and to Dean's family.



Featured On the Masthead

14 year old "Accidental Artist", Eli Dyer



In preparation for a youth art show in 2017 when he was 9, Eli and his Mom selected a video on liquid acrylic painting. He collected his supplies, followed the directions, and was disappointed to see that he hadn't quite "nailed it". As he continued to try, he accidentally dropped a canvas face down into the paint and thought he had ruined it. He squished the canvas around, plucked it up from paint, and discovered that he liked what he saw. This became his unique smooch technique. Response to his artwork was overwhelming. He sold every piece he made and was asked to create custom pieces and to show again. The "Abstracts by Eli" adventure began.



Since then, Eli has shown his work throughout Eastern Connecticut in galleries, restaurants, festivals, and art shows. He has been invited to the Mystic Outdoor Art Festival as an Emerging Artist on 4 occasions and received an Official Citation from the General Assembly for his involvement with community art.



Establishing and running a business has been an excellent learning experience. Eli re-invests his earnings into his abstract artwork as well as his love for computers and digital art.

For upcoming events and to learn more, visit his Facebook and Instagram pages at fb.me/AbstractsbyEli and instagram.com/AbstractsbyEli

Artists Demonstration Series

In partnership with the Coventry Arts Guild, WRAC is hosting a demonstration in pastels by award-winning Connecticut Artist **Susan Bosworth.**

Date & Location: Sunday, November 13, 2022 at 1:00 PM
Mill Brook Place, 1267 Main Street, Coventry CT

Join us as Susan will build a landscape with an initial under painting followed by layers of brilliant colors to a finished painting.

Admission is free, but we request attendees to **preregister** by calling Micky at (860) 456-1972 or email contactus@windhamrac.org

Be sure to mark your calendars for additional demonstrations in **2023**

March 11 - Watercolors by Mo Myra

April 22 - Pastels by Robin Frisella



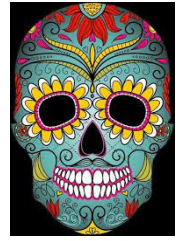
Artistic Activity

Get ready to observe the **Dia de los Muertos** (Day of the Dead) by joining in on a fun Skull Mask painting session with Dan Thomacos:

Saturday, October 29 — 12:00 – 1:45 PM

in the **Willimantic Public Library Community Room**

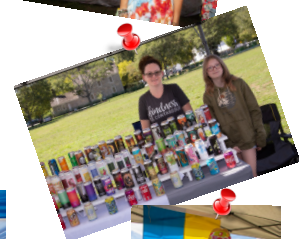
Participation is **free** and supplies will be provided. Recommended for ages teen – adult. Please **preregister** by calling the library at **(860) 465-3079**.



W.R.A.C. Art & Artisan Event

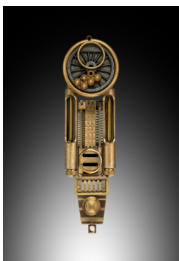
On Saturday, September 3, W.R.A.C. sponsored its first outdoor art/artisan event at the Jillson Square parcel. It turned out to be a spectacular sunny day! There were 20 tents with vendors spread out before the Shaboo Stage.

Featured work included fiber art, photography, candle making, sculptures, print making, author, modern and abstract art, mask making, as well as oil, watercolor and acrylic paintings. While music was provided by D.J. Kevin Butler, the center tent accommodated coloring activities for children and a Ukrainian Easter Egg demonstration. What a fun day for all, hopefully a first of many future outdoor art exhibits!



Photos by
Tom Hurlbut

Local Artist Exhibits



Windham jewelry designer Ann Pedro's work is celebrated in her new exhibition, **Elements of Time: Lost and Found** - The Jewelry of Ann Pedro, at the Babbidge Library, at Uconn.

The award-winning artist, is known for her use of what she calls "industrial colors," which includes pieces created out of brass, aluminum, bronze and copper. She uses found objects such as vintage watch parts in her work and is influenced by the Art Deco, Art Nouveau, Steampunk genres and the art and architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright. The exhibit is open daily through Dec. 11th.

WRAC Member at Met Gallery



Congratulations go to **Shirley Bernstein**.

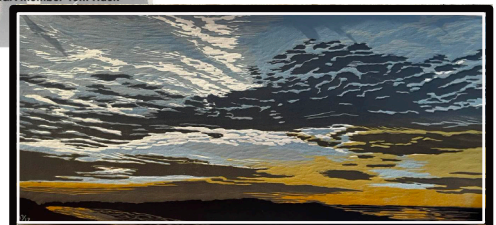
Shirley's reduction wood cut "Cloud Fan" (10"x22") was selected for exhibition at the

Met Gallery

October 24th - Nov. 4th

Opening Reception

Oct. 28th from 6-8pm



WRAC invites you to join or renew your membership and receive the ArtSpectrum

Name _____

Address _____

Town _____ Zip Code _____

Phone (H/C) _____ Email: _____

Membership Categories (circle one): New / Renewal

(check one) \$15 (individual) ___ \$20 (Family) ___ \$100 (Group) ___ Date _____

Your area of artistic skill (circle one): Visual Art / Music / Writing / Drama / Dance

Your Donation helps WRAC continue to promote the ARTS in the Windham and surrounding regions. If you wish to help promote the ARTS further, please consider enhancing your membership to one of the following levels:

(check one) Benefactor \$100 ___ Patron \$50 ___ Donor \$30 ___

**Please make checks payable to the Windham Regional Arts Council (WRAC) and mail to
P.O.Box 847, Willimantic, CT 06226**

WRAC has a NEW Website!!

www.windhamrac.org

After a careful design process, WRAC's new website is up and running, and we are now inviting our members to be included in the site. Are you an artist, photographer, author, or performing artist seeking to increase your online presence and reach more customers? If so, please send us a sample of your work. We will include your name and the sample work on our Membership page.

Please include with your submission:

1. Your name or business name as you want it to appear in a public domain
2. Contact information (optional) or link to your website
3. The title and medium of the submitted work. Be sure to crop and edit the image for the very best appearance.

If you are a published author, please submit an image of the book cover.

If you are a performing artist, an audio or video file can be included.

Inclusion in the website membership page applies only to paid-up, current WRAC membership.

If you are not sure if your membership is current, please look at that address label on this issue of Art Spectrum. If your membership has expired, you may renew by mail (with check) or renew online through the website. Please send your submission via email to:
contactus@windhamrac.org



P.O. Box 847
Willimantic, CT 06226



Has your membership expired?

Find us on **facebook** 

Any member who would like to receive the ArtSpectrum (in color) via email please send your request to Contactus@windhamrac.org

Young Artists Music Competition

Now in its 36th Year!

**DECEMBER 4, 2022 at 1:00 pm
at the Burton Leavitt Theater**

OPEN TO STUDENTS IN GRADES 7 – 12

Grades 7–9: Wind, Strings, Piano

Grades 10–12: Wind, Strings, Piano

Vocal and ENSEMBLES

of 2– 5 players of any combination

Registration is open until November 7th.

Registration forms & competition guidelines on-line @ windhamrac.org

Save the date to enjoy an afternoon of music!!



The Windham Regional Arts Council (WRAC) was founded in 1983 to help organize community arts activities for the 50th birthday of the city of Willimantic. The Council is a non-profit volunteer organization with over 250 members. The ArtSpectrum is published three times a year and highlights events and people actively involved in the arts community.
The organization that financially supports the Willimantic Orchestra and the Burton Levitt Theater. It sponsors an annual art show for member artists. April, August and December feature a group show at the Windham Hospital Corridor Gallery. Members have the opportunity to exhibit their work at the Windham Hospital Corridor Gallery. Each year the WRAC holds a juried music competition for students aged twelve to eighteen and the overall winner performs a solo at the Willimantic Orchestra's spring concert.
We welcome new member and creative ideas to promote the arts in Windham and surrounding regions.

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