

“JazzWall New Bedford” mural to be installed in downtown New Bedford

Superflat NB announced today that it will be program managing the installation of the “JazzWall New Bedford” mural starting this week which was designed by local artist, Kat Knutsen and sponsored by Fiber Optic Center, Inc., Whaling City Sound, and the New Bedford Historical Society. The mural, which is funded in part by New Bedford’s Wicked Cool Places grant will be applied to the East facing wall of the Fiber Optic Center building at 23 Centre St. in New Bedford, MA. It is the second Superflat project for 2020 and celebrates jazz musicians who have made a lasting impact on the city and its inhabitants. It features Rick Britto, Armsted Christian, Paul Gonsalves, Bobby Greene, Herbie King, and Joe Livramento.

On the eve of painting, Knutsen commented “I was inspired to create a candid moment between the musicians performing popular jazz standards like “‘Round Midnight.” They’re positioned to reflect the moment right before one of them (Livramento) is getting ready to begin his solo. The design attempts to capture the magical telepathy that exists between musicians as they fill the space with their captivating performance. The colors selected for the design are inspired by the festivities that jazz music brings to events like Carnival, Mardi Gras, and the New Bedford JazzFest.”

The mural location has been the site of free summer concerts as part of the New Bedford AHA! nights for the last 20 years. The “JazzWall New Bedford” mural will serve as a backdrop to future performances and bring an appropriate added dimension to a space that has brought the local community world-class music. More details about the featured musicians and the breadth of New Bedford jazz history will be showcased on a

future website that will host biographies of local jazz musicians.

“We are celebrating the amazing history of jazz in New Bedford by featuring masters from the area who had an influence not just on up and coming players but on the world jazz scene as a whole, and who are no longer with us. Paying tribute to them where live jazz music will be experienced, in this striking manner, recognizes their efforts and extends their influence into the future,” stated Neal Weiss, the founder of Fiber Optic Center, Inc., and president of the CD studio and label, Whaling City Sound.

This installation joins approximately eleven other murals that Superflat NB has either brought directly to the city or in partnership with other local organizations so that all residents of New Bedford can enjoy public art. Superflat NB is a creative placemaking, mural art organization dedicated to beautifying New Bedford while flattening barriers to the arts. It aims to foster pride and ownership of shared spaces through public art by giving local, national, and international artists a role in revitalizing the city of New Bedford while creating inclusive environments where anybody can experience great art. Serving young people is central to its efforts. The organization wants to inspire them and be inspired by them, creating new explorations of culture, expanding social networks, and making connections to resources and opportunities.

Fiber Optic Center Inc. is an international leader in distributing fiber optic components, equipment, and supplies and has been helping customers make the best cable assemblies in the world for over two decades.

Founded in 1999, Whaling City Sound is a CD label based in New Bedford that works with artists near and far to produce exciting live events and recordings.

The New Bedford Historical Society (NBHS) is dedicated to documenting and celebrating the history, legacy, and presence of African Americans, Cape Verdeans, Native Americans, West Indians, and other people of color in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Founded in 1996, the NBHS has created public art that highlights the history of people of color in New Bedford including the 54th Regiment Mural and the Lewis Temple statue.

Wicked Cool Places (WCP) is the city of New Bedford's grant program for creative placemaking, uniting willing property/business owners, artistic/cultural groups, design/preservation specialists, and business/development experts to help transform New Bedford's overlooked or undervalued places. Wicked Cool Places enhance community development, arts entrepreneurship, and ongoing investment in the rich arts and culture of the city. Wicked Cool Places is funded by the city of New Bedford's Arts, Culture + Tourism Fund, with additional funding by Bristol County Savings Bank, Mass Cultural Council, and MassDevelopment.