

# MIZZOU

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## Around the Columns

### Painting the town

Attempts to capture the spirit of the MU campus abound: Writers describe it, photographers record it, and now, a local artist has painted it.

Columbia artist David Spear depicts the entire campus in a three-panel series of oil paintings. Two side panels feature aerial views of the Red and White campuses, and a center panel zooms in on students.



Local artist David Spear completed a three-panel oil painting of the MU campus. This panel shows White Campus and its icon, Memorial Union.

Michelle Froese, public relations manager for student auxiliary services, and Susan Elledge, coordinator of interior design for student affairs, worked with Spear to plan the piece, which they hoped would celebrate the history and diversity of the student body.

“Memorial Union is a public building that has a great sense of history,” Froese says. “And what better way to celebrate that than with a piece of local art.” The union was originally intended to honor the students who lost their lives in World War I — their names are inscribed in the walls of the tower archway. In addition, “This campus has become progressively diverse,” Elledge says, “and we wanted to celebrate the multiculturalism of our student body.”

Spear spent about four months developing the project. The aerial landscapes were probably the most time-intensive, he says. He struggled to make Jesse Hall and Memorial Union the centerpieces of each side without depicting both in the same panel. Matt Jenne,



Another panel by Spear shows Red Campus and its icon, Jesse Hall.




BS CiE '97, Spear's friend and co-owner of local Columbia restaurants Sophia's and Addison's, offered to help. "I had Matt fly me over Columbia, and I took pictures of campus from all different angles," Spear says. "Ever since he took me up, it changed the way I do landscapes."

Spear's artwork appears all over town: Wabash Station displays four paintings; he developed posters for Columbia's True/False Film Festival and Roots 'N Blues 'N BBQ Festival; and he painted a traffic light box in downtown Columbia.

The MU paintings are permanently displayed in Tower Lounge at Memorial Union. Prints are available from Spear's Web site, [alleywayarts.com](http://alleywayarts.com).

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