



# Discover

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# 419

## March 2025



### Mazza Museum rescues art from wildfires

Author sends original work for safekeeping

By: Elizabeth Clauss

Visiting the Mazza Museum many years ago as a speaker, best-selling author, journalist, and poet Nikki Grimes was impacted by the place and expressed her desire to bring her original illustrations to the museum at some point. She originally intended to bequest 12 original pieces to the museum as a part of her estate after her passing.

When the California wildfires spread quickly near her home recently, she decided to send the artwork to the museum early, to ensure its safety.

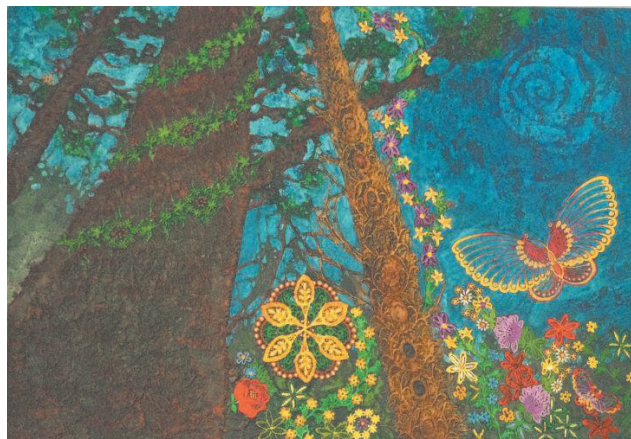
“A couple of Tuesdays ago when it

was below zero, I was in the office and received a phone call from Nikki, almost in tears,” said Mazza Museum Director Benjamin Sapp. “She said that

she was probably going to have to evacuate her home and had planned



Nikki Grimes



A Paul Morin illustration from “At Break of Day.”

Continued on page 3

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It is often said that everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day. That is because St. Patrick's Day has become a global celebration that is enjoyed by those of Irish descent as well as anyone who enjoys a good party. Although you don't have to be Irish to raise a pint or dig into some corned beef this March, there are plenty of people who can trace their lineage to the Emerald Isle, including some notable celebrities. Check out these individuals that you might not have known have some Irish roots, courtesy of Irish Star, Hollywood Ancestry, Carrolls Irish Gift Shop, and Business Insider.

- **Barack Obama:** In 2007, Barack Obama was a presidential-hopeful and found out his great-great-grandfather **Flamouth Kearney** traveled from Ireland to America by way of Liverpool in 1850, giving the former president some Irish heritage.
- **George Clooney:** With a last name like Clooney, it makes sense that the Academy Award winner has some Irish heritage in his background. His paternal great-great-grandparents **Nicholas Clooney** and **Bridget Byron** came to the United States from Ireland.
- **Anne Hathaway:** The actress has said she has Irish ancestry through both parents and is believed to be more than 60 percent Irish. Her roots lie in counties **Cork** and **Donegal**.
- **Mariah Carey:** This diva songstress has Irish ancestors on her mother's side. Hollywood Ancestry traces that Irish heritage to at least her third great-grandfather, **John Blanchfield**, who was born in Ireland around 1822.
- **Meryl Streep:** This award-winning actress has great-great-grandparents who were from **Nunfanaghy** on the north coast of County **Donegal**. They emigrated to Pennsylvania sometime between 1864 and 1870. Many celebrities can trace their ancestry back to Ireland, giving them added incentive to celebrate this St. Patrick's Day.
- **Nicole Kidman:** Though Kidman grew up in Australia, the Oscar-winning actress has Irish and Scottish ancestry. Her father's ancestors traveled to Australia as free settlers in 1839.
- **Marilyn Monroe:** This popular 1950s film star adopted her mother's maiden name "Monroe" when she began her acting career. Monroe's maternal grandparents were American midwesterners of Irish descent. It is said Monroe stems from the **Gaelic Munro** clan.
- **Robert De Niro:** Despite having an Italian surname and having starred in many films in which he's played an Italian character, De Niro has said he's more Irish than Italian in regard to his heritage. His mother's

parents were both Irish and his father's mother was Irish.

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on gifting us these 12 original works of art through her estate, but wanted to do it now because of the fires that were affecting so many people and homes in California. So we worked quickly to make it happen.”

That same morning, Grimes removed the pieces from their frames, had them packed, and shipped them to Findlay. The museum is currently processing the pieces into its database before displaying them in upcoming exhibits.



An illustration from “Meet Danitra Brown” by Floyd Cooper.

Although the original pieces will be at the museum, they will be duplicated to be included in Grimes’ home as well.

“We will make high-quality prints and send those to her and they’ll be the same size as the originals that she took out of the frames,” said Sapp. “She’ll be able to put these prints back in the frames and hang them wherever her home might be at any given time.”

The collection includes illustrations from Grimes’ books made by renowned artists, including father and son Jerry Pinkney and Brian Pinkney (“A Walk in the Woods”), Ashley Bryan (“Aneesa Lee and the Weaver’s

Gift”), Floyd Cooper (“Meet Danitra Brown”), Paul Morin (“At Break of Day”), Elizabeth Zunon (“Bedtime for Sweet Creatures”), E.B. Lewis (“Talkin’ About Bessie,” “Our Mothers, Our Fathers”), Wendell Minor (“Southwest Sunrise”), and Jerome Lagarrigue (“My Man Blue”).

Sapp said he couldn’t possibly pick a favorite from the collection.

“That’s a question I get a lot and I don’t know that I can truly answer that. I know each of these people who did the illustrations and they all are fabulous,

originally after her passing, but now that can be done today and from this point forward.”

When the pieces are officially put on display, visitors can view the artwork along with the books they’re published in, providing guests with both the visual and literary aspects of the story.

The Mazza Museum is known for having the largest and most diverse selection of original picture book art on display. Grimes’ addition will continue to expand the museum’s collection and featured illustrators.



Ashley Bryan’s illustration from “Aneesa Lee and The Weaver’s Gift.”

wonderful people who are, in a sense, all favorites of mine and so many others in the world who read and share picture books with children. I don’t think you could pick an actual favorite.”

Sapp said the donation is important not only for its artistic value but what the pieces represent.

“Nikki will be able to see these works of art and hear about these works of art being used in educational ways with the 25,000+ visitors we have here each year,” said Sapp. “She’ll be able to know that they’re being cared for and preserved. They will be used in the way she would hope they would be

“It’s a place where people can come and see the highest quality of work that these illustrators are creating. It’s also showing diversity in the work of illustrators and how they’re sharing that diversity through their work in picture books,” said Sapp. “I think there’s a lot to be told. You could even sit down and read each of the books while the art is on display. Those stories then have so much more meaning and things to be shared within the cover to cover of each book.”

For more information about Nikki Grimes’ work, visit [nikkigrimes.com](http://nikkigrimes.com).

# LOCAL EVENT CALENDAR

# MARCH

**MAR 6**

## PERFECT CRIME

**Fort Findlay Playhouse** 300 W. Sandusky St, Findlay

The Fort Findlay Players proudly present Perfect Crime, the longest-running play in New York City history. This gripping cat-and-mouse thriller opens at the Fort Findlay Playhouse at **8 pm**. Tickets are available now online at [FortFindlayPlayhouse.org](http://FortFindlayPlayhouse.org). Visit the website for a full list of showtimes throughout the month!



**MAR 9**

## MAPLE FEST

**Snavely's Sugar Shack** 9404 E. Township Road 138, Republic

Celebrate all things maple syrup from **10 am - 2 pm** with an all-you-can-eat breakfast, free hayrides to Sugar Camp, and expert-led demonstrations on syrup making. Enjoy treats, goodies, and outdoor fun—dress accordingly! Meals by Seneca Lodge #790: **\$13** for adults, **\$8** for kids 5-11, and **free** for kids 4 and under.



**MAR 15**

## BEER AND FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL

**Tiffin Elks Lodge** 106 E. Perry St, Tiffin

Join us for the 2nd Annual Beer & Food Truck Festival at the Tiffin Elks Lodge in downtown Tiffin, starting at **4 p.m.** Enjoy karaoke, giveaways, tip boards, live music, and exclusive beer and food specials. Don't miss the Most Festive contest at **9 p.m.**!



**MAR 22**

## ANNUAL MARKET AND FIBER FAIR

**Wood County Fairgrounds** 13800 W. Poe Rd, Bowling Green

Join us for the BSSG Annual Market Day & Fiber Fair at the Wood County Fairgrounds in Bowling Green from **9 a.m.-4 p.m.** Browse supplies, fibers, handcrafted items, and more from local artisans. Classes available with **\$1** admission. Enjoy food from Toledo Chuck Wagon and drinks from The Bard's Coffee.



**MAR 25**

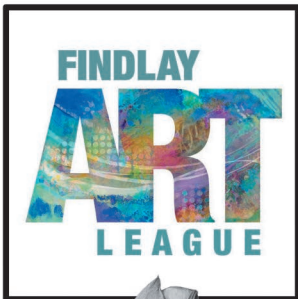
## CELEBRITY BASKETBALL GAME

**Findlay High School** 1200 Broad Ave, Findlay

March is National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month! Support Blanchard Valley Center and the Hancock County Board of Developmental Disabilities at Findlay High School for the **FREE** Celebrity Basketball Game from **7-9 pm**. Local celebrities and Special Olympics athletes team up for a fun, inclusive night. Don't miss it! Concessions available for purchase.



This information was pulled from community websites and was considered current at press time. We apologize for any information that may have been changed/updated after this edition was printed.



IN THE GALLERY March 4 thru 26

# BLACK, WHITE & SHADES OF GRAY



Opening Reception  
Friday, March 7  
6-8 pm



## HUMANS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

April 1-23 --- Opening Reception, Friday, April 4, 6-8pm

### MARCH/APRIL CLASSES

Register at [www.findlayartleague.org](http://www.findlayartleague.org)

**Youth Pottery, Ages 9-17-** Saturdays, 9-10:30 Wheel & 10:30-noon Glazing, March 8, 15, & 22; Tuition: \$150, all materials provided, all skill levels welcome.

Instructor: Cindy Meadows

**Rainbow Swipe Pour Painting-** Saturday, 4:00-5:30 pm, March 15; Tuition: \$55, all materials provided, all skill levels welcome (16+). Instructor: Thomas Craley

**Parent & Child "Play-in-Clay" Wheel Throwing-** Saturday, 1:00-2:00 pm, March 15 OR March 22; Tuition: \$100 (for two), all materials provided, all skill levels welcome.

Instructor: Cindy Meadows

**Painting with a Black Marker-** Saturday, March 22, 12:30-2:30 pm ; Tuition: \$40. Open to those 18+, all materials provided, all skill levels welcome. Instructor: Patty Brown

*Note: Additional classes may be added so check the website for the latest information.*



## POTTERY PARTIES



Looking for a fun event with friends, family, or coworkers? [Plan a Pottery Party!](#)

2 hours of clay time, projects picked up 3-4 weeks after the party. Contact the Findlay Art League at [findlayartleague.org](http://findlayartleague.org) for details, cost, and to schedule day and time.



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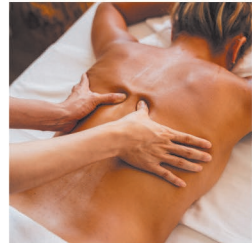
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