

News Release

Connecting the community through art at Thompson's Point in Portland

Portland, Maine (October 3, 2023) – Thompson's Point in Portland once served as a hub for shipyard and rail traffic, but in recent years, it's become a destination for art, music, culture, and community gatherings. It's the connectivity with the community that inspired Northern Light Mercy Hospital to team up with Thompson's Point on three new murals on its property – two of these are collaboration with artists Ryan and Rachel Adams, and another by artist Madison Poitras-Upton. The partnership also includes an online [art map](#) that provides information about each art installation.

This initiative is a timely one for all participants. In recent years, the sense of loneliness and isolation has been on the rise. Through this collaboration, Northern Light Mercy Hospital is hoping to inspire community members to develop connections with the art, with one another, and with their own physical and mental wellbeing. Places like Thompson's Point have helped people rediscover a sense of togetherness, and phrases featured in two of the murals – “Be here now” and “It's a beautiful day, whenever we're together” – are encouraging people to be present and cherish their time with friends and family.

“We have both been fortunate to exhibit and display our work all over the country, but there is something so cherished and special about creating work in our city,” said Ryan and Rachel Adams. “The city of Portland made us the artists and people that we are today. It's an honor to have our work available and accessible to all people within our community.”

The two new pieces represent a collaboration of each artist's styles. Ryan's “gem” style of art using lettering, geometric shaping, and layering is combined with Rachel's “quilt” style that pieces together geometric and botanical patterns, combining unlikely colors and shapes. These techniques combine to lend depth and movement to a single word or phrase.

“The first thing to be finished at Thompson's Point was artist Sam Van Aken's Tree of 40 Fruit Grove in the fall of 2014, and the rest of the project has grown from there,” said Jed Troubh, one of the owners and developers of Thompson's Point. “Thinking of art, and the questions it asks of us, as a key part of our development efforts has been integral to the way the project has taken shape over the years as a place for people to be together and enjoy shared experiences.”

“Ryan and Rachel's work is all about requiring viewers to take a pause, reflect, connect to themselves and their surroundings, and ultimately to ask themselves what it means to be part of a community – whatever that word might mean to them at that moment. Their studios are based at Thompson's Point, and their work brings life to every corner of the site – from these murals to those at Bissell Brothers and the Children's Museum and Theatre of Maine,” added Chris Thompson.

In 2022, Northern Light Health installed its first work of art at Thompson's Point asking visitors: “How are you?” This work, painted by The Color Wizard Jared Goulette, came on the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic and emphasized the importance of checking in on friends, family, and loved ones, as well as ourselves. After being apart for so long, many people were just starting to return to their old routines, like going to concerts or catching up with friends at restaurants.

For more information, please contact:

Ed Gilman, Northern Light Mercy Hospital

Office 207.879.3165

Cell 202.657.9363

Email gilmane@northernlight.org

Kellie Kerrigan, Thompson's Point

Office 207.747.5288 x104

Cell 978.380.2849

Email kkerrigan@thompsonspointmaine.com

Signage at the three new murals will contain QR codes linking to the [online art map](#), connecting visitors to information about the art as well as Northern Light Health's ["Find Help" tool](#), which features local and regional resources offering free or reduced cost services, including medical care, food, community services, and more.

###