

Spotlight

Your weekly
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A Night of Color, Music, Song and Dance: Ewing Arts Awards

By Nicole Colson



Dr. Rudy Fedrizzi, director of Community Health Clinical Integration at Cheshire Medical Center/Dartmouth-Hitchcock Keene, chats with James Putnam of the Putnam Foundation during the reception following the Ruth and James Ewing Arts Awards at Redfern Arts Center on July 23. Paintings by three of the 15 winners - (left to right) Peter Roos, Craig Stockwell and Richard Whitney - hang behind them.

The first Ruth and James Ewing Arts Awards was a showcase of color and music, song and dance.

At the event last Thursday night, the region's most talented visual and performing artists were showcased at Keene State College.

The event, a project of The Sentinel and Arts Alive!, a nonprofit that facilitates programming, fundraising and other activities for artists, was held in advance of a magazine in last Friday's Sentinel highlighting the arts in the region and featuring 15 profiles of artists and artistic groups chosen to be honored by a group of community judges.

Some of the talent took to the stage; the event featured live performances by The Chamber Singers of Keene, classical guitarist Frank Wallace, Animaterra Women's Chorus, and dancers from MoCo Arts.

More than 250 people gathered in the Hoffman Auditorium at the Redfern Arts Center for the event.

Honored artists and groups were recognized in the form of remarks and a video presentation displayed on a large on-stage screen that offered, in each artist's own words, a snapshot of their inspiration and artistic

process. Each honoree received a glass statue to commemorate the recognition.

Among those who attended were Keene State College President Anne E. Huot and State Sen. Molly Kelly, D-Keene.

Jessica Gelter, executive director of Arts Alive! spoke passionately about the importance of bringing awareness to individuals and groups making contributions to arts in the region — noting specifically the scope of that challenge amid steep state funding cuts for arts programs.

"The arts are a means to communicate," Gelter said. "They are a dialogue with humanity that can teach us the world is bigger than what we alone can experience."

Jim Rousmaniere, retired Keene Sentinel president and editor, spoke about Ruth and Jim Ewing, who purchased The Sentinel in 1954 and ran the daily newspaper for nearly 40 years, noting in particular their enduring investment of time and interest in the arts and humanities.



Deborah Lloyd Kaufman, an abstract artist, receives a Ruth and James Ewing Arts Award.



MoCo Arts dancers, May Minard, Casie Coffman, Sarah Foucher, Audrey Douglass-Fish and Leeann Minard, were one of five performing arts groups to receive a Ruth and James Ewing Arts Award.

Ruth and Jim Ewing and the arts in this region will forever be intertwined, Rousmaniere said. Both served on the board of The MacDowell Colony in Peterborough and Jim Ewing served on the board of the N.H. Humanities Council while his wife was active with the Grand Monadnock Arts Council, the organization that hosts Keene's annual Art Walk.

The list of recipients featured fine artists — those who work in paint, pastel, sculpture, watercolor and photography — along with classical musicians, vocal ensembles and arts organizations.

The Chamber Singers of Keene sang an anthem of blessing in German, which the group performed in Einbeck, Germany — Keene's partner city — and a group of five dancers in colorful leotards per-

formed a ballet-infused modern dance. Wallace performed two short pieces he'd written for his son, a videographer, to be used as background music for a project. Women's chorus Animaterra closed the evening with a two-song medley that ended with a South African anthem of freedom, complete with whooping cries of joy.

Gelter said the spirit of the arts, and the possibilities they bring, united those who were gathered: "This is Monadnock," she said. "It inspires those artists who stand alone like the mountain and those looking up at it together as a community with a shared sense of wonder."

For videos on all the award winners, check out www.sentinelsource.com/multimedia/ewing_arts_awards/



Animaterra Women's Chorus, headed by Allison Aldrich Smith (center) closed the Ruth and James Ewing Arts Awards with two songs. The Chorus was one of five performing arts groups recognized with an award.

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