

THURSDAY, JULY 9, 2015

TO DO

The following is a list of upcoming local entertainment events. The Times Observer welcomes additions to the list that are of community interest. Club meetings and closed gatherings are not included. To add an event, call features editor Diana Paddock in the newsroom at 723-8200 by noon Monday.

Through July 24: 10th Annual Summer Super-Reader Program, independent reading program for kids grades kindergarten through 12 completed, Youngsville Library.

Through July 25: Constructed three-dimensional cityscape paintings by artist Jeff Pullen of Kew Gardens, N.Y. Public opening reception, Saturday, July 11, 6-8 p.m. Meet the artist, gallery talk begins at 7 p.m., Crary Art Gallery, 511 Market St., Warren <http://www.crarygallery.org>

Through July 30: Picturing America I Spy Contest, Warren Public Library's Wetmore Gallery, for ages 5 to 12. Contest forms available at entrance to Wetmore Gallery on library's third floor. Prize is \$25 Amazon gift card.

Through Aug. 3: Toddler Time: Mondays at 10:30 a.m. in Warren Public Library Children's Department. Geared for ages 1-4. Stories, songs, crafts, creative play.

Through Aug. 5: Reading Wednesday: Wednesdays at 10:15 a.m. in the Warren Public Library Children's Department. Geared for ages 4-7. Stories, songs, games, crafts.

July 10: Library Theatre Films, "Cinderella," 7:30 p.m.

July 10: Generation Swing (jazz) at Music in the Park sponsored by Northwest Savings Bank, Soldiers & Sailors Park, Hickory St. at Pennsylvania Ave. W., Warren, 7-9 p.m.

July 11: A Vet and His Pet: A veteran and his recently obtained service dog will visit children and their families to share challenges and triumphs at the Warren Public Library, 11 a.m. in the Children's Department. This program begins with a reading of Tuesday Tucks Me In: the Loyal Bond Between a Soldier and His Service Dog by Luis Carlos Montalvan. A craft will be provided as a culminating activity. Preregistration not required.

See TO DO /D2

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FOCUS

At The Crary

The 3-D cityscapes of Jeff Pullen

By DIANA PADDOCK

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The extraordinary three-dimensional cityscape art of Jeff Pullen is on display at the Crary Art Gallery at 511 Market Street through July 25.

"In the City" is open from noon to 6 p.m. Thursday and Saturday, noon to 8 p.m. Friday and noon to 4 p.m. Sunday. The show is open to the public, and admission is always free at the Crary Gallery. An opening reception will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday, July 11, and Pullen will give a gallery talk at 7 p.m.

Pullen's works are not just illusions of three-dimensional realities. They are actually large three dimensional images of New York Cityscapes painted on all sorts of construction materials, from shutters to bricks and siding.

Pullen was born in New York and continues to live and work there, in Kew Gardens, N.Y. He holds a bachelor of fine arts degree and a master of fine arts degree from Pratt Institute and has been exhibiting steadily since 1970, with more than 50 solo exhibitions to his credit, from Massachusetts to Florida to California. His work also has appeared in several publications.

The show "is unique in that it's three-dimensional," said Tom Drennen, Crary board member and a former art instructor. The artist "uses a lot of found object, car hoods, window shutters, tin cans ..."

The 14 pieces that make up the local show are city skylines, Drennen said. "Manhattan, Times Square."

"I think anybody who has any experience with New York at all is going to find it fascinating," Drennen said. "The three dimensionality is fascinating itself. They are very colorful, very large paintings that I think Warren will get a big kick out of."

Pullen has been in the business for 45 years, and "never liked flat," he said. "I always liked structure."

He studied architecture in high school, and that design element "has always taken over the art," he said.

He has used louvered doors, plexi glass and other three-dimensional objects to give depth to his art.

"I've painted on everything from car hoods to brick," Pullen said.

The pieces are quite heavy (30 to 50 pounds), but "our hanging system seemed to be up to the task," Drennen said.

Pullen uses oil paint with wax mixed it, which "evens out the paint," he said. "When you are painting, it absorbs differently ... gives it almost a matte, soft finish."

Although Pullen has created some South Beach scapes, NYC is his primary subject, and the work hung at the Crary.

"I would hang out in Times Square as a kid," he said. "It's always been a great playground."



Photo submitted to the Times Observer

Twilight Ambush

Artist's Statement

The Picture Plane's movement throughout the history of painting has been glacial. Its progress measured in centuries, defined by only a handful of artists. Pictorial space was regarded as flat and illusionistic with any attempt to turn, shift or redefine the plane met with resistance and derision. Forays into another dimension no matter what the size, were immediately labeled relief or sculpture, no longer to be considered painting.

It is my contention that the painted image is the illusion regardless of its surface. Linen or canvas lends no extra validity to the image. My first introduction to the idea of painting on non-traditional surfaces and forming a new and dual reality came in the form of Graffiti's colorful letters and cartoons undulating across the doors and windows of a full length subway car in the 1970's and 1980's presenting one illusion until the car doors opened revealing the second reality, the riders inside and the cars functional interior. Reacting to this new duality, my work over the past twenty years has been a continually changing illusion/reality dynamic. I paint my imagery directly onto walls constructed of brick, louver doors, plexi-glass, car-hoods and other assorted building materials. The selections in both cases of image and surface are not random choices. I am not striving for a dominant and subordinate balance, rather an existing simultaneous "push/pull" or "illusion/reality." Both elements should always be at the viewer's forefront. This is not a sculpture involved with negative space. Form and the illusion become form that create multiple views both real and imagined. The narrative picture dictates the form and the construction demands

how the illusion is read, whether its surface is floating above on plexi-glass or enconced within the brick and louvers. I have chosen to use realistic images in my work in the hopes of garnering an emotional response from the viewer and ultimately fusing it with the tactile qualities of the constructed surfaces. I wish to involve all who come to peruse my work to engage in a constant dialogue back and forth between the two realities together to form a single pictorial/sculptural continuum. One should not be comfortable looking at a painting but rather be continually challenged. Most recently I have begun to further confront the viewer in the form of cutouts in the surface exposing the wall behind the piece, or one constructed of brick, stone, wiring, etc. bringing the illusion full circle back to flat. The picture plane in my work is never stationary because as one moves back and forth between the two distinct elements, the plane continually shifts.

Every generation in time has trumpeted the death of painting or has created rules for it that have been set in stone, from the Catholic Church to Clement Greenberg. When Cezanne tilted his picture plane he did so unaware he would outrage the French Academy and later be proclaimed the "Father of Modernism." When Rothko painted his floating blocks of color he did so long before being hailed as the first "Color Field Abstractionist." In my work, I have no desire to be regarded as a 21st Century Mannerist. It is my considered opinion that the artist is continually learning all that he can, finding his vision over time, and setting out to express it any way possible. And if he is fortunate, he may change many of the rules along the way.



Photo submitted to the Times Observer

Douglas Hearn, Steve Blume and Tom Drennen hang the works of Jeff Pullen at the Crary Gallery.

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Next Week
Members & Guests
7/17 8:00 PM - 11:30 PM

Happy Days

This Friday Night

7/10

8:00 PM - 11:30 PM

Sammy Slicker and the Black Jacks

Members & Guests

Saturday Night

7/18

8:00 PM - Midnight

Easy Street