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**SUNY Plattsburgh and Outside Art Collaborate on Monumental Mural Honoring Rockwell Kent and Former President George Angell**

 **PLATTSBURGH, N.Y.** — SUNY Plattsburgh and the local public art project, Outside Art, are in collaboration on a monumental mural project that will enhance the beauty of the campus and community while paying homage to the late artist Rockwell Kent and the muralist’s grandfather.

Work has begun on “North Country Dream” by Plattsburgh native Brendon Palmer-Angell, now based in New Orleans but who has made a name for himself locally through his large-scale murals of actress Jean Arthur, astronaut Michael Anderson and, most recently, 19th century poets Lucretia and Margaret Davidson. “Dream” will be painted on the wall of Hudson Hall, facing the pond adjacent to the Northcountry Planetarium.

Palmer-Angell is the grandson of the late SUNY Plattsburgh president, Dr. George Angell, who served the campus from 1954 to 1974, and who was a good friend of Kent. After Kent’s death, his wife, Sally Kent Gorton, gifted the university more than 5,000 artworks and more.

“Although my grandfather passed away shortly after I was born, the spaces and community that he cultivated have held me in many different ways,” Palmer-Angell said. “I spent my summers growing up at the Adirondack lake home that he created; it was a carefree place to revel in nature and family and (to) develop a deep connection to the region.”

It’s this connection that motivated Palmer-Angell to participate in the Outside Art project, giving him a way to honor his grandfather and continue supporting public art in his hometown.

Outside Art’s Amy Guglielmo said, “The space was chosen to share and affirm the university’s support for creative partnerships and its deep pride in being a public institution grounded in this region.

“This partnership aligns with SUNY Plattsburgh’s mission and strategic vision, a meaningful example of its commitment to the North Country by highlighting local artists, celebrating public art, and enriching the campus environment in ways that reflect both its values and community roots.”

University President Alexander Enyedi concurred.

“This mural reflects everything SUNY Plattsburgh values: Creativity, collaboration, and connection to the North Country,” he said. “We are proud to partner with local artists to bring color and meaning to a space that symbolizes shared purpose and regional progress.”

Enyedi said that public art “tells a story, and this piece tells ours.”

“As SUNY Plattsburgh continues to grow as a regional anchor institution, we are committed to celebrating the artists, communities, and histories that shape our identity,” he said.

The project is funded by support from SUNY Plattsburgh alumni Tom ’70 and Marie ’72 Hermes, whose support through last year’s Cardinals Thrive campaign also funded the purchase of 125 red Adirondack chairs that are located throughout campus near student living spaces.

Anne Hansen, executive director of the Plattsburgh College Foundation and vice president of Institutional Advancement, praised the Hermes’ continued support of their alma mater.

“Their support will bring to life a vibrant new mural that enhances the visual appeal of a central campus space,” she said. “Their support through Cardinals Thrive (offers) students comfortable outdoor seating where they can relax, connect and enjoy the beauty of our campus.”

The muralist gained a special appreciation of SUNY Plattsburgh’s spaces after spending the final semester of his senior year in high school as a fine arts major at the university.

“It wasn’t until then that I appreciated how my grandfather championed a space of learning for personal development and the good of society at large — though it was a little surreal to spend lunch and study time in a building named for him.”

Palmer-Angell gave a shout-out to Rick Mikkelson, SUNY distinguished teaching professor emeritus of art, whose drawing class changed the trajectory of his life.

“Though I had created art my whole life, it wasn’t until that year in drawing class with Rick Mikkelson that I became convinced that I wanted to turn my passion into a career,” he said.

Palmer-Angell said the mural will incorporate the view from his grandparents’ lake cabin “merged with the view from Rockwell Kent’s Asgaard farm, another scene that has been imprinted on my mind since childhood encounters with Kent’s gorgeous paintings,” which are in the university’s permanent collection in the Rockwell Kent Gallery in Feinberg Library.

George Angell’s lake cabin and Asgaard are “just 15 minutes away from each other, (and) both places shared a view of the same mountain range,” Palmer-Angell said.

“This collaboration with Outside Art reflects our strategic vision to elevate SUNY Plattsburgh as a place of belonging, creativity and public service,” Enyedi said. “The mural will welcome all who pass by with a visible reminder of who we are and what we stand for.”

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