

TERRACE PAINTACULAR | SUNSET OVER LAKE MENDOTA

# From skilled to budding, artists gather at Union Terrace to paint the sunset

CHRIS AADLAND caadland@madison.com Sep 5, 2017



Nicole Rosenbaum, left, and Ashley Ortega, with Wheelhouse Studios, offer instruction to participants in the Terrace Paintacular at the Union Terrace. [BUY NOW](#)  
AMBER ARNOLD, STATE JOURNAL

Obstructed by clouds for most of the day, the sun peeked out Monday evening just in time for those at Union Terrace to watch it set.

Among the crowd of gazers eating pizza and ice cream and drinking beer on the lakeside terrace were those who had come to re-create the sunset with paint.

Hundreds of artists — from skilled to novice — spread out across the terrace to paint their depictions of a hazy sunset punctured by golden streaks of fading sunshine over the west side of Lake Mendota during the Terrace Paintacular.

Despite a mostly windy and overcast day, the artists helped fill Union Terrace just in time for the clouds to break at about 6:30 p.m. so they could paint the setting sun over the sailboat-dotted lake.

The event was the third — and second one on Labor Day — hosted by the Wisconsin Union's Wheelhouse Studios.

Monday's gathering was the largest one so far, said Jay Ekleberry, director of Wheelhouse Studios.

Organizers ran out of the 822 canvases they had for the event, which was geared toward move-in week for UW-Madison students, he said.

"This turned into a beautiful evening," Ekleberry said, adding that he was more worried about the wind not letting up than the cloudy skies throughout the day.

Although the event was aimed at students, everyone from parents and children to older couples turned up to paint.

The painters were given all they needed for free to re-create the scene on their canvases as the sun sank below the horizon: brushes, paint, a cup of water to clean their brushes and guidance from two instructors.

Attendees used red, yellow, white, green and blue paint to depict the setting sun, the gray and light blue of the clouds and sky, and the dark outline of land on the other side of Lake Mendota. Others included the iconic sunburst Union Terrace chairs in their paintings.

The range of Monday's paintings included more literal re-creations of the sunset over the terrace to more abstract to ones featuring the Loch Ness Monster and cheese crumbles in the lake. Some didn't even

The range of Monday's paintings included more literal re-creations of the sunset over the terrace to more abstract to ones featuring the Loch Ness Monster and cheese crumbles in the lake. Some didn't even include the sunset.

"We just kind of did what we wanted to," said incoming UW-Madison freshman Sarah Huber. "It didn't make it any less fun."

Huber was among a group of six other incoming freshmen, with most opting to paint what was on their minds rather than the evening sky.

But for those who attempted to paint the twilight sky and landscape around the terrace, most — like 61-year-old Barb Bowman, of Sun Prairie, who was with her grandson and a group of friends — said it didn't matter if the paintings turned out well.

"Uh, OK," she said when asked how the paintings turned out. "Some are better than others. But it was lots and lots of fun."

