

Julie Vornholt's Mural: Where Flowers Grow Wild and Memories Bloom

At first glance, the flowers might be what draw you in. Big, bold, and unmistakably alive, they stretch across Julie Vornholt's mural with graceful power. But look again, and you'll notice more. Color choices that hint at personal memories. Shapes that flow with quiet confidence. A style that feels painterly and freehanded, just like the artist herself.

Julie Vornholt's mural on the Washington Mills wall is a tribute to the natural beauty that surrounds us and the emotions it stirs. It's rooted in her lifelong love of art and flowers, and inspired by Georgia O'Keeffe's floral works—specifically the iconic poppies and Jimson weed blooms that left an early impression on her.

Building the Design from Memory

"I saw her Jimson Weed painting at the Indianapolis Museum of Art many times growing up, and it's always been the most memorable to me," Julie shared.

"I knew I wanted to include those two types of flowers, so I built the rest of the design around their shapes and colors."

She layers in meaning, even if it's subtle. The purple petunias, for example, are a nod to her mother's garden—a personal touch that makes the mural feel even more heartfelt.

From Portraits to Public Walls

Julie has wanted to be an artist for as long as she can remember. She studied painting at Herron School of Art in Indianapolis, focusing on oil portraits, figures, and fabric. Her artistic path shifted after she began painting theatrical backdrops, and a friend asked if she could create a mural in their basement. That was all it took.

"After that, I was hooked on painting large scale—whether backdrops, murals, or big canvases in my studio," she said.

Her style? Floral. Vibrant. Painterly.

A Warm Welcome in Sun Prairie

While painting in Sun Prairie, Julie had several memorable encounters. Most were filled with compliments and kind words from passersby.

"I've had a lot of great interactions with people. The community was overwhelmingly kind, with people often stopping to say that her work was brightening their day."

Encouragement for Young Artists

"Keep painting," Julie says to emerging artists. "Persistence is key. Go out and talk to people. If you aren't sure where to start, just reach out to artists you admire, especially if they're local."

She admits that networking hasn't always come naturally but says reaching out on social media has helped her make valuable connections.

What Would Georgia Say?

If Georgia O'Keeffe could see this mural today, Julie hopes she would feel the same awe that inspired her in the first place.

"First, I hope she would think I did the flowers proud," Julie says. "Her flowers drew me to painting large scale, and I know she's inspired so many people with such simple subject matter."

A Painting Playlist

Julie keeps herself entertained while painting with podcasts and music. Her go-to background noise ranges from comedy and long-form storytelling podcasts to classic rock and pop.

"Led Zeppelin and AC/DC always make for a fun painting day," she says.

Final Invitation

Julie Vornholt's mural is more than a celebration of flowers. It's a story woven through shape, color, and memory. From the Jimson weed that inspired her, to the petunias that honor her mom, every petal on the wall carries weight.

Take a moment to stand in front of her mural. Let your eyes wander across the blooms. And if you feel a bit more connected to nature or maybe just a little more joyful that's the magic of Julie's work taking root.