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Spring 2019 ■ Montana - The Land of Creativity

Providing information to all Montanans through funding by the National Endowment for the Arts and the State of Montana

## Montana Poet Laureate Nominations due April 10 for 2019-2021 honoree

The Montana Poet Laureate nominations are now open! The Poet Laureate recognizes and honors a citizen poet of exceptional talent and accomplishment and encourages appreciation of poetry and literary life in Montana.

The Poet Laureate is chosen on the basis of three criteria:

1. Artistic excellence and achievement;
2. Ongoing contributions to the cultural community; and
3. Worthiness of state recognition. To be eligible, the poet must currently reside in Montana and have been a resident for at least one year.

Do you know a poet that you think should be the next Poet Laureate for Montana? The nomination process is easy: identify the poet you are nominating, share your favorite poem by the poet, and tell us why you enjoy it, and why you feel they should be the Poet Laureate.

Nominated poets will have the opportunity to accept or decline consideration. If the poet accepts, their nomination will be reviewed and presented to the Governor to make the final selection. The deadline to submit a nomination is 5 p.m. April 10, 2019. Nominations can be made through a web-based survey at [art.mt.gov](http://art.mt.gov). To request a hard copy nomination form call 406-444-6430.



Curt Olds (Photo courtesy of Central City Opera, Colorado)

## Butte native Curt Olds globetrots with role in world tour of "Phantom"

By Annie Pentilla  
Reprinted with permission from the  
*Montana Standard*, Feb. 19

Butte native Curt Olds has reached many highs in his career as a baritone singer, and now he can put a checkmark next to another long-held dream.

Olds has landed a role in the world tour of "Phantom of the Opera," a work that continues to hold the title of Broadway's longest running musical.

"It's wonderful," said Olds of the upcoming performance. "It's so exciting to be in 'Phantom' after all these years."

Olds will play the part of Monsieur Andre, one of the managers of the Paris Opera House, and it's a role that will take him to seven cities throughout Asia and the Middle East.

See Curt Olds, page 5



Fort Peck Theatre celebrates 50 years of summer theatre with a reunion and celebration June 27-30.

## Jewel of the Prairie celebrates 50 seasons

By Kristi Niemeyer

When the Fort Peck Theatre opened in 1934, silent movies ran 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to accommodate the flood of workers who were constructing mighty Fort Peck Dam. Even though it was built as a temporary structure, the elegant chalet-style building survived the test of time. In 1970, an enthusiastic group of community members launched its first season of summer theater.

Fifty years later, the "Jewel of the Prairie" continues to bring live theatre "to the middle of nowhere," attracting audiences from across Montana, North Dakota, Canada and beyond.

The theatre's many friends and fans gather June 27-30 for the 50th anniversary celebration, which kicks off Thursday with an alumni rehearsal for Saturday's revue. At 7:30 p.m. Friday, enjoy the frisky musical, "Mamma Mia!" A "Black(ish)-tie Gala" follows for the cast, board and professional theatre alumni.

Saturday brings Art in the Park from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., theatre tours, brunch, and a matinee performance of "Mamma Mia!" Barbecue is served at the Fort Peck Hotel at 4:30 p.m. and the theatre doors open for "50 Years of Fort Peck Summer Theatre" at 7:30. Reunion coordinator and company actor Christen Etchart expects at least 20 alumni to join the resident cast in the show. "We'll be giving the original cast members the stage in the second act," she says.

Festivities wrap up with a Theatre for Young Audiences production of "Alice in Wonderland" at 10 a.m. Sunday and a 4 p.m. performance of "Mamma Mia!"

### Bringing theatre to the hinterlands

When the theatre first opened, 50,000 people lived nearby; now, the town of Fort Peck is home to about 200 year-around residents.

See Fort Peck Theatre, page 12

## Headwaters: Helena students premiere choral work

More than 130 singers from Helena and Capital High in Helena performed the world premiere of a complex, one-of-a-kind choral piece called "Headwaters" this February in a project commissioned by The Myrna Loy with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

At the premiere at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, the singers flowed throughout the sanctuary, emulating rivers, mountain ranges, wind in the forests. Expanding on the main lyric, "I am headwaters, new above ground," they became the map of the land they were singing about.

The project is one of several programs at The Myrna Loy to support artists, commission new works, and provide stellar arts education opportunities to people of all ages. "Headwaters" resounded in all three ways: It brought a new piece into the world by acclaimed singer/composer Moira Smiley; she based the lyrics on reflections by young Helena writers on their sense of place; it required the choir students to master 11-note chords and complex dissonances (while in motion); and the project may lead to more and bigger opportunities in the future.

"The choirs did such a beautiful job, it brings tears to my eyes," composer Smiley said the day after the pre-



Moira Smiley presents her original work, "Headwaters," with singers from Helena and Capital High. (Photo by Jason O'Neil)

miere. "As a composer, you can only work with how you hope it will sound. A piece doesn't come to life until the singers perform it."

Roots of this piece go back several years, when Smiley began working with Helena High choir director Molly Steele to teach singing techniques to her choirs. Smiley recognized in Steele the capacity to go beyond a one-day workshop and try something really big.

See Headwaters, page 2





## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Tatiana Gant, Executive Director  
tatiana.gant@mt.gov



Photo by Czelsi Gomez

### The most consistent season

We are in the most consistent of any of Montana's seasons: the legislative session. For 90 days in odd-numbered years, 150 elected officials gather in the capital and make decisions that guide the state for the next two years. Biennial legislatures have become increasingly rare, and Montana is one of just a few states to maintain the practice. The pace is quick and the work is focused and productive. The Montana Arts Council (MAC) is moving through the process with good support from the committees reviewing our funding bills.

Supporters of the arts frequently ask me what they can do to help increase support for MAC. While I understand the ultimate goal is an increase in funding, I feel that MAC is in a positive environment. Protecting that goodwill, while establishing the worthiness of additional resources, is dependent on demonstrating the benefits of the present investment.

I have yet to meet a legislator – *knock on wood* – who is against the arts. Often the stumbling block is uncertainty if public support of the arts is the best use of taxpayer dollars. Legislators understand that, like all government services, MAC provides resources aimed at equalizing opportunities. We strive to strike a balance between making secure investments, encouraging innovation, and ensuring there's a wide variety of artistic experiences in all parts of the state, so that anyone can be engaged in the arts.

#### Experience fosters enthusiasm

MAC's most enthusiastic legislative supporters are those with first-hand experiences. For some, their children have had a visit from the Art Mobile or Montana Shakespeare in the Schools, both grantees of MAC. High school students from their districts have represented

Montana at Poetry Out Loud National Finals. Others have witnessed the economic value that cultural programming can bring: attracting tourism, supporting ancillary businesses, and creating jobs.

Invite your elected officials to events, and most importantly thank them for the support that they have given. The strongest relationships are forged over time. Montana's term limits guarantee that there will be fresh faces every legislative term. Those who want to see MAC grow can help by speaking consistently on the importance of public funding to the arts.

#### NGA report relevant to rural state

A recent report released by the National Governors Association highlights ways that arts and culture initiatives can grow the economy in rural communities. While there are varied definitions of "rural," most agree on a metric of fewer than 50,000 residents, classifying most Montana towns as rural.

MAC is proud to have made investments that strengthen our vast and very rural state, and that help shine the national spotlight on some of our innovative programs. As a vibrant part of state government, MAC is grateful for the trust of the governor and the legislature to continue to grow the arts in Montana.

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#### Sign up for MAC's eNews

Between the quarterly issues of the *State of the Arts*, our staff publishes four separate e-newsletters with opportunities and information:

- Artists' eNews
- Arts Educators' eNews
- Arts Organizations' eNews
- Public Artists' eNews

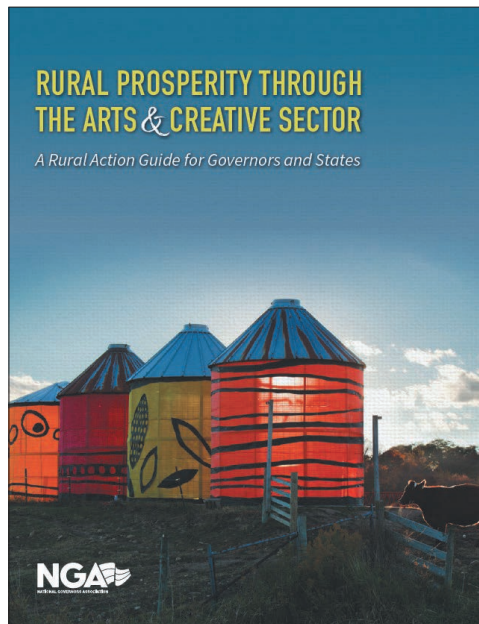
If you'd like to sign up for one or more of these, please offer us your contact information and what you'd like to receive at: art.mt.gov/enews or send us an email at: mac@mt.gov.

## Rural Prosperity Through the Arts and Creative Sector

Struggling rural communities have found new life through smart public policies that boost the creative sector, the National Governors Association said in a report and action guide that is the product of more than a year of research across a wide swath of the country.

*Rural Prosperity through the Arts and Creative Sector: A Rural Action Guide for Governors and States* synthesizes a growing body of research showing how arts-based economic development – already responsible for more than 600,000 jobs in rural states – can help communities to thrive. The guide grew out of a collaborative initiative between the NGA Center for Best Practices, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.

The NGA undertook this project to help states address the urgent challenges facing rural communities, many of which are struggling with high unemployment rates, manufacturing declines and outmigration. "Governors need fresh, results-oriented approaches that boost economic opportunities, create jobs, retain young people and preserve a great quality of life in our small towns and undeveloped areas," said Scott D. Pattison, NGA CEO and executive director. "Our analysis indicates that leadership from governors and smart public policies can help the creative sector realize its



potential as a catalyst of growth and pride in rural communities."

According to the guide, when rural regions lose their traditional industries, they can capitalize on their creative assets to re-imagine – and realize – a new future. Drawing on quantitative data, an extensive scan of field practices and insights from a national panel of rural development experts, the guide offers a five-point policy framework and 27 policy action steps, illustrated by 100 examples of how

arts-based strategies have worked in diverse geographic settings.

"From Appalachian coal communities to our agricultural heartland to the mountain west, the examples in this action guide reveal how the arts and culture are central to rural vitality," said Mary Anne Carter, acting chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. "Creative placemaking opens economic doors for rural communities."

The most recent data produced by the Bureau of Economic Analysis and the Arts Endowment show that arts and cultural industries contributed \$67.5 billion and employed more than 628,000 workers in the country's most rural states.

The NGA action guide points to the arts as a key ingredient in comprehensive rural development efforts, noting that the creative sector complements other industries and can boost the efficacy of state economic development policies, partnerships and plans.

"Including the arts in rural development efforts enriches the policies states can bring to bear in this crucial policy domain," said Pam Breaux, president and CEO of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies. "The resulting strategies have a unique local resonance.

Rural residents love their communities and hold deep attachments to the places they call home. The arts and culture mobilize that pride and harness the optimism of rural America."

*Rural Prosperity through the Arts and Creative Sector* was produced by the NGA through a cooperative agreement with the National Endowment for the Arts in collaboration with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA). Related resources can be found on the NGA website, nga.org, research from the National Endowment for the Arts and NASAA's rural prosperity web page. The partner organizations are using the hashtag #ruralarts on social media.

#### The Montana story

The report highlights two innovative Montana Arts Council programs: Montana Teacher Leaders in the Arts (MTLA) and the Montana Artrepreneur Program.

In a section about applying the arts to rural health care, the report talks about MTLA: To help address the Native American teen suicide rate in Montana, the Montana State Office of Public Instruction and the Montana Arts Council teamed up with Salish Kootenai College on the Flathead Indian Reservation to create a statewide professional development program that is forming a powerful cohort of kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) teacher-leaders for Montana classrooms. These teacher-leaders then support other teachers around the state through a close-knit social support network that is positively addressing mental health among the state's teen population. An NEA ArtWorks grant called "Montana Teacher Leaders in the Arts" supports this effort.

A section devoted to "Enhancing art-based entrepreneurial ecosystems by supporting artist entrepreneurs" discusses MAP, which "expands entrepreneurial opportunities for rural visual artists by providing personal coaching and other business and marketing training over 10 months. Artists who received MAP certification between 2009 and 2014 experienced, on average, a 650 percent net sales increase and an 87 percent out-of-state sales increase."

### STATE OF THE ARTS

*State of the Arts* is published four times a year by the Montana Arts Council and produced by *Lively Times*.

*State of the Arts* welcomes submissions of photographs, press releases and newsworthy information from individual artists and arts organizations.

Please check with the Montana Arts Council for reprint permission.

**Next Deadline:** The deadline for submissions is June 3 for the Summer issue (July-September). Send items to: Montana Arts Council, PO Box 202201, Helena, MT 59620-2201; phone 406-444-6430, fax 406-444-6548 or email mac@mt.gov.

**Subscriptions:** *State of the Arts* is available free of charge upon request as a public service of the Montana Arts Council. To subscribe, call 406-444-6430, or update or sign up online at art.mt.gov.

## Headwaters (from page 1)

Smiley spent two full days rehearsing with the combined choirs, practicing choreography and gestures, and making last-minute adjustments to the music. And on the second evening, the students were invited to hear Smiley perform with Jayme Stone's *Folklife*, one of the many ensembles that keeps the singer on the road.

"You couldn't do a project like this with just any choir director," said Krys Holmes of The Myrna Loy, who wrangled the NEA funds to support the commission. "It

takes a skilled and fearless director like Molly to take on this much complexity, in a long-distance project, having just a few days on the ground with the composer. And Thomas Baty of Capital High was game – he just jumped right in. Pretty impressive."

Smiley and Steele are now talking about future performance opportunities, elsewhere in Montana and beyond. "Headwaters," it turns out, is just the beginning.



## CONGRATS TO ...

Montana artist **Theodore Waddell**, whose painting graces the cover of the winter issue of *Luxury Magazine* while an article titled “Waddell’s West,” by Jason Edward Kaufman, begins on page 180, and includes several images of his work. The article begins: “In his majestically abstract paintings of animals grazing Western landscapes, Theodore Waddell marries passions for ranching and modern art.” Read the story online at [www.luxurymagazine.com/issue/Winter2018/art](http://www.luxurymagazine.com/issue/Winter2018/art).



The winter edition of *Luxury Magazine*, with Theodore Waddell’s painting on the cover

**Shawna Moore** of Whitefish and **Catherine Courtenaye** of Bozeman, whose paintings were on display Feb. 6-March 6 at Telluride Gallery of Art in Telluride, CO, as part of the “Winter Highlights” exhibit. Paintings by Courtenaye were also featured at Art Miami, a modern and contemporary art fair market, held Dec. 4-9 in Miami.

**Teresa Garland Warner** of Missoula and **Kadin Goldberg** of Red Lodge, who each had paintings included in the National Oil and Acrylic Painters’ Society online International Fall 2018 Exhibition, on display at [noaps.org](http://noaps.org). Their pieces were among 150 paintings selected from over 900 international entries.



“Rugged Refuge” by Teresa Garland Warner

Billings artist **Jane Waggoner Deschner**, who was selected to join award-winning artist Marilyn Artus on “Her Flag,” a collaboration with 36 women artists who live in each of the 36 states that ratified the 19th amendment granting women the right to vote. Each of these 36 artists will design one stripe of the 18-by-36-foot flag that Artus will sew in the capital city of each state, beginning June 8 in Madison, WI. Her 14-month journey across the United States celebrates the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote. “‘Her Flag’ is a not a political piece of work, but rather a powerful positive symbol used to educate and celebrate this truly momentous American anniversary,” says the Oklahoma artist.

Dillon artist **Tom Foolery**, whose “Victory Parade” was juried into “Winter in America,” on display Jan. 3-Feb. 2 at Gallery 114 in Portland, OR. The sculpture is from his ongoing Dark Horse Series.



“Victory Parade” by Tom Foolery

Three Montana authors whose books were among 28 titles shortlisted for the Reading the West Book Awards, given annually by the Mountains & Plains Independent Booksellers Association (MPIBA). Finalists include *The Weight of an Infinite Sky* by **Carrie La Seur** (fiction); *Volcano Dreams* by **Janet Fox** (picture books); and *The Swan Keeper* by **Milana Marsenich** (young adult fiction). Readers and book lovers are encouraged to vote for their favorite shortlist titles online at [mountainplains.org/vote](http://mountainplains.org/vote). The winning titles will be announced on April 15 via email and social media.

The **Missoula Writing Collaborative (MWC)**, a nonprofit started in 1994 to bring professional writers into school classrooms to teach students to write poems, which received a 2019 Library of Congress State Literacy Award. MWC was one of nine organizations nationwide that will receive the \$2,225 award. Nominated in December by the Montana Center for the Book, a subsidiary of Humanities Montana, the MWC was recognized for its work bringing poetry and creative writing to more than 2,000 students in 31 schools in western Montana. The nomination particularly recognized writing residencies that take place in five elementary schools on the Flathead Reservation of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Writers **Alex Alviar**, **Caroline Keys** and **Anna Zumbahlen** teach fourth- and fifth-graders American Indian poetry as model poems, then have students write and read form and free verse poetry.

ImagineIF Libraries’ Senior Librarian **Megan Glidden**, who has been selected as an American Library Association Emerging Leader for the Class of 2019. The American Library Association (ALA) Emerging Leaders (EL) program is a leadership development program which enables newer library workers from across the country to participate in problem-solving work groups, network with peers, and have an opportunity to serve the profession in a leadership capacity. As head of the Community Engagement Team at ImagineIF,



Imagine IF Libraries Senior Librarian Megan Glidden

Glidden has brought many innovative projects to the Flathead Valley, including a Seed Library located at ImagineIF Columbia Falls, the result of a partnership with the Good Seed Co. She has also been a key leader in helping launch Making Montana, a two-day festival of invention and creativity featuring a Manufacturing and Technology Expo alongside the Kalispell Mini Maker Faire.

Bigfork author **Leslie Budewitz**, who was elected to a two-year term as an at-large board member of Mystery Writers of America, the professional organization for mystery and crime writers. MWA’s mission statement: “MWA is the premier organization for mystery and crime writers, professionals allied to the crime writing field, aspiring crime writers, and folks who just love to read crime fiction.” Budewitz says her goals include “helping the organization continue to expand the diversity

of its membership, help members find their audience, and expand the benefits available to writers who don’t have physical access to chapter meetings and programs, such as writers in Montana and other far-flung communities.” She served three years on the board of Sisters in Crime, an international organization of authors, readers, and other book industry professionals, including a year as president. Budewitz is the author of eight mystery novels, more than a dozen published short stories, and a nonfiction book for writers on using the law in their fiction; the Billings native is also the winner of Agatha Awards for Best Nonfiction and Best First Novel.



Leslie Budewitz

The five recipients of Arts Missoula’s annual Arts and Culture Awards, which will be presented at the annual luncheon from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Tuesday, April 9, at the Doubletree Hotel. This year’s Cultural Ambassador award, honoring someone who has consistently supported the arts community and cultural diplomacy in numerous ways, goes to **Mark Thane** for his support of arts and cultural education for 39 years as a teacher, principal, administrator, and for the last four years as Missoula County Public School Superintendent. **Corwin “Corky” Clairmont**, printmaker and installation artist from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, received the Individual Artist award for exceptional achievement in his chosen craft. The Arts Educator, honoring an outstanding local educator who has devoted a career to teaching the arts, is awarded to **Matt Loehrke**, education director for MCT, Inc. The Business Support for the Arts, given to businesses that have provided long-term support to Missoula’s artists and arts organizations, goes to **Kimberly Roth/Merrill Lynch**. And **Marc Moss**, founder and director of Tell Us Something, the live storytelling event, receives the Cultural Vision award for artistic programming. According to Arts Missoula Executive Director Tom Bensen, “These outstanding individuals each represent a lifetime of dedication to the arts, and all have helped to make Missoula an exceptional place to work and live.” For tickets to the event, call 406-541-0860 or [info@artsmissoula.org](mailto:info@artsmissoula.org).

**Sentinel High School Wind Ensemble**, which performs at prestigious Carnegie Hall in the New York Sounds of Spring International Music Festival on Tuesday, March 26. The Missoula ensemble was chosen from a pool of international applicants based on an audition tape band director Lewis Nelson submitted nearly two years ago. “It’s only four high school bands performing at this particular festival and one college band so it’s quite the honor for us to be accepted into it,” he told the *Missoulian*. Nelson and a handful of chaperones will accompany 74 Sentinel students to New York City for the trip over spring break where students will perform four songs at Carnegie Hall. In addition to their performance, students will explore the city’s robust arts and culture offerings and get a sense for different performance styles and venues, including a visit to the Blue Note jazz club in Greenwich Village where they’ll watch the Sadao Watanabe Quartet. They’ll workshop with Brian Worsdale, music director of Three Rivers Young Peoples Orchestras, and offer a public “pops-style” performance the Liberty Science Center. “We are really mastering something at a level that students rarely see, at least in music,” Nelson said of the upcoming performance. “Everything counts, every little minutia matters of what we’re doing. I mean it’s been a year-and-a-half process.”

– From the *Missoulian*, March 19

**Glacier High Band** of Kalispell, which is among 50 bands selected to perform in Washington, DC on Memorial Day. One band was selected from each state. Band Director David Barr told MTN News that this marks the first time in his 13 years as director that the band has been selected. “The kids are super excited, and there are some of our students that haven’t been out of the state and some that haven’t flown on an airplane before, and now we’re going to do both.” The band is in the midst of raising \$1,600 per student to attend. Call 406-758-8687 to make donations and for more information.

More Congrats on next page



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### Send us your good news

Artists, writers, musicians, arts educators and arts administrators: Please let us know about major awards and accomplishments, especially beyond the borders of Montana.

Send your good news to Congrats, c/o Kristi Niemeyer, 207 6th Ave. E, Polson, MT 59860; or better yet, email [kristi@livelytimes.com](mailto:kristi@livelytimes.com).

If you include a digital photo, please make sure it’s at least 200 lines per inch (lpi or dpi) and a file size of over 500kb.

Congrats compiled by Kristi Niemeyer for *State of the Arts*





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## More Congrats to ...

**Peter and Cathy Halstead**, founders of the Tippet Rise Art Center near Fishtail, whose Olivier Music Barn has received LEED® Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) for its environmentally sustainable design and systems. LEED, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a certification program developed by the nonprofit USGBC to assist in the design, construction and operation of green buildings, homes and neighborhoods around the world. Located on the Cottonwood Campus at the 12,000-acre art center, the barn is home to most of the indoor concerts and recitals that take place each summer. Like the other buildings and structures on the Cottonwood Campus, the Music Barn's standards of sustainability include low-carbon emissions and near-net-zero energy consumption. Tippet Rise will reopen to the public on Friday, July 5, for tours of its monumental outdoor sculptures on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Van tours are priced at \$10; free to those 21 and under. Hiking and biking at the art center are free for everyone. Prior registration via the website is required for all visitors, and is available beginning March 13 at [tippetrise.org](http://tippetrise.org).

## TRANSITIONS

Welcome to **Susan Barnett** of Erie, PA, who has accepted the position of curator at the Yellowstone Art Museum in Billings. "We are pleased to hire Susan after a lengthy national search, and we are happy to announce that this is a homecoming for her," said YAM Executive Director Bryan W. Knicely.

Although she spent the past 16 years in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, Montana is still the place she calls home. Barnett discovered her passion for curatorial work as a student at Montana State University in Bozeman.

After earning her Bachelor in Fine Art – Printmaking, she was hired as director and curator of Anaconda's Copper Village Museum and Art Center. She founded and managed a gallery in Butte for 14 years before moving to Wisconsin. There, she served as executive director and curator for the Cedarburg Cultural Center, managed a private art collection, and worked on an exhibition and publication commemorating 40 years of the Kohler Arts/Industry program. Since 2017, as curator of the Erie Art Museum in Erie, PA, she has organized more than 20 exhibitions and cared for a collection of 8,000 objects.

Barnett earned an MA in Art History and a Certificate in Museum Studies from UW-Milwaukee. Her research areas include contemporary art, studio craft, American art and history, and non-Western art.

"The mission of the Yellowstone Art Museum resonates with my appreciation of art both as a historic document that reflects a community and the social glue that binds it," Barnett said.

She points out that YAM not only exhibits, interprets, collects, and preserves art, it also strives to achieve enrichment, education, inspiration, and enjoyment for all. "This requires a commitment to welcoming people of all backgrounds, connecting programming with curriculum and funding, engaging people who don't think art is for them, breaking down perceptions of elitism, and making exhibitions both scholarly and fun," she says. "I look forward to the challenge."

Barnett was in town in early March for the Yellowstone Art Auction 51, and returns to begin work in the office by April 1.

So long and best wishes to **Jim Meinert**, who is retiring after serving as director of The History Museum in Great Falls for the last nine years, and welcome to **Kristi Scott**, who has been hired as the new director and she begins work at the museum March 18.



**Kristi Scott**

"Her appointment to this position was an outstanding choice by the museum's board of directors," Meinert said in a release. Scott served as curator of art for Paris Gibson Square Museum for the last five years and before that as development director for the Ursuline Historical Foundation.

She's a graduate of C.M. Russell High School in Great Falls and earned an undergraduate degree in anthropology and a graduate degree in Native American studies from Montana State University. Her master's thesis was based upon her work at the Smithsonian Institute in Museum Anthropology.

"I am excited and honored to serve as the director of The History Museum, continuing its role as the 'People's Museum' and strengthening our role in contemporary culture," Scott said in a release. "History plays an important part within any community and we are so fortunate that ours is rich with local and national significance."

Welcome to **Ignacio Barrón Viela**, the new executive director of the Billings Symphony Orchestra and Chorale. Originally from Spain, Viela was born in Zaragoza, where he studied music and engineering. He is a classically trained cellist and was a cellist while serving as General Orchestra Manager of the Heinrich Heine Orchestra in



**Susan Barnett**

Dusseldorf, Germany. He was also principal cellist with the Nottingham Philharmonic Orchestra in the UK. Recently, he was a member of the USC Orchestra in Los Angeles, CA. Barrón Viela has spent more than ten years playing in orchestras and managing music projects worldwide. During his tenure with the Heinrich Heine Orchestra, he was responsible for all aspects of the orchestra's operations, fundraising, finances, budgeting and planning, as well as coordination of international orchestra tours, concert programs and participation in international festivals.



**Ignacio Barrón Viela**

Barrón Viela recently completed the International MBA program at the University of Southern California, where he supported the administrative staff of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association in planning and staging events. He was selected to participate in the Essentials of Orchestra Management course, which is run by the League of American Orchestras and is regarded as the world's gold standard of orchestra management training.

"There were a lot of different options around the world, but there was something that hooked me here," he told the *Billings Gazette*. "The genuineness of the people, the hospitality I received, the openness ... My personality fit well."

Barrón Viela recognizes the Symphony as a cultural partner for the city. "Our mission is to enrich life with music, for people of all different levels," he said, noting the organization's work in the Montana Women's Prison and the education outreach program that reaches more than 35,000 students each year, as well as Symphony in the Park that brings classical music to thousands of Billings residents for free each year.

Barrón Viela said he was excited to find a position that matches his passion for a leadership career with a symphony and chorale, and is already enjoying the spaciousness of his new home. "I love nature. I love places where maybe it's a little calmer," he told the *Gazette*.

He looks forward to taking the symphony "to a new level" – which includes extending educational outreach and building audience numbers, especially with younger people. "It's not only about the concert; it's about the experience, and what happens before, during and after the concert," he told the *Gazette*.

## CONDOLENCES TO ...

The family and friends of educator and philosopher **Ron Perrin**. He died Oct. 7 in Missoula. Born on Jan. 20, 1934, in Montpelier, VT, and spent his formative years in Vermont and Massachusetts. During his 20s he served in the U.S. Army ('55-'57) and in the corporate world, where he worked in sales and advertising for Proctor and Gamble. In 1960, he met and married Sandra, whose passing in April of 2017 was a devastating loss. At age 31, he enrolled as a freshman at Northwestern University, earning his bachelor's degree in 1965. During this time he became increasingly



**Ron Perrin**

involved in social and political causes. A trip to Selma, AL, during the height of the Civil Rights Movement in 1965 remained a deep and lasting influence in his subsequent teaching and public involvement. He went on to earn a master's degree and Ph.D. from the University of California, San Diego, and in 1968, became a faculty member at Montana State University. In 1971, he joined the philosophy faculty at the University of Montana, Missoula, where he later became a professor of philosophy and political theory. In 1986, he received the University's Distinguished Teaching Award and was initiated into the order of Phi Kappa Phi in 1994. He served as a member of the Missoula Arts Council and with the Institute of Ethics and Humanities at St. Patrick Hospital. But his first love of public service was within the field of public humanities; he served as a member and chair of the Montana Committee for the Humanities and as a member of the National Federation of State Humanities Councils. In 2011, he was a recipient of the Montana Governor's Humanities Award.

The family and friends of musician **Greg Devlin**. He died Jan. 10 at age 71. Devlin was born in Mayville, ND, and graduated from Polson High School in 1965, where he excelled as a musician. He earned his bachelor's in fine arts from the University of Montana in 1971, and was active in UM's music group, the Jubileers. He joined the military and moved to Maryland where he became a member of the U.S. Air Force Singing Sergeants. Devlin continued his education, earning a master's in musicology from Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, before moving back to Missoula in 1981 and adding a long and diverse chapter to his musical career. He joined the Missoula Chorale and the Missoula Mendelssohn Club, which he sang with until his death. He expressed his faith singing at the Catholic churches he attended. He also performed with his brother, Tom, and Tom's wife, Val, in the Devlin Lenz Connection, and later with brothers Tom and Jeff in the Devlin Connection. Devlin also formed a duet with Gina Hegg and they sang together for several years. His latest musical foray led him to partner with Steve Riddle and Nick Terhaar in the Singing Sons of Beaches. Over the years Devlin held a variety of positions in investing and insurance, and worked hard to take good care of his clients.

More Condolences on next page



## Curt Olds globetrots with “Phantom” (from page 1)

Olds has performed in Europe before, but the upcoming tour will give him an opportunity to travel to countries he wouldn't otherwise get a chance to visit – places like Malaysia, Israel and South Korea.

The world tour premieres in Manila Feb. 28, and Olds described the newest iteration of the tour as something akin to Phantom 2.0.

A lot has happened in the way of theater technology since “Phantom” took the world by storm in the 1980s, so the upcoming show promises to bring some audience members spectacles they haven't seen before.

Demand for the upcoming tour is high, so Olds expects each leg of the journey will last about a month, with eight performances each week.

There will be ample time to explore the local scenes, Olds said, so he's excited about taking in all the sights and sounds each country has to offer.

Olds said he's always wanted to perform in “Phantom of the Opera,” which during his teenage years was like the “Hamilton” of its day: wildly popular and impossible to get tickets.

“What's really crazy is that it has never

lost its momentum. It opened on Broadway in 1988 and it's still playing. It plays two blocks away from my apartment,” said Olds, who is based in New York City. “It's the longest-running show in Broadway history, and it doesn't look like it's going to be leaving any time soon.”

Olds described “Phantom” as “the Olympics of opera,” a “pastiche of styles” that incorporates elements of both opera and modern musical theater ...

“It's really bridging my worlds together,” said Olds. “I have a foot in musical theater and I'm also a trained opera singer, so it's one of those shows I've been dying to do for years.”

According to previous news stories, Olds first caught the performance bug as a 16-year-old when he went on a trip with a group of Butte High band students to NYC, where the group saw “Les Misérables.”

During his youth, Olds was enrolled in an honors chorus program and also took part in the Butte Community Theatre. He later graduated from the University of Montana and studied opera and musical theater at the New England Conservatory in Boston. Olds credits

local educators with helping him get his classical chops, and he says you don't have to live in a big city to sing on the big city stage.

“I'm really, really pro-Montana and what you can do there,” said Olds. “I've never lost my association with Butte or with Montana, and that's extremely important to me.”

Olds has gone on to perform with the New York City Opera, the Hawaii Opera Theatre and the Central City Opera in Colorado. He was also part of a German production of the musical “Cats,” among many more career highlights.

Olds makes time to perform in Butte and other Montana locations whenever he can.

Four years ago, he directed “A Charlie Brown Christmas” for the Orphan Girl Theatre. In October, he performed in “The Pirates of Penzance” with Intermountain Opera Bozeman. He says he hopes to soon put on another performance in Butte.

When asked what he likes about performing, Olds said music can go places where the spoken word cannot.

“I think that's the thing that drives me the most – that connection to the audience,” he said.



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## MORE CONDOLENCES TO ...

The family and friends of Missoula artist **Doug Baldwin**. He died of natural causes Dec. 10; he was 79. Baldwin was born Jan. 6, 1939, in Bottineau, ND, and the family moved to Missoula when he was a sophomore in high school. After graduating from Missoula County High School, he earned his bachelor's degree in 1961 from the University of Montana. He was drafted into the U.S. Army, and served two years as an illustrator before returning to the University of Montana for graduate studies. Baldwin completed his master's degree in printmaking in 1965, and was awarded a scholarship to study ceramics at the Brooklyn Museum Art School. After completing his studies in New York, he taught art for three years at the University of Wisconsin before beginning his long career as a ceramics professor at the Maryland Institute College of Art. He was chair of the ceramics department for several years, and retired in 2004 after nearly 34 years of teaching. Upon retirement, he moved back to Missoula where he found a warm and welcoming community of friends and artists. Baldwin never stopped making art, and spent most of his days at the Clay Studio of Missoula. He received a Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Montana in 1994, and was awarded the Maryland Institute College of Art Medal of Honor in 2003. During the course of his career, his work was exhibited in several countries and around the United States. A *Missoulian* story, published Dec. 16, characterized his sculptures as featuring “little anthropomorphic ducks, expressive figurines in red terra cotta. He planted them in scenarios, more often than not humorous ones.” Of his own approach to art, Baldwin told the reporter, “I just have a good time. I really think that if someone sees my work and they smile, it's successful.”



Artist Doug Baldwin with one of his whimsical duck sculptures (Photo by Kurt Wilson/Missoulian)

The family and friends of **Irene J. Muir**. The long-time Great Falls resident passed away peacefully Feb. 2 on the eve of her 102nd birthday. She was born and raised in Great Falls, where she met and married her high school sweetheart, Jack Muir in December 1940. They lived in Chuquicamata, Chile, for five years before returning to Great Falls where Muir followed her passion for music and art. She volunteered for the Community Concert program, playing the piano, and pursued her love of watercolor painting. After moving to Butte in 1969 she opened and operated the Summer Gallery for several years. She displayed her artwork at numerous local shows, taught watercolor classes and remained an active member of the Montana Institute of the Arts. She also loved golf and travel and was a member of the Butte Country Club. In later years, as her vision declined, she returned to her musical roots. An accomplished piano player, she entertained her friends and neighbors at Big Sky Senior Living playing their favorite melodies from her memory of an accumulated 100 years of music.

The family and friends of Montana native, author, and lifelong activist **Patricia Nell Warren**. She died Feb. 9 in Santa Monica, CA, after a roughly three-year battle with cancer. She was 82. Warren is best known for her groundbreaking love story *The Front Runner*, a novel that features an openly gay Olympic runner and his closeted coach. The 1974 *New York Times* Bestseller is credited for changing the lives of gay men and women around the world and even inspired an international running organization of the same name. Warren was born in Helena in June 1936. Four years later, her father Conrad, or Con, Warren bought the Grant-Kohrs Ranch in Deer Lodge, where Patricia and her brother Conrad grew up. There, the two Warren children followed in the footsteps of their great-grandfather, Conrad Kohrs, learning the ins and outs of the cattle business and living a Montana ranch life. “You could tell she absolutely loved growing up in Montana ... she loved the freedom of the ranch and the Deer Lodge area,” current Grant-Kohrs Ranch Superintendent Jacque Lavelle told the *Montana Standard*. According to Lavelle, Patricia's family

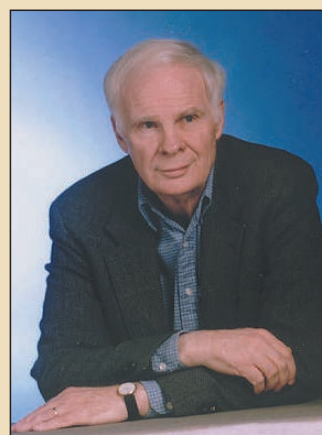
is credited with preserving a nearly unbroken 120-year history of the ranch, first when Con Warren sold the ranch – along with every object and record associated with it – to the National Park Service in 1972. And over 30 years later when Warren and several family members founded the nonprofit arm of the national historic site, The Grant-Kohrs Ranch Foundation. Warren served on the foundation board since its inception and often posted various histories, memories, and other stories of the ranch on the foundation Facebook page. She was vice president of the ranch foundation in the last two years of her life. The ranch area is believed to be where her love of animals, especially horses, and gardening stemmed from, as well as the source of inspiration for many of her literary works, including her first novel, *The Last Centennial* (1971); *One Is the Sun* (1991); *My West* (2011); and more.

– Excerpted from the *Montana Standard*, Feb. 18



Patricia Nell Warren (Photo by John Selig)

The family and friends of prolific author and Livingston legend **Richard S. Wheeler**. He died at his home on Feb. 24; he was 83 and had been diagnosed with leukemia in late January. Since he took to writing books full time in 1985, Wheeler authored more than 80 titles – westerns, novels of historical fiction, even some detective novels. His most loved work includes the Barnaby Skye series, which follows a frontiersman character, and *The Richest Hill on Earth*, a historical novel about the Copper Kings of Butte, to name but a very few. His output has not gone unnoticed: The Western Writers of America honored him with six Spur Awards, the 2001 Owen Wister Award for lifetime achievement, and a 2015 induction into its Hall of Fame. Wheeler was born in 1935 in Milwaukee, and was raised in nearby Wauwatosa. He studied history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison but did not take a degree. After trying his hand,



Richard S. Wheeler

very briefly, as a screenwriter in Hollywood, Wheeler started his writing career as a newspaper reporter and worked for a series of newspapers in the 1960s, including the *Billings Gazette*, where he drove into work each day from a cabin outside of Roundup. He later worked as a cowboy on a ranch in the Arizona borderlands and as an editor for book publishing companies before giving up a steady paycheck and moving to Big Timber to write novels at the age of 50. He eventually settled in Livingston, which he said became the “literary center of Montana” after many writers moved to the area in the 1970s and brought with them filmmakers, musicians and artists. Scott McMillion, a Livingston writer and the publisher of the *Montana Quarterly*, praised Wheeler's contribution to western literature. “Richard did a lot to help people understand the real West, as opposed to the mythic West,” said McMillion. “His stories, especially his later stories, are about people making a living and living a real life in the West.” In 2000, Wheeler married Sue Hart, an English professor at Montana State University-Billings and a longtime friend. The couple kept their own separate houses – she in Billings, he in Livingston – and spent weekends together until her death in 2014. If there's a word besides “author” or “storyteller” that comes quickly to peoples' tongues when they speak of Wheeler, it's “gentleman.” A week before he died, Wheeler received a note from painter and former Livingston resident Russell Chatham. “I've followed your writing for many years, four decades at least,” Chatham writes, “and nothing has ever moved me to change my opinion you are the finest author who ever lived and worked in Montana.” Wheeler has left his estate to the American Prairie Reserve and an archive of his work to the University of Oregon in Eugene. Elk River Books in Livingston will take over management of his body of published work.

– From the *Livingston Enterprise*, Feb. 28



## ARTS EDUCATION



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Contestants in the 2019 Montana Poetry Out Loud State Finals on the stage at Grandstreet Theatre in Helena. (Photo by Jerry Kozak)

## Montana Poetry Out Loud culminates in state finals

By Monica Grable  
Arts Education Director

Montana Poetry Out Loud – administered in the state by the Montana Arts Council, with support from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation – culminated its 2018-19 program year with an inspiring Montana POL State Finals held March 2 at Helena’s Grandstreet Theatre.

High school students from across the state made the trip to Helena to compete in the event, with all 21 students reciting works of noted poets past and present in two semi-final rounds. From there, eight students advanced to recite a third poem in the afternoon’s final round, ultimately leading to the naming of the 2019 State Champion.

Sophie Barth of Butte High School took the top honor with her recitations of “Larkinesque” by Michael Ryan, “It Couldn’t Be Done” by Edgar Albert Guest, and “Fairy-tale Logic” by A.E. Stallings. Sophie will go on to represent Montana at the Poetry Out Loud National Finals in Washington, DC, April 29-May 1.

Victoria Shelton of Belt High School and Anna Hedinger of Flathead High School placed second and third respectively to round out the top three honors. We congratulate all three remarkable young women, and their outstanding teachers: Scott Cooney of Butte High School, Jeff Ross of Belt High School, and Alison Kreiss of Flathead High School.

Serving as judges were Lowell Jaeger, Montana’s current Poet Laureate, Natalie Peeterse, a Helena-based poet and 2013 Artist Innovation award winner, and University of Providence professor Aaron Parrett, also a recent Artist Innovation awardee. Esteemed literary force Kristi Niemeyer, of LivelyTimes.com, served as accuracy judge. Featured as the event’s first guest poet was Sean Hill, a National Endowment for the Arts fellow and new Montana resident. Lending their musical talents to the event were members of the Helena Schools’ Chamber Orchestra, who provided musical interludes between recitations.

This year’s program involved a new and important initiative. Leading into the state finals, five regional events were held on college and university campuses across Montana in early February. Hosting the events were the University of Montana Western in Dillon, Montana State University Billings, University of Providence in Great Falls, Flathead Valley Community College in Kalispell, and the University of Montana in Missoula. At each event, members of the literary community, university faculty and administration, English/Creative Writing students and pre-service teachers were engaged as personnel or attendees, building future capacity for the program.

Involvement in Poetry Out Loud is open to all high school students in Montana. Schools interested in participating in the program during the 2019-20 school year should contact Monica Grable, Arts Education Director and statewide Poetry Out Loud Coordinator, throughout the spring and summer months at [monica.grable@mt.gov](mailto:monica.grable@mt.gov) or by phone at 406-444-6522.

### Big Snowy: A contest for young writers

If you’re 30 or younger and a current or former Montana resident, the *Montana Quarterly* wants your best work. The sixth annual Big Snowy Prize will award two prizes, one for short fiction and one for essay/nonfiction.

The contest is open to anyone 30 or younger, who is a current or former Montana resident.

Contestants should send entries of up to 3,500 unpublished words in a Word document to [editor@themontanaquarterly.com](mailto:editor@themontanaquarterly.com) (one entry per person), and show that they currently live or have lived in Montana. Deadline is April 15.

Previous winners are ineligible.

Winners in each category will get a check for \$500 and publication in *The Montana Quarterly*. Winning entries will be announced and published in the Summer 2019 issue.

Learn more at [themontanaquarterly.com/big-snowy-prize/](http://themontanaquarterly.com/big-snowy-prize/).



Poetry Out Loud Champion Sophie Barth of Butte High School with Montana Poet Laureate Lowell Jaeger, one of the contest judges. (Photo by Jerry Kozak)



Sean Hill, guest poet, shares his work during the Montana Poetry Out Loud State Finals. (Photo by Czelsi Gomez)



Victoria Shelton of Belt High School took second place. (Photo by Czelsi Gomez)



## ARTS EDUCATION

## Artists in Schools and Communities grant cycle now open

The Montana Arts Council's FY20 Artists in Schools and Communities (AISC) grant program is currently accepting applications to support projects taking place between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020.

Three subcategories exist within the program – Grants \$1,500-\$5,000, Grants Under \$1,500 and Arts Learning Partners – each with its own application due date.

Supported by National Endowment for the Arts and State of Montana funds, AISC grants pair professional artists with arts learners of every age and ability. Projects cover a diverse array of arts experience focused on hands-on learning that is designed to introduce or extend knowledge in one or more arts disciplines. AISC-funded projects range from a one-time 90-minute workshop with a visiting artist to a long-term artist residency engaging learners over weeks or months.

Current Artist in Schools and Communities grantees include the newly-formed Wolf Point nonprofit, Bigger Sky Kids, serving the needs of youth in an after-school learning environment; Free Cycles' "Funkify Your Bicycle" bike-associated sculpture workshop for all ages in Missoula; the Billings Symphony Society's ongoing guitar classes provided

to women incarcerated at the Montana State Women's Prison; Electric Peak Arts Council's performance-based project designed for older adults in Gardiner; and Anna Jeffries Elementary School's arts integration program in expressive art therapies in Cut Bank.

A highlight of the AISC grant program is the collaboration that transpires between teaching artists and those working in other arts or non-arts disciplines, whether in school or community settings.

Awards are granted to schools and non-profit entities and must be matched in cash 1:1 by the applicant, which may include other sources of income. First-time applicants, or those in a Class C or smaller school, are eligible for 2:1 support.

Requests submitted to the Arts Learning Partners and Grants \$1,500-\$5,000 categories will be reviewed by a panel of professionals from the arts and arts education fields. Requests in the Grants Under \$1,500 category will be reviewed internally by a member of the MAC staff and at least one outside reviewer well-versed in the particular discipline(s) of the request.

The AISC review panel will meet to dis-

cuss requests in an open public meeting to be held between May 15 and 31; grant applicants will be notified of the meeting details no later than May 1. Final funding determinations will be made by the end of June.

## Application deadlines

The upcoming deadlines for each of the three Artists in Schools and Communities grant categories are:

Requests to the FY20 AISC Arts Learning Partners category are due by 5 p.m. Monday, March 25. A code to access this application is required, and is provided only to those applicants who meet the eligibility requirements.

The deadline for requests to the FY20 Artists in Schools and Communities Grants \$1,500-\$5,000 category is 5 p.m. Monday, April 15.

Requests to the FY20 Artists in Schools and Communities Grants Under \$1,500 category are due by 5 p.m. Wednesday, May 1.

Applicants, new or renewing, are invited and encouraged to discuss their proposals in advance with MAC's Arts Education Director, Monica Grable. She can be reached at [monica.grable@mt.gov](mailto:monica.grable@mt.gov) or by calling 406-444-6522.



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## Wordmeister Junior

The Great Falls Public Library's Festival of the Book has added a new event to its popular Wordmeister Competition this year: Wordmeister Junior. Just like the adult version, teams of fourth-eighth graders are encouraged to square off to see who has the biggest vocabulary. The junior squads compete at 5 p.m. April 18 at the library, followed by adult teams at 7 p.m.

In both contests, bonus round passes will be given to the teams with the best costumes, and those that bring in the most donations of non-perishable foods.

For rules and registration or information on other festival events, visit [www.greatfallslibrary.org](http://www.greatfallslibrary.org).

Creative collaboration  
MCT and 4th Wall design workshop for special needs students

During the week of March 11-16, the worlds of the Missoula Children's Theatre (MCT) and the 4th Wall Theatre Company met in Missoula for a week of creative collaboration regarding the transformational potential of theatre.

The mission of the Missoula Children's Theatre is the development of life skills in children through participation in the performing arts, while 4th Wall invites people of all abilities to experience personal affirmation, empowerment, and build important life skills through the power of musical theatre (4thWallKids.com).

"It does seem that this meeting was destined to happen," say MCT education director Matt Loehrke. "Both companies believe that acting, singing, and dancing are languages everyone can speak and enjoy, no matter what abilities or challenges they may have."

While MCT has always practiced inclusive casting, Loehrke has sought to expand MCT's offerings to students living with disabilities. Through his projects with the Department of VSA and Accessibility at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, he learned about the work of 4th Wall.

VSA seeks to promote the creative power of people with disabilities. With former VSA Montana Executive Director Alayne Dolson's guidance, he created a workshop called "Acting in Oz," which was developed in three Missoula middle school special education classrooms.

That workshop was added to MCT's International Tour and over 200 students across the country have participated in it. According to Loehrke, the pivotal feedback from educators about "Acting in Oz" centered on the noticeable improvement of communication skills in kids who participated.

MCT's excitement about the potential impact of the workshop led Loehrke to reach out to 4th Wall. Based in Detroit, 4th Wall was founded seven years ago, after recognizing a profound need for arts inclusion and accessibility for people of all abilities and ages. Co-founders Katie Mann and Annie Klark quickly found a niche in helping to foster confidence in the creative process of a population who is often not seen on stage.



Katie Mann and Annie Klark of 4th Wall are working with MCT to develop a new workshop to help kids with special needs connect emotions to actions through movement and music.

4th Wall's outreach and travel has impacted more than 8,000 students with disabilities in 19 states and five countries. Klark notes, "Theatre is such a valuable way to bring

people together, and it also teaches important life skills in a way that is fun and approachable."

The primary goal of Mann and Klark's trip to Missoula, said Loehrke prior to the visit, was to develop a new workshop for students with special needs that will explore "how to connect emotions to actions through movement and music."

This workshop will then travel worldwide, separately, with MCT and 4th Wall, beginning in June. The workshop collaboration will be just the beginning.

"Theatre for all abilities is such a special niche. We're excited to meet people of similar hearts and minds," said Mann. Throughout the week, and likely beyond it, "we will exchange ideas, best practices, and concepts to be able to better serve this population."

This innovative collaboration was made possible thanks to a generous grant from The Llewellyn Foundation.

For more information, visit [4thWallKids.com](http://4thWallKids.com) or [mctinc.org](http://mctinc.org).



Watson Children's Home artist at work. (Photo by Stoney Sasser)

## Children's art exhibit

The Dana Gallery in Missoula hosts The Watson Children's Shelter Art Exhibit in April, with a reception from 5-8 p.m. April 5.

In recognition of April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month, this show demonstrates the ways in which children are able to express themselves through their art, fostering resiliency, confidence and creativity.

The gallery is located at 246 N. Higgins Ave.



## NATIVE NEWS

## Montanans named Artists in Business Leadership Fellows



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Two Montanans – visual artist Ben Pease and musician Joseph Running Crane – were among the dozen 2019 recipients of First Peoples Fund Artists in Business Leadership Fellowships.

“First Peoples Fund has funded performing artists in the past but this is the first year almost half our fellows are performing artists,” Amber Hoy, FPF Program Manager of Fellowships, said in a story announcing the fellowships. “This is an area where we are expanding. It’s great to have this cohort of performing artists that can really share different ways of creative expression.”

Traditional arts, film, mixed media, fashion design, and a variety of other visual arts are also represented in this year’s group of 12 recipients.

**Ben Pease (Crow Tribe of Montana, Northern Cheyenne Tribe and Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation)** is a versatile artist, skilled in drawing, graphic design, mixed media, painting, photography, regalia/fashion design, sculpture and storytelling, who lives in Billings.

From his website ([www.benpeasevisions.com](http://www.benpeasevisions.com)): “My journey as a storyteller stands as a continuation and protection of our contemporary indigenous cultures.”



**Apsaalooke Madonna and Child by Ben Pease**

As minorities in the world of art, contemporary Indigenous artists are confronting issues like cultural appropriation, exotification, racism and stereotype disguised as appreciation and oblivion. Pease’s work continually, yet respectfully, asks “how?” and “why?”

“Many times, the question is more important than the answer. What really matters, is the path.”

**Joseph Running Crane (Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation)** is a musician who resides in Browning.

At 29 years old, the Crow/Northern Cheyenne artist stands firmly upon the ideal of education via creativity, as a contemporary storyteller. Pease’s work is known for its unique and culturally relevant style using historic photographic references while simultaneously touching on current events and issues. He often collages both antique and contemporary items into his work to create literal and conceptual reference points.

Aaron Parrett mentioned Running Crane in his 2016 book, *Montana Americana Music: Boot Stomping in The Big Sky*:

“Joseph was weaned on punk rock and hard-core, a huge fan of The Minutemen and The Dead Kennedys since practically grade school. He grew up in Browning, Montana on the Blackfeet Reservation, and his early influences were loud, heavy, and hard rock. Still, his recent songs have taken on a more wistful tone and use an acoustic sound far removed from the angsty and frenetic electric punk sound.”

#### First Peoples Fund Fellowships

Through the Artists in Business Leadership and Cultural Capital Fellowships, First Peoples Fund partners with Native artists and culture bearers to strengthen their business skills and to ensure that art, culture and ancestral knowledge are passed from one generation to the next.



**Singer/songwriter Joseph Running Crane**

### Folk Festival Art Market applications due April 30

The 2019 Montana Folk Festival, taking place in Butte July 12-14, is currently accepting applications for its Montana Traditions Art Market and First Peoples’ Market. Both markets will be open the full length of the festival, which sees an average attendance of more than 150,000 people over three days.

The Montana Traditions Arts Market offers festival-goers the opportunity to purchase works by some of the region’s best traditional artists and craftspeople. These artists have come from across Montana and share varied art forms such as quilting, paintings, metalwork, sculpture, pottery, photography, jewelry, recycled and upcycled clothing, and more.

The First Peoples’ Market offers the work of Native American fine artists and craftspeople including both deeply traditional crafts and more contemporary artistic expressions rooted in Indigenous experience. Past participants have shared paintings, antler carving, parfleche works, hide paintings, ledger art, star quilting, doll making, jewelry, and other forms of expression.

Applications are due no later than April 30, and all artists chosen will be notified before May 15. Market guidelines and applications may be found at [montana-folkfestival.com](http://montana-folkfestival.com).

## Perma Red voted Montana’s Best-Loved Book

By Mary Auld  
Reprinted with permission  
from the *Valley Journal*, Feb. 6, 2019

Debra Magpie Earling’s novel, *Perma Red*, tells the story of Louise White Elk, a strong-willed Salish woman navigating love and heritage on the Flathead Reservation.

The story is built around the landscape of the Mission Valley and the true history of Earling’s family. “The story resonates and is long lasting because it’s real,” Earling said.

The book was recently chosen as the state’s Best-Loved Book through the Great Montana Read project, which allowed members of the public to vote for their favorite read by a Montana author. Ray Ekness, director of the University of Montana’s Broadcast Media Center, which helped execute the contest, said the project brought a local spirit to the format of PBS’s *Great American Read*.

According to Ekness, seven literary experts from Montana each submitted a list of the 20 books they believe are most important to the state of Montana. Voting opened to the public online in October and 2,500 individuals voted for their favorite by the end of the year. *Perma Red* received the most votes.

Earling grew up in Spokane, hundreds of miles from the setting of her novel, but her mother filled her childhood with stories of family history on the reservation. Even as a child, Earling was fascinated by stories of her late Aunt Louise, who would become the central character in the book. Earling is a descendant of Chief Charlo and her mother grew up on the Flathead Reservation.

In 1976, Earling got a job in Dixon, near the home of her mother’s family, working as the first tribal court advocate for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. She drove the long commute to Dixon each day, seeing few other cars. The loneliness she felt during that part of her life made her turn her attention to the land.

She drove country roads and went on long walks near her family home in Perma. She used those memories to create vivid descriptions of the Mission Valley in her book. Earling said those descriptions allow readers across Montana to relate to the story.

“In Montana, the land is a character for all of us,” she said. “There’s beauty and devastation. It’s a tough place to be.”

Throughout the story, characters travel the reservation by foot, in cars and by hitching rides. Readers see the stark wildness of Hot Springs, Arlee, Dixon and Perma, just as the characters did.

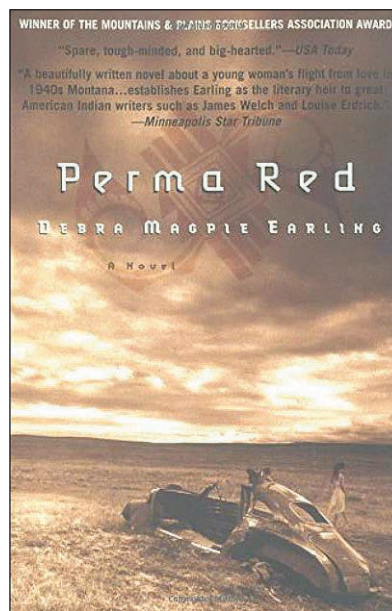
Earling also learned about her family’s history while she worked in Dixon. The book’s action is rooted in stories Earling’s mother told her as a child and other stories she was told about her people.

In the story, Louise, like Earling’s Aunt Louise, is a beautiful and free-spirited woman, called Perma Red for her red hair and her reputation. Louise seeks freedom as three very different men pursue her romantically. The story focuses on her evolution as a character despite the forces that attempt to control her, including romantic relationships, family ties, racism, sexism and the law.

The national attention being devoted to the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women helped draw attention to the book, which is a major subject in the plot. “I think even five years ago this never would have been chosen as the most beloved book,” Earling said.

She believes a new willingness to examine the factors that lead to abuse and murder of indigenous women has allowed the novel to gain a second wave of support.

However, *Perma Red* is not about being a victim or having a lack of power. Instead, it celebrates the strength of a woman determined to live life on her own terms at almost any cost.



**Debra Earling’s novel *Perma Red* is headed for a reprint after being named the state’s Best-Loved Book.**

“It appeals to a lot of young Native women because it is their story,” Earling said. “It’s the story of an average woman trying to define her own life.”

Earling was the only Native woman author to have a book in the contest. Non-native men wrote the majority of the nominated books. According to Earling, the same people for too long have defined the definition of an “important story.”

“It’s always been the story of colonialism and the absence of Native people. I think at long last the tide is changing,” she said.

Native actors and filmmakers are adapting the book into a television series. Earling said it feels right to have another generation of artists work to bring her family’s story to life in a new way.

Earling received a Master’s of Fine Arts from Cornell University in New York State in 1992. She published *Perma Red* in 2002. She has also published the book *The Lost Journals of Sacajewea*. Today, Earling is a professor and director at the University of Montana’s creative writing program. She’s working on a novel about the Native American boarding school experience.

Despite its popularity *Perma Red* has been out of print since 2009. At the Book Exchange, a used bookstore in Missoula, an employee said the waiting list for a used copy is long. However, potential readers will soon be able to get a new book. In response to increased interest, Earling’s editor has decided to reprint the book.

“Being selected as the Most-Beloved Book serves as a culmination of a long work of honoring and love,” Earling said. “It’s humbling. It’s such a joy.”



# ABOUT MUSIC

– By Mariss McTucker

## Hawthorne Roots: *On Second Thought*

Here's a band to reckon with. Fronted by sisters Madeline and Emma Kelly, Bozeman's Hawthorne Roots deliver a knockout punch on their debut EP. They feature stellar pickers Lucas Mace, lead guitar, Dustin Crowson, bass, and Michael DeJaynes, drums and percussion. Kevin McHugh sits in on keys, as does a monster horn section, with Jon Gauer on trombone, Tanner Fruit, saxophone, and Nathan Crawford, trumpet.



Besides sporting awesome vocal cords, along with her sister, Madeline Kelly plays rhythm guitar; Mace and DeJaynes contribute vocals, too. Madeline wrote and arranged the songs.

The songbirds grew up in a musical family and Madeline began to pen songs at 16. She moved to Bozeman in 2008 to attend school, and older sis Emma followed five years later. Soon, the Hawthorne Roots were born.

The band calls their music “revved-up soul.” That’s evident in the killer chops both Emma and Madeline Kelly possess. The gals’ sisterly harmonies are perfectly in sync, the timbre of Emma’s lusty alto complementing Madeline’s sweet, high register.

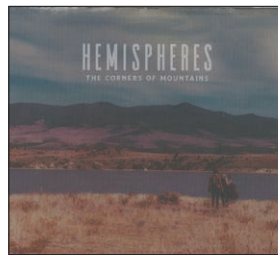
“Fine Line,” co-arranged by Mace, is a bluesy, slow hip-shaker with a nifty chord progression. As on most songs here, the younger Kelly sings lead. Emma shares the lead at times, and matches Madeline’s inflections on the harmonies. Both singers bend and slide notes and mesh phrasing, showing their terrific vocal control. This scintillating sonic blend is accompanied by stinging guitar breaks, punchy horns, and bass and drums that percolate around the vocals.

“Glasses,” with DeJaynes singing lead, has a rockin’ Muscle Shoals flair, and on “Ray,” Madeline seems to channel Amy Winehouse, with a slight Stevie Nicks trill thrown in.

To hear vocal pyrotechnics and crackerjack musicianship, don’t miss this band.

## Hemispheres: *The Corners of Mountains*

Helena’s Kate Plummer, guitar, and Maren Haynes Marchesini, cello, have released their first album together. Plummer, from Sydney, Australia, and Marchesini, from Bozeman, each traveled the world, touring with oodles of prestigious musicians before crossing paths in the Capital City.



Plummer, who has solo albums to her credit, steeped herself in Sydney’s eclectic music scene, playing blues, rock and jazz, and later honed her chops on country and blues. Marchesini has a doctorate in ethnomusicology and studied with pros around the globe. She played in indie rock bands to boot, and currently teaches.

When Plummer was considering a home-cooked album of instrumental music, she asked Marchesini to play on one of the pieces, and they clicked. The band name represents their diverse backgrounds.

Plummer wrote all the songs, drawing on her travels and experiences, and love of Montana. But they collaborated on the cello parts, and also nabbed two accomplished Helena musicians to help on the project: David Casey, bouzouki, and Josh Loveland, percussion. The musicians weave the various genres of acoustic, instrumental, indie and folk into a gorgeous whole.

“Mountains Over Flathead” starts with succinct guitar phrasing underpinned by drony, rich cello bowing. It morphs into a complex round, the cello echoing the fluid guitar flourishes. Pretty!

In “Jonah’s Song,” wistful cello lines sway alongside finger-style guitar, then seems to float overtop, like film-score music. The western, folksy “Colorado, By the River” sports some silky guitar finger-pickin’ as the bouzouki and cello trade off unison leads and harmonies. Cool!

“Waking Up to Snow” has stops and starts, the spooky ping of harmonics and growling, sandpaper cello work. The tempo slows as a new theme is introduced, bell-like. Wow! This album is layered and polished, with sterling production values.

## June West: *Road of Love and Life*

Singer/songwriter and multi-instrumentalist June West calls both Missoula and Tucson home. She grew up in the Garden City, helped start the country-rock band the Best Westerns, and played with Death Moth, a country-folk outfit.



West calls her music “soul for the soul,” and cites influences like Natalie Prass, Angel Olsen, Ricki Lee Jones, and Joni Mitchell. But I also hear the silky tones of Sade, who displays the same hypnotic sensibility.

Her collaborators are Tucsonans: Connor “Catfish” Gallagher, lead guitar and pedal steel; Grant Beyschau, bass and saxophone; Jarvis Taveniere, bass and percussion; Adan Martinez-Kee, drums; and Julian Neel, Wurlitzer, Rhodes, and organ. West plays rhythm guitar, Wurlitzer, piano, and percussion; Lori LeChien sings back-up vocals.

West’s opulent, alluring melodies derive from a luscious stew of soul, country, and folk nuances, fused with pop. The 10 tracks meld all of these genres and provide an exotic feel that complements her expressive voice.

The tropical, tranquil bent to “Island of Women” counters its not-so-subtle message. It’s an upside-down take, if you will, on the Sirens myth. West bemoans the reality that men take advantage of women.

The bluesy “No Words to Say” has an inventive chord progression, and West adds a Ricki Lee Jones lilt to her voice in the slow country-blues number, “What I Am.”

In the slow-rockin’ “The Comedown,” with its ’60s R&B feel and an

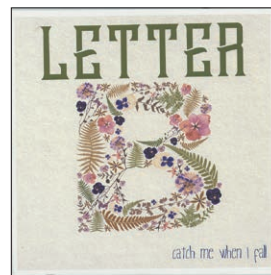
infectious hook, West sings, “I’m puttin’ your letters back on the shelf.” There’s a reverby sax interlude, too. Cool!

And on “Game to Claim,” West utters in glossy velvet tones, “You’ve got me driftin’ in tangles of your kisses.” Good line!

West funded this self-titled first effort through a Kickstarter campaign, and there’s a lot more here to wrap your ears around. I’d do it.

## Letter B: *Catch Me When I Fall*

Missoula’s Letter B band calls themselves an “indie-hip-pop” group. On their second release after *Moving Forward*, I hear nuances of hip-hop, yes, but hey! – there are cool melodies and infectious hooks, thoughtful lyrics and excellent musicianship. How refreshing! So yes, “indie-hip-pop” nails it.



Letter B began with brother-sister duo Jordan Lane and Katie C in 2014. Jordan had performed and sung around Missoula for several years; Katie joined him after writing a poem called Letter B. It got her writing and performing with her brother.

The siblings are joined by Dillon Johns, bass, Lhanna Writesel, saxophone, Josh Hungate, trombone, and Brandon Zimmer, drums. Lane adds guitar, keys, and lead vocals, and Katie C, vocals.

Lane wrote the five songs here, but the musicians wrote their own parts. The roots-rock band plays tight, intricate phrases, while Lane’s robust baritone voice sails smoothly over cascading lyrics à la Dave Matthews.

“Wake Up” features Lane singing about living through the pain of his parents’ divorce. “You try to stand tough, you need to wake up,” he sings, voice full of emotion. The song builds with a pulsating riff from sax and guitar, punctuated at times by the gunshot rat-a-tat of a perfectly placed snare drum. “The Wolves” has an exotic beat and a bluesy ambience, along with stutter-step drum work and a wailin’ sax break. Lane sings about going your own way, making a break from the pack.

“MUYM” (“Made Up Your Mind”) opens onto the voice of Barbara Jordan, who gave the keynote address at the 1976 Democratic National Convention. There’s knockout bass playing, and Katie C shares vocals with Lane in places, their voices perfectly meshed.

There’s a lot packed into this EP. This band is going places!

## Martha Scanlan: *The River and the Light*

Songbird Martha Scanlan, who resides near Missoula, has her fourth album out in 11 years. The reclusive singer/songwriter, a guitar player and former member of the old-time string band the Reeltime Travelers, has appeared on NPR and shared the stage with celebrated roots artists. Back when, she soaked up the music of eastern Tennessee, and was heavily influenced by that personal connection between people and their natural surroundings that infuses traditional music.



She moved west to a Montana ranch and wedded her compositions to the Treasure State’s rivers and wide-open spaces. Her songs are quiet and sparse; they’re simple, yet ring with vivid, intimate descriptions underpinned by drony guitar chords that ride beneath Scanlan’s delicate soprano. Such alchemy defines her music.

She’s accompanied on this effort by long-time collaborator Jon Neufeld, who plays a slew of instruments, including all kinds of guitars, mandolin, dulcimer, omnichord, and an mbira (think thumb piano). He also contributes vocals. Acclaimed roots musician Dirk Powell, fiddle and accordion, and Black Prairie’s Annalisa Tornfelt, fiddle and vocals, flesh out the album.

“Brother Was Dying,” with its fuzzed-up guitar, is bluesy and shuffly, belying its bittersweet title. Scanlan sings, “remember the time when you rode with me, chasing light chasing time, you were young and you were with me.”

“West Virginia Rain” has a folksy country beat and a soaring fiddle interlude, and “Buttermilk Road” is a whimsical, idyllic paean to a loved one. “Only a River/True-Eyed Angel” opens as an instrumental tune, slow and strangely eerie, before it segues to Scanlan’s vocals: “I’ll swing you in circles in the arms of an eddy in the sweet flowing river.”

Scanlan continues to adorn her albums with pretty melodies and eloquent lyrics.

## The Road Agents: *Dreams of Stingrays, Roadrunners, and Hangovers*

The duo of Jeff Peterson, Bozeman, and Justin Ringsak, Helena, play “Southwest Montana acoustic rock and roll.” Peterson, guitar and vocals, wrote all the songs here, and Ringsak, mandolin and backing vocals, contributed his instrumental parts.

The fellas have professional careers, so music is a fun sideline. They both left Montana for a while, and love being back, playing in small towns and breweries.

Travel is in their blood, and the songs highlight the lure of the highway. The music is clean and uncluttered. Infectious rhythms, long sustained intros and interludes of guitar chording, coupled with mando riffs, set up that feeling of constant motion. But there’s a desire to return home, too, as detailed in “Highway 191.”

“All Alone” is a nice country loper, and “Fire” reminds us to relax, don’t stress the small things.

Peterson spent a lot of time in the desert, and those experiences color his writing. His scratchy baritone trembles with emotion; it’s rough-hewn and authentic.

In the exotic “Border Story,” he growls lyrics, pouring out a litany of cities he’s visited, and describes the lay of the land, conveying a vivid visual feel. Writing about true-life events makes the songs believable, Peterson says.

“Fossil Creek” is about taking risks, seeking new experiences, to make us feel alive. The song is in a spooky minor key, imparting a feeling of foreboding. Peterson hikes out of a canyon in a blizzard at night in one verse, then shares his fear while lost in a desert cave in another. His party gets out alive only after discovering a bottle of malt liquor left next to a hidden shaft showing the way out. That’s definitely worth singing about!



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## State of the Arts welcomes CDs

*State of the Arts* welcomes CD submissions by Montana musicians for inclusion in the About Music section. The recordings must be professional, commercially available, full-length CDs recorded within the past 12 months, with cover art and liner notes. Reviews also appear at [livelytimes.com](http://livelytimes.com), Montana’s statewide source for arts and entertainment.

Brief biographical information on band members would be helpful to the writer.

Please send submissions to CD reviewer Mariss McTucker, P.O. Box 81, Dixon, MT, 59831.





# ABOUT BOOKS

Non-fiction/Memoir



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## How to submit a book for State of the Arts

To submit a book published in the past 12 months by a Montana author for inclusion in the About Books section of *State of the Arts*, email the following information to [kristi@livelytimes.com](mailto:kristi@livelytimes.com) or [mac@mt.gov](mailto:mac@mt.gov):

- Title, author, publisher and month/year published;
- A brief description of the book (no more than 200 words), and a short bio of the author;
- A cover image: minimum 200 dpi in pdf or jpg format;
- If other publications or authors have reviewed the book, send a brief sampling of those remarks.

Books submitted to *State of the Arts* appear in this publication at the Montana Arts Council's discretion and as space permits, and will not necessarily be reprinted at Lively Times.com.

### **Warblers & Woodpeckers: A Father-Son Big Year of Birding**

By Sneed B. Collard III

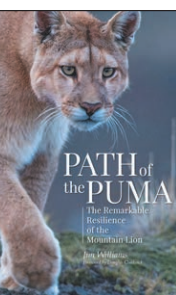
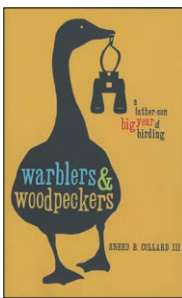
With intrepid intentions, a phalanx of binoculars and cameras and sly humor, Missoula author Sneed Collard recounts the Big Year of Birding he undertook with his then 12-year-old son Braden. Together, they aspire to count 350 species.

From periodic bouts of "birder battle fatigue" to the enchantment of the Galápagos Islands, the duo scours the western hemisphere for rare and common bird species, aiming to tally 350 birds in 12 months.

They're a good pair. While his son absorbs identification details "at rates rivaling a Pentagon supercomputer," Collard – a biologist and nature writer by trade – struggles to distinguish species in the field. Hence the omnipresent camera, which allows him to capture the birds first on film, then confidently identify them later in his birding book.

Highpoints include seeing six California condors soaring "over the ridge like a squadron of B-52s," a Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Prothonotary Warbler and a Roseate Spoonbill on a particularly fruitful outing in Texas, and on the very last day of 2016, a Northern Pygmy-Owl, tucked into a tree near Maclay Flat on the outskirts of Missoula and dubbed by the duo Bird of the Year.

As the *Seattle Times* writes, "Accompanying Sneed and Braden Collard is a pleasure whether or not you're a birder." It's a fun and fertile book for anyone who's enthusiastic about birds, nature, or parenting.



### **Path of the Puma: The Remarkable Resilience of the Mountain Lion**

By Jim Williams

An award-winning Montana wildlife biologist explores the remarkable resilience of the mountain lion – also known as a puma or cougar – in a book lauded by *Kirkus* as "well-balanced, instructive, and authoritative."

Jim Williams has been working for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks for more than 27 years, and specializes in lion ecology issues in Montana, as well as in the Patagonia region of Argentina and Chile. Throughout his career, he's helped local communities in both regions conserve mountain lions and other large carnivores.

During a time when most wild animals are experiencing decline in the face of development and climate change, the intrepid mountain lion has been quietly reclaiming historic habitats in the United States, Canada and South America. *Path of the Puma* explores how wildlife thrives where conservation, community and culture overlap, and offers lessons for the protection of all species in times of dire challenge and decline.

The 312-page hardcover book brims with full-color photographs of the majestic cats and features a forward by acclaimed wildlife biologist and nature writer Douglas Chadwick.

"Written in accurate yet easy-to-understand scientific language, Williams's heartfelt and comprehensive offering will appeal not only to wildlife biologists, but to nature lovers everywhere." (*Publishers Weekly*)

### **Daughter of the Border**

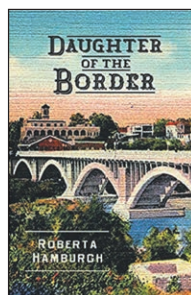
By Roberta Hamburg

Having grown up in Mirando City, TX, a small oilfield community near the Mexican border town of Laredo, the author weaves the stories of her grandmother, mother and herself into a tale exposing that world of bias and how that changed in her lifetime.

These women, along with the kind and generous men who attached themselves to them, lived in what the poet Randall Jarrell referred to as the "cake of custom, the lung fish embedded in a world of prejudice which one can't see." It spewed forth people whose speech belied racial prejudice even as they worked to make living and educational situations better for the groups they placed themselves above.

Hamburg earned her master's degree in education and spent four years teaching at the University of Michigan Children's Psychiatric Hospital. Later she moved to Montana, where she taught and spent the past 11 years as a principal.

"Exquisite! This book ... is a tender and living exploration of what it means to be a woman, a girl, a daughter and a human in our complicated world," writes Molly Caro May, author of *The Map of Enough*.

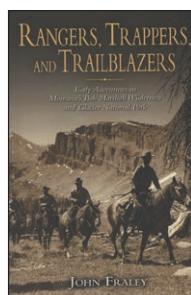


### **Rangers, Trappers, and Trailblazers: Early Adventures in Montana's Bob Marshall Wilderness and Glacier National Park**

By John Fraley

The North, Middle and South Forks of the Flathead River drain some of the wildest country in Montana, including Glacier National Park and the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. Retired state wildlife biologist John Fraley recounts the true adventures of people who earned their living among the mountains and along the cold, clear rivers in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

He tells the stories of intrepid Glacier Park Ranger Clyde Fauley and his young family using a cable bucket to reach their isolated cabin across the Middle Fork, trapper Slim Link's fateful meeting with a grizzly bear



in the North Fork, and the life and times of Henry Thol, "the ranger's ranger," who happily snow-shoed hundreds of miles at minus-40 degrees to patrol the South Fork wilderness.

Tragedies and near misses abound: a fatal shootout, tangles with bears and packrats, a devastating train wreck, and a missing airplane. But these are balanced with tales of courage, endurance, and remarkable personal achievement. The author tells all in intriguing detail wrested from dozens of interviews, site visits, and extensive research conducted over nearly a decade.

Fraley has written two previous books, *A Woman's Way West* and *Wild River Pioneers*; his latest is published by Farcountry Press.

### **Sweepers, Snags, and Steam: The Steamboat Era on Montana's Missouri River**

By Ed Wolff

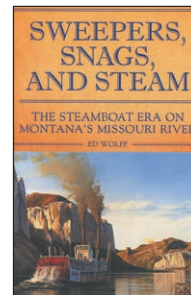
Stevensville author and retired veterinarian Ed Wolff captures the history of Montana's steamboat era in this engaging new book, accompanied by more than 60 historic photographs of the steamboats that plied the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers and their ports of call.

From 1850 to 1889, hundreds of steamers fought their way up the treacherous Missouri to Fort Benton, the world's most inland port. By carrying thousands of tons of freight and thousands of passengers, these boats forever changed the character and cultures of Montana and the Northern Plains.

Every trip was full of risks: hull-piercing snags and sweepers, grounding sandbars, powerful rapids, herds of swimming buffalo, Indian attacks, and exploding boilers. The dangers were great but the rewards were enormous – until the railroads came.

Wolff describes in rich detail steamboat construction, river navigation, famous captains, daily life aboard a steamboat, and notable steamboat journeys, including the famous, record-setting trip with wounded soldiers from the Battle of the Little Bighorn that brought news of the "Custer Massacre" to the world.

Published by Riverbend Publishing of Helena, it sells for \$20.



### **Montana Epiphany**

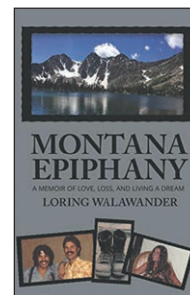
By Loring Walawander

In the heart of Pennsylvania's steel and coal country, most young men in the 1960s followed the generations before them into the mills and mines, but Loring Walawander was different. He dreamed of the open spaces and soaring mountains of Montana – a dream that grew as he dealt with the tics and twitches of undiagnosed Tourette syndrome.

It spurred his tentative first steps out of the nest to college in Tennessee, and was an anchor as he came of age in a turbulent era, witnessing firsthand the conflict surrounding the Vietnam War and racism in the South. And it sustained him through the loss of his first love and his own struggle to survive a near-fatal heart ailment.

Even after he landed a job with the Forest Service in Montana, Walawander had to learn how to negotiate harsh winters, sporadic work, and a tumultuous relationship. Over time, he found a way to live his Montana dream.

"For anyone who's ever dreamed the impossible, *Montana Epiphany* tells you that you can achieve it, and that it's worth the effort," writes author Gwen Florio of Walawander's memoir.

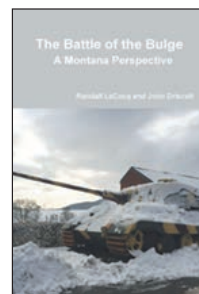


### **The Battle of the Bulge: A Montana Perspective**

By Randall LeCocq and John Driscoll

The Battle of the Bulge was the largest land battle in U.S. history, a battle that cost the United States 20,000 lives and stopped the last German offensive of World War II. The authors, both veterans and residents of Helena, studied the history of this battle and walked the critical sectors of the battlefield, examining examples of American heroism and looking for evidence of involvement by Montanans.

Their objective was to better understand this significant battle and how American soldiers managed to stop an enemy steamroller, overcoming their fears while outnumbered more than three-to-one. This book examines the 11 critical junctures of the battle and includes personal stories of Montana veterans.



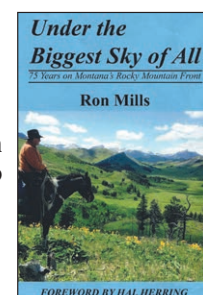
### **Under The Biggest Sky of All**

By Ron Mills

Longtime Bob Marshall Wilderness outfitter Ron Mills of Augusta recalls a rugged life spent in Montana's wild country over the past 75 years, working on cattle ranches, shoeing horses and packing people into the wilderness.

The book's 18 chapters and many photographs chronicle the author's life from his years spent growing up on the Rocky Mountain Front to stories about the people he worked with, and packed into, the Scapegoat and Bob Marshall Wilderness areas. Mills survived broken bones, as well as broken marriages while often working seven days a week for months at a time. Yet, says the author, "Few people have witnessed the things I have nor enjoyed life more."

Hal Herring, an Augusta resident and contributing editor at *Field & Stream* magazine, wrote in the book's foreword, "I thought I knew that country well. But it is Ron's stories that make that landscape, and that wilderness, come truly alive in my imagination, peopling it with the wildest of characters, all of them real, human beings, fallible as all-get-out ..."





## Fiction

**Broken Field**

By Jeff Hull

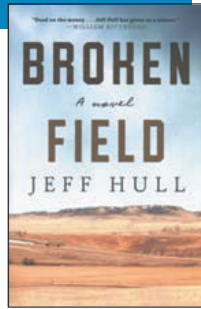
Told from the perspective of a high school girl and a football coach, Jeff Hull's second novel reveals the tensions that tear at the fabric of a small town when a hazing incident threatens a championship season. *Broken Field* is set on the high prairie of Montana, in small towns scattered across vast landscapes.

Life is dusty and hard, and men are judged by their labor. Women have to be tougher yet. That's what 16-year-old Josie Frehse learns as she struggles to meet the expectations of her community while fumbling with her own desires.

Tom Warner coaches the Dumont Wolfpack, an eight-man football team. The coach is stumbling through life, numbed by the death of his own young son and the dissolution of his marriage. But he's jolted into taking sides when his star players are accused of a hazing incident that happened right under his nose.

"A sharp-eyed, often touching portrait of a fractured community and a harshly beautiful landscape," writes *Kirkus*.

Hull, who lives in Huson, is also the author of a collection of essays, *Streams of Consciousness*, and the novel, *Pale Morning Done*.

**The New Iberia Blues**

By James Lee Burke

Murder and mayhem collide when a Hollywood film crew comes to town in James Lee Burke's latest novel, set in his beloved New Iberia, LA.

A young black woman is found, crucified and floating in the bayou on a wooden cross. So begins a gruesome string of murders, linked only by tarot symbols and a Maltese cross.

Detective Dave Robicheaux is convinced it has something to do with the charismatic film director Desmond Cormier and his feckless entourage of writers and producers, even as his brilliant, headstrong daughter Alafair begins dating a producer, and gets pulled deeper into the morass.

The aging police detective's pulse is disrupted by his lovely new partner, 28-year-old Bailey Ribbons – a woman who sensuously evokes the female lead in "My Darling Clementine," a 1946 film about another righteous lawman.

Complicating matters further is the reappearance of a bizarre little hitman, known as Smiley, who sees himself as protector of the young and innocent, while masterfully killing the not-so-innocent.

As usual, sidekick Clete Purcel rumbles across the pages. "Mind if I tag along, do oversight, make sure things stay under control?" the massive ex-cop asks Robicheaux. Of course, he does none of these things, and still manages to save the day.

"We would never change the world, but by the same token, the world would never change us," Robicheaux ruminates after the dust settles. May the world never change Burke, our state's best known and most acclaimed author, "his storied lyricism drawing on a new range of powerfully resonant minor chords ..." (*Booklist*)



– Kristi Niemeyer

## Young Adult &amp; Children

**Montana for Kids: The Story of Our State**

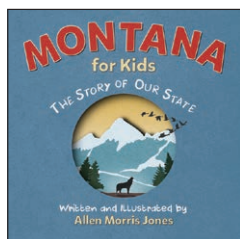
By Allen Morris Jones

Have you ever thought about all the things that might have happened in a place before you arrived? Welcome to the first broad history of Montana for early readers in Bangtail Press's *Montana for Kids: The Story of Our State*.

This 48-page journey by author and illustrator Allen Morris Jones guides readers through Montana history. Touching on the state's first peoples, the introduction of the horse, gold strikes, copper kings, vigilante justice and the Indian wars, *Montana for Kids* makes history fun for young readers. Topics also include mountain men, the railroads, mining, homesteading and logging.

Twenty-four delightful illustrations by Jones enhance the journey. Montana's history is a fascinating and compelling tapestry, and by connecting each of these broad topics to the next, Jones demonstrates that it is indeed one long, continuing story.

Jones is the author of the novels *A Bloom of Bones* and *Last Year's River*, and an examination of hunting ethics, *A Quiet Place of Violence*. He is the co-editor, with William Kittredge, of *The Best of Montana's Short Fiction*.

**The Fork, The Witch, and The Worm**

By Christopher Paolini

Set in Paolini's well-known world of Alagaësia, which has captivated over 35 million readers worldwide since *Eragon* was published in 2005, *The Fork, The Witch, and The Worm* includes three all-new stories, interspersed with scenes from *Eragon*'s own unfolding adventure.

The book includes four pieces of original art by Paolini and memoir pages from botanist Angela the herbalist, penned by Christopher's sister, Angela Paolini, the inspiration for the character.

It's been a year after *Eragon* has departed Alagaësia to train a new generation of Dragon Riders. He is struggling with an endless sea of tasks: constructing a vast dragonhold, wrangling with suppliers, guarding dragon eggs, and dealing with belligerent Urgals and haughty elves. A vision from the Eldunari, unexpected visitors, and an exciting Urgal legend offer a much-needed distraction and a new perspective.



Paolini's love of fantasy and the natural beauty that surrounds his home in Montana inspired him to begin writing the Inheritance Cycle at age 15. He became a no. 1 *New York Times* bestselling author at 19 and spent the next decade immersed in the world of Alagaësia.

"Writing about *Eragon* and *Saphira* again felt like arriving home after a long journey," he says. Visit the author at [www.paolini.net](http://www.paolini.net).

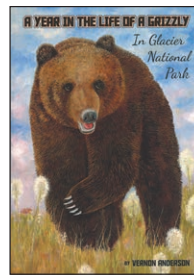
**A Year in the Life of a Grizzly**

By Vernon Anderson

Anyone who has stopped at Montana Coffee Traders in Columbia Falls has probably viewed the paintings of Vernon Anderson. This summer, the retired businessman and photographer-turned-author compiled some of his colorful wildlife scenes into a new children's book, *A Year in the Life of a Grizzly*.

As the title suggests, the book follows the first year for a young grizzly cub and her sister as their mother teaches them the keys to survival among some of Glacier National Park's most famous sites. Starkly beautiful pencil-and-ink sketches and more elaborate oil paintings portray the cub's journey as she learns how to forage for food, navigate a variety of terrain, and interact with other animals.

More than just an endearing tale of a young bear's odyssey from first emergence from her den to the next winter's hibernation, the book educates young readers on the seasonal cycles and habits of the park's sometimes fire-scorched flora and fauna. It's a quick and appealing read for the whole family.



– Brynn Cadigan

**Volcano Dreams: A Story of Yellowstone**

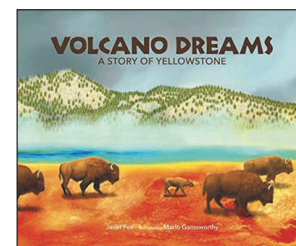
By Janet S. Fox; illustrated by Marlo Garnsworthy

Janet Fox's new book leads readers on a tour of the Yellowstone supervolcano, from the wolves, elk, bears and mountain goats that roam its surface to the fiery depths of its magma chamber. The book knits together the vibrancy of the Yellowstone ecosystem with its explosive history, placing the everyday lives of its creatures within the context of geological time.

Fox's poetic text takes young readers to the root of it all – the "sleeping giant" of magma responsible for the Yellowstone landscape – while Marlo Garnsworthy's evocative paintings capture the awe of natural forces at work in our nation's oldest national park.

"This lyrical, lusciously illustrated title offers an introduction to the flora and fauna of Yellowstone Park to young readers ... A valuable addition to an Earth science collection," writes *School Library Connection*.

Fox, who lives in Montana, writes award-winning books for children of all ages, including the non-fiction middle grade book, *Get Organized Without Losing It*, and three young adult historical romances.



## Poetry

**On the Chinese Wall: New & Selected Poems, 1966–2018**

By Roger Dunsmore

Roger Dunsmore's latest volume, published by Drumlummon Institute, gathers some 50 years of writing in a collection that Stephen Osborne describes this way: "Informed by the lyric past of ancient Greece and the visionary traditions of ancient America as expressed by the Sioux visionary Black Elk. Here, among echoes of Archilochos and Meister Eckhart, can be found a poem for a loose ram, for a woman kissing all the icons in the Byzantine Museum in Athens, for a trapper in Montana whose pet wolverine loved Oreo cookies."

He continues, "Dunsmore's poetry derives from an older world of people, creatures, and things held in the compromising embrace of the New: Che Guevara in the mountains; the voices of students in China; and a man named Mike Blue Horse, 'best night-hawker on the Hi-line,' dancing solo in a bar in Montana."

"Roger Dunsmore's collection runs as deep as the river of time," writes Debra Magpie Earling, author of *Perma Red*. "Ways of seeing the world are renewed and retooled. These poems seem in tune with the hum of ancient spirits. The old earth sings."

Dunsmore, a former professor at the University of Montana, has authored nine other collections of poetry. He refers to Montana as "the greatest Mother Muse any poet could hope for."

**Flight Path**

By Becca Carson

In her debut collection of poems, Missoula author Becca Carson explores what it means to be temporary in an unpredictable but seemingly infinite landscape.

The largely autobiographical collection challenges the notion that time is a linear function by examining the ways in which grief framed her childhood. "Mothers always pass on what haunts them./ I found her like this: only eleven, stick thin, but already/ wearing eyes like mine: canyon dark and starless."

And she celebrates resilience: "For the first time I wondered if I could be/ a crime scene, a war memorial, and also/ a holy place ..."

The collection is part of the Montana Poets Series, edited by Craig Czury and published by FootHills Publishing. Carson competes in the occasional poetry slam and has published one non-fiction piece in *Mama-lode* magazine. She teaches English and introductory creative writing at Big Sky High School, and heads the *Aerie Magazine Program*, which publishes two student-produced literary arts magazines annually.



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**Montana Book Fest seeks submissions**

The Montana Book Festival welcomes submissions for the 2019 event, Sept. 12-15 in Missoula.

Submit ideas for a panel, event or workshop by June 15. Ideas include (but are not limited to):

- Craft workshops on building plot
- Reimagining the Western narrative
- Self-publishing discussions
- Native American literature
- Issues concerning race, diversity and inclusion

- Creating and experiencing queer literature
- Cross-genre insights: What do poets and memoirists share?
- How does research play into fiction?

- Who benefits from nontraditional narratives and characters?
- The intersections of visual art and writing

The Montana Book Festival will also be accepting submissions through June 15 for authors, and the festival lineup will be announced in July. Books published in 2019 will receive priority consideration.

Exhibitors are also invited to participate in the 2019 Montana Book Festival exhibitor fair and have until Sept. 2 to submit an application.

Head to [montanabookfestival.submittable.com/submit](http://montanabookfestival.submittable.com/submit).



## Fort Peck Theatre: 50th anniversary (from page 7)



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### Nonprofit group seeks donations to digitize author's archives

The nonprofit Big Sandy Cultural Fund has inherited the archives of noted Montana writer and long-time Great Falls resident Dan Cushman. He's the author of *Stay Away, Joe*, *The Silver Mountain*, *Good-Bye Old Dry*, *Plenty of Room and Air*, *Timberjack*, and many other stories and articles.

The group plans to make this extensive trove of material so it can be accessed by researchers and general-interest readers. To that end, the Big Sandy Cultural Fund hopes to raise \$3,000 to help volunteers sort, assemble, edit and digitize the many boxes of Cushman lore.

"If you love Montana history and Montana writing, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to help us preserve and make available this unique collection of letters, manuscripts and photographs," urges Executive Director Doug Giebel.

Send donations to the Big Sandy Cultural Fund, 533 Third Ave., Big Sandy, MT 59520; or call 406-378-2430.

Actors are recruited from Montana and beyond, mixing professional performers with up-and-coming high school and college students and community talent of all ages. They typically live in Fort Peck during the summer, in a duplex purchased by the theatre, and share their talents with kids from around the region during a two-week performing arts camp and with two Theatre for Young Audiences shows. A "pop-up" production with a smaller cast (this year, it's "Pinocchio") travels to several underserved communities, and a larger production plays only in Fort Peck (this year's "Alice in Wonderland" was written by artistic director Andy Meyers).

It was this early exposure to theatre that brought Etchart to her career path. She grew up in nearby Glasgow, and auditioned every summer beginning in 1996. "My sister and I lived for it," she says. "That was where my love of acting and entertaining people sprouted."

She earned a degree in acting, directing and arts management from Carroll College in Helena, and headed to Los Angeles with her sister, also a theatre professional. When Meyers encouraged her to return to her home stage, she began spending summers in Fort Peck — this time as a paid actress. One of her first roles as a child was as "the tiniest pirate" in "Peter Pan." This season, she stars as Peter, and also performs in "Lend Me a Tenor" and as Tweedle Dee in "Alice in Wonderland."

The theatre's unique reputation helps draw such talent to the hinterlands. "Honestly, my favorite part about the job is the people," says Meyers. "It is so rewarding to assemble the cast and crew ... I think I have been very fortunate in my career to collect and maintain a large Rolodex of amazingly creative and talented friends. Many of our company



Chisten Etchart as Tweedle Dee and Scott Worley as Tweedle Dum in Fort Peck Theatre's production of "Alice in Wonderland." (Jennifer Ray Photography)

members may be 'past summer stock' at this point in their careers, but they've always been intrigued by Montana and jump at the opportunity to travel to Fort Peck for a show or two."

The building's charm, coupled with a commitment to quality theatre, keeps audiences coming back year after year too.

Although the theatre seats 940, most shows draw an average of 330 a night during the season (with an occasional full house). This year's offerings are "Lend Me a Tenor," May 31-June 16; "Mamma Mia!" June 21-July 7; "The Marvelous Wonderettes," July 12-21; "Peter Pan," July 26-Aug. 12; and "On Golden Pond," Aug. 16-Sept. 1.

Etchart notes that when the cast arrives for a play, the town is typically quiet and the parking lot empty. They step on stage to a sea

of faces, "and by the time we take off our costumes and go outside, it's completely deserted again."

Artistic director Andy Meyers acknowledges that running a theatre in one of the most rural regions of Montana poses challenges. "Sometimes specific materials needed to execute the design elements are just not available," he says. "It's hard to wrap the designers' heads around this, and get everyone to adjust their timeframe accordingly, thus allowing time for online ordering or finding different creative methods to create the final project."

It helps to have designers who have returned for five or more seasons, and instinctively build the lag-time into their sets. He's also grateful to other companies — including Arizona Broadway Theatre, Missoula Children's Theatre, Montana Actors Theatre and Bigfork Summer Playhouse — "who are always willing to help us out by sharing resources."

When the reunion comes around this summer, Fort Peck Theatre has plenty to celebrate.

Together, the community and nonprofit theatre have raised more than \$750,000 to restore "a shell of a building with a costume shop in the church across the street" into an architectural gem. With plenty of "blood, sweat and tears," Etchart says, they've also built a scene shop and costume shop/rehearsal space on the theatre property, and purchased cast housing, all of which is debt free.

They continue to make headway on the theatre's "biggest mission and challenge," investing more than \$100,000 to improve sound in the "beautiful but massive barnlike space."

On the eastern Montana plains, where it's a long way to anywhere, Etchart understands first hand how a touch of culture can change lives. "There's nothing like live performance," she says. "The laughter and applause, the way you arc through the story with the audience."

Learn more about the summer ahead at [fortpecktheatre.org](http://fortpecktheatre.org).

## ZACC doubles size with new downtown building

After 10 successful years in a leased space on Missoula's Northside, Zootown Arts Community Center (ZACC) is preparing to move into a larger, more accessible building.

The new ZACC will double its footprint when it relocates in September to the Historic Studebaker Building on West Main Street in the heart of the downtown area.

ZACC bought the building last March and launched a capital campaign to raise \$4.25 million to fund building acquisition, an extensive remodel and the equipment needed to turn it into a community arts center that will continue to serve Montanans for many generations to come. The center has since raised \$2.4 million, and began the first phase of construction in March.

"The community is really excited about our project, especially downtown business owners, artists and parents," says Executive Director Kia Liszak. "The new ZACC will be much more accessible for the whole community and be able to offer many more opportunities to youth, veterans, residents and visitors of all ages to thrive."

ZACC — the only nonprofit arts community center of its kind in Montana — offers a unique range of opportunities.



Artist's rendering of the Studebaker Building, transformed into Zootown Arts Community Center.

Educational programs include music camps for kids, adults and combat veterans, drama and visual arts classes and clay camps. A public print shop is used extensively by the community; artist studios are available for rent; and a gallery offers such one-of-a-kind shows as the Missoula Monster Project, an annual collaboration between 200 kindergartners and 200 adult artists.

The new facility will serve "as the central bridge between community and art in Missoula," predicts Liszak.

It will boast a new 170-seat black-box theater space to accommodate music shows, local plays, dance, poetry readings, commu-

nity events and more. According to Liszak, the theater fills "a pressing local need for an all-ages performance space."

The project also includes:

- More artist studios available for rent to support Missoula's growing artist community;
- Multiple classrooms to accommodate classes for adults and youth;
- Increased practice rooms and musical instruction space for the rapidly growing Alternative Music Program;
- A larger community art gallery, as well as a separate gallery for youth artwork;

- A hands-on, children's creativity center;
- A free community arts supply closet; and
- An expanded paint-your-own-pottery studio space and a large public print shop.

More than 300 individuals, businesses, banks and foundations have donated to the expansion so far, with major support from the Checota Foundation, The Washington Foundation, The Bill and Rosemary Gallagher Foundation, The Engelhard Foundation, Jeff Ament and Pandora Andre-Beatty, and several anonymous donors.

Visit [newzacc.org](http://newzacc.org) to learn more.

## Construction starts on Bozeman's new entertainment venue

Missoula-based Logjam Presents broke ground on its new 1,500-capacity venue in Bozeman March 4. The live performance venue, located at 506 Seventh Ave., is directly adjacent to the RSVP Motel.

Logjam CEO Nick Checota announced plans to build the new theatre in May 2018 and expects to complete the project by January 2020.

The name, ELM, follows a longstanding tradition of naming venues after people (think "Wilma" in Missoula, "Myrna Loy" in Helena, "Ellen" in Bozeman). Specifically, the initials pay tribute to Nick and Robin Checo-

ta's three children "while also representing a brand that fits the aesthetic design of the venue."

The Checotas also own the Top Hat and The Wilma in Missoula, which both entailed substantial renovations, and the KettleHouse Amphitheater in Bonner.

By building ELM from the ground up, Checota plans to construct "a world-class venue that maximizes functionality through contemporary architecture," equipped with top-notch sound, production and sight lines.

Learn more at [logjampresents.com](http://logjampresents.com).



Architect's rendering of The Elm.



# ABOUT VISUAL ARTISTS

## Monica Thompson: "Take Care"

Through May 24 at Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art in Great Falls

Artist's website: [thimbleanddot.squarespace.com](http://thimbleanddot.squarespace.com)

Monica Thompson is a textile artist whose pieced and stitched hand-dyed creations, primarily on cotton and silk, combine imagery with her love of pattern and color. Often, there's an inherent tension between subject matter and material.

She's enthralled with the landscape and fauna of Montana, for example, and creates "a deliberate mismatch of themes punctuated by abundant color and rich pattern."

Thompson lives and works in Missoula, where she also teaches elementary art in the Missoula County Public Schools.

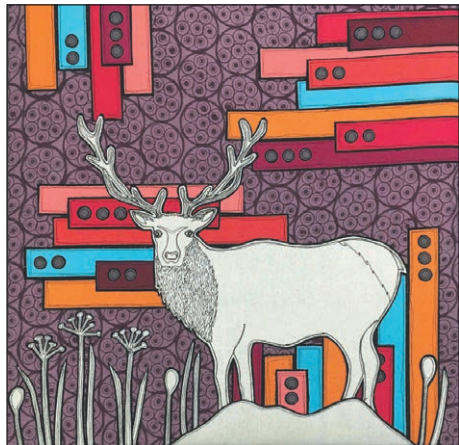
She studied fibers and graphic design at the University of Michigan and textiles at the Penland School of Crafts in Penland, NC, where she was awarded the Edwina Bringle Scholarship for a student showing excellence in textiles.

Thompson has shown her work in solo and juried group exhibitions across Montana and the Northwest, including the Missoula Art Museum's annual auction, the Zootown Art Community Center's Mini Show, and the Montana MADE Fair.

"In my work, I am striving for order while simultaneously compelled to create chaos, resulting in tension and harmony between these two seemingly incongruous states of being," she writes.

Inspired by the purity and austerity of Japanese textile processes, she seeks "to deconstruct and reassemble these ideas to reflect my midwestern upbringing."

And in a Zen-like fashion, she often purposefully chooses impractical labors, "with the intention of instilling self-imposed purity in my process."



"New Elk" by Monica Thompson

## KellyAnne Terry: "Elsewhere"

April 1-30 at the Lewistown Art Center, with a reception 5-7 p.m. April 5

Mixed-media artist KellyAnne Terry's abstract paintings are grounded in a sense of place. Described as "a form of literary art," these compositions reflect the past, far-flung destinations, discovery, and historic writings.

Working primarily in acrylic, the Lewistown artist uses vintage papers, antique ephemera and out-of-print books to tell a story in each of her pieces.

Terry grew up on a horse ranch in North Central Montana and finds fodder for her art in the natural world, travel, the sketchbooks and notebooks of early explorers and historic figures, flea markets, and most of all, the written word. She was a librarian for 10 years, and says close proximity to books at the Lewistown Public Library influenced her work. "We have a great local and western history collection, and I loved the old photos and hand-written works."

She titled her show "Elsewhere" to invoke "a sense of travel, of being somewhere different, daydreaming, planning and creating, a hope for the future but also a reverence for the past."

In addition to earning two master's degrees – one in English literature and another in organizational leadership – Terry was awarded the Women Leading Montana Award in 2018 for her work in bringing a women's leadership conference to Central Montana.

Not surprisingly, her work is often inspired by women, including Gertrude Bell, the great English woman explorer who mapped and negotiated the boundaries of Iraq in the 1920s, Isabelle Eberhardt, Anne Morrow Lindbergh, Virginia Woolf, Lady Jane Franklin, Mary Shelley, "and all the explorers and early naturalists."

She also writes essays and creative nonfiction and plans to launch a blog "on art, life and learning" this spring. She currently manages the historic Calvert Hotel, and her mixed-media works hang on its walls.

## Nicole Stroman: "Aftermath"

Opening April 25 at the Holter Museum of Art in Helena  
Artist's Website: [nicolestromanphotography.com](http://nicolestromanphotography.com)

Helena photographer Nicole Stroman remembers when her niece was struggling and attempted to take her own life. "I took it very hard," she recalls. "I felt so helpless."

Her photography exhibit explores the aftermath of suicide in an attempt to show who it affects and foster awareness. "This project is my way of not feeling helpless."

She points out that Montana has one of the highest suicide rates per capita in the nation. "Suicide is the second leading cause of death of our youth and yet it's still a subject no one is really talking about," she says.

Stroman teamed up with Jamie Eastwood, the founder of "Breathe, Let's Start a Conversation," a non-profit organization in Helena for suicide education and bereavement support. Together, they decided to sit down with individuals affected by suicide. "While they share their stories I photograph them in hopes of capturing the emotion behind their journeys."



"Aftermath" by Nicole Stroman

Stroman was born and raised in southern California and has lived in Helena for 10 years with her husband and two kids. She says she came to photography "later in life."

"I started taking pictures of my kids as all moms do, loving to capture their cute expressions, and then I started to take pictures of friends, extended family and neighbors and I fell in love with it." Now, as a professional photographer, she shoots "pretty much everything from real estate to high school seniors."

But the artfulness of her work rests in candid moments and deeper expression. "My true passion is to go beyond the surface and take what some may think to be dark or hard to look at and create a photograph to make you feel something. We have many different parts that make up who we are and I truly believe they are all equally beautiful."

## Eric Ryan Simmons: "tiny voices"

May 1-30 at 4 Ravens Galley in Missoula with a First Friday opening reception 5-8 p.m. May 3

Sculptor Eric Ryan Simmons has a cheeky sense of humor. We glean from his bio that he "supposedly" earned an MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art, and is native to Missoula "if you don't count the first 34 years of his life when he lived elsewhere."

He's plagued with the artist's paradox, meaning "he can't afford to make art because all his income goes towards paying off student loans to a prestigious art school that taught him how to make the art he now can't afford to make." To support his family and his art habit, he creates craft cocktails at Plonk! Missoula.

After a 10-year divorce from the art world, this "reconciliation" exhibit at the 4 Ravens Gallery marks a turn away from academia, and toward a more playful and fun approach to sculpture. "It is looser, coy, and reflects more of my personality and humor."

To begin, he created pages of thumbnail sketches to help "find an overall emotional environment or feeling for the body of work as a whole." From that point he began cutting metal and working with his hands. "Sometimes I would end up with what I had in mind," he says. "Most of the time, however, the piece took on a life of its own and finished itself."

He calls the show "tiny voices" in deference to the voices that constantly rattle around in humans' heads. "They are embedded so deep within our psyche that we don't even recognize them. They are sticky and pointy, they are varnished and raw – but most of all they are forever changing, like rust degrading over time." Or like sculpture in an art show.



"Blue-X" by Eric Ryan Simmons

## Lyn St. Clair: New Works

Opening Reception: 5:30-8 p.m. June 28 at the Frame Garden in Livingston

Artist Website: [www.facebook.com/LynStClairArtist](http://www.facebook.com/LynStClairArtist)

Lyn St. Clair launched her professional career at age 12, when she started selling portraits of horses and dogs. In 1983, she began self-publishing limited edition prints of her pen and ink drawings and by 1994 had created more than 600 different prints that could be found in collections worldwide.

In 1990 she began to explore new subject matter – wildlife, plein air landscapes and the cowboy culture of the American West. Since then, her paintings have won more than 80 awards across the country, including Best in Show three years in a row at the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art Show in Maryland. Her work has been exhibited at the Tucson Museum of Art, Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Bennington Center for the Arts, the West Valley Art Museum, the Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum and the Phippen Museum. It's also in permanent collections of the Worrel Museum and the Bennington Center.

A Tennessee native who followed her art West, St. Clair moved to the Greater Yellowstone region decades ago. She currently resides on a ranch near Livingston, with inspiration never far from her door. Bears, cougar, wolves and other wildlife prowl through her backyard (sometimes on the deck), eagles and hawks ply the sky for prey, and countless miles of backcountry beckon to be explored on foot or horseback.

That authenticity seeps into her paintings. "I live what I paint," she told Todd Wilkinson in an interview for *Explore Big Sky*. "... I believe in painting what I know and if I'm going to paint it, I better know it."



"A Place in the Sun" by Lyn St. Clair



## Send your submissions for About Visual Arts

With About Visual Arts, *State of the Arts* continues to profile living Montana artists (no students, please), whose work is the focus of a current exhibit in Montana (on display during some portion of the three months covered by the current issue of *State of the Arts*).

Submissions must include:

- A digital image of the artist's work, with title of the piece (at least 200 dpi and 500kb);
- A brief bio and description of the artist's work;
- Date range and title of exhibit; and
- The gallery or museum name, town and phone number.

MAC will select submissions that reflect a cross-section of gender, geography, styles and ethnicity, and are from a mix of public and private galleries and museums.

Submissions for the Summer issue (July-September) are due June 3; send ingredients to [Kristi@livelytimes.com](mailto:Kristi@livelytimes.com) with About Visual Arts in the subject line.



## FILM CLIPS NEWS ABOUT MONTANA'S FILM SCENE



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### Meet up with MAC on Facebook

"Like" us for updates on Montana Arts Council activities and opportunities, as well as information for and about artists, arts events and organizations across the state: [www.facebook.com/pages/Montana-Arts-Council/347466251951287](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Montana-Arts-Council/347466251951287).

## Montana film festivals bring the world to your doorstep

By Allison Whitmer  
Montana Film Commissioner

In the 1920s, film societies in Europe began to show films that were outside of the Hollywood-dominated cinemas as a forum for expression and ideas beyond the commercial filmmaking system. After the war, Venice and Cannes would become the leading edge of cinematic artistic expression. While the United States had festivals, it wasn't until the New York Film Festival began in the 1960s that world cinema fans in the U.S. had a consistent venue.

Since then, audiences have been rewarded with incredible collections of films and documentaries shown around the world, with major festivals in Toronto, Berlin and Park City. Montana is no exception, with incredible growth in festivals especially over the past five years. While we won't get to all of them in this column, we'll take a trip through festival history and meet some newcomers.

Helena started the trend in 1976 when the Helena Film Society filled the need for alternative cinema at the Second Story Cinema, as the grand vaudeville and movie house, the Marlow Theater, was long gone by then. Undeterred by their makeshift space, the society expanded and took over the historic Lewis and Clark County Jail in the late 1980s and transformed it into the Myrna Loy Center, named after the famed Montana actress.

In Missoula, science and nature filmmakers started the **International Wildlife Film Festival** in 1977. It is the longest-running event of its kind, beginning at the University of Montana and eventually buying its own theater, the Roxy, in 2002. Wildlife and scientific filmmakers spend thousands of hours in remote, harsh conditions, researching



The Big Sky Documentary Film Festival's DocShop is a five-day forum and conference.

and filming interesting species and tracking predators and prey alike. These talented and engaging filmmakers create the backbone programming of modern television channels like Discovery and Animal Planet.

In time, Missoula would become a major film hub for Montana.

The **Montana Film Festival**, which also calls the Roxy home, highlights narrative features and shorts that seek to inspire, educate and engage diverse audiences. The success of the Montana Film Festival for narrative work, coupled with the award-winning run of independent features being produced in the state, has opened the door for other programmers.

Documentary films have their day at the **Big Sky Documentary Film Festival**. Held every year since 2003 in mid-February, this Oscar-qualifying juggernaut shows between 100 and 150 films each year. Its well-curated, worldwide selection of films and documentary education workshops is an incredible asset. Films at this festival have included "Dark Money," which examines campaign finance, and "Ski Bum: The Warren Miller Story."

Bozeman, another hub of film activity in Montana, created the Bozeman Film Society in 1978 and started screening a wide assortment of foreign and domestic titles unlikely to hit the local multiplexes. Today they screen in the historic Ellen Theater downtown. Having a film school at Montana State University provides a ready supply of eager audiences to augment the community cinephiles.

More recently, the **Bozeman Film Celebration** fills a niche to explore independent filmmaking and creative expression, focusing its first festival on women's voices and films encouraging action to preserve our planet. Ted Turner and Jeff Bridges stopped by in 2018, so you never know who you may sit next to!

Down the road in Butte, the **Covellite International Film Festival** draws filmmakers from across the globe to a converted church theater in Butte, astonishing audiences with its community-driven approach. It has even been featured on Al Jazeera as the unlikely yet hip place to go for indie directors.

Amid the sandstone rims of Billings, the **MINT (Montana International Film Festival)** dusted off the marquee of the historic Babcock Theater for a smartly run set of films and panels, treating the filmmakers and audiences to new voices in cinema, especially in the Native American community.

The **Bigfork Film Festival** populates its program with entirely made-in-Montana projects, and they range from award-winning features to student projects from the universities. Special guests have included Hollywood legend Jerry Molen, whose films include "Rain Man" and "Jurassic Park."

We'll cover additional festivals in future columns. To learn more in the meantime, please visit the Film Festival section of our website at [montanafilm.com](http://montanafilm.com).

## Film festivals on the horizon in Missoula, Bigfork and Bozeman

### IWFF: Celebrating wildlife and environmental filmmaking

Every spring, the International Wildlife Film Festival draws industry, filmmakers, scientists, conservationists, and audiences to the heart of the Rockies for this long-standing Missoula tradition. Festival no. 42, April 13-19 and headquartered at the Roxy Theater, is no exception.

Through diverse programming and community events, IWFF celebrates ethical wildlife and environmental filmmaking as well as emerging filmmakers. This year, 70 films, originating from 36 countries, were selected.

Filmmakers and audiences can expect lively Q&A's after every screening, and engaging day-time programming including panels, dialogues and networking opportunities with top-notch filmmakers, fresh media makers and scientists working on the brink of discovery. The festival also hosts IWFF Labs, a highly competitive science-driven filmmaking intensive.

As usual, the festival kicks off at noon Saturday, April 13, with the the WildWalk Parade down Higgins Ave., followed by the WildFest in Caras Park, featuring live music, food vendors, and fun activities hosted by local organizations.

Learn more at [wildlifefilms.org](http://wildlifefilms.org).

### Bigfork festival focuses on Montana films

The third annual Bigfork Independent Film Festival, held April 5-7 at the Bigfork Center for the Performing Arts, offers a variety of short, feature, documentary and student films that were either made by Montana filmmakers, or were made in Montana.

Just as last year, the selected films will be divided into film blocks, each between two and three hours long; available filmmakers offer a Q&A at the end of each block.

This year's festival offers three free filmmaker workshops at 10 a.m. daily:



Among the IWFF offerings is "Whale Wisdom" by filmmaker Rick Rosenthal.

- "Make Your Feature Film," led by Flathead Valley filmmakers Ridge Mallery and Mitch Underhill on Friday morning;
- The Saturday morning workshop, "Drones: From Simple to Cinema," is led by Birds Eye of Big Sky;
- Emmy-winning and Grammy-nominated composer Lance Bendiksen presents the Sunday morning workshop, "The Creative and Business Side of Film Composing."

For details, visit [bigforkfilmfestival.com](http://bigforkfilmfestival.com).

### BZN showcases 60 independent films

The second annual BZN International Film Festival brings more than 60 films from around the world to Bozeman June 6-9. This four-day event celebrates independent filmmaking, creative expression, and emerging as well as established voices.

The screenings at various theaters across the city will be complemented by a rich slate of Q&A sessions, panel discussions, community-wide events, and parties. Additional events include the Opening Film and Reception on Thursday, a free Family Night on Saturday, and an Awards Ceremony and Filmmakers' Brunch on Sunday.

The festival opens with the Montana premiere of "The Divide," presented by actor/director Perry King

Thursday, June 6, in the Emerson Center's Crawford Theater. Set in drought-plagued Northern California in 1976, "The Divide" chronicles the story of an aging rancher with a failing memory, his estranged and independent-minded daughter, and a young ranch hand, who finds himself in the midst of a family in crisis.

Other selected features include "The Etruscan Smile," starring acclaimed British actor Brian Cox; "Be Natural," Pamela B. Green's energetic film about pioneer filmmaker Alice Guy-Blaché; and "Words from a Bear," which examines the enigmatic life of Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Navarro Scott Momaday. Also featured is "Not Enough Time," a tribute to musician Dave Gruisin, who will facilitate a Q&A after the screening.

"We are delighted that Ted Turner will present the inaugural Ted Turner Award to the film which most inspires environmental stewardship," says Artistic Managing Director Beth Ann Kennedy, who adds that the festival emphasizes films that educate, encourage and inspire audiences to get involved and take action to protect the planet.

Visit [bozemanfilmcelebration.com](http://bozemanfilmcelebration.com) for details.



The Ellen Theater is among the venues for BZN.



# OpenAIR Residencies: Time and space to work

Western Montana Creative Initiatives launches its pilot year of Open AIR residencies this spring in western Montana. The residencies aim to give artists in all media – visual, literary and performance – time and space to focus on their work.

The organization's founders are two University of Montana alumni: Missoula painter and muralist Hadley Ferguson and artist Stoney Sasser.

Residencies provide artists with “a sustained period of time to focus on their practice, separate from the business of everyday life, and additionally lets them connect to a new community of people and bring in fresh ideas,” Sasser told the *Missoulian*.

In 2019, at least 10 selected artists will be invited to connect with residency sites that range from remote wilderness areas to historically significant venues in Missoula. Applications closed March 10, and artists will be notified March 26.

The program is open to emerging, mid-career and established artists, and students 18 years and older are welcome to apply.

Those selected are expected to contribute one piece of work to the OpenAIR collection, provide feedback, and help work out kinks in the pilot program. Spring artists are responsible for room and board while summer and fall artists receive lodging.

Spring Residencies, open only to Montanans, bring artists to Home Resource, the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula, and Moon-Randolph Historic Homestead, all in



Flathead Lake Biological Station is among the sites hosting OpenAIR residencies.

(Photo by Stoney Sasser)

Missoula, from April 20-28, and to Flathead Lake Biological Station, on the east shore of the lake, April 19-27.

The mostly six-week Summer Artist-in-Residence, open to local, national and international artists, also bring participants to Home Resource, the Historical Museum and Moon-Randolph Historic Homestead June 23-Aug. 4; and to a remote cabin in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness July 8-22.

Two artists will be selected for a fall residency at the Flathead Lake Biological Station, Sept. 21-Oct. 12 or Oct. 20-Nov. 9.

The program is the first venture of Western Montana Creative Initiatives, a nonprofit started by Ferguson and Sasser, with Missoula

Community Foundation acting as their fiscal sponsor.

The duo sought host organizations that have a relationship to “place and environment,” Sasser told the *Missoulian*. “Many of the places have resource libraries and huge historical archives, and so it just seems like a really dreamy opportunity for somebody, an artist to come in and explore the history of place and site,” she said.

Ferguson found that residencies contributed to her growth as an artist. “It gives you time to explore and it did give me things to bring home and incorporate into my professional practices,” she told the *Missoulian*.

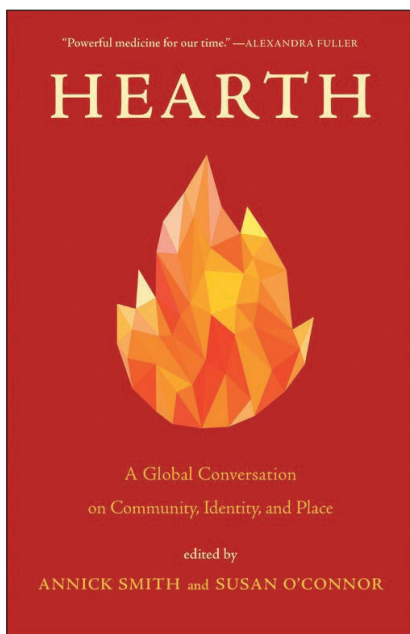
For information, head to [openairmt.org](http://openairmt.org).

## Hearth: A Conversation launches Gather Round program

Internationally renowned authors Debra Magpie Earling, Chicago Obioma and Carl Safina will headline an evening at Chico Hot Springs on Saturday, April 20, with a discussion about community and place.

The event serves as a launch party for Humanities Montana's new program, Gather Round, an initiative to provide free DIY toolkits to people who are interested in hosting humanities conversations based on the themes raised in *Hearth: A Global Conversation on Community, Identity and Place*, an anthology edited by Missoula authors Annick Smith and Susan O'Connor:

“A hearth is many things: a place for solitude; a source of identity; something we make and share with others; a history of ourselves and our homes. It is the fixed center we return to. It is just as intrinsically portable. It is, in



short, the perfect metaphor for what we seek in these complex and contradictory times – set in flux by climate change, mass immigration, the refugee crisis, and the dislocating effects of technology.”

Earling is the former director of the University of Montana's creative writing program, and a Bitterroot-Salish tribal member. Her novel, *Perma Red*, won Spur, American Book, and WILLA awards, among other honors, and is being made into a television series. *Perma Red* recently was voted the state's favorite book by participants in

the Great Montana Read.

Nigerian writer Obioma's novel, *The Fisherman*, was a finalist for the Man Booker Prize. *The New York Times* called him “the heir to Chinua Achebe,” and he was named one of “100 Global Thinkers” by *Foreign Policy* magazine in 2015. He is a professor of

English and creative writing at the University of Nebraska.

Conservationist Carl Safina holds the endowed chair for nature and humanity at Stony Brook University. His work has been honored with many awards and fellowships, including from the MacArthur, Pew, Lannan and Guggenheim foundations. He was the host of the 10-part PBS series, “Saving the Ocean with Carl Safina.”

The event will begin with a social gathering at Chico's convention center at 5 p.m. Following the featured authors' presentation, participants will break into smaller groups for dinner and a discussion using the Gather Round toolkits designed by Humanities Montana.

The evening's program also will include a short reading by two Livingston public school students. These will be chosen from among participants in a poetry workshop, in which local poets – over the course of several days – will be paired with students to work on their ideas about the role of community and place in their lives.

Tickets are \$50, and include dinner with a cash bar, and may be purchased at Elk River Books, 120 N. Main St. in Livingston, or at [elkriverbooks.com/hearth/](http://elkriverbooks.com/hearth/).



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## Queen City Roundup

The Queen City Roundup for Cowboy Poets, Playwrights and Storytellers, sponsored by the Montana Playwrights Network (MPN), is a unique blend of workshops and performances April 26-27 in Helena.

Workshops in writing cowboy poetry, playwriting and Native American oral traditions are offered from 12:30-5:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday at the Helena College.

Evening performances at Helena High School begin Friday with Raisin' a Ruckus, featuring a theatrical reading and a showcase of writers' works, followed on Saturday with cowboy poets Gwen Petersen, Margaret Wilhelm and Jim Hamilton and music by and Judy Williams and the Divine Bovines.

Call 406-235-0353 or visit [montanaplaywrights.org](http://montanaplaywrights.org).

## MONTANA POET LAUREATE

### Blacktail Deer Road

Never mind my knees burned, bone against bone,  
after the first hard-earned hundred miles, pedaling  
from early hint of sunrise till nearly dark,  
parched and exhausted. Never mind  
the grit in my teeth when dust-devils rose  
and tore through rolling hills of sage, blasting me  
sideways. Never mind the late summer sun  
blistering my shoulders and thighs, rivulets of sweat  
pooling in my ears, my neck sticky with brine.

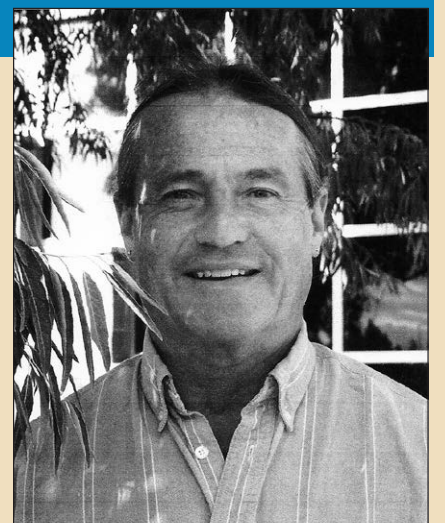
Middle of that first night,  
I woke with a full moon, my tent aglow,  
hips stiff against the rubble.

Struggled to unzip  
my bedroll and step outside to pee. Stood marveling  
at the stars. Felt strangely at home ...  
a gypsy, maybe, glimpsing the road continuously  
unfolding. Couldn't have guessed the strain

and ecstasy next morning cresting Red Rock Pass ...  
how aspen groves fluttered goosebumps up my spine.  
How, gleefully, ragged cinders spit beneath my tread.  
Half way to Yellowstone, how I'd finally ditch  
my head's constant jabber. How I'd muscle the crank  
as if the bike were pedaling me. Never mind,

never mind, a breeze hushed across fractured canyon walls,  
as in a distant meadow, a scatter of antelope  
lifted their heads to look at me and wonder.

– Previously printed in *Earth-blood & Star-shine*  
(Shabda Press, 2018)



Montana Poet Laureate Lowell Jaeger is spearheading “Poetry 101: Poems Across the Big Sky,” with the goal of bringing 101 poetry-related events to communities across the state during his tenure. Learn more at [art.mt.gov/Portals/27/Poet%20Laureate%20](http://art.mt.gov/Portals/27/Poet%20Laureate%20)





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## IBRC open late for community arts access

The Imagine Butte Resource Center, now in its fifth year of providing community arts programming and access to the people of Butte and the surrounding region, has new, later hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays to extend access to the space and equipment.

Tuesday nights are DoubleLuck Gatherings, which feature a rotating program of weekly events from 6-9 p.m. First Tuesdays feature casual, artist-led workshops in a variety of skills; Second Tuesdays are board game nights, including a potluck dinner; Third Tuesdays are open studio time; and Fourth Tuesdays are movie nights.

Open Print Studio hours are 5-8 p.m. Thursdays. The IBRC Community Print Studio provides equipment access and knowledge to both new and experienced printmakers with seven available presses and tools, paper and plate-making materials available for use or purchase. For those new to printmaking, Open Print Studio offers one-on-one instruction from print studio steward, BT Livermore, and other experienced printmakers.

The Imagine Butte Resource Center is located at 68 W Park St., in Butte; visit [ibrc.me](http://ibrc.me) for information.

# Giant kiln expands possibilities for Montana artists

By Keila Szpaller

Reprinted with permission from the *Missoulian*, Jan. 27

Trey Hill is painting the largest sculpture he's built in the United States.

In the studio, he's using unusual tools to transform the nude ceramic tree standing 8 feet tall. Disposable cups, one in each hand. Stepladders, one on each side of the sculpture.

The colors of the glaze are basic, white, jet black and medium blue. The process is mesmerizing.

The ceramic sculpture marks a milestone not only for Hill, but for the ceramics program at UM. It's the first firing that's filled the new kiln on campus, a kiln that may be one of the largest at any university in the region.

Hill works mostly in silence, the only sound the trickle of water and paint draining into the cut bottom of a plastic garbage can under the foot of the sculpture.

As the lines begin to give the piece dimension, Hill pauses to show the way the glazes split and flow and streak around the curves, the way gravity pulls some runs into thin wisps, the way the sculpture itself chooses the path of the glaze.

"See that nice long line? That starts to feel resolved in a different way."

At a certain point, Julia Galloway, another ceramic artist and faculty member, walks by and pauses to watch, a big smile on her face.

"Looking good," Galloway says to Hill, and she turns to the other observers. "It's pretty exciting, isn't it?"

Once Hill finishes glazing the tree, the sculpture will return to the monster kiln, where he hopes it won't crack from heat that will reach 2,250 degrees.

The scene underway is emblematic of the ceramics program at the School of Art and perhaps of Montana's place in the field. The kiln allows work at an ambitious scale. The faculty are collegial and work alongside their students, in the tradition of the program's founder, Rudy Autio.

Dean Leeper, in his third year studying ceramics in Missoula, said students at UM learn to consider their work within a larger context of the art scene, past and present. The directive isn't overt, he said, but students are led to think about how their art will add to the conversation.

"There's definitely a push to be a contributor in that dialogue," said Leeper, an MFA candidate.

## Building an extra-large kiln

Hill started building the kiln about five years ago. He drove to Wyoming to buy bricks from a potter at one-fifth of the normal cost and brought them back to Missoula in a U-Haul. The kiln cost roughly \$3,000 in brick, \$1,000 in steel, and \$6,000 in burners, a fraction of the cost of purchasing a new one.

The floor of the "car kiln" sits on a track that rolls out and allows access on all sides. The "stacking space," or the interior, measures 4 feet wide by 6 feet deep by just under 9 feet tall.

"Everybody always asks me, 'Is this the biggest kiln in the blank?'" Hill said. "I don't know. It's a very big kiln, and there are very few kilns like this in the country at universities."

The kiln is made out of soft brick 9 inches thick, and the material is so insulating, the brick remains cool to the touch on the outside even as the four gas burners push the inside temperature to 2,200 degrees.

At first, Hill planned to build the kiln at his home, but he later decided to move it to campus, partly so students could use it.



Paris Summers, Dean Leeper, Ryan Caldwell and ceramics professor Trey Hill, from left, move one of Hill's ceramic sculptures onto a lift after the piece was bisque-fired in a new kiln last month at the University of Montana School of Art Ceramics studio.

(Photo by Tom Bauer/Courtesy of the *Missoulian*)

It's difficult to build a successful sculpture, and any limitation adds to the challenge, Hill said. The giant kiln removes scale as a limitation.

"It doesn't mean if you make an 8-foot-tall piece, it's going to be good," Hill said. "It might be terrible and huge."

But he said it opens new possibilities for students. "They don't have to get their tape measures out anymore. They can just build."

## Persistence in Clay – a Montana tradition

In *Persistence in Clay: Contemporary Ceramics in Montana*, art historian H. Rafael Chacón wrote about the ceramics program at UM for the publication of the Missoula Art Museum.

From the start, faculty members were also notable artists, making marks outside the classroom and beyond Montana. In his piece, Chacón described Autio's verve, his "discipline, affability, and sense of humor." The UM faculty member noted another kiln and milestone, too.

"In 1984, UM ceramics was among the first academic programs in the nation to build an anagama (wood-fired) kiln," Chacón said.

In another piece in the 2011 publication, Stephen Glueckert noted a Missoula woman, Sister Trinitas, brought the first kiln to Montana for ceramic use in the 1930s. "Trinitas later worked with engineers from the Anaconda Copper Company to build a railcar walk-in

kiln, which was significantly ahead of the times."

In an interview, Chacón said the field of ceramics is constantly changing, and Galloway and Hill are respected around the world for their dynamic work. He said Hill has pushed the ceramics program into a "much more robustly sculptural tradition," and a more abstract one, and Galloway has continued a painterly tradition, but with "radically different" themes, ones "rich with social content and political content."

Steven Young Lee, resident artist director of the Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts, said the hires of Hill and Galloway at UM, along with Josh DeWeese and Jeremy Hatch at Montana State University, "raised the profile of ceramics in the state pretty significantly." Based in Helena, the Bray is an educational institution with a mission to stimulate creative work in ceramics.

The new kiln will make a mark because it will allow students to see the way Hill challenges himself, Lee said: "The classroom ends up becoming this window into his studio practice, which is incredibly important for them to see."

Hill first landed in Montana for an Archie Bray residency after working for a couple of years following his master's degree from San Jose State University.

A decade ago, a faculty post at UM opened, and Hill applied for the job; he was working at the University of South Carolina at the time, but he and his partner, Olivia

Riutta, both wanted to return to the Treasure State.

He's been building tree sculptures for the last five or six years. Hill had been looking at the way the human form had been portrayed historically, looking at Greek and Roman stone figures that were seductive, beautiful and sexual.

The trees and branches supporting the body captured his attention. Many forms had trees with cut limbs that came halfway up the thigh, and those features, secondary to the human form but critical to its stability, reflected his interest in the unseen elements of life.

"It became a perfect way for me to talk about those things that we miss in life, but those things that are holding so much of what we do," Hill said.



Trey Hill pours glaze on his sculpture at the ceramics studio, layering black, blue and white colors over one another. Getting the desired effect on the lower parts of the sculpture by pouring from the top is a challenge, Hill said, and the form of the sculpture largely dictates the path of the glaze.

(Photo by Tom Bauer/Courtesy of the *Missoulian*)



## NEA NEWS

## Survey shows arts attendance on the upswing

New survey findings from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) show gains in arts attendance totals, rates and demographic groups, plus sizeable growth in poetry-reading. Published in September, *U.S. Trends in Arts Attendance and Literary Reading: 2002-2017* is a first look at results from the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA). A partnership of the NEA and the U.S. Census Bureau, the SPPA is the nation's largest and longest-running survey of how millions of adults participate in the arts.

The gains in arts attendance in the survey track with findings from a recent National Endowment for the Arts report, in partnership with the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, which shows growth in consumer spending at the box office for performing arts events. The performing arts together with other arts and cultural industries contributed more than \$760 billion to the nation's economy in 2015.

The new U.S. Trends report covers shifting patterns of arts attendance and literary reading as measured by the share of Americans aged 18 years and older who reported doing any of these activities at least once in a year. The report covers the years 2002, 2008, 2012 and 2017.

"The growth in arts attendance indicates the increasing value of the arts in the everyday lives of Americans," said NEA Acting Chairman Mary Anne Carter. "From poetry reading to visiting a museum or attending a jazz performance, the arts are not only part of our lives, but also assets in our communities and fuel for our nation's economy."

#### The 2017 SPPA findings for arts attendance are positive in comparison to the 2012 results.

Between 2012 and 2017, the share of adults who attended visual or performing arts activities grew by 3.6 percentage points to 132.3 million people, representing nearly 54 percent of the U.S. adult population. Performing arts events range from dance to theater performances while visual arts events include going to art museums, galleries and craft festivals.

Most of the increase in this survey came from visiting art museums or galleries and the "informal" arts sector that includes outdoor performing arts festivals and touring places for their design or historic value. Also scoring



#### U.S. Trends in Arts Attendance and Literary Reading: 2002-2017

A First Look at Results from the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts

*U.S. Trends in Arts Attendance and Literary Reading: 2002-2017* offers the first look at results from the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts.

high is attending "other" performing arts events – those not tracked individually in the SPPA – such as rap and hip hop, country music, rock, or folk music events.

#### An area of substantial growth in the 2017 findings is reading poetry.

Between 2012 and 2017, the rate of poetry-reading among adults grew by 76 percent, to 28 million people in 2017. Other significant findings include:

- The share of 18-24-year-olds who read poetry more than doubled.
- Women showed notable gains, increasing from 8 percent in 2012 to 14.5 percent in 2017.
- Hispanic poetry readers increased from 4.9 percent in 2012 to 9.7 percent in 2017.
- Other racial and ethnic subgroups saw gains such as African Americans (+8.4 percentage points) and Asian Americans (+7.8 percentage points) between 2012 and 2017.

In addition, reading plays has increased, but reading novels and short stories continued on a pattern of decline.

**Further on the performing arts, 106.8 million people attended in 2017, up 3.2 percentage points from 2012.**

For most art forms on the survey, including musicals and non-musical plays, classical music, jazz, ballet and other dance performances, opera, and Latin/Spanish/salsa music, attendance rates held steady despite a five percent growth in the adult population over the five-year period. Therefore, the number of adults attending those events increased over the time period studied.

The top three forms of arts attendance in the performing arts are:

- Outdoor performing arts festivals: 58.5 million people
  - Musicals: 40.2 million people
  - Other performing arts events referenced above: 36.4 million people
- In another demographic gain, a 29 percent increase in the rate of attendance at these types of activities is reflected in greater participation by demographic subgroups – specifically, African Americans, Asian Americans, and 25-54-year-olds.

**In 2017, 102.5 million adults attended visual arts events, an increase of 3.3 percentage points from 2012.**

The share of adults who visited art museums or galleries grew by nearly 13 percent from 2012 to 2017, totaling 57.5 million people in 2017. The most significant increases occurred for African Americans, 18-24-year-olds, and 35-54-year-olds.

#### The NEA has developed additional resources to promote access and understanding of the survey findings.

The arts data profile page offers an interactive data tool that lets users search quickly for findings related to specific art forms and demographic tables and tables about adults with disabilities.

- A fact sheet discusses the arts attendance rates alongside NEA funding and information on the economic impact of arts and culture.
- Raw data for the full 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts is available at the NEA's National Archive of Data on Arts and Culture.

The full 2017 SPPA (including engaging with the arts through electronic media and personally creating art) will be reported this year. Join the Twitter conversation at #NEA-sppa; visit [arts.gov](http://arts.gov) to learn more about the NEA.



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### NEA receives slight boost in funding

On Feb. 14, the U.S. House of Representatives, by a vote of 300-128, passed legislation providing funding for federal agencies until the end of the fiscal year (Sept. 30). The Senate also passed this legislation, by a vote of 83-16, and President Trump subsequently signed it.

The bill funds the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) at \$155 million, an increase of \$2 million over its current funding level.

Once the bill was signed, Congress began the fiscal year 2020 appropriations process.

– From the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, [nasaa-arts.org](http://nasaa-arts.org)

## NEA awards eight grants to Montana organizations

The National Endowment for the Arts recently announced more than \$27 million in grants, as part of its continuing effort to provide all Americans with the opportunity to participate in and experience the arts. These fiscal year 2019 grants, including eight to Montana organizations, will reach all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

This is the first of two major grant announcements in fiscal year 2019 and includes three of the agency's funding categories: Art Works and Challenge America to support projects by nonprofit organizations, and Creative Writing Fellowships. Through these grants, the National Endowment for the Arts supports local economies and preserves American heritage while embracing new forms of creative expression.

"The arts enhance our communities and our lives, and we look forward to seeing these projects take place throughout the country, giving Americans opportunities to learn, to create, to heal, and to celebrate," said Mary



The award-winning a cappella quartet Women of the World performed March 22 at the O'Shaughnessy Center in Whitefish, and offered a free outreach concert to students and seniors, with funding support from the NEA.

Anne Carter, acting chairman of the NEA.

The eight grants, totaling \$110,000, include:

- **Alberta Bair Theater in Billings:** \$10,000 to support a series of concert performances and related educational activities.
- **Billings Cultural Partners (aka The Writer's Voice):** \$10,000 to support the High Plains BookFest, a literary festival held each October.

- **Billings Symphony Society (aka Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorus):** \$10,000 for symphony performances and educational outreach in honor of Black History Month and the 60th anniversary of the founding of Motown Records.

- **Intermountain Opera Association of Bozeman:** \$10,000 to support a production of *Eugene Onegin* by Tchaikovsky with associated community engagement activities.

- **Archie Bray Foundation in Helena:** \$25,000 to support a visiting artist program in ceramics.

- **Helena Presents (aka The Myrna Loy):** \$20,000 to support the presentation of new and existing works at the Myrna Loy Center.

- **Missoula Writing Collaborative:** \$15,000 to support creative writing residencies for students.

- **Whitefish Theatre Co.:** \$10,000 to support music performances by guest artists WOW (Women of the World).



## PUBLIC VALUE PARTNERSHIPS

# The 3 Rs at work in Montana



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Public Value Partnership grants between Montana nonprofit arts organizations and the Montana Arts Council champion the fact that the arts are of benefit to all the citizens of Montana and are worthy of state and federal investment.

Public Value Partnerships utilize three tools we call “The Three Rs” to expand the public value of the work being done by Montana’s non-profit arts organizations:

- Building relationships;
- Creating greater relevance and meaning; and
- Establishing return on investment (measured both as economic vitality and impact on people’s lives).

MAC believes that using “The Three Rs” strengthens participation, understanding and support from audiences, donors and funders. We’d like to share some of the best examples of these stories from 2018 responses:

### Building Relationships

**Missoula Art Museum:** Last year MAM created an exhibition and a myriad of community events titled “From Flower Cloth to Story Cloth: Hmong Textiles in the MAM Collection,” as a timely reminder of the value of art and creativity to the human experience. The exhibition coincided with the arrival of Eritrean, Congolese, and Syrian refugee families to Missoula through the help of the International Rescue Committee and the local non-profit organization Soft Landing.

Questions about refugee resettlement are relevant in light of rising nationalism and a recent proliferation of hate speech nationwide. “From Flower Cloth to Story Cloth” celebrated the diversity of the city and stood as an example of the significant Hmong contributions to the Missoula community.

The Hmong were resettled in Missoula after being persecuted in Laos because of their loyalty to the anti-communist U.S. government and CIA operations. Over the years, Missoula, MAM and the Hmong community have grown and evolved together. Hmong are skilled farmers and artisans who have established successful businesses and are very visible at our farmers’ markets and contribute generously to our local food bank. In addition, Hmong culture in Missoula has been profiled nationally through press and in award-winning publications.

“From Flower Cloth to Story Cloth” marks the third time MAM has presented a significant exhibition of Hmong textiles, first in 1978 and also in 1993. In the ensuing years MAM’s collection of Hmong textiles has grown to the hundreds, along with rich cultural exchange and friendship. The exhibition and related events were aimed at demonstrating the strong and positive relationship MAM and the Missoula community have built with the Hmong people

and at the same time welcome new refugees.

Several events were offered to foster discussion and exchange and the culminating event was the Family-Friendly Celebration of Hmong Culture, on July 26, 2017, in the museum and in the Art Park. This included an exhibition reception, musical and dance performances, demonstrations of traditional Hmong embroidery, hand-made musical instruments and a Hmong food truck in the Art Park.

### Creating Relevance

**Alpine Artisans, Inc., Seeley Lake:** For our initial Maclean Festival in 2015, Alpine Artisans received more than \$20,000 from Tourism Montana for paid publicity outside of the State of Montana. We designed a beautiful ad campaign and placed it in regional and national publications. However, our post-festival survey indicated that most of our out-of-state and foreign visitors found the festival through social media. So we changed our approach for the 2017 festival to focus on



Alpine Artisans: Author William Kittredge speaks at the 2017 Maclean Festival.

marketing efforts focused on targeted banner ads, social media ads, and target market influencers. Banner ads were placed on national, relevant websites where our target audiences frequent.

Social media ads were created on Facebook and Instagram which focused on our national target markets. We created Facebook memes that we shared with our organizational sponsors to place on their FB and web pages, which worked well. Digital marketing efforts also extended to national influencers in our target markets in the form of blogs and social media posts on literary, fly fishing, river conservation and cinema sites. Our paid national magazine ad campaign combined paid print and online advertising in *Sunset Magazine*, *Trout Magazine* and *Narrative Magazine*. We also produced four 30-second ads publicizing the festival and Seeley Lake as a tourism destination.

The analytics of the social media campaign shows that our Instagram reach was 9,393, Twitter was 32,437, and the total Facebook reach was 52,285. Our email blast list is 6,580. This targeted media campaign enabled us to establish relationships with a motivated audience nationally and internationally and to maintain that relationship affordably.



Missoula Art Museum: Family-friendly celebration of “From Flower Cloth to Story Cloth,” an exhibit of Hmong textiles.

hiring a professional social media company and the Montana Film Office enabled us to launch an effective publicity campaign.

In 2017, funding from Tourism Montana enabled the festival to expand its marketing campaign to include digital and magazine advertising to a national and potentially international audience.

The 2017 Maclean Festival’s digital media and paid magazine ad spend targeted our national fan base of general literature fans, fly fishermen, filmmakers, and students in the film and screenwriting world, plus river conservationists, including national Trout Unlimited (150,000 members). We reached these target audiences utilizing the services of professional digital marketers, Bonfire Communications in Missoula, who were hired to carry out an \$8,000 digital marketing campaign. Bonfire deployed national digital

### Return on Investment

**Montana Ballet Company, Bozeman:** Montana Ballet spends significantly in the community. These investments include:

- Willson Auditorium – one of our biggest line items is theater rental for annual “Nutcracker” and “Cinderella” performances. The Willson is also part of the Bozeman Public School District, so fees support local schools. The fee paid to the Willson Auditorium also supports our local stage crew and lighting technicians.
- Rent – another significant annual expense is studio rental. Our space is on North 7th and is owned by a local Bozeman family.
- Bozeman Symphony and local musicians – MBC is committed to performing to live music.

Continued on next page

### Statewide arts service organizations

Montana has many arts-discipline-specific statewide service organizations. You can find a complete list here: [art.mt.gov/arts\\_service\\_orgs](http://art.mt.gov/arts_service_orgs)

### Montana Arts Council grants, awards & commissions

Visit the Montana Arts Council’s website for a complete listing of grants, awards and commissions:

**Individuals:** [art.mt.gov/grants\\_awards\\_comm\\_home#individuals](http://art.mt.gov/grants_awards_comm_home#individuals)

**Organizations:** [art.mt.gov/grants\\_awards\\_comm\\_home#orgs](http://art.mt.gov/grants_awards_comm_home#orgs)

**Schools:** [art.mt.gov/grants\\_awards\\_comm\\_home#schools](http://art.mt.gov/grants_awards_comm_home#schools)

**Programs and Services:** [art.mt.gov/programs\\_services\\_home](http://art.mt.gov/programs_services_home)

## PVP application deadline is April 5 for 2019-23

Public Value Partnerships applications are available now at [art.mt.gov/pvp](http://art.mt.gov/pvp). The deadline is 5 p.m. April 5.

Public Value Partnerships provide operating support for the artistic and educational mission of Montana arts organizations. The program recognizes strong operations, stable management, ongoing engagement, and high-quality programming for the communities being served.

Public Value Partners expand their work by:

- Building relationships with audiences, funders, community and political leaders.
- Creating greater relevance and

connection to what has value and meaning to the community.

- Demonstrating a strong return on investment that brings meaning, adds vitality, and becomes a catalyst for new ways of thinking, seeing and solving problems.

Eligible applicants are non-profit arts organization with an IRS 501(c)(3) ruling, incorporated in Montana and registered and in good standing with the Montana Secretary of State, or may be a tribal or university arts program with ongoing outreach programs that significantly extend services beyond the campus.

Applications are reviewed based on the

following criteria:

1. The organization has appropriate and sufficient governance, management and staffing.
2. Activities must engage and be responsive to the people and communities for whom they are intended.
3. Artistic programs and services are aligned with the mission.

Grants will range from \$2,000 to \$10,000 and will be awarded annually between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2023. For more information, visit [art.mt.gov/pvp](http://art.mt.gov/pvp) or contact Kristin Han Burgoyne ([kburgoyne@mt.gov](mailto:kburgoyne@mt.gov) or 406-444-6449).



## MONTANA ARTREPRENEURS

### MAP workshops well underway; registration open for fall

By Rickie van Berkum  
Certified MAP Coach

The Montana Artrepreneur Program (MAP) is an art-centered business development program taught by working artists and open to all Montana visual artists. MAP provides over 40 hours of college-level instruction, reviews 35 practical business tools, demystifies the world of business, and affirms the title of “Artist” as a credible profession.

Instruction is focused on advancing your proficiency in your chosen medium, articulating your story and purpose as an artist, strategically seeking patrons for your art, and engaging in the arts community. MAP instruction is centered on four weekend-long workshops held roughly eight weeks apart. After submitting for review a complete “toolbox,” demonstrating understanding of each business tool, artists become certified.

MAP is currently working with two cohorts (groups) of artists, one in Three Forks and another in Helena, under the leadership of Liz Chappie Zoller and myself. Both of us are Certified MAP Coaches and working artists. The 20 Montana artists in these FY19 cohorts are busy working through the tools in their toolbox.

As MAP coaches, we work with the artists to articulate and refine the story of their art in a way that speaks to their target customers. We provide feedback as artists write and rewrite their artists statements.

We “Start with Art” every day of instruction. Each artist stands and speaks briefly about their art as though they are speaking to customers. With this practice, we’ve seen marked improvement in artists’ ability to talk to others about their art.

We have recently completed Workshop 3, and the artists are reaching out to mentors to advance their proficiency in their medium and considering internships to learn more about their business of art. They are using the skills they learned in Workshop 2 to design and create booths that professionally display their artwork at shows and other venues.

In the workshops, we also cover best



The Helena Cohort, at a recent gathering, includes (L-R): Marcia Miller, Suzy Combs, Madeline Keller-King, Suzy Lake-Lejeune, Ciadie Schlosser, Dre Castillo, Brandy Rasmussen, Rebecca Wells and Bobbi de Montigny (Amanda Bielby was absent).

practices in creating logos, business cards and brochures, and general business practices such as record-keeping, among a range of practices necessary for creating a sustainable business of art.

We strive to create a safe and welcoming environment as artists work their way through MAP. New MAP artists are welcomed into the community of over 450 Montana artists who have completed the program. The feedback we most often hear from our MAP artists is that the program teaches everything they need to learn to be successful small business owners and thriving artists.

The next instructional period will occur between September 2019 and May 2020. For more information and to apply, please see [art.mt.gov/map](http://art.mt.gov/map).

Are you interested in becoming a MAP artist? Wondering if MAP is right for you? The MAP Coaches are happy to discuss this with you. Please contact one of us: Liz Chappie Zoller [PearlSnapStudio@gmail.com](mailto:PearlSnapStudio@gmail.com) or Rickie van Berkum [vanBerkumFiberArt@gmail.com](mailto:vanBerkumFiberArt@gmail.com).

#### Upcoming Montana Artrepreneur Program (MAP) Deadlines

##### Learning Cohorts: May 15 deadline

The application system is open for artists interested in participating in the 10-month curriculum. Accepted applicants will be contacted in July to determine the meeting locations of the learning cohorts. Workshops will commence in the fall.

##### Certification: June 28 deadline

Artists who have completed the MAP coursework may submit toolkits for certification beginning June 17. Toolkits will be available for pick-up after Aug. 5, 2019.

Information on the MAP application and certification process is available at the MAC website: [art.mt.gov/map](http://art.mt.gov/map). Please direct questions to [mac@mt.gov](mailto:mac@mt.gov) or 406-444-6548.



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#### Strategic Investment Grant funds available

Strategic Investment Grant (SIG) funds are still available for spring, summer and fall projects and professional development.

These grants provide up to \$1,000 in matching funds for professional artists, nonprofit 501(c)(3) arts organizations and Preschool-Grade 12 teachers in Montana, and are available in four categories:

- **Professional development grants** help build individual art skills and knowledge, arts careers and/or arts businesses.

- **Market expansion grants** help increase exposure and improve marketing or promotion, opportunities for exhibition, performance and/or sales to a wider or new audience.

- **Grants for public outreach arts activities** fund ongoing or one-time activities that are designed to reach a new or expanded audience.

- **Challenges and emergencies grants** provide resources for artists or arts organizations experiencing challenges or emergencies that impede the ability to continue work.

The application deadline is the 15th of the month.

For guidelines and more information visit [art.mt.gov/sig](http://art.mt.gov/sig); contact Kristin Han Burgoyne ([kburgoyne@mt.gov](mailto:kburgoyne@mt.gov) or 406-444-6449) for more information.

### TourWest grant deadline is April 1

TourWest, a competitive grant program funded by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), provides subsidies to presenters for the presentation of out-of-state touring performing and literary artists. The grant application is currently open, and the deadline of April 1 is fast approaching.

TourWest standard performance grants are available in amounts of up to \$2,500 or 50% of the artistic fees, whichever is less. The grants are only available to organizations that sponsor performances within the 13-state

WESTAF region, which includes Montana.

For the 2019-2020 cycle, projects must take place between Sept. 1, 2019, and Aug. 31, 2020, and must feature one public performance and one educational outreach activity. Applicants may apply for up to two standard performance grants, each of which is for a distinct project.

The proposed program must involve a paid professional performing artist/company that is based outside of the presenter’s home state. The performers do not need to be based in the

13-state WESTAF region and can be located outside of the United States.

Literary projects are also acceptable provided they have a performance aspect to them.

TourWest funds can be used to support performances in festivals. The festival organization itself, not individual presenters participating in the festival, may apply for up to two grants to support artists performing in the festival.

### The 3 Rs at work in Montana (from previous page)

These collaborations create more meaningful experiences with performing arts for our patrons. The Bozeman Symphony accompanies MBC annually in the “Nutmcracker,” and a variety of accomplished local musicians perform with MBC during the season. MBC expends significant resources to support these collaborations as well as other arts organizations.

- **Sets and costumes** – MBC upgrades/builds new sets for local performances; artists using locally purchased materials do all of this work. MBC hires local wardrobe professionals to handle all costuming using local materials.

- **Ad sales** – MBC works hard to create and maintain a strong presence in the Bozeman community. We purchase advertisements with local publications to publicize performances and our dance academy to accomplish this goal.

- **Printing** – MBC expends significant funds annually with two local Bozeman print

shops to create programs for performances, advertisement posters, and other written materials used in informational packets and donor letters.

- **Dancers** – MBC has a small number of company dancers. We are committed to paying them for their work in our performances.



Montana Ballet Company: “Cinderella” takes center stage at Willson Auditorium.



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## STATE OF THE

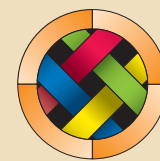
# Arts



Aaron Parrett's Territorial Press in Helena – which he describes as “a largely philosophical enterprise” – churns out pages the old-fashioned way – via a 1920s Chandler and Price platen printing press. He has since published an award-winning book of 10 short stories, *Maple & Lead*, with illustrations by Seth Roby. (Photo by Czelsi Gomez)

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## Fort Peck Theatre Celebrates 50 Seasons

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