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Artists Transforming Electrical Boxes

PORTSMOUTH, VA – Lovers of Olde Towne Portsmouth who have expressed a devotion to their neighborhood through public art have started a trend that continues to grow. First, the Supporters of Portsmouth Public Art bought the beloved toad at the entrance of the Children’s Museum of Virginia. Then Sam Welty was commissioned to create a commemorative War of 1812 mural along Effingham Street. Next, a decorative switchbox cover was installed at the intersection of Court and High Streets, and the city added another Welty creation on the Water Street Wall of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Museum. Then Welty was asked to use his imagination to create a special children’s mural on a wall adjacent to the Children’s Museum. Shortly after, a chalkboard-begging passers-by to list their answers to the question, “Before I die I want too...” popped up in front of the Old Colony Theater. Now, hand-painted electrical boxes are beginning to appear at High Street Landing.

In April, the City of Portsmouth put out a call for local artists to submit concepts for their choice of electrical boxes in the downtown area of Portsmouth. This exciting project was designed to enhance the appearance of downtown and to celebrate the identity, history, pride and spirit of the City of Portsmouth. Three different, regional, artists were selected. The project has enjoyed great success in bringing original artwork by local artists to an unexpected place in the City.

The artists painting the electrical covers include Amber Fagan of Chesapeake, Howard Batkin of Portsmouth and Julie Coughlin of Portsmouth.

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