

## Maryland Muralist Chooses Vycom's Celtec for Indoor and Outdoor School Projects



Maryland artist Gayle Mangan Kassal recently used Vycom's Celtec® expanded PVC material for mural projects at two schools in Anne Arundel County. She worked with students to create artwork depicting the schools' culture and surroundings. At Meade Middle School, a canvas mural featuring a bulldog mascot was adhered to Celtec and hung in the cafeteria. At Tracey's Elementary School, Celtec panels painted with iconic regional images add aesthetic appeal to a highly-visible exterior wall.

"While I worked with the Celtec differently in each project, I chose it for the same reasons for both: it's durable, light weight, environmentally friendly, can be used almost anywhere, and is easy to work with, install and maintain," explains Mangan Kassal.

Meade Middle school commissioned her to create a mural to spruce up a dull white cafeteria wall. She worked with students to develop the concept and paint the mural on canvas.

"Since the mural hangs 10' high in the cafeteria, using Celtec rather than the wall let the students be involved in the painting without the safety risks of working on scaffolding," explains Mangan Kassal, "Knowing I could adhere a painted canvas to the sturdy Celtec when completed gave us the ability to

roll up the working canvas each day, keeping it from occupying precious classroom space."

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*Mangan Kassal, Artist*

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To prepare it for installation in the school, she scuffed the surface of ¼-inch-thick Celtec, purchased from Piedmont Plastics in Elkridge, MD. She then applied wallpaper paste to it and rolled the canvas onto the Celtec. The finished mural was light, flexible and easy to transport, lift and install.

The final piece prominently features the Maryland flag and a super-hero version of the school's bulldog mascot.

"It looks amazing," says Principal Christine DeGuzman. "The kids were very excited when they came in at the start of the year and saw it."



The mural at Tracey's Elementary School adorns a very large, gray 115-foot x 4-foot-tall exterior retaining wall that is along a busy road; it is the first image people see when arriving at the school. The principal particularly wanted to showcase their surrounding environment on the artwork, from the horse farms of Harwood, Maryland to the Chesapeake Bay.

"The Celtec panels were a terrific, environmentally friendly way to approach the enormous wall one panel at a time," says Mangan Kassal. "Since it will not warp or crack, it will last longer in outdoor exposure and may also be removed easily if the school chooses to rework the mural in the future."

For this outdoor project, ½-inch thick panels of Celtec were used, along with exterior paints and several coats of exterior varnish. Mangan Kassal finished the project by custom cutting and fitting each panel to mimic the contour of the landscape. As an added benefit, the installed panels helped hide unsightly drainage pipes from the parking area behind the wall.

"The panels were strong yet flexible enough to work directly on the ground outside. The students loved painting while sitting down and it provided plenty of surface area for each to have their own section to work on," explains Mangan Kassal. "Using Celtec again let us prioritize students' safety on the project, because they didn't have to work by a busy road, and could paint in the protected shade on hot days."

She notes the durability, versatility and light weight of Celtec has revolutionized the way she creates her murals, even when she's not working with students.

"It has freed me from dealing with scaffolding, heavy wooden frames or backer board, and the time constraints of working on-site within a client's business hours. I can now paint where I need to and when I need to, and produce a piece the client will have no difficulty installing or maintaining."