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Savage Wonder Art Center: First Month Summary – Art, Absurdity, and Audacious Nights in Beacon

Beacon, NY – June 4, 2025 – In just its first month of operation, the Savage Wonder Art Center has ignited Beacon’s cultural landscape with a fearless fusion of visual art, immersive theater, and live performance. Located at 141 Main Street, the veteran-powered nonprofit has already debuted a dynamic slate of programming that channels its mission: to invigorate the American arts through the voices of military veterans, first responders, and their families.

Radical Fun: A Gallery Reborn

The May 10 opening of the Savage Wonderground Gallery premiered Radical Fun—a rule-breaking, riotous exhibition featuring 13 veteran artists. With conceptual and immersive works from the likes of Chris “Daze” Ellis and Jane Hammond, Radical Fun ditches white-wall conventions in favor of energy, intuition, and raw personal narrative. The show runs through July 6 and has established the gallery as a must-see destination for contemporary, veteran-made art.

The Bald Soprano: Theater of the Absurd

Located in our historic bank building is The Parlor Theater with Savage Wonder Art Center where we mounted our first theatrical production: Eugène Ionesco’s absurdist classic, The Bald Soprano. Intimate, chaotic, and sharply funny, the show’s four Saturday performances throughout May were completely sold out. Directed with surreal precision and performed by Equity-affiliated artists, the production set the tone for Savage Wonder’s theatrical ambition—fun and eccentric.

The Grape Escape: Drink in the Culture

Also debuting in May was The Grape Rebellion, wine & dessert bar. This hidden destination bar, along with its flagship event series: The Grape Escape. Every Wednesday and Thursday from 5–10 PM, guests enjoy \$6 glasses of standout wines paired with live music—often from West Point musicians like Rich Johnson, whose ambient jazz fusion sets the tone for whimsical, world-class evenings. No cover. Just vibes. “We hid the whole bar inside a 100-year-old bank vault, tucked behind an art gallery, in the basement of an iconic building,” said Jeremy Plybum, Chief Hospitality Officer. “It doesn’t get much cooler than that.”

Comedy Weekend: Gallows Humor With Guts

To close out the month, Savage Wonder’s Comedy Weekend (May 30 – June 1) delivered three powerhouse nights of stand-up with a lineup of military veteran comics. Headliner Linette Palladino, host Jay Lawrence, and featured comic Jad Sleiman brought raw honesty, battle-hardened wit, and explosive laughs to Beacon. “No art form captures our intimate, absurd, whimsical, and jarring aesthetic better than stand-up,” said Artistic Director Christopher Paul Meyer. “This was just the beginning of our variety act programming.”

One Month. Expression Unleashed.

With a sold-out theater, an eye-popping gallery debut, an underground wine bar, and a comedy series redefining what veteran art can be, Savage Wonder Art Center has set the tone for what's to come—and audiences are surely going to come back for more.

Savage Wonder Art Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that selects, develops, and produces exceptional work by military and first responder veterans and their immediate families. Whether through plays, music, gallery shows, or absurdist comedy, its programming is unapologetically whimsical, intimate, absurdist, and jarring.

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