

A pop-up gallery fills a vacant spot in Providence with joy and light

“Reflection-Delight,” a free, temporary gallery on Westminster Street, showcases pieces from two local artists

By [Alexa Gagosz](#) Globe Staff, Updated May 14, 2021, 6:00 a.m.



(Left to Right) Artist Carol Scavotto, curator Sheryl J. Kopel and artist Juditta Musette in the gallery. There's a new pop-up gallery in downtown Providence called "Reflection Delight," where two artists are displaying feminine pieces in a free gallery open every weekend. The art, and atmosphere, is supposed to represent the "light" of spring after a dark COVID-19 pandemic winter, and year. DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

PROVIDENCE — During the pandemic, downtown Providence was living in its own shadow, with empty storefronts and restaurants that were “hibernating” for the winter or closed for good. But these days, cobblestone-lined Westminster Street has started to feel alive again, thanks in part to three Rhode Island-based women and their new pop-up art gallery, “Reflection-Delight.”

Curated by Sheryl Kopel, a freelance artist manager and facilitator, the temporary exhibition has filled 233 Westminster St., a

space that is usually vacant. She's chosen two artists whose styles are vastly different, but whose work looks to project "joy and inner strength that fly in the face of darker trends in the wider world."

"The world is still very screwed up, indeed. People are still dying during this pandemic. People are still being killed for being Black or brown. There's all sorts of stuff that's deeply, deeply troubling in our world that doesn't seem to be budging very easily," said Kopel, who is also a research project director at Rhode Island Hospital. "With that in mind, there is still a cause to feel hopeful. And we are starting to see this collective feeling of, 'We might actually get through this.'"



"In Deep" on display by artist Juditta Musette, who is selling the piece for \$8,500. DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

The three-room pop-up gallery is free to the public. And most of the art is on sale, ranging in price from about \$150 up to several thousand dollars.

[Juditta Musette's](#) bright, eye-catching paintings feature highly saturated images, such as a grand, magenta-colored octopus with its tentacles twined around a mermaid in “In Deep.” Her painting “Time Bender” depicts a woman delicately sipping different cups of tea, with ruby-red orbs and objects floating around her eggplant-colored hair.



"Coming Ashore" on display by artist Juditta Musette. It's for sale for \$1,800. DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

But her favorite piece, she said, is “Coming Ashore,” which is a large piece with three red orbs coming out of a pastel void.

“Those red spheres are the juicy mystery of life that we haven’t opened yet. The possibilities are endless,” she said. “It’s a gift like a ripe fruit to be eaten and enjoyed. It shows that life is here in small, little packages. And we just need to stand in the void and accept them as they roll in.”

Musette, who started working with watercolors at age 6, studied art in Paris, and graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design. She created “Coming Ashore” in about 40 hours, she said. “In Deep” took about three months.



Silk thread pieces by artist Carol Scavotto. This piece is for sale for \$225. DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

[Carol Scavotto](#)'s provocative silk-thread pieces are a direct contrast to Musette's work. Scavotto said her art embrace women's sexuality and love for their own bodies, even as the world tries to hide the natural beauty of them.

A mixed-media artist, Scavotto has worked on 3D collages that confronted difficult social issues using photos of herself in costume, her face replaced by a doll's. But after a few years, she said, the series became taxing as she dove into complex issues, such as school shootings, racism, and child abuse.



Artist Carol Scavotto artwork on display in the gallery, which is for sale for \$2,500. This is mounted top and bottom on teak bars with white dupioni silk fabric, silk threads, and silk mohair. DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

“I needed a break. I just wanted to draw beautiful bodies,” said Scavotto, who graduated from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. “I started with line drawings of two bodies that would mend into one. And it was great. After everything else I was working on, the world and I needed a creative hug.”

Her current work has a Japanese influence, she said. She grew up surrounded by Japanese art, and “it’s a way of visually speaking that I find extremely comforting,” she said. “And these are intimate works, they are smaller, and they are inviting you in.”

She added, “It’s exactly how we want to make people feel while they are passing by, looking into the gallery. Like they are being invited into this intimate space to enjoy art, and feel hope.”

“Reflection-Delight,” 233 Westminster St., Providence, is open Saturdays and Sundays in May from 2 to 5 p.m., with additional appointments available during the week. A virtual, 3D gallery [is viewable online](#). Book an appointment by [emailing curator Sheryl Kopel](#).