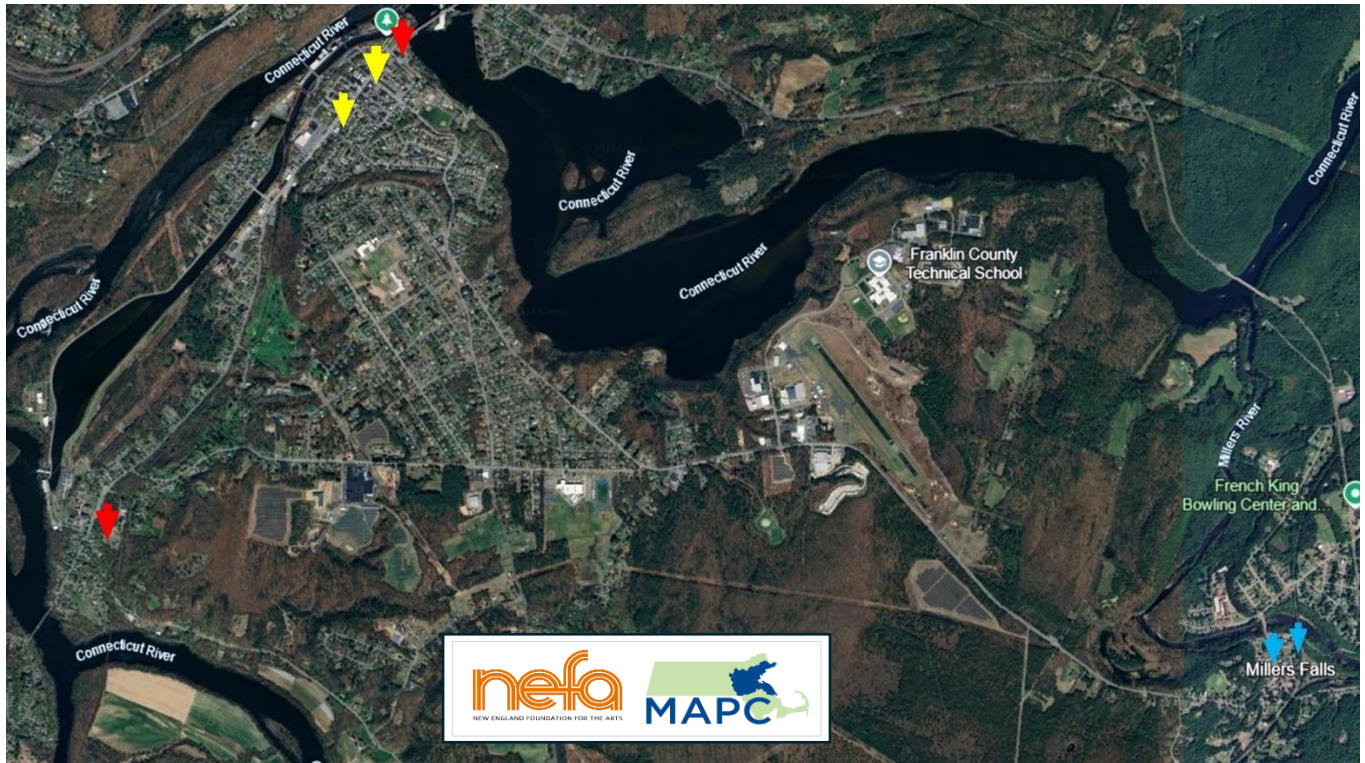


MONTAGUE WHEAT PASTE MURAL PROJECT



Montague Wheat Paste Murals is funded through a grant from **Making it Public for Municipalities**, a training program co-designed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's (MAPC) Arts and Culture Department and The New England Foundation for the Arts' (NEFA) Public Arts Team. The curriculum trains municipalities in practices to commission public art that is in alignment with the principles of fairness, transparency, and accountability in public procurement. Three artists were chosen to create six designs, two in downtown Turners Falls, two along the Canalside Rail Trail and two in downtown Millers Falls.

This project is supervised by Suzanne LoManto, Director of RiverCulture

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Jon Dobosz, Caitlin Kelley and Maureen Pollock (T.O.M.)

Peter Chilton, File manager

Britt Ruhe, Common Wealth Murals, wheat paste installer

Sam Urkiel, Superintendent Montague DPW

Jim and Brandon, Montague DPW

Bryan Camden, Turners Falls Airport

Sean and Mackenzie, Amherst Copy (Hadley)

Steering group members: Pam, Alice, Oliver, Garth, Colleen, Dorinda, Kate, Nancy and Tammy.

Oliver Miller, Building Owner

Bob Obear, Building Owner

Colleen and Skip Descavich, Building Owners

Erin and John at LOOT

Anne Harding, help trimming copies

AARON MESHON *Downtown Turners Falls*

LOCATIONS: 85 Avenue A and Third Street, Turners Falls (Colle)
199 Avenue A and Seventh St (St Kaz) Turners Falls

STATEMENT:

I'm honored to have had 2 designs chosen for the Montague Wheat Paste Mural Project in the Turners Falls locations. I Have had a personal connection with Turners Falls after visiting my friends there over the years. Since I have always been attracted to the power of water, time and history, I really was inspired to represent that in my submissions for the Project. I tried to show the impact of humans, past and present around the dramatic Great Falls in the Connecticut River and give respect to what has come before us in the past and what will come in the future for this special area.

As an illustrator for over 30 years, I work both digitally and traditionally. For this project I used mostly line work and wanted to also use a limited color palate as to not make the scene even busier than it was on both submissions. With my work over the years I try to create images that hopefully can inspire and bring a smile to the viewer. I am always pleasantly amazed that I am the one more inspired by the personal connections I make with each project and the locations I draw. I really enjoy this process and learning more with each new project. I always wanted to be an architect but since my math skills are limited, I at least got to draw many of the buildings I love in Turners Falls.

I hope the viewers can see in my work the love and inspiration I have gained from the Montague area and respect for the people, animals, and nature in this beautiful part of Massachusetts. I know I have been inspired and felt joy by those connections I have made during this project, and I hope I can return the favor a little through my art. Thank you so much!

AARON MESHON BIO: Aaron Meshon illustrates and designs for magazines, advertisements, children's products, murals, and books that can be found all over the world. When Aaron is not illustrating for clients, you can find him bathing in a Japanese Hot Spring (his wife's family is from Japan) or in The Berkshires in MA, where he lives with his wife, human son and dog son. Aaron is honored to have been chosen as one of the muralists for the Montague Wheat Paste Mural Project.

LOCATIONS 1 Avenue A, Town Hall. (back entrance)
20 Masonic Ave, Montague City (Side)

STATEMENT:

The Canalside Railtrail murals are playful celebrations of Montague and its distinct blend of rolling hills, small villages, waterways and historic mills. I aim to capture both the creative spirit of Montague's community and the historic and physical context that gave rise to its rich culture and way of life. Growing up in the Pioneer Valley, I enjoyed hours biking along the Norwottuck Rail Trail so I was very excited to highlight the joy of cycling. Some of my fondest memories take place at the Bookmill, absorbed in a book or watching the waterfall, or walking along the fish hatchery with my dad and younger sister. My illustrations aim to capture these personal, but ultimately universal experiences and memories of the magic and joy of the physical spaces, the hollows, the creative community, and the wildlife. The unifying theme of the two pieces is a celebration and honoring of water from the Turners Falls Connecticut River reservoir. Using a whimsical narrative, the illustrations weave together the diversity of fish and the beautiful architectural bridges. I emphasize how water created both the delightful natural landscape and the local paper making industry which defines Montague's history. Water serves as the center of all life and paper is the platform on which artists paint and poets write. I emphasize the inextricable connections between water, natural phenomena, and individual creativity, and the melding of these in Montague's rich history and landscape. My two illustrations use collage elements, fantastical imagery, and vibrant colors to create a whimsical narrative focused on vignettes of small moments. My illustrations aim to capture the joyous, creative, and community spirit of Montague.

Process:

My process for creating the Canalside Railtrail murals began with sketching out key themes identified by the community, as well as drawing from historical photographs, maps and personal memories I have of the town of Montague. From these initial sketches, I experimented with various collaged compositions, layering drawings and textures until I arrived at two layouts that best encapsulated the many elements. In mid-April I had the pleasure of meeting residents and discussing the drafts during a community input session hosted by LOOT, which offered so many valuable insights that helped shape the final designs

SOPHIE FOULKES BIO: I am an artist and illustrator from Western Massachusetts who graduated from RISD in 2023 with a BFA in Illustration. I enjoy creating fantastical imagery by experimenting with eccentric colors and textures. My work is narrative and playful, inspired by vibrant cityscapes and the serenity of more rural environments. I create whimsical compositions that stir imagination and reflect relatable experiences, balancing clarity of space and narrative with the ambiguity of letting materials flow organically. I strive to capture the emotions and excitement inherent in fleeting moments as visual stories to share with others. Find me on instagram at @s0.phie Visit my website at <https://sophiefoulkes.com/> Prints of my work are available for purchase on my site.

LOCATIONS

[26 East Main Street, Millers Falls](#)

[41 East Main Street at Franklin St., Millers Falls](#)

STATEMENT

The design of the murals for Millers Falls are inspired by the history of the place as a world-class machine and tool manufacturing and how their skillful craftsmanship created not just the tools but also built up the economy of the town. The murals exhibited antique machines producing continuous colorful rainbow paths representing history and shared pride that connects the residents together.

A storytelling workshop was held at the town's library and on zoom where residents shared stories of Millers Falls with ponnapa. Residents talked about what they like in Mills Falls, favorite breakfast place, local wildlife commonly found when hiking or foraging, sightseeing spot for tourists, and tools that used to get manufactured in the town which still can be found in hardware stores today. ponnapa translated these stories into the graphic design of the piece, including a silhouette of native flora and fauna such as black bear, deer, eagle, hawk, buzzard, blue bird, skunk, wild turkey, squirrel, garter snake, maple tree, and service berry. The town also has a Tool Museum with a website and online catalog documenting various types of machines and tools manufactured in Millers Falls. The murals show boring machine, power hacksaw, and vintage companion machine together with some hand tools such as hand plane, barber brace, and pratt auger handle.

The design of the murals combined both man-made elements and natural images reflecting on the life of the residents and their respect to the land, woods, and water.

PONNAPA PRAKKAMAKUL BIO: ponnapa prakkamakul พรณภา ปรัชกมกุล 陳可意 (she/her) is a multidisciplinary artist and landscape architect based in Massachusetts. Inspired by her multinational background, ponnapa's work explores the relationship between humans and their environment, focusing on cultural displacement and a sense of belonging. Using found materials foraged from landscapes and stories collected from local communities, ponnapa aims to create place-specific artwork that tells stories of the place and amplifies voices from those communities.

ponnapa believes in Muditā (Pāli), a vicarious joy or pleasure that comes from delighting in other people's wellbeing. She believes that we are all interconnected beings, and our joy is a shared experience that can pass on from one person to another. In her public artwork, she aims to create moments of shared experience that spark joy. Her past projects often take the form of bright, colorful sculptures and murals that respond to human scale, inviting passersby to engage with or start a conversation. The goal is to use the joyful moments to connect people and strengthen a sense of belonging.

ponnapa holds a Master's degree in Landscape Architecture with honors from the Rhode Island School of Design where she received the Lowthorpe Fellowship Award upon graduation. Her past collaborations included the Institute of Contemporary Art Boston, Greenway Conservancy, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, American Planning Association, Harvard Museums of

Science & Culture, Harvard Ed Portal, Boston Center for the Arts, Boston Public Art Triennial, Downtown Boston Alliance, Flatiron-Nomad BID, Pao Arts Center, Asian Community Development Corporation, The Dance Complex, Somerville Art Council, City of Cambridge Community Development Department, and Perkins School for the Blind. Her work has been featured in the Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Boston Arts Review, GBH, and the Provincetown Banner.