

Castellani's 'Party on the Portico' celebrates art, music, conversation



Top: Plein air-style live artists Kath Schifano and Joel Mulindwa. Below: From left: CAM Interim Director Michael Beam, artist Schifano, and CAM Head of Marketing & Membership Jessica Minicucci.

Information courtesy of the Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University

The Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University welcomed members, friends, and the wider Western New York community to "Party on the Portico" on June 25. CAM's annual summer celebration was set against the backdrop of the museum's iconic portico and current summer exhibitions. It brought together art, music, conversation, and community in one of CAM's most anticipated annual traditions.

"Party on the Portico" featured live music by pianist Kevin Clark, light bites sponsored by the Niagara Falls Culinary Institute, and a series of plein air-style live art demonstrations by regional artists Kath Schifano, Doug Mess, John Sauter and Joel Mulindwa. Throughout the evening, visitors had the rare opportunity to watch each artist create an original work in real time, offering an intimate look into their unique artistic processes and creative approaches.

CAM Interim Director Michael

Beam updated the audience on museum happenings and funding initiatives. And, in keeping with CAM's ongoing lifetime membership initiative, the museum honored artist Schifano, whose work is represented in CAM's permanent collection. Schifano received a lifetime membership in recognition of her artistic contributions and lasting impact on the museum's collection and community.

"Party on the Portico" embodies everything that makes CAM special," Beam said prior to the event. "It brings together artists, members, students, and the community in a way that is accessible, engaging and inspiring. It's a celebration of the creative energy that continues to thrive throughout our region."

For more information on CAM, visit castellaniartmuseum.org, and follow CAM's Facebook page, X (@CAM_of_NU) and Instagram (@CastellaniArtMuseum).

Current works on display inside the Castellani Art Museum include "The Family," an oil on canvas painting by William Y. Cooper (gift of the Diane Castellani and Terrance Bromley family); "Breathing Water: For Niagara, Thundering Waters" by Beili Liu, a mixed-media collection of ocean, river and lake plastics gathered from the shorelines of the Arctic Ocean, Barents Sea, Norwegian Sea, North Pacific Ocean, North Atlantic Ocean, Baltic Sea, North Sea, Adriatic Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Gulf of Mexico, Lake Ontario and the Niagara River; and "Earth" by Chantal Calato, which is discarded plastic toys, hand-painted cotton rope, and bolts.

Paraphrasing Castellani's note: "Earth" is one in a fleet of push toy monstrosities – gigantic push toys made from discarded toys lashed together with hand-painted cotton rope. The toys, collected from people's garbage heaps around the City of Buffalo, are anywhere from 40-plus years old to almost new – toys one might even have in their own backyard. They are engraved with play and dirt and scribbled with the children's names who once played with them. This work reflects Calato's commitment to environmental stewardship by rescuing these



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2. The **phytonutrients** in plant-based foods are essential for health and wellness for our body and mind. Eat plenty of vegetables and low-sugar fruits, every day.
3. **Rest** is necessary for your body to run optimally, between 7-9 hours nightly.
4. Take time to **have fun**. Social support and positive experiences have been noted in studies to be very beneficial to health.
5. Make sure to **keep your body moving** every day, even if it's just walking up and down the stairs at work or taking a noontime stroll around the block. Exercise is one of the keys to living a long, healthy life.

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