

LOCAL

'This was her library.' DeHoff Memorial branch remembers artist Margene May with expo

Late artist was a big supporter of DeHoff

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Published 5:02 a.m. ET Feb. 11, 2023

Key Points

- Library dedicates tree in Margene May's memory
 - African American art expo showcases local artists.
 - The late Margene May created 3-D portraits of Black life.
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CANTON – The DeHoff Memorial branch of the Stark County District Library is honoring one of its own with a monthlong display of her art.

The late Margene May was an artist and community activist who once served as president of the Friends of the DeHoff Library. May, who died on July 10, created three-dimensional portraits from Black life using fiber. She also did illustrations.

On Tuesday, the library at 216 Hartford Ave. SE hosted an African American art expo to showcase May and the works of other local Black artists. The artwork will remain on display this month.

May's work featured at Walsh Walsh exhibit highlights local artists

"She was dedicated to DeHoff; this was her library. She let the community know it," said D'Juana Philpott, a young adult programmer for the district library.

Remembering Margene May's passion for art

Roberta Covington, a longtime friend, said May was dedicated to her Fourth Ward community and her art. The two met as members of the neighborhood group, Concerned Citizens of the Fourth Ward, took art classes together, and shared a love for gardening.

"She enjoyed doing art. She was proud of being an artist," Covington said. "She enjoyed capturing emotions with her fiber art, but she'd want to be known for her community work. We helped to save the Monroe (fire station) Center. I was really proud of her. Her favorite quote was, 'Just a quick question.'"

May's son, Mark Momie, said his mother created art for as long as he can remember.

"She just had a vision of what Black art was about," he said. "It was her passion, something she enjoyed doing. She didn't care about sales, it was about the art."

Momie noted that his mother first began displaying her work at a downtown gallery she shared with Linda Tuttle before switching to online.

DeHoff library art expo

Other artists' works featured at the expo included Janice Hamilton, Clara Martin, Errick Freeman, Zealot Preston, Israel Robinson, Ashley Palmer, Payton Finley, Da'Quane Finely and Jo Jo Freeman.

Hamilton is an artist who makes jewelry, collages, and crafts envelopes out of magazine pages.

DeHoff gets an upgrade Stark Library's DeHoff Memorial branch set to reopen after renovations

"I just started doing collages because I like paper," she said. Her work also includes original poems that she illustrates.

Part of Tuesday's event also included the dedication of a cercis "Ruby Falls" redbud tree planted in May's honor.

An emotional Momie said he knows he was fortunate to have such a talented mother.

"She was all about family and community," he said. "If you knew my mom, if she welcomed you in the house, you were good people. It was just a blessing to know someone with such a

gift; one you won't see for another 50 or 100 years."

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