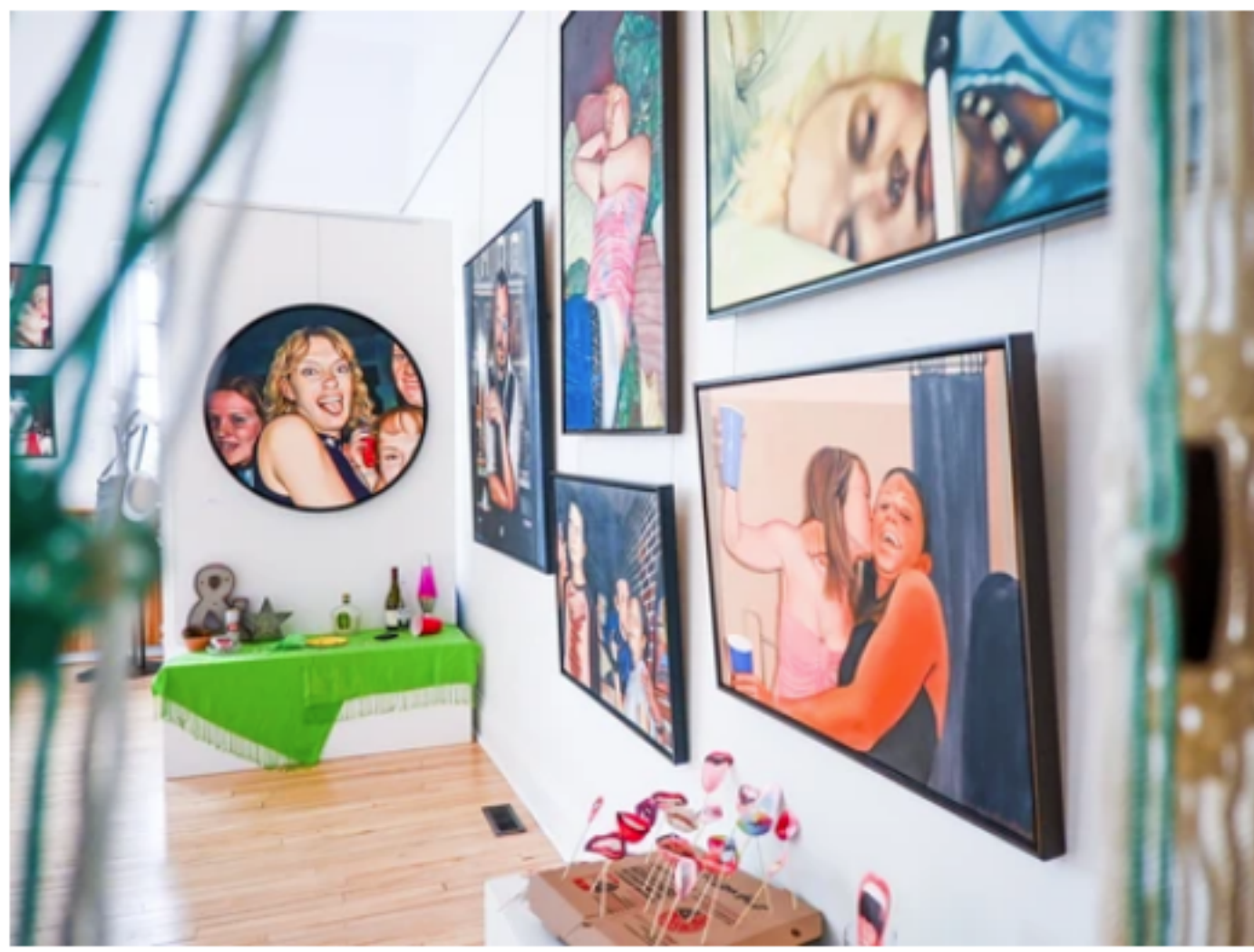


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# Multicultural Heritage Centre welcomes new 'Party Paintings' exhibition

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A new art exhibition by Campbell Wallace titled, "Party Paintings: Life of the Party in Narrative Portraiture" will remain on display at the Multicultural Heritage Centre in Stony Plain until Nov. 23. Photo by Alexis Chute.

The Multicultural Heritage Centre is inviting residents to relive their youth through its latest art exhibition.

Titled, "Party Paintings: Life of the Party in Narrative Portraiture," the 25-plus piece exhibit by Campbell Wallace depicts hyper-realistic portraits of individuals in the act of partying at social gatherings. It is on display at the Centre's Art Gallery from Sept. 7 until Nov. 23.

## RECOMMENDED VIDEOS

Alexis Chute, the gallery's curator, first came across Wallace's work on Instagram roughly a year ago. She said she was drawn to his 'edgy' paintings because they were unlike anything the gallery had ever shown before. Their subject matter was a little more mature and reflected human imperfection — something she said is not typically depicted in portraiture.

"Campbell embraces flaws and elevates them in a selfie culture where everyone smiles and poses to look flattering for the camera. His work is about capturing the rawness of people and their experiences which is not always pretty," said Chute.

All of the paintings featured in this exhibition are based on a growing collection of found photographs amassed by Wallace. His recreations on canvas use acrylic and oil-based paints to best capture the moods, lighting, and textures constituting the memory of each moment. The paintings make reference to the traditional flaws of their respective photographs such as flash, heavy shadowing, and red eye.

The purpose of each portrait is to tell a story about its subject. Through dress, body language, and location, the paintings tell the viewer what the subject is trying to say not only at the moment of being photographed but at this particular stage of their life.

"This shifting narrative has been the focus of this group of paintings since I began working on them. These images and people seem important to me, and I feel compelled to separate them from the pack and elevate them for the viewer's contemplation. This process allows me time to understand what inspires me about the source material and what symbols and/or art-historical references I need to emphasize in the final painting," said Wallace.

The gallery space itself has been staged by Chute to resemble a house party. It features pizza boxes, liquor bottles, confetti, and household furniture with articles of clothing strewn across them. She said she wants visitors to feel like they are walking into an actual house party.

The target audience of this exhibition is young adults and adults. Chute said the older generations will get a kick out of reliving their younger days while the younger generations will be able to more closely relate to the subjects of the portraits.

"These recent portraits have been selected from a larger ongoing body of work concerned with extraordinary moments such as the highs and lows found within the ordinary events of people's lives. The 'Party Paintings' focus on both the potential highs of social interaction, as well as the potential unease of its after effects," said Wallace.

On Thursday, Sept. 29, the gallery will host an official opening party for the exhibition from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. when Wallace will talk at length about his inspiration and process. Additionally, musical guests, the Moonshine Mamas will perform. The Three Moons Kitchen will be serving sweet and savoury 'party pies' and signature cocktails in keeping with the house party theme.

"My hope is to bring in a different demographic. This is a fun and youthful departure from the kind of art the Multicultural Heritage Centre is known for showing. We're all excited about presenting this because it has a lot of relevance," said Chute.

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