

**\*PHOTO AND VIDEO OPPORTUNITY\***

**The Celebration Started Today: 47<sup>th</sup> Annual AmeriCU Syracuse Arts & Crafts Festival Showcases the Talents of 165 Artists In & Around Columbus Circle**

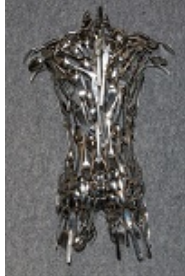



***Friday, July 28: 10:00 am – 6:00 pm;***

***Saturday, July 29 & Sunday, July 30: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm***

**Syracuse, NY** – The 47<sup>th</sup> annual AmeriCU Syracuse Arts & Crafts Festival, featuring 165 artists, craftspeople and entertainers, officially kicked off this morning at 10:00 am, taking centerstage in the ArtsWeek celebration. Presented by AmeriCU Credit Union and the Downtown Committee of Syracuse, Inc., the **three-day festival** is one of the signature events of ArtsWeek, a partnership among several organizations committed to celebrating the arts throughout Downtown Syracuse. Throughout the weekend, the festival will showcase the wares of some of the country's most talented artists in Columbus Circle and surrounding streets. **This year**, the festival has attracted **international artists** from as far away as **Israel** and **Canada**. Domestically, artists from 25 U.S. states are represented, including artists from as far away as California and Washington State.

**Rain or shine**, from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm **Friday, July 28** and from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm **Saturday, July 29** and **Sunday July 30**, Columbus Circle, as well as Jefferson, Montgomery and Onondaga Streets will be the destination to find contemporary arts and crafts, functional and decorative booths including two-and three-dimensional works including ceramics, computer art, painting, fabric and fiber, sculpture, photography, glass, jewelry and more. The Syracuse Arts & Crafts Festival is recognized as the most prestigious artshow of its kind in Central New York, and hailed as one of the premier festivals in the northeast.

The selection process to be part of this annual event is highly competitive. Applications were screened from hundreds of artists. Ultimately, 165 artists were selected through a jury process. Several featured artists use unusual media to create pieces that are unique and functional. For example, **Mark English** (who won an Award of Distinction at the Festival in 2015 and 2016) welds steel and stainless steel including flatware, incorporating other metals and materials to create beautiful sculptures. **Charles Adams** creates decorative lawn pieces using Minnesota field stone for character and shape. [Kathleen Scranton](#) creates purses, and covers for journals, laptops and eReaders from vintage books. And, [Chuck and Kim Peashey](#) reclaim musical instruments and vintage lamps, repurposing them into music-themed artwork and décor:

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| <p>Mark English,<br/>Sculpture</p>                                                  | <p>Charles Adams,<br/>Sculpture</p>                                                 | <p>Kathleen Scranton,<br/>Mixed Media</p>                                            | <p>Kim &amp; Chuck<br/>Peashey,<br/>Mixed Media</p>                                   |

With a variety of professional performers – including costumed dance groups, unique street entertainers and local singers and songwriters – as well as summer refreshments and a Children's Activity Area, the family-friendly festival attracts an estimated 50,000 people each year.

"The AmeriCU Syracuse Arts & Crafts Festival is one of the summer's most-anticipated family events across our region," said Nick Cray, Vice President of Member Relations and Marketing at AmeriCU. "AmeriCU is honored to support an event that reflects the goals of our organization by strengthening our community culturally and economically."

"Downtown Syracuse is the epicenter of arts and culture in our community, and we always look forward to this last weekend in July as an opportunity to showcase Downtown through an artist's lens," said Merike Treier, Executive Director of the Downtown Committee. "Between the high-quality talents of the artists, musical performances of strolling musicians, family-friendly activities in the Kids Tent and unique food experiences, the AmeriCU Syracuse Arts & Crafts Festival offers something for everyone. We hope that festival-goers fall in love with all of the unique amenities Downtown Syracuse has to offer while they're here, and discover new reasons to return."

Building on the success of this workshop last year, the Downtown Committee will once again host "**Activating Downtown's Alleyways**" - a **free, interactive workshop** where participants may decorate lanterns to depict their vision for the future of Downtown Syracuse. The decorative lanterns will be mounted on string lights and displayed Downtown later this summer. People of all ages are invited to stop by the lantern-decorating station located on the **green lawn located behind The Mission Restaurant on Onondaga Street** between **10:00 am** and **2:00 pm** on **Sunday, July 30**. Participants will be encouraged to share photos of their artwork across Social Media platforms using the hashtag, **#stARTcuse**.

The AmeriCU Syracuse Arts & Crafts Festival, as well as the [Northeast Jazz and Wine Festival](#) in Clinton Square, [Stage of Nations Eco Festival](#) in Hanover Square, and the [Syracuse NewTimes Chalk Painting Festival](#), along Montgomery Street are all anchor events of the multi-faceted ArtsWeek celebration. **ArtsWeek**, which **began Saturday, July 22 and runs through this Sunday, July 30**, is a joint project among several organizations committed to showcasing the arts throughout Downtown Syracuse. The CNY Jazz Arts Foundation, The Erie Canal Museum, Downtown Writers Center, Syracuse NewTimes, Onondaga Historical Association, the YMCA, the Armory Square Association and the Syracuse Parks and Recreation Youth Program are all involved. A complete schedule of events and activities is listed at the [Downtown Committee's website](#).

Funding for the Syracuse Arts & Crafts Festival is provided by [AmeriCU Credit Union](#) and grants secured by Senator John A. DeFrancisco. The Downtown Committee would also like to thank Dunkin Donuts for supplying coffee and pastries to participating artists and craftspeople as they begin each morning at the festival. For additional information about the Arts & Crafts Festival, please visit [www.SyracuseArtsandCraftsFestival.com](http://www.SyracuseArtsandCraftsFestival.com).

***About the Downtown Committee of Syracuse, Inc.***

The Downtown Committee of Syracuse, Inc. is a private, not-for-profit, professional downtown management organization representing all property owners and tenants within the central business district. The Downtown Committee undertakes programs to improve downtown's image, strengthen its economic base, increase its attractiveness, and assure that it's clean, safe and accessible. For more information, visit [www.downtownsyracuse.com](http://www.downtownsyracuse.com).

***About AmeriCU Credit Union***

AmeriCU Credit Union serves over 100,000 members throughout Central and Northern New York and beyond. It offers a complete line of financial services, including savings and investment accounts, consumer and real estate loans, credit cards, a proprietary ATM network and toll-free automated TeleLink service. AmeriCU is also a member of many ATM networks. For more information, please visit [www.americu.org](http://www.americu.org).

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