

Artpark artist seeking community-created clay works for park installation

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Make a piece at Artpark's Free Family Saturdays this weekend

Niagara County artist Karen Sirgey will be implementing her community art installation at Artpark this August. She will explore the theme of "Contribution" by inviting the public to participate in the creation of her large-scale sculpture.

This Saturday, July 25, Sirgey welcomes the community to create and contribute a piece of pottery at Free Family Saturdays, an Artpark event that offers drawing, painting and pottery workshops and live performances by the Niagara University Repertory Theatre (N.U.R.T.). Family Saturday attendees will design clay pieces with messages of what they would like to "contribute" to the world. After firing and glazing their artworks, Sirgey will incorporate each piece into a permanent large-scale installation that will be on display at Artpark for years to come.

Sirgey's sculpture makes its debut during "ArtsParked," a free, all-day celebration held at Artpark from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 15. The event features a full lineup of art-related activities, including live music and performances, a gallery show and a large-scale regional art sale by 80 participating artists. Beginning the day of the festival, the installation will be on view for free at the bottom of the red brick road across from the entrance to the historic Woods Trail.

Sirgey, a Wheatfield resident, studied with local sculptor Mark Griffis and has taught metal sculpture to a variety of students. She started Avian Architecture in the late 1980s, which specializes in custom birdhouses and miniatures. Over the years, Sirgey has worked alongside Niagara Wheatfield teachers Tracy Bloom, Martha Rogala and art students to create seven permanent sculptures at the high school.

In 2014, Arts Service Initiative awarded Sirgey the inaugural Spark Award for DEC Program of the Year. Sirgey instructs during Artpark's summer art camp, and teaches classes for community groups as the director of education for the Ashford Hollow Foundation.

Sirgey's "Pods" sculpture can be found along Artpark's Woods Trail. Her artworks have been exhibited in local galleries and in private collections throughout the U.S. and Canada. Visit [Karen Sirgey](#) or [AvianArchitecture](#) on Facebook.

Lewiston's Artpark has been a top destination for performing and visual arts for more than 41 years.

Visit www.artpark.net for more information, park hours and event schedules.

Sirgey's project is funded by the New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of Gov. Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and administered by the Arts Services Initiative of Western New York (<http://www.asiwny.org>).

<http://www.wnypapers.com/news/article/current/2015/07/23/121500/artpark-artist-seeking-community-created-clay-works-for-park-installation>