



Shaun Hayes, left, the executive director of the Paint Creek Center for the Arts; Jeanne Barrett, the founding director of Music Shapes; Alana Stultz, the PCCA's community engagement coordinator; and Lisa Brandt, an artist who designed the piano; along with Scott Blackett, the manager of the Piano Place, unveil the "Kaleidoscope Keys" street piano to the community June 8.  
Photo by Erin Sanchez

## PCCA welcomes new street piano for the summer

By: [Mary Beth Almond](#) | [Rochester Post](#) | Published June 22, 2022

ROCHESTER — The community can hit a high note this summer over at the Paint Creek Center for the Arts.

A new street piano — dubbed “Kaleidoscope Keys” — was recently installed on the lawn at the PCCA building, 407 Pine St., and unveiled to the community June 8.



**Scott Blackett, the manager of Piano Place, performs on the new outdoor community piano. Photo by Erin Sanchez**

Organizers say the project — a partnership between the PCCA and the local nonprofit Music Shapes — is a combination of both visual and auditory art coming together to create a unique experience in downtown Rochester.

PCCA Community Engagement Coordinator Alana Stultz said the idea of a street piano is something that has evolved over the course of many years.

“It’s a culmination of a community gathering spot — where you can play and have a good time. It doesn’t matter if you are Mozart, a complete novice or an amateur. It’s just to have fun, so we encourage people to play the piano while it’s here,” she said.

Music Shapes founder and Director Jeanne Barrett said Kaleidoscope Keys is one of five projects the nonprofit planned this year in celebration of its fifth anniversary.

“We wanted to create five impactful experiences for the community we serve,” she said.

The Piano Place, of Troy, donated the piano to Music Shapes with the intention of turning it into a street piano, meaning that all piano components had to be weatherized prior to being painted. Music Shapes’ founders Barrett and Derek Steinhoff, who are also piano technicians, completed the weatherization process.

A regular participant in the PCCA’s Art and Apples Festival Gate Group Partnership Program, Music Shapes reached out to the PCCA to ensure the piano’s outward appearance matched the beautiful music it would create.

“The name of the piano is Kaleidoscope Keys. One, being an engineer, I just love geometry and spirographs and kaleidoscopes — and I have a collection of them — so it is just a fun theme to have,” said Barrett.

The PCCA secured the talent of local artist and faculty member Lisa Brandt to design and paint the exterior of the piano. Brandt, who teaches classes at the PCCA and is a recent graduate of the College for Creative Studies, has a background in illustration and graphic design.

“It has a lot of different aspects — kind of like a kaleidoscope, where you are moving it around and things are constantly changing and you can look at it from different angles, lights and settings — but it’s all these things coming together to create a really beautiful experience,” said Stultz.

“Rochester has a lot of different views,” Barrett added. “They change it up. They make it interesting. It’s always fun, and there’s always different new things going on. Music is the same way. It has different colors, different aspects of it, different views, and everybody looks at music differently. Our piano itself, literally, has different views on each side of the piano, showing different kaleidoscope aspects and aspects of the town. It’s a fun way to use the kaleidoscope theme and give it a name.”

The project, organizers said, is not a permanent installation, due to Michigan weather.

“Outdoor pianos only last about 70 days, so if we can make it through the summer and have people still enjoy it and it’s still operating well, then we will be super-duper excited,” Barrett said.

PCCA Executive Director Shaun Hayes said partnering with Music Shapes on this project is truly an honor.

“We are so excited to not only bring another public art installation to Rochester’s streets, but also involve alternate forms of the arts such as music,” he said in a statement.

The piano was partially funded through the Huizenga Fund via a grant that Music Shapes secured.

For more information, call the PCCA at (248) 651-4110.