

## **Shara Osgood – Biography - 2024**

Shara is a classically-trained artist with a BFA from School of Visual Arts in NYC. She has studied abroad at the Academy of Visionary Art in Italy and trained with Ania Amador & Chris Morphis of Anamorphosis Arts; an internationally renowned mural team.

In 2022, Shara was chosen as one of 3 lead artists, to create three large-scale murals in downtown Fitchburg. As part of the Community Mural Institute program, Shara was trained in community engagement methods for Listening Sessions, Paint Parties and the polytab process of mural painting. Shara designed the “Power of Art” mural & led a crew of 3 other artists in production & installation.

Since then, she has designed and created many more murals, including a 2000 square foot pedestrian walkway mural: “Reaching Towards Change” and a 1500 square foot mural: “Monson: Past, Present and Future”. By involving the residents of the town in the concept creation, paint party and celebration of the mural, they have felt their voices being heard, valued and represented.

*“You’ve captured everything that we love about our town, its history and its people! This is truly amazing!” ~ Deborah D. (Monson resident)*

Shara has been an active Art Steward and Community Steward in Fitchburg, working on many public events, including: Fitchburg Open Studios, Winter Bazaar, Farmer’s Market, & First Thursdays. Shara was the founder, event coordinator and key fundraiser for the Lowe Park Chalk Art Festival. She has been an active member of the local Fitchburg Cultural Council, MA Caucus for Womens Art & Fitchburg Cultural Alliance. Shara regularly exhibits her paintings throughout the US and abroad.

Shara said, “When I painted my first mural, I knew that I had found my calling. I felt like I was dancing with my paintbrush across the wall. It was such a thrilling experience!” That first mural was a 300 square foot mural at the Fitchburg Public Library, painted in 2021. Since then, Shara keeps expanding, creating much larger works of public art with more social impact.

## **Shara Osgood – Artist Statement - 2024**

Murals are the people's art. I have been invited into spaces to transform them into memorable backdrops for people's lives. My work is designed to uplift and reflect a community's best self, back to them, bring hope in dark times, and amplify the message & values of that community. I am determined to bring ideals of hope & possibilities into all aspects of my work. I was drawn to murals as a tool to empower my community.

I have been fascinated with all patterns in nature and in life. How does a body move? How can I express that flow? What makes someone feel valued and vital? Permaculture design has informed a lot of my recent work. The concept of companion planting is the way that plants are stronger when supported by other plants. Humans, like the natural world, sustain themselves through collaboration and support, building stronger communities. My great passion is to use my skills to bring people together and help to empower them to achieve their highest purpose, using art as a healing tool.

By creating public art, collectively, we send messages and plant seeds for future generations to learn sustainable practices for global healing. In my work within communities, people share stories of resilience, change and hope. These artworks become landmarks and the backdrops for people's lives. They are some of the most accessible artworks within a community, creating unique opportunities to impact & shift the local narrative.

My murals utilize bold patterns and strong colors to convey many concepts. They enliven the spaces where they reside. I am passionate about Community Engaged Murals (CEM). In CEM, we invite the community to come paint with us after we've turned the painting into a large color-by-number. I love this type of work because, not only does the community feel ownership of the artwork, but they can say that they, literally, helped make it.

The more that I evolve as an artist and a humanist, the more that I crave to paint larger, more impactful murals that sing to the world of hope and imagination and possibility and connection and love!