

# Making These Walls Talk

## Art students create mural that speaks to UNH's rich history

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THE MURAL “LAND, SEA, AND SPACE” WAS COMMISSIONED TO CELEBRATE UNH’S 150TH ANNIVERSARY.

The first thing you notice is the swirl of vibrant colors — red, orange, blue, green — and the larger-than-life figures, both in their design and significance to UNH, chosen to visually mark the university’s 150-year history.

Created by students in professor [Jennifer Moses’s](#) intermediate painting class, “Land, Sea, and Space,” a new mural for the Dimond Library was commissioned as part of the yearlong

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[sesquicentennial festivities](#) that began in September. It will be officially unveiled this week.

Moses's class spent the beginning of the semester discussing possible themes for the project and conducting research on how best to artistically present UNH's rich past. Once a consensus was reached to root the work in the university's land-grant mission, students crafted individual designs. The one chosen is a hybrid of many of the proposals, Moses says.

"This is their mural. I was the facilitator," she says. "The students did the research and worked out the notable people they thought should be portrayed, and then came up with their designs."

["So far it has been an average of 70 man-hours a week to meet our deadline."](#)

Those notable people include Lee Morin '74, a NASA astronaut who traveled to the International Space Station; Floyd Jackson, UNH's first marine scientist and founder of the marine laboratory on Appledore Island in 1928; Edwin and Mary Scheier, mid-century modern potters who taught at UNH for 20 years; Clark Terry, professor of music and internationally renowned jazz trumpet player; Caroline A. Black, a botanist and the first female professor at UNH, and Yitang Zhang, the professor of math who received a 2014 MacArthur Foundation "genius grant" for his work on the twin prime conjecture.

A mural is "hard to pull off," Moses says. The painting is not done from observation but rather from the imagination, and it is highly stylized. Students took pictures and used magazine cutouts for resource materials. In class, Moses worked on issues she thought would come up during creation of the mural.

Sidney Stevens '17, who is majoring in psychology with a minor in studio art, called her involvement in the project "a whirlwind experience."



A SECTION OF THE MURAL IN PROCESS. THE IMAGE OF RENOWNED JAZZ TRUMPETER CLARK TERRY CAN BE SEEN AT RIGHT.

“So far it has been an average of 70 man-hours a week to meet our deadline. What is important about my experience is the time spent with my classmates and the fact that we made it through this process together,” Stevens says. “This was the cherry on top of a stressful college career, and I am proud of what we

accomplished.”

Adds art major Daniel Faiella '19, “The class brought a great positive energy to the project and I think that energy shows in the completed work. I’m glad I was able to play a small role in making something to commemorate the university’s 150-year anniversary, and even if the mural doesn’t make it another 150 years, I think everyone in the class learned a lot (from the process) that we’ll carry into our future work.”

While Moses hadn’t led students through the process of creating a mural before, she notes the experience wasn’t that different from the way she teaches. “My style is more about critique. We talked about the decisions they were making, and I’d give my assessment and then let them translate that into their own sensibilities,” she says.

“After the initial phase was over of trying to plan what to paint, and we all just went with our artistic intuition, the mural started to paint itself, really,” says Kyra Grasso '19, a dual major in studio arts and biomedical sciences. “I would definitely say that the perspective this project has given us has enhanced our skills as artists tenfold.”

A reception to celebrate the unveiling will take place Friday, Dec. 9, at 11 a.m., in the Natural Science Resource Center, room 201 of Dimond Library.

“It’s been gratifying. I’m proud of my students,” Moses says. “It was a really big project to take on, and they all came together and made it happen.”

**Interested in studying art and art history at UNH? See what other students are up to.**

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