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# Lights, Stories to Link City and Town

### By Jen Thomas

iBerkshires Staff

06:31AM / Monday, May 05, 2008

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NORTH ADAMS — The city and the Mother Town have more in common that just a name — they have a shared history. And two local artists' organizations have teamed up to expose the ties between the two communities.

"Networked Realities: (Re)Connecting the Adamses," a collaboration of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts' Gallery 51 and Greylock Arts (with Turbulence.org), seeks to "artistically reconnect" the two municipalities through a series of exhibitions, including elements that will be featured exclusively online.

"They're doing some really cool things with Greylock Arts in Adams and we're trying to do some pretty cool things here in North Adams so it just seems to fit to do an exhibit like this," said Jonathan Secor, MCLA's director of special programs. "Adams and North Adams used to be one place, so let's put them back together at least for a couple of months."

One of the exhibits, titled "Lumens," will see hundreds of lamps set up in gallery spaces to represent the interconnectedness of the two communities. Described as an "interactive installation that not only explores the metaphorical links and histories that connect these two communities, but one that also investigates the personal histories that have made these communities what they are," "Lumens" will concentrate on uncovering shared stories.



The exhibit will display borrowed lamps from both city residents and those from Adams in gallery spaces in both communities.

When visitors come in, their physical presence will turn on the lamps and, simultaneously, a corresponding lamp will turn on in the other location," explained Marianne Petite, co-owner of Greylock Arts.

The two physical exhibits will be linked through cyber exhibit provided by Turbulence.org, part of New Radio and Performing Arts Inc. The 12-year-old Web site commissions, exhibits and promotes networked art forms.

Because the individual stories of the lamps will be chronicled online, whenever someone researchs a specific lamp in the Turbulence online gallery, it will also light up.

"It's going to be three different audiences interracting and making their presence known to each other," said Petite.

With "Networked Realities" scheduled to begin in July, organizers are asking for between 150 and 200 donor lamps for the "Lumens" exhibit. They will be returned in their original conditions.

"These towns have a shared history and there's still a lot of similar issues. What we're trying to do here is start a conversation," Petite said.

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Settled in 1737, the city was once a part of Adams before separating from the town in 1878. Both were named for Revolutionary leader Samuel Adams, cousin of President John Adams.

"No matter what, this is going to be a cool and interactive exhibit. But for those who dig a little deeper, they'll find the history," said Secor.

"(Re)Connecting the Adamses" is being made possible through the support of Turbulence with funding from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and the LEF Foundation.

Lamps can be dropped off in the city at Gallery 51, 51 Main St., Monday through Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

In Adams, bring your lamp to Greylock Arts at 93 Summer St. Monday through Sunday. Donors should call 413-241-8692 prior to delivery.

As part of "Networked Realities," Turbulence is offering commissions to artists living or working in Adams and North Adams. Commissions will range from \$300 to \$1,000 and must include a compelling Internet experience or component. The application deadline has been extended to June 1. See the Turbulence site for more information.

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This is a really neat idea. It is great to see what these arts groups are doing for our area.

from: on: 05-05-2008 12:00AM LAgree (0) - LDisagree (0)

Jen-

Thanks for a great article!

ids

from: Jonathan Secor on: 05-06-2008 12:00AM

I Agree (0) - I Disagree (0)

I see "Lumens" as not only a physical connection of two cities, but the expansion of the arts into the electronic genre. The piece is didactic and enlightening. That is what light is. It brightens a space in order to see what it influences more clearly. Light is the symbol of knowledge. The translations of this piece conjures up a wealth of analogies, similes, and facsimiles. I live in California and plan on being there to be part of "Lumens".

from: Mary Castello

on: 05-24-2008 12:00AM <u>I Agree</u> (0) - <u>I Disagree</u> (0)

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