



Last new sculpture completes 2010 project 'City Garden' put into place by local cooperative

BY CARL BURNETT JR. • The Eagle-Gazette Staff • May 14, 2010

LANCASTER -- The final piece in Lancaster's 2010 Urban Outdoor Sculpture project was set in place Thursday next to the Glass Museum on Main Street.

The Urban Outdoor Sculpture project is a collaboration of Main Street Lancaster and the Midwest Sculpture Initiative and is coordinated by local sculptor Ric Leichliter.

The last piece, called City Garden, features flowers designed, constructed and put into place by Blue Shoe Artists, Leichliter and woodworker Lou Gatch.

"The Urban Outdoor Sculpture project is something we've been doing for a couple of years now," Leichliter said. "This year we wanted to all inclusive and thought about Blue Shoe Arts developing a piece."

Blue Shoe Arts, in Carroll, is a studio and gallery that works with artists with disabilities. It receives support from Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities and is owned by Fairfield Industries.

Cheryl Fey, art director at Blue Shoe Arts, said the group took about three months to complete the project.

"We had eight artists working on the project," Fey said. "The flower images were designed by Stefanie Pierce, the woodwork was completed by Lou Gatch, and the metal work was completed by Ric (Leichliter). The petal backgrounds are made with metal newspaper plates from the Lancaster Eagle-Gazette presses recycled for the sculpture."

Gatch, who was on hand Thursday for installation, said it was really great to work with Leichliter, Fey and the people at Blue Shoe Arts.

"They just came up with the design for the project, and then I went into my basement and didn't come up until I had the pieces they needed," Gatch said. "I think it has turned out very well, and I was glad to help."

Leichliter said donations to Main Street Lancaster funded the Urban Outdoor Sculpture project this year. It features 10 sculptures around downtown Lancaster.

The sculptures will remain in place for about a year.

The Midwest Sculpture Initiative is a nonprofit organization created to give artists exposure while allowing communities to experience art in their everyday surroundings.

"We hope people enjoy the pieces and thank the donors who make this possible each year," Leichter said. "If you want to donate for next year's sculptures, contact Main Street Lancaster."

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