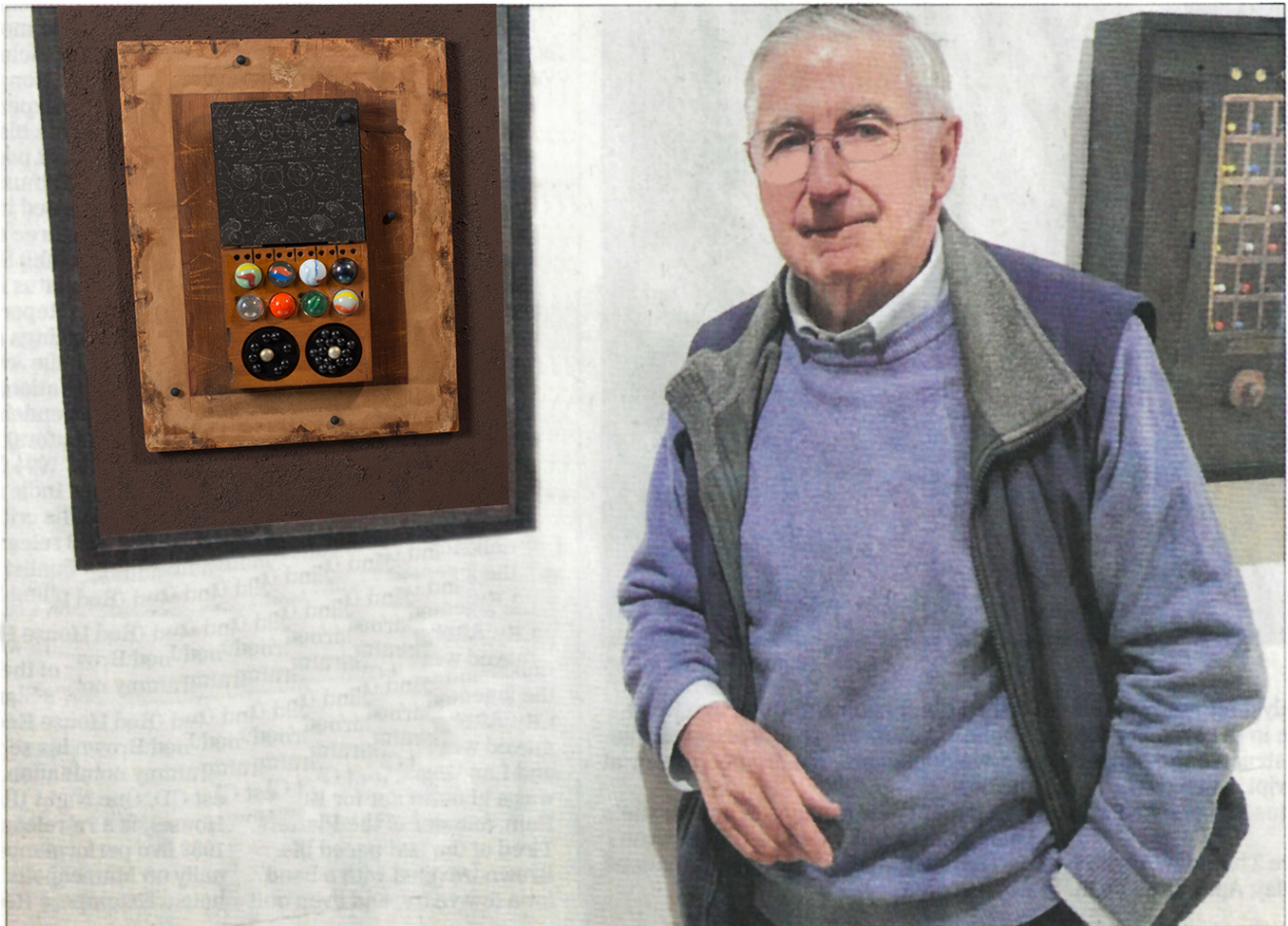


ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Science meets art

Local artist takes it to outer space at new Dublin School exhibit

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STAFF PHOTO BY RACHEL VITELLO

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By RACHEL VITELLO
Monadnock Ledger-Transcript

Outer Space: Art and Science Tour of the Universe" is an art exhibit currently on display at the Dublin School Putnam Gallery that is "artwork about outer space, born of an artist's inner space." The Busyhaus Exhibition was created by artist and conservator Robert Hauser of Sharon.

About 20 years ago, Hauser and his wife visited the Dublin School's planetarium with a group of other people concerned about conservation. This is what compelled Hauser to create art inspired by what is going on in space based on current events and

past explorations and discoveries.

"That experience made me continue to look at outer space and the universe. It's in the news every day, you can't avoid it," Hauser said. "Visually, as an artist, I've tried to take that informed knowledge about science and real events, that have been more or less confirmed, and then try to convey that knowledge or event into my own artwork."

The exhibition is also a way of bringing together the humanities and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) subjects. Hauser also hopes that people can gain a better appreciation for the planet during a time of many environmental misfortunes.

"The sun – we wake up every morning and we just take it for granted. A lot of us just treat it as a light bulb," Hauser said. "But someday it will shut down, that's the only time we have. That's how fragile we really exist in the universe. We need to understand how fragile our situation is in the universe and how we're degrading it when we need to appreciate it, and be more responsible – good stewards in other words."

While many pieces in the exhibit reflect this idea, one piece, in particular, is "Noah in Space." Hauser borrowed from the Biblical story of Noah's Ark, in which Noah takes two of each animal and saves them from

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a flood by bringing them onto his arc. This piece is meant to represent the increasing issue of extinction.

"We've got ourselves in a situation here where extinction is happening daily almost. It's so sad that we need to consider another arc," Hauser said. "How do we stop doing what we're doing? Do we not care enough about this to ignore what's happening here while we're going into outer space trying to solve that problem, while we can't solve the problem we have right here?"

This is not the only piece within the exhibit that borrows from a piece of literature. "Goldilocks Where Are You?" uses the children's story "Goldilocks" to convey how the distance of Earth from the sun allows for the perfect temperature to sustain both life and water. The temperature is not too hot and not too cold, but just right. This is so rare in the universe that, according to Hauser, scientists have only found about 400 candidates as of right now.

Other pieces of art and topics explored in the exhibit include "Goodbye Pluto" and "First Born." "Goodbye Pluto" is an homage to Pluto no longer being considered a planet. The piece includes a newspaper clipping of when this decision was made and announced to the public. "First Born" is a reference to the first sun that coalesced



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about four billion years after the Big Bang happened.

However, not all of Hauser's works have a historical or environmental aspect attached to them. Hauser was able to have some fun when creating the work "Dangerous Exoplanets." This piece is about four imaginary planets with unfriendly locals.

"I just get to stretch my imagination a little," Hauser said. "We've discovered all these little planets, but the inhabitants of those planets are not friendly to us visiting. I've created this fictional

space police enforcing and telling everyone traveling in space to not visit these four planets because of the inhabitants. It's pretty far out but it was a lot of fun to do."

As for how Hauser went about putting all the pieces of art together, he said it was a combination of using things he had already collected over time, and searching for the right pieces. Hauser also said the inspiration for exactly what scientific topics and events to use in his work came from newspapers, Science Magazine and his involvement with the

Union of Concerned Scientists.

"I have so many drawers you open up and it has all these things that I found at flea markets and stores and they slowly make their way into the final piece, so it can be years in between assembling the piece," Hauser said. "I intuitively use pieces or I will know I have to go looking for something at antique stores. All the pieces come together one way or another."

Hauser is never quite done with his work, however, at least not until he hands it

over to a buyer.

"As long as that work is still in my possession, I don't put a date on it until it actually is sold," Hauser said. "I go back to some of these pieces, I've gone back two or three times to some if there's something that's of better use to the piece. It's a little confusing for the curators of the world. Some of these pieces may go back 15 years."

Hauser worked for 40 years in museum conservation. He finds it only natural that today, although he is retired, he still has interest

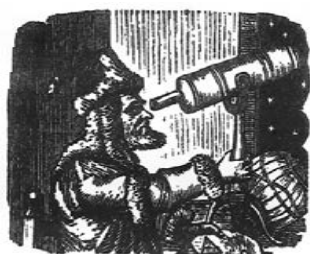
and a yearning when it comes to saving and preserving things. This exhibit is his own way of expressing this desire.

"I guess the preservation part of me is always wanting to save things that are going to get lost or thrown away. That's just part of the way in which I value things," Hauser said. "Sometimes it's simply the artist trying to satisfy themselves. It's a selfish thing, too. You have this way of wanting to interpret all that's happening visually, like an author would in words or a musician would in score."

At the end of the day, Hauser wants people to find an appreciation and a respect for the planet that we have. While Hauser does see the benefit and importance of space exploration and research, he also wants people to focus on what we have right in front of us and not take it for granted.

"Some way or another become proactive, understand our rather existential situation that we exist in, be more thoughtful and careful about how we care for our planet," Hauser said. "It's an incredibly modest attempt of admission but it's my contribution to that subject. I don't expect to be changing points of view of the audience but I suppose it could happen."

"Outer Space" is on display at the Putnam Gallery until May 10. For more information visit www.busyhaus.com.



Artist Notes:

The Dublin School Putnam Gallery, 18 Lehmann Way, Dublin, N.H. 03444, 9-5 Daily, April 5th-May 10th, 2019, 603-563-8584. Artworks: A. Those Math Crazy Luptians, "They dread changes in the celestial bodies." B. Thank You Galileo, "What you see is what you get." Robert Hauser, P.O. Box 508, Peterborough, N.H. 03458, www.busyhausartworks.com. Memberships: Union of Concerned Scientists & The Planetary Society.