A Collaborative Artistic Menagerie—Oh, Ashfeld!

BY DAVID KULP

The June 3–4 Ashfield Town Spectacle and Culture Fair, organized by the Double Edge Theatre troupe, was a massive, montessorial fusion of history, culture, democracy and the arts. Dozens of resident volunteers, including professional and side profession artists from Double Edge and elsewhere to create an innovative menagerie that included structured programs, spontaneous art and public participation. Each day's events culminated in a centrist parade and a floating performance at the lake, with actors soaring across the water.

The weekend event, cast as an ode to the stage slowly drifted to the far shore while songs were sung, led by musical director John Goldman. Silks billowed across the stage as wings. Giant puppets depicting current confederate soldier. Under a large tent, the Goldman acted a story about an Ashfield Common, Kermit Dunkelberg and Marina Goldman acted a story about an Ashfield confederate solider. Under a large tent, the Ashfield town band played marches and show tunes from Lechuck as a “heroic demonstration.” In the Congregational Church Parish House performed impressionistic sketches. Representative paintings from about 20 Ashfield artists and former Pocso’s barn. Mary Patierno screened her film about AIDS at the library. These performances performed antebellum acts behind the line at Norton Field. Many area poets shared their writing.

Somewhere distinct from the artistic genre: a children's book sale and the town hall hosted a town meeting room. Our usual town meeting room, the Town Hall, temporarily moved to a space on the second floor. The room was a remarkable anteroom, which not only expanded our community spirit in Ashfield and the infusion of the arts in so many of our lives.

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Photos by Bill Hughes, Carrie Cranston, Tenaha Smith, Greg Raff, Gregory Toepf, Kim Chin-Gibbons, Robin Logan