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The Merrimack Valley Region

Murals At The Currier Honor Manchester's Working Class Roots

New Hampshire Public Radio | By **Peter Biello**

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LISTEN • 4:52

*Peter Biello/NHPR /*

This week, the Currier Museum of Art in Manchester is welcoming art-lovers to its gallery for a **new show**. Boston-based artist and Tufts Professor Ethan Murrow has

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week, ahead of the show's opening, he and a team of art students put the finishing touches on the drawings.

[Editor's note: We highly recommend listening to this story.]

On the gallery walls, the 42-year-old artist and these students have drawn murals about fifteen feet high. The images are of piles of tools and people pulling, pushing, and lifting them. The show is called "Hauling."



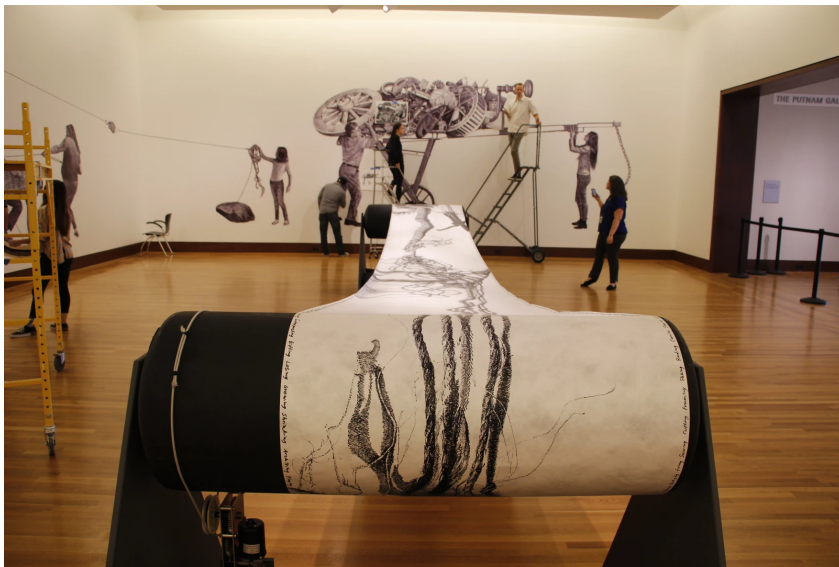
Credit Peter Biello/NHPR /

Ethan Murrow works on one of the murals at the Currier Museum of Art using a Sharpie marker.

The artist, Murrow, wears a brace on his forearm, and it's easy to see why: each one of these enormous murals is composed of thin strokes of the common black Sharpie pen.

"I've used Sharpie in a bunch of different wall drawings. It does have a staying power that I'm attracted to. It has a nice rich black, and it's relatable, hopefully, to people who come in," Murrow says.

Those who come in will also encounter a conveyor belt made of Tyvek paper, a building material. On that paper is a 53-foot Sharpie drawing of a rope, and words referring to work: cutting, framing, binding, carving. The belt slowly rolls, powered by a rotisserie chicken motor.



Credit Peter Biello/NHPR /

A scroll drawing of rope runs on a loop at the center of the exhibit, an ode to manual labor in the Queen City.

Murrow says the show comments on parts of the Manchester economy that have come and gone, such as the native fishing communities, colonial farmers, and the textile mills. "Hauling" is meant to honor Manchester, a city where, through the changes, work has been the constant.

For more of Ethan Murrow's thoughts on the exhibit, what he calls a "subjective history" of Manchester, listen to the audio version of the story above. NHPR's Peter Biello spoke with the artist as he finalized the installation.

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Peter Biello

Peter Biello is the host of *All Things Considered* and *Writers on a New England Stage* at New Hampshire Public Radio. He has served as a producer/announcer/host of *Weekend Edition Saturday* at Vermont Public Radio and as a reporter/host of *Morning Edition* at WHQR in Wilmington, North Carolina.

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