

# Art lights up the night at Shimmer

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The Carrboro Commons

Twenty-three artists from across the country arrived in Carrboro on Friday to display their unique talents at the inaugural Shimmer: The Art of Light event. The various art installations, sponsored by Duke Energy and the Orange County Arts Commission, featured illuminated displays across 20 Carrboro and Chapel Hill venues from 6-11 p.m.

Sarah Wolfe, the head coordinator of Shimmer, was inspired by distinctive art displays from around the world.

“The inspiration for the event initially came from an event that started many years ago in Paris called ‘Nuit Blanche,’” Wolfe said. “In the United States, you mostly have these events in large cities.”

The art of Shimmer was scattered throughout four distinct areas. While most of the art was centered on Main Street, residents of Carrboro and Chapel Hill could also view pieces of art on Graham Street, Merritt Mill Road and Rosemary Street.

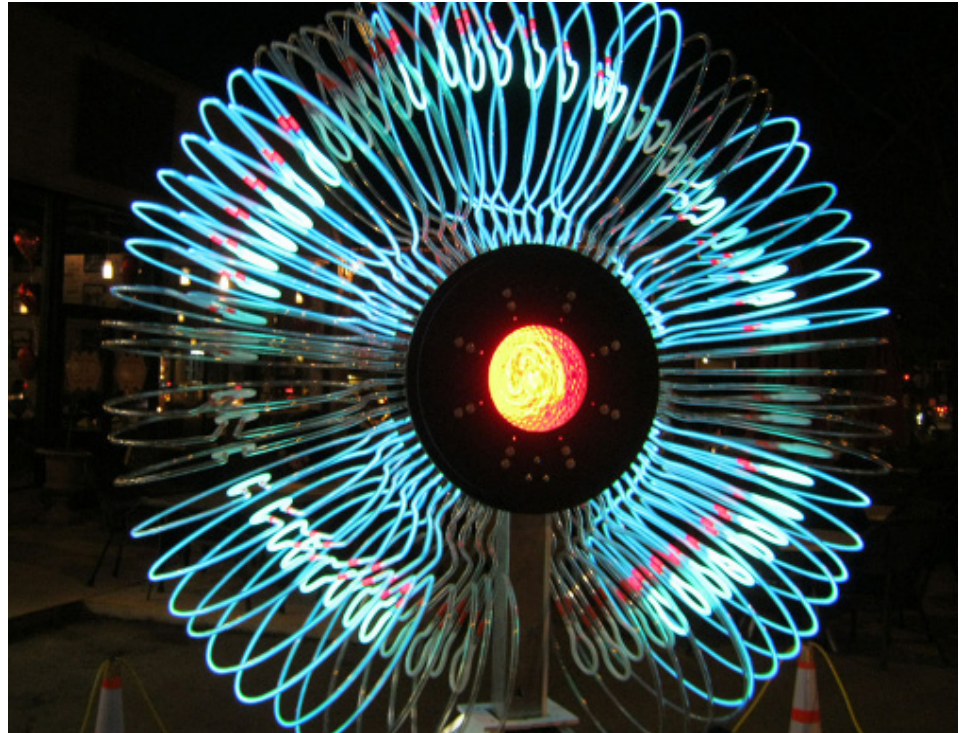
## Artistic inspirations

Amie Oliver, an artist from Richmond, Virginia, displayed one of her pieces, “Ascension,” at The ArtsCenter. “Ascension” is part of a series of works called “Heaven in Earth and Sea,” and has illuminated ladder forms to represent the search for enlightenment.

Oliver said that personal experience in Tibet and encounters with various bodies of water around the world served as heavy influences for her art.

“Water affects the quality of my work,” Oliver said. “The water is always different wherever you go. It’s something you discover through travel.”

Many pieces of art drew large crowds during the night. “Keyhole



**“Keyhole Torus” by artist Nate Sheaffer on display at WomanCraft. Sheaffer said that HAL 9000 from “2001: A Space Odyssey” was a major inspiration for the design of his work. The music emitted from the art piece served to make the audience feel as if they were being transported to a different world through a portal. (Staff photo by Brandon White)**

Torus,” created by Nate Sheaffer and displayed outside of WomanCraft Gifts on Main Street, was one of the most popular attractions. The work featured a moving circular structure that displayed changing lights and music patterns.

## Expect the unexpected

Other installations were designed to be interactive. Karen Niemczyk’s “Low Hanging Clouds” was proposed to have cloud installations and projection elements to replicate an outdoor environment at the Café Carrboro side patio. However, Niemczyk had to cancel the interactive portion of her art due to changing weather conditions while the artists were setting up their work.

Wolfe also organized the ANYTHING GLOWS costume contest. Everyone attending Shimmer was encouraged to dress up in illuminated costumes—

outfits could feature lights or glow paint—and the most creative design would win \$100.

However, only one couple, Angela Blakemore and Trip Overholt, dressed up for the contest. They were declared winners by default.

“We’re both artists at heart,” Blakemore said of herself and Overholt. “Trip loves to entertain and make everyone happy. We are here to support the artists and how they share their heart and vision.”

## An inaugural success

Although the costume contest didn’t get a large turnout, Shimmer proved to be a success for Wolfe, The ArtsCenter and the Town of Carrboro. The success of the first Shimmer event might lead to a new yearly tradition in the Carrboro: its own Nuit Blanche for the Paris of the Piedmont.