

LOCAL NEWS

Steamroller Print Fest brings art, creativity, fun to Kingston



A steamroller was used to make prints at the Steamroller Print Fest, part of the Kingston Art Walk, on Saturday, Sept. 21, 2024. (Connor Greco/Daily Freeman)



By **CONNOR GRECO** | cgreco@freemanonline.com

UPDATED: September 21, 2024 at 7:24 PM EDT

KINGSTON, N.Y. — A crowd gathered at Iwo Jima Lane on Saturday afternoon, Sept. 21, to witness the Steamroller Print Fest, as a steamroller was used to create prints on cloth.

Part of this year's Kingston Art Walk, the print fest is in its second year. Previously, it was a part of last year's Draw-A-Thon. The event is organized by the Midtown Kingston Arts District.

With 34 artists participating, attendees gathered to watch the steamroller roll over a piece of cloth on top of inked blocks roughly two feet long and two feet wide. The block carvings were worked on over a span of five weeks.

Proofs of the artists' prints were available at the Neighborhood Print Studio on Greenkill Avenue, where live tours and demonstrations of the studio's printing equipment took place.

Chris O'Neal, program and communication manager for the Midtown Kingston Arts District, was the one operating the steamroller. O'Neal explained the process of planning the event and making the prints.

"We put the call out to many of the artists we know, to invite them to participate," O'Neal said. "Each artist is given a linoleum block between two and three feet."

"We spend the month or two leading up to the event getting together, working on our carvings," O'Neal added, "and then leading up to it, a week before, we'll do a series of artist proofs. Those are also available for show and for sale inside."

Despite the weeks of planning and preparation, O’Neal said the steamroller is the main event. “Once we’re all set to go, we set up outside, ink up the blocks, get the steamroller rolling, and use the large banners that we print on by driving the steamroller over the top,” he said.

The Midtown Kingston Arts District learned about using steamrollers for printmaking from another event, according to O’Neal. “This was inspired by another steamrolling event we saw, I believe, in Pittsburgh,” he said.

The event is a great way to draw people to the arts, O’Neal said. “It’s wonderful. it’s the biggest way to do it,” he said. “It really gets results you’re not going to get any other way.”

For more information about Kingston’s Neighborhood Print Studio, visit madkingston.org/neighborhood-print-studio.

Originally Published: September 21, 2024 at 2:07 PM EDT

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