MAC announces 2019 Artist’s Innovation Award recipients

The Montana Arts Council approved six Montana artists to receive its Artist’s Innovation Award. The $5,000 award is given every two years to artists who have attained a level of success in their pursuit of discovery.

A panel of experts convened in November to determine the six recommendations that were presented for the council’s approval at the December meeting in Billings. “Montana has an incredibly rich creative environment,” says Tatiana Gant, executive director of the Montana Arts Council. “The Council understands the necessity for artists to take chances. This award encourages artists to invest in research and continued exploration. The caliber of the artists selected highlights Montana’s bright future.”

Over the next year, each awardee will make a public presentation on their creative process, and the role innovation has played in their development. MAC will share details over social media as information becomes available.

This year’s winners are:
- Jane Waggoner Deschner, Billings
- Robert Harrison, Helena, with support from the Jessie Wilber and Frances Senska Individual Artist Award in Ceramics
- Nan Parsons, Basin
- Jennifer Reifsneider, Missoula
- Naomi Siegel, Missoula
- Melissa Stephenson, Missoula

Mural aims to raise awareness of opioid crisis

By Anna Paige

Reprinted with permission from the Billings Gazette, Oct. 25

Carlin Bear Don’t Walk describes his life as a process of chasing dreams, something his high school art teacher instilled in him. He hopes to do the same for young people, inspiring them to use art as an outlet, especially if they come from a world of addiction.

The 37-year-old abstract artist, who lives in Billings and is a member of both the Crow and Northern Cheyenne tribes, was commissioned by ZooMontana and the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council to paint an expansive outdoor mural, which he titled “Dream Chasers of Montana.”

Not just another pretty piece of art, the mural is funded by a collaborative effort to prevent and address opioid abuse in Yellowstone County.

Bear Don’t Walk grew up on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and has been painting since he was a kid. He was taught the culture and ways of life of the Northern Cheyenne people, and he said living on the reservation inspired him to pursue his dreams of being a professional artist, despite the hardships, addiction, and loss that also surrounded him.

“I’ve seen all kinds of great artists who never made it, who succumbed to the stereotypes, who succumbed to the way of reservation life. That is my biggest inspiration right there,” said Bear Don’t Walk. “I grew up around all that stuff, and that is what pushes me to be great, pushes me to live the dream for those who never made it.”

Bear Don’t Walk’s painting stretches across time, from the migration of indigenous people and the bison herds of the West to a hopeful, urban future. The vivid and action-fueled scenes across the nearly 80-foot long mural reflect the history, oppression, and triumph of indigenous peoples of the Great Plains.

“In order to fulfill your dreams, you’ve got to remember where you started at and remember those who came before you and what they’ve been through,” said Bear Don’t Walk. The mural was painted in collaboration with children in the community and indigenous activist Goldstein Little Eagle.

The mural is painted atop a concrete retaining wall at the entrance to ZooMontana, measuring five feet tall and 78 feet long. Bear Don’t Walk estimates he’ll spend a total of 50 hours on the project, which was funded by a Tribal Opioid Response Grant through SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), part of nationwide funding from the Department of Health to curb opioid abuse.

Roy Pack, Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council program director, applied for a grant for Yellowstone County. The council received $200,000 to be used for opioid prevention, treatment, and recovery for Native Americans across two years.

Though the artwork represents the smallest allotment of the grant, it’s the most dramatic, Pack said. “It’s about not just collaboration, but building community. Bear Don’t Walk, whose work in recent years has gained national attention, was asked to participate in the project, in part because his artwork is so visually impactful (it’s difficult not to notice his nearly neon color palette and striking imagery), but also because of his connections between the urban Indian community of Billings and the state’s reservations.

In Memoriam

Montana’s arts community is reeling this fall with the loss of some of its iconic musicians, thespians, artists, teachers and arts advocates. Among them is Arlene Parisot, known artist, teacher, arts ambassador and MAC member Arlene Parisot. Read about her many contributions to the council on page 2, and see our many other condolences on pages 5 and 8.

See pages 6-7 for AIA Profiles

See Bear Don’t Walk Mural, page 8
Shawna Korth joins MAC staff as Business Specialist

Shawna Korth, a native Montanan who grew up in Cut Bank, joined the Montana Arts Council in November as Business Specialist. She replaces Lauren Pan, who accepted a job in Washington, DC.

Shawna Korth, a native Montanan who grew up in Cut Bank, joined the Montana Arts Council in November as Business Specialist. She replaces Lauren Pan, who accepted a job in Washington, DC. Korth attended Montana State University Billings where she majored in Business/Accounting. In 1999, she and her husband relocated to Denver where she spent over a decade working in corporate legal departments for large financial services organizations, conducting corporate board meetings and completing federal SEC filings. After a corporate reorganization she decided to take a foray into real estate and sold homes in Denver and the surrounding area for six years.

In 2017, with their two children grown, Korth and her husband, Jay, purchased a business, Autotrix Signs and Graphics, and moved back to his hometown of Helena. Korth says she enjoys giving back to the community and has volunteered for organizations such as Special Olympics, Habitat for Humanity, Back Country Patrol, Therapeutic Needs Program, and Jr. Achievement through Grant Award Possibilities (GAP) grants.

In addition to adult children, she and her husband have three more of the four-legged variety. She enjoys trail running, paddle boarding, mountain biking, snow shoeing, golf, hiking, camping and traveling as much as life permits.

“I’m excited to be a part of the Montana Arts Council and look forward to meeting and working with all of you,” she says.

As a Business Specialist for the MAC team, Korth will be responsible for managing council data and supporting grant award processes, accounting, and office administrative functions for the agency. She can be reached at 406-444-6510 or Shawna.Korth@mt.gov.

FROM THE DIRECTOR
Tatiana Gant, Executive Director
tatiana.gant@mt.gov

MAC member Arlene Parisot
Missing her warmth, brilliance and humor

Arlene directed workforce planning initiatives. Arlene found joy and inspiration in nature. In the past, I have shared how important the governor-appointed council is in guiding the work of the Montana Arts Council. Each member brings unique perspectives and experiences that are invaluable.

Arlene Parisot at work in the printmaking studio during a Montana Arts Council gathering in 2011.

Shawna Korth

In the past, I have shared how important the governor-appointed council is in guiding the work of the Montana Arts Council. Each member brings unique perspectives and experiences that are invaluable.

MAC has lost a vibrant member with the death of Arlene Parisot. Arlene was appointed to her first term on the Montana Arts Council by Governor Brian Schweitzer, then reappointed twice by Governor Steve Bullock.

Arlene’s service on the council was the perfect marriage of her career in public service, her commitment to community, and her enjoyment in creating art. At her core, Arlene was an educator. She worked in classrooms internationally, from grade school through higher education.

Early on, Arlene saw the potential of using technology as a learning tool and the role it would play in the economy. In the position that she held until her retirement, with the Montana Commissioner of Higher Education, Arlene directed workforce planning initiatives.

In addition to two adult children, she and her husband have three more of the four-legged variety. She enjoys trail running, paddle boarding, mountain biking, snow shoeing, golf, hiking, camping and traveling as much as life permits.

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State of the Arts • Winter 2020

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
• In their educators’ eNews
• Arts Organizations’ eNews
• Public Artists’ eNews

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

State of the Arts and Conference meets in Fort Benton
Seventeen professional performing artists will showcase samples of their work on Saturday, Jan. 25, at the Fort Benton Elementary Theater. Part of the 37th annual Montana Performing Arts Consortium (MPAC) booking conference, the showcases are free and open to the public.

Showcase selections were made based on quality of presentation, probability of booking, grant award possibilities and overall showcase diversity. Additional artists will have booths in a Resource Room located in the Ag Center (open to registered conference participants only).

MPAC is a statewide non-profit arts organization that brings professional artists to Montana communities and promotes education through the arts. The annual Artistic Showcase and Conference is made possible in part through a legislative grant from Montana’s Cultural Trust, the Montana Arts Council, National Endowment for the Arts and Western States Arts Federation.

Although the showcases at the Fort Benton Elementary Theater are free and open to the public, the conference requires advance registration and will take place in the Agricultural Center, attached to the Montana Agricultural Museum in Fort Benton.

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More information is available at www.mpacperformingarts.org and through MPAC. P.O. Box 6484, Great Falls MT 59406, 916-798-4479 or info@mpacperformingarts.org.
CONGRATS TO...

MAPS Media Institute, whose student-produced film, “Browning Rising Voices,” won a 2019 National Student Production Award for Excellence in the Short Form Non-Fiction category. These awards are distributed by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS), better known as the organization behind the Emmy Awards. “Browning Rising Voices” tells the story of a poetry club in Browning, on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, led by school librarian Amy Conrey Andrews. Students write and perform original works of poetry, and through that process explore the power of creative expression. The 2019 competition saw more than 2,000 entries across 24 categories. “Browning Rising Voices” beat out four other films in its category — including another MAPS effort, “Art For Survival,” about an innovative arts program in Helena — to claim the top prize in the country. Congratulations!” said Sandy Filan, Commissioner Allison Whitmer. “The future filmmakers in Montana are honing their skills by telling stories that speak to diverse voices and interpretations, and programs like MAPS have the potential to develop these students.” The Hamilton-based educational non-profit, which offers free media-arts classes to students in grades 8-12 across Montana, is no stranger to the national stage. In 2017, MAPS was honored by the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award.

Butte High student Derek Bane-Parrson, who joined around 200 other students from across the U.S. as part of Mary's Great American Marching Band during the giant Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade through New York City on Nov. 28. Bane-Parrson, a 15-year-old sophomore, plays 14 instruments, including his two main instruments, the French horn and the mellopheone, along with the trumpet, several types of saxophones, guitar, and the euphonium. In addition to playing in band, he also plays for Butte High's jazz band and in the Butte Community Band, among other musical pursuits. Recently, he has an opportunity to play in the University of Montana's High School All-Star Band and Orchestra, which consists of select students from across the northwest U.S. and Canada. On Thanksgiving Day, Bane-Parrson played the mellopheone before an estimated 20 million television viewers and the throngs of spectators who show up to watch the parade in person. His band teacher, Jean Perusich, who nominated him to be part of Mary's Great American Marching Band, describes the student to the Montana Standard as a hard worker, a diligent student, and “fine musician,” who is “serious about his music.”

From the Montana Standard, Nov. 13

Artist Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, who is the 2019 recipient of the Murray Reich Distinguished Artist Award from the New York Public Library. The $12,000 award, which was established in 2015, recognizes artistic excellence and provides resources to mature visual artists with a long history of creative practice. Smith, an enrolled Salish member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Nation, has been creating complex abstract paintings and prints since the 1970s. She is internationally known as an artist, curator, lecturer, printmaker and independent professor. Smith was also among the 2018 Governor's Art Awards recipients for Montana. A self-described “cultural arts worker,” Smith uses humor as a tool to examine stereotypes of American Indian life in contrast to American consumerism.

Bitterroot Valley artist Bobbie McKibbin, who received the Best Body of Work award from juror Ian McKibbin White (no family relationship), artist and director emeritus of Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, during Yellowstone Forever’s second annual Plein Air Invitational. “This event is really wonderful — a great celebration of art and Yellowstone,” says McKibbin. “I am very honored to be included and this park is one of my favorite places in which to work,” Held Sept. 24-29, the five-day invitational celebrates the current and historical presence of art in Yellowstone. Sixteen artists from across the nation painted outside on site for five days in various locations in the park, culminating in a public painting demonstrations, a paint-out on Sept. 28, and in a VIP banquet and art auction at Old Faithful Lodge Recreation Hall.

Montana State University professor and graphic designer Meta Newhouse, who has received a Fulbright fellowship to Ireland where she’ll teach guerrilla advertising and marketing at the Dublin Institute of Technology. Newhouse was also a 2019 finalist for the Barski Legacy Memorial Fund Award for work in progress. Excerpts from the book have been published in various literary journals and have been finalists for a number of awards.

Bobbie McKibbin with Yellowstone Forever Best Body of Work Award recipient

BOBBIE McKIBBIN

My Trip to Yellowstone” by Volkerz Wolters

Silo” by Richard Buswell

Honors the story of a rapidly changing field’s future,” said League of American Orchestras’ President and CEO Jesse Rosen. Barrón Viela joined the Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale as executive director in December 2018. Since arriving, he has crafted a new strategic plan and is passionate about expanding the orchestra’s musical offerings and community engagement programs; he’s also sought to build relationships with other businesses and nonprofits across Montana and Wyoming, and coordinate joint activities with the Montana Association of Symphony Orchestras (MASO). He came to Billings from Germany where he managed orchestra tours in Europe for the Heinrich Heine Orchestra. Originally from Zaragoza, Spain, Barrón Viela earned an MBA from USC Marshall School of Business, with an emphasis in arts leadership; in 2018, he completed the League of American Orchestras’ Essentials of Orchestra Management.

Livingston author Elise Atchison for winning an international Elidra Award for her award-winning book, Crazy Mountain. The novel tells the story of a rapidly changing place and community through the diverse and conflicting stories of the people who live, work and play there. Set in a fictional mountain valley over nearly half a century (1970-2015), the story offers 15 clashing perspectives on the shifting realities of contemporary Montana. The book is available. V olkersz has lived and worked in Bozeman since 1986 and is Professor Emeritus of Art at Montana State University. Helenah photographer Richard S. Buswell, whose student work was included in 2018 in a large group exhibition of contemporary photographers of the American West at Yale University’s Beinecke Library. The exhibition was titled “Eye on the West: Photography and the Contemporary West,” which is also the title of a hardcover book published in support of this show. Buswell has been photographing Montana ghost towns and homesteads for nearly 50 years. The Collection of Western American at Yale University has purchased a complete collection of Buswell’s photography, consisting of 458 photographs. In addition, 232 other museums, nationally and internationally, have collected Buswell’s work, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Denver Art Museum, Seattle Art Museum and the Library of Congress. In 2018, Washington Public Broadcasting System filmed a documentary about Buswell with the title “Where They Left Behind,” which was broadcast in five western states and in western Canada.

Ignacio Barrón Viela

Ignoacio Barrón Viela, executive director of the Billings Symphony Orchestra, who is one of 12 orchestra professionals participating in the League of American Orchestras’ Emerging Leaders Program. The competitive eight-month program began with a three-day meeting in New York City and also includes one-to-one coaching, in-depth seminars led by leadership experts, visits with leaders in cultural and performing arts institutions, virtual convenings, and a capstone project culminating at the League’s 2020 National Conference in Minneapolis/St.

Love your story, send your good news to Congrats, c/o Kristi Niemeyer, 207th Ave E, Pocion, MT 59680; or better yet, email 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.

Send us your good news

Artists, writers, musicians, artists educators and arts administrators: Please let us know about major awards and accomplishments, especially beyond the boundaries of Montana.
Flathedge resident Beth Hodder, who received a 2019 Moonbeam Children’s Book Award for her newest release, Out of the Ashes: The third book in her award-winning Jessie and Oriole Mystery Series, finds Jessie Scott and her canine companion, Oriole, back in Montana’s Great Bear Wilderness on the cusp of her 13th birthday. This time they face one of the modern West’s most formidable foes: wildfire. A former U.S. Forest Service employee, Hodder comes by her interest in the care and preservation of the West’s forests honestly. She has spent most of her adult life in and around the Bob Marshall Wilderness, and her books celebrate the places and people who live there. Hodder is a graduate of Ohio State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism. Hodder is an accomplished nature and adventure photographer and is best known for her work with the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation. Hodder and her husband, Bill, recently relocated to the Flathead Valley from Asheville, NC, for his work with the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation and are thrilled to call the Swan Front and Bigfork home.

Poet and writer Virginia Mortensen Howell, 97, who will be inducted into the Montana Hall of Fame Feb. 7-8 during the ceremony and Western Heritage Gathering at the Heritage Inn in Great Falls. Howell was born in Declo, ID, on Sept. 12, 1922, and landed in Montana in 1923 when the Mortensen family moved to the Moiese Valley. She graduated from Charlo High School in 1940, married Dean Howell, and so began years of working, motherhood, “and not finding life to be as I had envisioned when I was younger.” While living in Roundup, Howell would awaken at night to “this line drifting into my mind…” and it was so pretty. With pen and paper at her bedside, she began to capture the words that poured forth, words that helped her survive and “erase the shadows” in her life. Through poetry, Virginia wrote about her life in Montana, and eventually authored a self-published book in 2016, Life and Times in Montana: A Diary in Prose and Rhymes. In its pages she recounts the life she led and the people she met along the way: “He’s the last of his kind, this old cowboy, and the end of the road for him.” Today, Virginia still lives in Billings. Now living in Billings, Howell said her purpose for writing the book was to record and preserve her experiences of Montana life and leave a legacy so others would know about the artistry into visual poetry is to be watched with awe, and respect.” She believes “that the talent and work required to combine athleticism and artistry into visual poetry is to be watched with awe, and respect.” She believes “that the talent and work required to combine athleticism and artistry into visual poetry is to be watched with awe, and respect.” She believes “that the talent and work required to combine athleticism and artistry into visual poetry is to be watched with awe, and respect.” She believes “that the talent and work required to combine athleticism and artistry into visual poetry is to be watched with awe, and respect.”
Theatre educator Firman Hewitt “Bob” Brown, 93, who died Nov. 10, 2019, at his home in Missoula. He was born Sept. 27, 1926, in Bradenton, FL, and moved with his family to the American Southwest before earning undergraduate and master’s degrees from the University of Montana in Missoula.

During a career spanning nearly half a century he chaired theater departments at UM, York College, NY, Rollins College, FL, and Ohio State University. He launched his educational theater career as part-time director-designer-costumer and all-around technician at what was then Northern Montana College in Havre, moonlighting as a sports reporter for the Havre Daily News. The following year he joined the college faculty, teaching and working in the areas of theater and public relations (1951-1954) and also served as editor of the Montana College of Arts and Media Quarterly called the Missouri Headwaters.

As one of the world’s foremost lithographers. He collaborated with Chatham's work was featured in a catalog called One Hundred Paintings, and another about his original lithographs titled The Missouri Headwaters. He was also profiled in thornog of newspapers and magazines; and was interviewed on National Public Radio’s Morning Edition, and Fresh Air, PBS, and CBS Sunday Morning. He received a Governor’s Arts Award in 1997. Chatham was also an accomplished writer, who crafted hundreds of articles, short stories, essays and reviews about fly-fishing, bird hunting and conservation, as well as a number of pieces on food and wine. His books include The Angler’s Coast, Silent Seas and Dark Waters. He was founder and publisher of Clark City Press which published fiction, non-fiction, poetry, art, photography and children’s classics. In 1996, he opened Chatham’s Livingston Bar & Grill, one of the Rocky Mountains’ finest restaurants. Eventually he partnered with master printer Geoff Harvey to open a print shop and create original lithographs closer to home. “He lived on the edge – they don’t make them like him anymore,” Harvey told the Missoulian.

The lasting effects Bo’s work had on the theatrical landscape of Montana are still evident today,” wrote the Missoulian. During a career spanning from the University of Montana in Havre, moonlighting as a sports reporter for the Havre Daily News. The following year he joined the college faculty, teaching and working in the areas of theater and public relations (1951-1954) and also served as editor of the Montana College of Arts and Media Quarterly called the Missouri Headwaters.

Brad Edwards (Photo by Cassey Page/Billings Gazette)

Merrily Va...
**MCF offers new grants for artists**

The Montana Community Foundation (MCF) offers a new grant program for Montana Indigenous, folk, traditional and media arts, via the William B. Pratt Endowment Fund. This fund is a legacy gift to the people of Montana to help tell them and share stories – especially the untold ones – about Montana’s arts, culture and history and to learn about the traditional art forms and cultures of this unique state.

Montana 501(c)(3) organizations, and local, state and tribal governments are eligible to apply. Media artists who are not staff of a nonprofit organization may apply under the fiscal sponsorship of a 501(c)(3) organization. Grants will range in size from $500 to $1,500 and must be matched dollar-for-dollar.

The grant process is competitive, and complete applications will not be considered. Grant applications will be accepted from January to March 16, 2020. To learn more about eligibility and to apply, access the online application at mcf.org/grants. For more information, contact MCF Director of Operations and Grants Jessica Stewart-Kuntz at 406-441-4950 or jessica@mtcf.org.

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**ARTIST’S INNOVATION AWARDS PROFILES**

Jane Waggoner Deschner, Visual Artist

Jane Waggoner Deschner came to art in her 30s when she enrolled at Montana State University Billings to pursue a second bachelor’s degree, this time in fine arts. Her preferred medium was the everyday photograph, incorporating images from stacks in a subscription and architecture magazines. In her early 50s she enrolled in an MFA program at Vermont College of Fine Arts, and was completing her final semester when 9/11 struck. Her thesis exhibition, “Anchor Project,” incorporated snapshots of people in her personal and professional life, who sent her images “that ‘anchored’ them during this horrible time.”

“I felt a joy in the expressiveness of the personal photograph.”

Waggoner Deschner has since made the everyday family photograph her medium, buying large lots of seemingly mundane snapshots on eBay. Initially, she scanned these images and processed them in Photoshop. But in 2008, her early predilection for sewing surfaced, and she began to embroider quotes by famous people onto existing photos. “I loved stitching – and the chance to moralize,” she says. “I will use this technique.”

“When her studio was destroyed by a rock slide in 2011, her theme became resilience. And as the nation and world became increasingly polarized, she sought a new narrative, one that might elicit hope while exploring our common stories.”

So far, she’s created more than 750 pieces in the ongoing project she calls “Remember me: a collective narrative in found words and photographs.”

In this series, she hand-embroiders anecdotable quotes to the images of found snapshots and studio portraits in an effort to forge empathetic connections and demonstrate our common humanity.

She works from an archive of more than 70,000 photos and four foot-long boxes of photographs. “I will use this technique.”

**White Gold; Montana Dreams** by Robert Harrison

Harrison notes that his residency at the Archie Bray Foundation was pivotal to his career, giving him the materials and space to create large-scale scupltural work. Initially, Harrison was drawn to ceramic vessels, focusing on form and Oriental clay traditions. Eventually “the work took a decided direction.”

Architecture, land art and other sculptural materials began to influence his work, and he gained an international reputation for large-scale pieces. He has worked with national and international clay, clay-pipe and porcelain factories, utilizing the resources and tools they offer to further his creative pursuits.

Each site is unique, and poses a new set of challenges – ways to integrate human scale pieces. He has worked with national and international clay, clay-pipe and porcelain factories, utilizing the resources and tools they offer to further his creative pursuits.

**State of the Arts • Winter 2020**

**From the AIA Panel:** “Every one of Harrison’s works is a new exploration in material and process. From her seat inspired by nature, Parsons exposed a series of paintings fueled by an intense study of water, its currents and reflections. The work culminated in a one-woman show at the Holter Museum of Art in 2006, and a smaller exhibit at the Drawing Studio in Los Angeles.”

During visits to the Oregon Coast, she painted the ocean in watercolors and oils. Back in Montana, her coastal adventures inspired large paintings and drawings based on beachcombing, including images of wood, bone and shells.

She explored aquifers – streams and pools that exist beneath the surface of the Earth – in a series of watercolor paintings featured at the Turman Larison Gallery in Helena in 2013. The natural world has long been her muse. But in recent years, inspiration has come from another source, sound, and particularly the total vibration of music.

Parsons found herself especially moved by the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, an artist “who is able to express and touch the deepest, darkest parts of us and to bring us out of the depths to a brilliant joy.”

Her journey began while filming the Helena choral group Musikanten Montana, under the direction of Kerry Krehbiel, as they were preparing to perform Bach’s Mass in B Minor. Parsons videotaped rehearsals and the final performances staged in four Montana venues, and then condensed her footage into a 40-minute film, “Bach Under the Big Sky.”

As she listened intently to the composer’s music and studied the Baroque period, she began to “respond to, and paint what I feel as I am touched by the music.”

From the AIA Panel: “The artist shows a clear devotion to exploring her unique art form, and willingness to explore and expand artistically. I see in her the fire to step out, take risks, and also remain rooted in her original intent and aesthetic.”

**Robert Harrison, Sculptor**

Sculptor Robert Harrison came to his large-scale architectural works through a helvable medium of clay, the use of fire and his alchemy. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Minnesota, and his MFA from the University of Denver, both in ceramics. Over four decades, he’s built an extensive and global record of exhibitions and installations.

Harrison is a founding member of the World Association of Brick Artists (WABA) and was named a Fellow of the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) in 2011. His book, Sustainable Ceramics: A Practical Guide, debuted in 2013.

He was elected to the International Academy of Ceramics (IAC) based in Geneva, in 2001, and to the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts (RCA) in 2007. Closer to home, he was a founding member of the Montana Clay Tour, and received the Moley Stevenson Award of Excellence from the Archie Bray Foundation in Helena (where he was a resident artist, instructor and board member).

From the AIA Panel: “Robert Harrison’s art is an exploration of the root of material and place. His work uses the ‘full circle’ method as a means to make art that is an extension of the environment.”

**“Remember Me: handwork” by Jane Waggoner Deschner**

**“Every one of Harrison’s works is a new exploration in material and process. From her seat inspired by nature, Parsons exposed a series of paintings fueled by an intense study of water, its currents and reflections. The work culminated in a one-woman show at the Holter Museum of Art in 2006, and a smaller exhibit at the Drawing Studio in Los Angeles.”**

**“White Gold; Montana Dreams” by Robert Harrison**

**“Bach (fugue)” by Nan Parsons** (Kurt Keller Photography)
Jennifer Reifsneider, Visual Artist

“Diagrammatic sculptures” — that’s how Jennifer Reifsneider describes her recent body of work. “I often begin by thinking of my Reifsneider body like a planet in space,” she writes. “I map my latitudes, perimeters, rotations and orbits to delineate these measures through quiet but intense, expansive processes, seeking an elusive momentum when what is exact in the mind becomes fluid in the hand.”

Her home studio in rural Pennsylvania, “where cycles of nature taught me about repetition, growth and decay,” influence her work. She says, “I do mathematical processes encoded in human biology, and fiber techniques that evoke domesticity and the persistence of time. Colors, particularly, with all of its modest functions and Victorian flourishes, has a unique capacity to model fractal growth and non-linear figures in both space and time, which is at the heart of today’s quantum physics.”

This thoughtful melding of art and science has landed the artist in work in more than 70 solo and group exhibitions across the United States, including the 2018 Montana Triennial at the Yellowstone Art Museum. Her sculptures are in numerous private and public collections, from New York City to Los Angeles, and from Minneapolis to Missoula.

After earning a BFA from the Rochester Institute of Technology, Reifsneider lived in Missoula in 1997 and based her studio in the Brunswick Building — a vibrant community of artists. In 2008, she relocated to Los Angeles and earned her MFA from California State University, Long Beach in 2011.

After graduating, she participated in High Desert Museum’s Idea Constellation Lab; received an Investing in Artists grant from the Center for Cultural Innovation; expanded her practice at Keystone Art Space in northeast L.A.; and exhibited at the Artists Space in northeast L.A.; and exhibited. “Told in short, numbered sections that bob and weave — picking up one topic, letting it go, and circling back later — a first piece is moving, mysterious and it for granted.”

While “Debut” forms the backbone of her first collection of poems, which was a finalist in 2017 for the Barry Spacks Prize and the Brittingham/ Pollak Prize. Her memoir, DRIVEN, was published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in 2018 and long-listed for the Chautauqua Book Prize.

The same prolific period saw her essays published in LitHub, Ms. Magazine, The Washington Post, The Rumpus and FourGoa. Among other body of writing is at the heart of today's quantum physics. “I’ve never since squandered a moment that I have taken for granted.”

Recently, Stephenson has returned to Msoulla in 2011 on the edge of divorce and with two kids to raise by herself. “The past eight years have been the most challenging and productive of my life,” she writes. “I know that I would have to fight for writing time, and I’ve never since squandered a moment that I have taken for granted.”

In the intervening weeks she wrote her first full collection of poems, works published in 2017 for the Barry Spacks Prize and the Brittingham/ Pollak Prize. Her memoir, DRIVEN, was published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in 2018 and long-listed for the Chautauqua Book Prize.

The same prolific period saw her essays published in LitHub, Ms. Magazine, The Washington Post, The Rumpus and FourGoa. Among other body of writing is at the heart of today's quantum physics. “I’ve never since squandered a moment that I have taken for granted.”

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Bear Don’T Walk mural (from front page)

Not slowing down, Guthrie then penned The Pony Express: An Illustrated History (1981) and Montana: Our Heritage (2010) and Ann Fagre to co-author Death & Survival in Glacier National Park: True Tales of Tragedy, Courage, & Misadventure (2017). Only a short time after Don returned to Blackfeet, he was diagnosed with additional information, photographs and a new format. Brimming with photographs and original art, her books combine meticulous research with lively storytelling. Guthrie believed in the power of history and stories, that they should not be lost. She was always a woman on a mission, equally inspired and inspiring.

Enter the Blackfeet Reservation from any direction – north, south, east and west – and you’ll be greeted by a pair of life-size horsemen, created by St. Ignatius artist Jay Laber, who died Oct. 24 at his home north of St. Ignatius of cancer. He was 58. A member of the Blackfeet tribe, Laber was born on Sept. 7, 1961, in Browning and raised on the Blackfeet Nation and in New Hampshire. After working construction in Alaska, Florida and Maine, he returned to Montana more than 20 years ago, enrolled at Salish Kootenai College to study forestry, and began taking art courses on the side, developing his skills under the guidance of his mentor and friend, SKC art professor Corwin “Corky” Clarmont. He left the Native American Indian Higher Education Consortium Conference in Billings. A museum in Munich, Germany, purchased it, and he was featured in the Tribal College Journal of American Indian Higher Education. “For a lack of a better word, he was a genius,” Clarmont told the Missoulian. “A lot of our communities have been through a lot of hardship, and I think that determination and beauty of our people come out in his work.”

Beloved Helena jazz musician Walter (Blackie) Nelson, who passed peacefully Aug. 8 in Billings. He was born in 1926, in the house where he was raised in Helena. He enlisted in the Navy in 1944 and served in the Philippines and New Guinea. He returned to Helena, met Isabel while frequenting the ice-cream parlor where she worked, and charmed her by playing her favorite songs on the jukebox. She married in 1950 and remained the best of friends. He worked on the ice-cream parlor and at one time was the beat of his heart. He started playing at age 15, and in high school led a western band that did live shows on KPFA radio. He played with innumerable musicians but his favorite gigs by far were playing music with his kids, sitting around the living room before dinner. In a tribute concert in April 2017, Nelson took the stage at the Myrna Loy Center in Helena with accomplished folk picker Pepion. “I believe not just in art, but in having a career, something to motivate you every day. It’s helped out a lot of people I know and me. I try and make it inside and outside of my work, to keep them away from doing drugs and keeps them out of trouble.”

Bear Don’T Walk hopes to spur additional public art around the Billings community focused on indigenous cultures. “Every community these days is trying to recognize diversity in the city among different tribes, different cultures. That’s the most important thing, and it brings everybody together. It unifies.”

More Condolences (from page 5)

Jay Laber (Photo by Tom Bauer/Missoulian)
Guitarist Brian Stumpf has a jazz and contemporary music degree, and also co-founded the band with Jackson.

Monty Mountain has played with assorted bands, and he and Stumpf have been a musical duo for most of a decade. The band is described as a country-rock group and performs solo from time to time, singing her own country songs.

A female guitar voice enters the band's sound with oodles of effects from his huge pedal board assortment bands, and he and Stumpf have been a bandmate and Stumpf has been a guitar player for Montana. The band is known for its unique blend of country and rock music.

The album is dedicated to the memory of Rick Waldorf. And it's an apt tribute: you'll get up and dancin'! To celebrate the memory of Rick Waldorf, the album is dedicated to his memory. The band is a country-rock group and performs solo from time to time, singing her own country songs.

The mid-tempo country-rock beat of "Only One" finds a love-struck dude on a dance floor and the lyrics are heartfelt and soulful. The song is about a love-struck dude who is dancing alone and thinking about the woman he loves. The lyrics are about the longing to be close to someone who he loves and who loves him back. The song is a love ballad and is about longing for love and companionship.

Bassist Mike Carey. With a band, is described as a country-rock group and performs solo from time to time, singing her own country songs.

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About Books

Fiction

**Sweat the Ashes**
by Mary Cleman Blew

Young feminist and historian Diana Karnov arrives in Yellowstone, Montana, to teach college history and unravels a few family secrets. Her childhood home, “cut of by distance and weather from anywhere ideas were being discussed and issues were being debated,” is remote, “a cut off from my family’s life.” The all-male faculty appears to be more appreciative of her looks than her intellect, and her clothes and car prove inadequate to the brutal winter weather.

But she’s escaped the overwhelming aunts who raised her in Seattle, and digs into流通 through newspapers at the local library, hoping to discover the identity of the father she never knew. blew is both enthralled by, includes Ashley M. Teller and her brother, Jake, both described from Metis. From them, she begins to see how narrow her sense of history is, especially when it comes to the American West. She realizes how small the pages begin to realize that our common history is a tapestry of multiplex narratives.

Mary Cleman Blew – a native of northern Montana – crafts an engrossing, romantic mystery set in a community that’s isolated from the turbulent world. Author Joy Passante calls it “smart, witty, hard-hitting, tender, and compelling a read.”

Blew, the author or editor of numerous fiction and nonfiction books, is professor emerita of English at the University of Idaho.

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**Leaves on Frozen Ground**
by Dave Cotts

In Port Landung, Wisconsin, on the south shore of Lake Superior, the Vaillancourtts, Cavers and Celine, own a successful construction company and a small farm. Cott’s home in Wisconsin is a place of passion and devotion. From a hardscrabble upbringing to the pain of losing the family land, from hardship are two sides of the same coin, and how sometimes the only way to cure heartache is to visit the great outdoors.

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Dave Cotts, an internationally recognized author, speaker, and environmental activist, explores the relationship between the human and natural world.

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**We Leave the Flowers Where They Are**
edited by Richard Fifield

“We tell ourselves stories in order to live.” The wisdom of author Joan Didion blossoms across Montana this fall, with 41 contemporary Montana women telling their stories in a new collection published by the University of Idaho.

Longtime memoir instructor and novelist Richard Fifield of Missoula curated the anthology. We Leave The Flowers Where They Are, named after a line in the single poem included in the collection: “Storytelling has been part of the human race for centuries,” says Fifield. “We are a storytelling species.”

The anthology is a diverse collection, with women from across Montana, from Powder River to Eureka, sharing stories of joy, pain, humor and hope.

“Working with other writers has made my life richer and wider,” says Missoula author and editor Gladys Considine, 78, who has been in Fifield’s memoir critique group for five years. “Regardless of our ages, whether we grew up in Butte or Broadus, the stories we tell are stories of similarities and differences.”

A portion of the book’s proceeds benefit Zootown Arts Community Center (ZACC) and Humanities Montana. Learn more at www.zacc.org.

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**Cold Country**
by Russell Rowland

The small town of Paradise Valley is ripped apart when popular rancher and notorious bachelor Tom Butcher is found murdered one morning, beaten to death by a baseball bat.

Suspicion among the tight-knit community immediately falls on the outsider, Carl Logan, who recently moved in with his family and his troubled son Sonja.

What Carl doesn’t realize is that there are plenty of people in Paradise Valley who have reason to kill Tom Butcher.

Complications arise when the investigating officer discovers that Tom Butcher had a secret – one that he kept even from Junior Kirby, a lifelong rancher and lifelong best friend. As accusations and secrets are revealed, the police discover that they may not have solved the mystery after all.

Kirkus Reviews calls Russell Rowland’s latest novel “a quick-moving, plainspoken, mostly charming exploration of the harshness of the lifeline rancher of old.”

Cold Country is a work of fiction. Names, places, locations, characters and incidents are either products of the author’s imagination or have been used fictitiously.
**Montana: Mountains & More**
By Rosella Mosteller

Photographer Rosella Mosteller shares 75 black and white images in her new book, inspired by Montana: “So much is so much of Montana that doesn’t meet the eye until you take the time to put wear on the thread of your soles,” she writes. “The medium of black and white photography transforms the landscape. What remains are images that give a person the emotive quality of Montana at its core.”

With camera in hand, she explores cold mountain lakes, meandering rivers, hot springs, and shifting light as it touches the trees and flowers, stone and grit of Montana’s natural world. Stories, facts, lore, and meaning are told by the striking, desaturated images.

With her technical ability and sharp attention to detail, she captures singular moments in time — images that have the power to enrich anyone who views her work.

Her book is available at mostellephotos.com.

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**Montana Entertainers: Famous and Almost Forgotten**
By Brian D’Ambrosio

For more than a century, Montana has supplied a rich vein of entertainment and personality to the nation—from dancehalls to dance floors, from star to stumps.

Treasure State stars Gary Cooper and Myrna Loy found unparalleled success during the Golden Age of Hollywood. Born in Miles City in 1895, comedian Gil “Pee Wee” Holmes played sidekick to such stars as Tim Terence. One-time Bitterrootian William Ellingson went on to become America’s first female impersonator.

There was Taylor Gordon, whose golden voice propelled the son of a slave from White Sulphur Springs to Harlem Renaissance fame. From the little-known Robyn Adair to the ever-popular Michelle Williams, author Brian D’Ambrosio marks Big Sky Country’s long-standing connections with America’s performing arts world. The 210-page book includes 77 black and white images.

D’Ambrosio is the author of more than 10 books, including Shot in M’tana: A History of Big Sky Cinema, and his articles have been published in local, regional and national publications.

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**The Best Gift: Montana’s Carnegie Libraries**
By Kate Hampton, with photographs by Tom Ferris

Between 1910 and 1922, 17 Montana communities built libraries with money given to them by the era’s richest man, Andrew Carnegie. Fifty of those libraries still stand today, and their stories are compellingly told in this new book by Kate Hampton, the Montana Historical Society’s community preservation coordinator.

“And Carnegie was no saint,” notes Hampton. “His philanthropic legacy marks Big Sky Country’s long-standing connection with America’s performing arts world. The 210-page book includes 77 black and white images.

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**Hidden History of Helena, Montana**
By Ellen Baumlner and Jon Axline

Two of Helena’s premier historians, Ellen Baumlner and Jon Axline, have penned a new look at the Queen City’s past.

Distinguished by statesmen and magnates, Hel- na’s history is colored with many other compelling characters and episodes nearly lost to time. Before achieving prominence in Deadwood, Wild Bill Bullock oversaw Montana Territory’s first two legal hangings. The Seven Mile House was an oasis of vices for the telegraph operators who acclimated travelers entering the valley on the Benton Road, despite a tumultuous succession of ownership. The heritage of the Sod Road Ranch and the saga of “King Kong” Clayton, “the Joe Louis of the Mt.,” faded from public memory.

From recounting the myth of Chancytown to detailing the lives of red-light businesswomen and the Cannon Ferry flying salmon seiner, Baumlner and Axline team up to preserve a comprehending of Helena’s yesteryear.

Baumlner, who was interpretive historian at the Montana Historical Society from 1978 to 1995, is a longtime member of the Humanities Montana Speakers Bureau, a 2011 recipient of the Governor’s Award for the Humanities and an avowed Helena resident.

Axline, the historian at the Montana Department of Transportation for three decades, has written five books on Montana history.

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**Moonbound: Apollo 11 and the Dream of Spacelift**
By Jonathan Fetter-Vorm

On a summer night in 1969, two men climbed down a ladder onto a sea of dirt at the edge of an ancient dream. When Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin first set foot on lunar soil, the moon ceased to be a place of mystery and myth. It became a destination.

Now, on the 50th anniversary of that journey, Moonbound tells the monumental story of the men and the men who went there first. With vibrant images and meticulous attention to detail, Montana graphic novelist Jonathan Fetter-Vorm conjures the lunar landscapes of the visionaries, stalkers, builders, and engineers who brought Apollo 11 on its legendary voyage.

From the wisdom of the Babylonians to the intrigues of the Cold War, from the otherworldly discoveries of Galileo to the dark legacy of Nazi atrocities, from the exhilarating trajectories of astronauts — recounted in their own words — to the unyielding brilliance of engineers working behind the scenes, Moonbound captures the grand arc of the Space Age in a graphic history of unprecedented scope and profound lyricism.

Published & WOYLD described it as “gloriously epic” in a starred review.

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**Listen to Your Spirit**
By Kerri Arthur

When a small airplane crashes in an African jungle, there are only two survivors, Kelly, 12, and her brother, 10-year-old Jake. Grieving, injured, frightened and lost, the children know they have to find their way out of the jungle and home to their only living relatives, an aunt and uncle in Florida.

Compelled to move, they choose a direction that takes them further into the wilds. A black leopard visits the injured girl in a dream, and admonishes her to listen to her spirit. Two men find the children and carry Kelly, with Jake following, back to the crash site and out of the jungle. One of the men, Sunil, is a former Hindi film star for Kelly. The children wait for the promised ship to start them on their journey to America, the black leopard visits Kelly again with a warning to listen to her spirit in the coming days — advice she follows through with her spirit. Two men find the children and carry Kelly, with Jake following, back to the crash site and out of the jungle. One of the men, Sunil, is a former Hindi film star for Kelly. The children wait for the promised ship to start them on their journey to America, the black leopard visits Kelly again with a warning to listen to her spirit in the coming days — advice she follows through with her spirit.

Fraser, a native of Florida, lives with her husband in Deer Lodge at the Fraser School of Driving Horses. Her debut novel was released by Raven Publishing.

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**The Fire in the Dark: The Truth Will Always Come Out**
By Tessa L. Gatz

Eighteen-year-old Tessa Gatz of Lewistown penned 267 pages for her debut novel, The Fire in the Dark — a fiery teen romance built on action and suspense. The book is narrated by Jaci, a 16-year-old high-school student who suddenly finds herself in a tangled mess of deception and unsure who to trust. When her brother John returns home after traveling overseas for several months, nothing is as it seems.

And what about Uncle Larry? For months, he was busy to play with his Margie uncovers some new lists and haiku poems by the author augment her striking, desaturated images.

Her book is available at mostellerphotos.com.

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**Forever Neverland**
By Susan Adrian

Penguin, 11, who is autistic, and Clover, 12, they are the descendants of Wendy Darling, of Peter Pan fame, in Susan Adrian’s latest adventure, released last summer by Random House. On a visit to their estranged grandparent’s in London, Peter Pan whisks the two away to Neverland, where they have a grand adventure with mermaids, Lost Boys and Girls, pixies, a Greek goddess and a sea monster.

This contemporary sequel to J. M. Barrie’s timeless classic is sure to appeal to anyone who loved “The Land of Stories” and dream of going to Neverland. “A magical ode to childhood that updates the classic while keeping its flavor,” writes Kirkus Review.

Adrian is a fourth-generation Californian who has lived in Montana for 16 years. By day she is a scientific editor, and by night she dreams up wild adventures that sometimes turn into books. She is the author of the acclaimed holiday fantasy Never/land (recently released in paperback) and two books for teens, Tunnel Vision and The Duel at the End. When she’s not with her family, Adrian keeps busy researching unusual facts, traveling and writing more books.

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**Gather Round sparks national attention**

Gather Round — a new Do It Yourself toolkit is! 10th anniversary of that journey, Moonbound tells the monumental story of the men and the men who went there first. With vibrant images and meticulous attention to detail, Montana graphic novelist Jonathan Fetter-Vorm conjures the lunar landscapes of the visionaries, stalkers, builders, and engineers who brought Apollo 11 on its legendary voyage.

From the wisdom of the Babylonians to the intrigues of the Cold War, from the otherworldly discoveries of Galileo to the dark legacy of Nazi atrocities, from the exhilarating trajectories of astronauts — recounted in their own words — to the unyielding brilliance of engineers working behind the scenes, Moonbound captures the grand arc of the Space Age in a graphic history of unprecedented scope and profound lyricism.

Published & WOYLD described it as “gloriously epic” in a starred review.

Gather Round is inspired by an anthology of essays titled Heath, A Global Conversation on Community, Identity and Place, edited by Annick Smith and Susan O’Conner. The limited-edition DIY toolkit is designed to inspire discussions about home, migration, technology and nature. The kit contains a copy of Heath, a deck of Cards for Humanities and a bag of Montana Gold Tea. Groups are encour- aged to “gather around a campfire, dinner table, or drinks to spark a conversation.” For more infor- mation, visit www. humanitiesmontana. org.
Audition Action

Museums host flurry of winter art auctions and events

State of the Arts • Winter 2020

Regents approve Montana Heritage Pavilion

The Montana Museum of Art and Culture at the University of Montana is moving forward with plans to build a Montana Heritage Pavilion on campus, with help from a $5 million gift from Jerry and Patt Payne Family. The Montana Board of Regents approved construction of the new privately funded $6 million building in December.

The Payne gift will allow the museum to transfer thousands of compelling works of art from campus storage to display, and launches efforts to inspire other philanthropic gifts to support construction of the building. “This addition to our campus will become an exciting destination in our community, state and region,” UM President Seth Bodnar said. “It will be a place of gathering, but more importantly, a manifestation of our enduring commitment to the arts and history.”

Among the works that will benefit from a new facility are the nine masterpieces that MMAC received in 2018 from the estate of Sen. William A. Clark.

Learn more about the building project at www.campus.montana.org.

Landscape by Jim Dick is part of the Emer- son College’s annual auction.

Scotland is theme for Emerson Celebration of the Arts

The Emerson’s annual Celebration of the Arts, 6 p.m. Jan. 24, is the Bozeman art center’s largest annual fundraiser, supporting art education programs, community events and building projects throughout the year.

This year’s celebration will explore the rolling and rugged landscape of Scot- land. The event features a four-course seated dinner, live music, fine art, live and silent auctions and entertainment. Local quick-draw artists create unique works to auction off at the end of the night.

The Celebration of the Arts Exhibit and Silent Auction is on display through Jan. 24 in the Jessie Wilber Gallery. The juried show features mixed-media works by local artists who generously donated to the fundraiser, and offers the community an opportunity to preview the work available for live and silent auctions. Silent bidding opened in December and continues through the Celebration of the Arts event.

For details, call 406-587-9797 or visit www.themerson.org/celebration-of-the-arts.

YAM Art Auction: Three events from Jan. 24-March 7

The Yellowstone Art Museum in Billings again hosts the longest-running and most diverse art auction in the region with Art Auction 52. According to museum director Bryan Knecly, the annual event “opens the doors between artists and collectors and helps make Billings an art-friendly environment.”

For the second year in a row, the YAM offers three distinct events, beginning Friday, Jan. 24, with Cocktails and Quick Finish and a special one-night-only silent auction. The evening will feature quick-draw artists, a silent auction of approximately 50 pieces of art, entertainment and hors d’oeuvres.

This gathering offers a rare opportunity to take home works by both well-known and up-and-coming regional artists. The opening night also provides collectors with a chance to “buy it now” in the silent auction and to preview the work in this year’s live auction. Tickets may be purchased individually or bundled with the events on Monday.

Once again, the YAM will host a Meet-the-Artists Reception on Friday, March 6, giving ticket-holding patrons the opportunity to visit with participating artists and providing one last chance to buy silent-auction work before Saturday’s big night.

The exhibition culminates in the annual Yellowstone Art Museum auction, which consists of a silent auction, a live auction, a quick finish, cocktails, and gourmet heavy hors d’oeuvres, all within the museum’s spacious galleries.

The auction begins at 5 p.m. March 7 (4:30 for members) and features an array of hor’s d’oeuvres catered by Thomas Nelson Catering, with live auction bidding at 7 p.m.

Highlights for this year’s live auction include a color lithograph by Pierre Auguste Renoir, titled “Children Playing Ball (Enfants jouant la balle)” and “Antelope Canyon, I,” a photograph by Clyde Butcher, a diptych from Jane Waggoner Deschner’s silhouette series, “Parallel Lives I” by Neltje; and “Get Lucky,” by R. James debut.

Learn more at artmuseum.org or call 406-256-6804.

MAM Art Auction set for Feb. 1

The 2020 Benefit Art Auction for the Missoula Art Museum will be held 5-9:30 p.m. Feb. 1 at the University Center Ballroom at the University of Montana.

MAM invites the public to celebrate 45 years of exhibitions, programming and arts education at this marquee event, which fea- tures two silent auction rounds and a dynamic live auction.

The auction showcases more than 80 works of art including sculpture, prints, paintings, glasswork and more. Artists from across the United States have donated at least 50% of the sale price of these pieces, which will support the next year of contemporary art programming at MAM.

All artworks will be on view at MAM in January, with an exhibition reception 5-8 p.m. Jan. 3. Other highlights include a special game night, Hack the MAM!, 5:30-7 p.m. Jan. 3.

This year, MAM partners with Givergy, an online registration, ticketing and bidding platform, which will allow for remote silent auction bidding both before and during the event on Feb. 1. Bidding on an exclusive list of artwork begins Jan. 3 and continues through Jan. 23. Register to participate in this first round of bidding (no ticket sale required) at www.givergy.us/mamauction.

Chefs, Champagne and Art mingle at Paris Gibson Square’s event

The Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art in Great Falls hosts its fifth annual Chefs, Champagne and Art fundraiser at 6 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 1. Six local chefs are compet- ing, with live auction bidding at 7 p.m. This event is the only dedicated fundraiser for the C.M. Russell Museum.

The live auction will feature artwork by Kevin Red Star, Carol Hagan, Julie Chapman, Terry Cooke Hall, Rachel Rusti with the birthday of famed western artist Charlie Russell. From March 18-22, Great Falls is home to more than 15 shows and 800 artists, who showcase art ranging from traditional paintings and sculpture to more contemporary works. Events include live music, quick draws, auctions, social get-togethers, and educational symposiums.

Check visitgreatfallsmontana.org/event/ western-art-week for an updated schedule.

Art Council of Big Sky hosts eighth auction

The Arts Council of Big Sky hosts its eighth annual fundraising art auction event from 6-10 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 29, at the Wil- son Hotel in the Big Sky Town Center.

The evening includes a quick finish, live and silent auctions, music, food and drinks. This event is the only dedicated fundraiser for the Arts Council of Big Sky.

The live auction will feature artwork by Kevin Red Star, Carol Hagan, Julie Chapman, Terry Cooke Hall, Rachel Rusti Warner, Cyrus Walker, Ben Pease, Amber Blazina, Barb Swartz-Karst, Miles Glynn, Carol Spelman, Jane Lekson, Tabby Ivy, Tom Gillson, Carlie and many more.

Artists interested in submitting artwork to be considered for the live or silent auction can find the application online: deadline for submissions is Jan. 3.

Call 406-995-2742 for more information or visit bigskyarts.org/events.
Dana Berardinis: Forgotten Lands

Through Jan. 16 at Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art, Great Falls

Artist's website: www.danaberardinis.com

While growing up in a rural mid-western town, Dana Berardinis spent hours roaming the fields and woods. Captured by the tones and textures that surrounded her, “I would draw the trees and cornfields of my home. I would bring back collections of bark, corn husk and bones to reference and apply to my creations.”

After graduating from the Cleveland Institute of Art in 2004, she headed West, looking for a place “where I could paint freely without interruptions.” She landed in Montana, where paths again lead to “the ever-present tones and textures of the natural palette. I memo- rize what I see and make drawings and paintings as I explore the vast wilderness.”

Her exhibit at Paris Gibson Square, “ Forgotten Lands,” explores sloughs and swamps and the abundant life they sustain. Her paintings focus on the different types of wetlands in Northwestern Montana and their significance to the landscape.

She points out that wetlands are among the largest and most diverse ecosystems in the world and act as the Earth’s “lungs.” They can often be overlooked and disregarded, perceived as ugly or as wasted acre- age.” In addition, many are threatened by invasive species and human development.

Berardinis celebrates the quiet beauty of these hidden gems. Of her approach to art-making, she writes, “I experience painting the way I do the landscape. It holds the same quietness, the same search. Through the layering of paint and materials, I begin to find continuity with what I’ve discovered in nature.”

This marks her second solo exhibit at Paris Gibson Square. Her first, “True Remains,” was displayed in 2010. Her exhibit, “Passage of Re-"Vibrant Slough” by Dana Berardinis

Calligraphy By Amity Parks

The Parks Family: “It Runs in the Family”

Through Jan. 31 at the Artists’ Shop in Missoula

Artist's website: www.amiyparks.com

The Parks family of Missoula has heard idioms like “it runs in the family” for years. Amity and Glenn and their adult children, Briar and Wren, prove that the adage is true in an exhibit on display through January.

The existence of artistry within a family may point toward a natural disposition to create, but it can also be cultivated by exposure and encour- agement. Both Glenn and Amity come from parents who had creative streaks—their fathers were wood carvers and their mothers were, and are, seam- stressers and crafters. “It makes sense then that we were influenced by them and that our kids felt that inspiration from us starting at a young age,” says Amity. Briar and Wren grew up on the craft-fair circuit and at Green Portfolio Clay Studio, a public art studio and school that Amity and Glenn operated in Missoula where they were immersed in making.

“You can see in their art that there is an easy appreciation for reaching inside themselves and drawing out a vision to share with the world,” says Amity.

Amity is an accomplished artist and calligrapher whose work has been featured in local and regional exhibits and publications. She participates and shares her expertise with local and state calligraphy guilds, teaches workshops within the U.S. and abroad, and has served on the faculty for multiple International Lettering Arts Conferences.

Glenn is a long-term member of the Artists’ Shop and actively participates in classes and figures of the anagama kiln with the Clay Studio of Missoula. Both hold degrees from the University of Tulsa and the University of Montana.

Their son, Briar, is an artist and animator living in Portland, OR, and a recent graduate of Pacific Northwest College of Art. He has been creating and showing his intricate drawings and paintings since he was 4 years old. His sister, Wren, lives in Bellingham, WA, where she’s a student at Western Washington University. She was named Hellgate High School’s Outstanding Art Student as a senior, and works primarily in watercolor with a focus on portraiture.

About Visual Artists is compiled by Kristi Niemeyer

Craig W. Hergert: From the Front to the Plains

Through Jan. 31 at the Emerson Center for Arts & Culture, Bozeman

Artist’s website: www.montanapanoramic.com

Craig Hergert is a freelance artist whose work is currently on dis- play in various public and private galleries and businesses throughout Montana, including his studio and gallery showroom in Bozeman, and in private collections all over the world. Montana Panoramic is an ongoing collection of his images that explores the vast landscapes, mountain ranges, wilderness, rivers, parks, towns, and wildlife of his home state.

Hergert was raised in New Mexico, but grew up mesmerized by family stories of the Montana landscape of the badlands near Glendive, Flathead Lake, Glacier Park and the Rocky Mountain Front. He studied fine art and graphic design at Eastern New Mexico University, then transferred to Montana State University. While wan- dering through the campus library, “I happened upon a book of old, scratchy, sepia-toned black and white panoramic images of mines, cities, groups and landscapes from the turn of the centu- ry and was just simply captivated.”

An earlier interest in photogra- phy was reignited, and he began to experiment with “my own versions of those wide open views.” But instead of tapping single prints together, or using conventional panoramic cameras and film, he began to shoot and scan series of slides and prints and slowly piece them together by hand using Photo- shop.

Eventually, in 2003, Hergert quit his day job and built a studio in the garage. Since then, his work has been published in The Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Forbes, Country and Indians, and a slew of Montana publications. He has won numerous international panoramic photography awards, and was named “Montana’s Treasured Artist” by the Secretary of State, and has published two acclaimed hardcover books: MONTANA: Skiing the Last Best Place, with a foreword by Warren Miller, and Montana Panoramic Volume I: 1997-2007, now in its third printing.
National Arts Education Managers gather in Montana

By Monica Grable
Arts Education Director

Each year, with support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) gathers its arts education managers for a Professional Development Institute (PDI). This year, arts education leaders from 34 states plus D.C. traveled to Missoula to participate in the convening Oct. 1-4. The Montana Arts Council submitted a proposal to host the PDI, highlighting the abundant arts and education offerings present in Missoula, a relatively rural city, and the potential for learning about our nearby tribal communities. Missoula was chosen, and we were delighted for the opportunity to highlight arts education in Montana.

Attendees were welcomed to Montana on the evening of Oct. 1 with a MAC-hosted reception at the Missoula Art Museum, where our guests were wowed by Hellgate High School’s jazz ensembles, under the direction of Leon Slater, and the works on view, including a preview of the retrospective exhibit of works by contemporary Native artist Rick Bartow.

Booking the PDI on Friday, Oct. 4, groups of participants visited Blackfoot Pathways: Sculpture in the Wild in Lincoln.

The primary days of the convening, Oct. 2-3, were split between Missoula and Pablo. The guiding question was “How can arts education managers adapt their agencies’ policies and practices to respond more effectively to diverse communities?” Attendees participated in sessions focused on asset-based approaches toward engagement with and serving the needs of rural, remote and tribal communities.

First-day sessions in Missoula were held in various spaces within the MCT Center for the Performing Arts, as well as the Missoula Art Museum, and included a discussion with panelists from across Montana who were asked to offer their perspectives on our arts education ecosystem, followed by relevant break-out sessions. Day one culminated in a dinner event at the Payne Family Native American Center on UM’s campus that featured an arts-inspired message by Missoula Mayor John Engen, poetry readings by UM faculty member Heather Cahoon, and an address to the group by NEA Arts Education Director Ayanna Hudson.

Day two of the PDI offered participants an immersive experience in Pablo that included a presentation by Cameron Decker, head of SKC’s Art Department, an introduction by artist Corky Clairmont to the Moonlight Bridge Project, and a panel discussion with several Montana Teacher Leaders in the Arts, and a collaboratively created artmaking experience. The unique and authentic nature of hosting the PDI in Missoula made this year’s convening one to remember for many attendees. The focus on rural, remote and tribal topics was relevant to our arts education work at MAC and offered an opportunity to see and discuss what our work holds in common with other states.

FY2021 deadlines coming in March and May

Artists in Schools and Communities (AISC) grants, one of the Montana Arts Council’s longest-running funding programs, seeks to support hands-on arts experiences in which learners of all ages and abilities are offered the opportunity to engage with, and learn from, professional teaching artists. Through one-time master classes and workshops, or through ongoing long-term residencies, a primary tenet of the AISC grant program is that students gain new skills in an art form or further extend their knowledge and experience. A 1:1 match is required, with a 2:1 match offered for first-time applicants or Class C or smaller schools.

Community-based nonprofits, art centers, museum education departments, arts presenting organizations, civic organizations, cities or municipalities, schools and other nonprofit entities are all eligible to apply. College and university programs may apply if extending educational outreach opportunities into the surrounding community and – although individual artists are not eligible to receive funding directly – teaching artists may partner with a school or nonprofit entity to deliver arts learning experiences.

FY2021 dates

March 11, 2020: AISC Grants Under $1,500 DUE
May 4, 2020: AISC Grants Under $1,500 (Round 1) DUE
July 1, 2020: Earliest project date for FY2021
Nov. 4, 2020: AISC Grants Under $1,500 (Round 2) DUE
June 30, 2021: Project end date for FY2021

To discuss a potential project, or to learn more about the Artists in Schools and Communities grant program, contact Arts Education Director Monica Grable at Monica.Grable@mt.gov or 406-444-6522.

The VOICE students at Two Eagle River School in Pablo created the photo above during their “camera-mirror” assignment.

AISC grants under $1,500 awarded to 13 organizations

Dancing Our Way Home – Arts After School, $780

November 2019 Deadline
Alpine Theatre Project, Whitefish: $1,200
Academy 2020 Winter Session Master Class, $1,500

Carbon County Arts Guild & Depot Gallery, Red Lodge: $1,200

Flathead Community Foundation, Kalispell: Dot Studio at KALICO Contemporary Art Center, $1,205

Good Grief Group, Kalispell: $1,000

The Song Catchers Workshop, $1,500

The Song Catchers Workshop, $1,500

World Fiddle Music, $1,000

Supplying Foundation, Eureka: $1,200

Tribal Art Center, Missoula: $1,250

Turning the Wheel Missoula, Missoula: $1,470

Cottonwood ALC, Helena: $1,500

Cottonwood ALC, Helena: $1,500

Flathead Community Foundation, Kalispell: $1,500

Mountain View Gallery, Red Lodge: $1,000

Missoula Art Museum, Missoula: $1,000

Montana Poetry Out Loud Finals set for March 7

Students from across Montana will converge in Helena on Saturday, March 7, to compete in the 2020 Montana Poetry Out Loud State Finals. The competition will be held at Grandstreet Theatre, 325 N. Park Avenue.

The event begins at 10 a.m. and will continue through three rounds into the afternoon. Free and open to the public, the community is invited to attend.

For more information contact Monica Grable, 406-444-6522 or Monica.Grable@mt.gov.
The Buffalo Unity Project

Engaging Poplar students with their culture through filmmaking

Near the beginning of the new documenta-
tion show “In This Together, We Are One: The Buffalo Unity Project,” seventh-grade teacher Jacob Turcotte asks his students a critical question: “How did the buffalo create unity amongst our people?”

Turcotte teaches at Poplar Middle School, located in the heart of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation, in the remote, northeastern corner of Montana. The 3,200-square mile reservation is home to two separate American Indian nations, the Assiniboine and the Sioux. Both were tribes of the American plains, and both built their cultures around bison.

The challenges facing modern American Indian communities are well documented, but perhaps none are more devas-
tating to the identity of Plains Indians than the loss connection to buffalo, their cultural keystone.

“We would ask students, ‘What kind of Indian are you? Who is your relation?’ And the students couldn’t answer those questions,” says Turcotte. “We’re right here in the middle of this reservation and we have chil-
dren who don’t even know where they come from. And we thought, ‘What can we do to change that?’ We had to do something differ-
tent to reach them, to engage our students. And the Buffalo Unity Project came about.”

In 2017, Turcotte led a group of Fort Peck elementary students on a buffalo harvest at the tribal buffalo ranch, where a herd of several hundred bison was reintroduced in 1999. Student engagement was so high during the harvest and processing of the animal that Turcotte saw the opportunity to expand the experience into a more formal curriculum with older students.

Poplar Middle School principal Morgan Norgaard immediately embraced the idea, and the Buffalo Unity Project was born. A buffalo harvest was planned for the spring of 2019, with the participation of the entire seventh-grade class.

“The Buffalo Unity Project turned out to be much more successful than we had initial-
ly dreamed it could be,” says Norgaard. “All the teachers were on board with the idea of creating a thematic unit that stretched across all subject areas, including English Language Arts, social studies, science, math, gym, art, music, and technology. Throughout the week we didn’t hear of a single moan or gripe coming from any of the 72 students or adults.”

And when Tahj Kjelland, a music in-
structor for MAPS Media Institute who has worked with the Poplar community for sev-
everal years, showed Turcotte a student-made MAPS film from the Blackfeet Reservation, the idea for a student-involved documentary film about the project took hold.

MAPS Media Institute, a free-of-charge media arts program based out of Hamilton, Montana, has been serving Montana students in grades 6-12 since 2004 with instruction in filmmak-
ing, graphic design, and music production.

In April, Poplar Middle School wel-
come the MAPS Media Lab, directed by award-winning filmmaker Dav Carr, to assist with documenting the Buffalo Unity Project.

The school held an essay contest to deter-
mine the seventh graders who would work with the MAPS crew on the film. Over five intense days, students learned the technical skills of operating a camera, capturing audio and film-set etiquette. They also learned the art of the interview with teachers, tribal elders, and other students as subjects.

“I can honestly say that it was life-chang-
ing for those individuals,” says principal Norgaard. “One student has completely changed his college outlook and intends on majoring in Media Arts because this project was so influential to him.”

The significance of the buffalo harvest was clearly felt among the entire class of Poplar seventh-graders, who were asked to compose thoughts about the proj-
ect. A selection of those thoughts, read by the students themselves, is used throughout the film to great effect.

Over stunning aerial footage of the buffalo herd, students express moving descriptions of bison: “The buffalo remind me of friends. If one is down, they protect each other, feeling free as can be. They stay together when one is hurt.” “As I am writing this, I can feel the cries and lost souls of the ancestors before me.”

And this quote, the inspiration for the film’s title: “They try to make us feel ashamed about who we are. Seeing my people prove them wrong, we are still here. In this together, we are one.”

That’s a message echoed by Turcotte, who regards buffalo as the great unifier of all people. An interview sequence near the end of the film drives that point home: “You know, our people have been through a lot. Our children have been through a lot. And those buffalo have been through a lot. People tried to wipe us off the face of this Earth. And we’re still here. And a lot of it has to do with that buffalo. Bringing it all together in unity will create that healing. It’s powerful.”

Turcotte says, rocking forward with clasped hands. “Powerful.”

“The Buffalo Unity Project” may be viewed on YouTube.com.
Montana-made film
The Last Beyond.

Big Sky Documentary Film Festival: Feb. 14-23

The 17th annual Big Sky Documentary Film Festival (BSDFF), the largest documentary film festival in the American West, is slated for Feb. 14-23 in Missoula. Guest programming director Joanne Feinberg, a 20-year veteran and award-winning filmmaker, has selected more than 150 films for the 2020 program from nearly 2,000 entries. The festival will screen films in The Wilma, The Roxy, the Hellgate Elks Lodge and other venues in the Bozeman area, and every so often, we’ll sneak in rugged badlands and epic landmarks around Glacier National Park.

Riding the rails
Now that we’ve got you going to grandpa’s house in style, it’s time to ride the rails! “Danger Lights” was filmed in Miles City and Lombard during the 1930s steam era. The railroad lines were hopping, and this film about competitive railroad men competing for the love of the character played by Jean Arthur has incredible footage for the railroad buffs! A real tug-of-war between two steam locomotives is one of the tension filled sequences. Originally filmed in 63mm Naturalvision, the highlight is a 100-mph race to get one of the characters to a train surgeon in Chicago. Actual scenes of railroading in the yards is a highlight of this pre-code film which can be viewed on YouTube.

Lewistown became the finale for a nuclear missile stand-off in the film “Broken Arrow.” Code for a missing nuclear weapon, this tense drama between former friends and military comrades played by John Travolta and Christian Slater culminates in a dramatic train sequence with helicopters, explosions and dramatic twists, all on a moving train.

Finding operational train tracks can be difficult, and the Central Montana Rail proved to be the ideal railroad. Their tracks in the prairie were smooth and had matching landscapes on each side, so the train could run to one end filming scenes, run back and keep filming. This rail line features the popular tourist attraction “Charlie Russell Chew Choo,” complete with train robbers.

Or how about airplanes?
Getting across the state by either train or automobile along the Hi-Line can take over 12 hours, and an airplane might be just the trick—or maybe not. “Always” director Steven Spielberg recruited top pilots Steve Hinton and Dennis Lynch to fly the Douglas A-26 Invader fighter bombers (#57 and #59) in the supernatural fantasy film.

Fighting fires in the forests is a tough, dangerous job, both on the ground and in the air. Richard Dreyfus and John Goodman take perilous risks with their airplanes with tragic results for some of them. Holly Hunter shines as the grieving girlfriend, and Audrey Hepburn appears in her last role.

Footage from the remarkable 1988 fires in Yellowstone National Park was used to great effect, and the crew filmed in the Kootenai National Forest, at Bull Lake, and were based out of Libby. More than 500 residents worked as extras portraying the wildland firefighters. This love story was a remake of the 1943 film “A Guy Named Joe,” a classic war film.

However you travel across Montana this winter, stay safe and check the road reports! Learn more about films made in Montana, incentives, crew and locations at montanafilm.com and follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

FLIC screens full-length features, shorts, animation, student films and documentaries, including a broad selection of international films from over a dozen countries. In addition to screenings, BSDFF hosts the Big Sky DocShop, a five-day filmmakers’ festival that includes panels, workshops, and the popular Big Sky Pitch for works in progress. The 2020 DocShop conference will focus on “Sustainability and Integrity,” an issue facing paths for building a sustainable career as a documentary filmmaker while maintaining integrity as an independent storyteller.

The Tribeca Film Institute will return to DocShop for a fourth year with the IF/Then Shorts Pitch for the American Dream competition. This year, one project $25,000 in production funding as well as distribution support through TFI and new 2020-partner ESPN.

Ross Brothers Retrospective
The festival will also welcome award-winning filmmaking duo Bill Ross and Turner Ross as retrospective artists, featuring their full body of feature documentary work Feb. 15-17. Their newest film, “Bleary Nose, Empty Pockets,” will screen at the Sky following its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival. The brothers also passivate a master class at DocShop on Feb. 17.

In addition, BSDFF presents a retrospective of veteran Oscar-nominated filmmakers Julia Reichert and Steve Bognar. Reichert is a co-founder of New Day Films and a three-time Academy Award nominee for “The Last Truck,” “ Seeing Red” and “Union Maids.” Bognar’s solo films have premiered at Sundance, SXSW and the Telluride Film Festival. Most recently, Reichert and Bognar’s short documentary about the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes continues in 2020, featuring a strand of Native-directed documentary films and welcoming eight emerging Indigenous artists as fellows in the 4th World Indigenous Media Lab. The year-long fellowship supports emerging and mid-career Indigenous filmmakers with opportunities to develop filmmaking skills and networks, hands-on training, master classes, work-in-progress development, pitching, and meetings with funders and other industry decision-makers.

For tickets, official selections, and the festival screening schedule head to www.bigskyfilmfest.org.

Governor Steve Bullock welcomed fans and filmmakers to the 15th annual Big Sky Documentary Film Festival.

Reinforcing the understanding that the area’s attendees are so supportive of independent cinema, says FLIC producer David King. He notes that spirited discussions between audience and filmmakers cap most screening blocks.

Among this year’s gems: “The Last Beyond,” a 1930s period piece shot in Montana and featuring Stephen Small Salmon, a Pend d’Oreille tribal member from the Flathead Reservation (screened at 6 p.m. Jan. 24), “Wuthering Heights,” Emily Bronte’s classic tale of undying love and tormented passion, produced and directed by Montana native Bryan Ferrier (1 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 26); and from Germany, “Effigy – Poison and the City,” directed, written and produced by Udo Flohe.

Films show on two screens beginning at 6 p.m. Friday at the Showboat Cinema, and continue through the awards ceremony at 5:30 p.m. Sunday. Informal gatherings, and a free children’s film are part of festivities.

Encore screenings are available Jan. 24-26, 25-30, visit FLICPolson.com for details.

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Flathedge Lake International Cinemafest: Jan. 24-26

Planes, Trains and Automobiles, on location in Montana!

By Allison Whitmer
Montana Film Commissioner

It’s not just the skiers who rejoice when snow starts to fall across Montana’s mountains; film crews are gearing up for winter car commercials that air during the holidays.

You’ve probably seen them: Impossibly smooth cars swooshing along desert mountain roads, gleaming chrome in the sharp sunlight, tire treads gripping the snow in slow motion. The trees are perfectly blanket in snow, the towns are immaculate, and the cars sweep through the snow with ease.

Ford, Toyota, Kia, Jaguar, Hyundai, GM, BMW, Audi and Subaru are just a few of the cars and trucks seen pulling trailers, pushing snowplows and breaking trail in fresh snow over the years. The commercials shown over “Year End Events” or “Holiday Sales” are called running footage, a specialty sub-set of car commercials.

Other commercials focus on special features that perform in extreme temperatures, from tires to transmissions. This fall, pre-snow old-west Montana scenes were featured in Kia spots.

These producers look for the snowiest snow, the sweeping turns, and made-for-snow-globe towns. We have so many places in Montana that fit this bill that we have an entire section of our database dedicated to “Performance Roads.” Viewers might recognize Big Sky, Whistler Mountain, West Yellowstone and other locations in the Bozeman area, and every so often, we’ll sneak in rugged badlands and epic landmarks around Glacier National Park.

Now that we’ve got you going to grandpa’s house in style, it’s time to ride the rails!

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Flly worthy: The historic Belton Bridge was the western entrance to Glacier National Park from 1920 to 1938. (Photo courtesy of Glacier National Park)
Kostasindustded into Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame

By Shaylee Ragar

Reprinted with permission from the Bozeman Chronicle, Oct. 11

Kostas Lazarides has at least 50 guitars scattered around the histor- ic three-story building he owns in downtown Belgrade.

It’s not surprising the prolific songwriter has an abundance of in- struments, but it’s a bit abnormal that he lives a quiet life in a sleepy town.

Lazarides, known professionally as Kostas, has written chart-topping songs for several artists, including Patty Loveless, Travis Tritt and George Strait.

On Oct. 14, the 70-year-old joined the likes of Johnny Cash, Dolly Parton and Chuck Berry when he was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame. He stood alongside other inductees Dwight Yoakam, Larry Gatlin, Rivers Rutherford, Marcus Hummon and Sharon Vaughn for a formal ceremony in Nashville’s Music City Hall.

But in an interview before the ceremony, Lazarides said what he was looking forward to most was getting the fuss over with and returning home to his 10-year-old pup, Bella.

“I don’t need the limelight to find happi- ness. I’d just as soon take what I need from each day and move on,” he said.

Lazarides spoke in lyrical prose throughout an interview in his apartment overlooking Main Street in Belgrade. Nearly every inch of the space was filled with antiques, knock-knacks, and of course, his guitars. A grandfa- ther clock engrailed with the year 1913 sat in the corner.

Lazarides said he’s got more projects coming, but that he prefers to tackle one day at a time instead of planning for the future.

“Live until you die and make people happy when you can.”

Ballet Beyond Borders returns to Missoula Jan. 8-11

The Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre brings Ballet Beyond Borders to downtown Missoula with the Grand Prix Dance Challenge and Global Diplomacy Conference slated for Jan. 8-11 in Missoula.

This marks the fifth global dance festival hosted by Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre and follows on the heels of a highly successful premier of Ballet Beyond Borders in Los An- geles and Westchester, CA, this past August.

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The four-day event kicks off Jan. 8 with an interview in his apartment overlooking Main Street in Belgrade. Nearly every inch of the space was filled with antiques, knock-knacks, and of course, his guitars. A grandfa- ther clock engrailed with the year 1913 sat in the corner.

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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

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/arts/macs
Organizations: art.mt.gov/gac/cgrps
Schools: art.mt.gov/gac/schools
Programs and Services: art.mt.gov/ps

Call for Cultural & Aesthetics Project Advisory Committee
Applications for membership on the Cultural and Aesthetics Project Advisory Committee will be accepted through May 6, 2020. The Montana Arts Council makes half of the appointments to this committee, and the Montana Historical Society makes the other half.

The arts council looks for a broad range of professional arts expertise, and also geographic, racial and gender balance for the committee. Obligations of the four-year terms include attending a two-day panel meeting every other year and reviewing up to 100 grant applications online in preparation for the review. The next meeting is scheduled for October 2020 in Helena. If you are interested in being considered, please send a letter of interest and a resume or bio electronically to Kristin Han Burgoyne at kburgoyne@mt.gov by May 6, 2020.

The 3 Rs at work in Montana
Public Value Partnerships 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 value; 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:

Helena Symphony: Maestro Allan R. Scott conducts the orchestra in a celebration of the late Leonard Bernstein’s 100th birthday. (Photo by Wandering Albatross Photography)

Building Relationships
Helena Symphony: The 2017-18 season represented newly discovered opportunities to the Helena Symphony to collaborate with businesses and individuals at local, regional, national, and international levels. In a non-series concert featuring Philip Aaberg and several members of the Helena Symphony Orchestra, the HSO worked with Aaberg’s Sweetgrass Music and EDGE Marketing+Design to film Facebook live videos and digital ads to help promote the concert, which also was the official launch of Aaberg’s latest recording, Versatile. These efforts brought together existing symphony-goers with Aaberg’s fans and provided a platform to grow the HSO audience, both online and in the concert hall.
In January, the Helena Symphony welcomed Montana resident and acclaimed violinist Tim Fain to the Helena Civic Center stage. Through online marketing and collaboration with public radio, the HSO attracted first-time ticket buyers from Helena but also from Missoula and Hamilton, which Fain calls home, and saw one of the symphony’s largest audiences for a January concert ever, as a result.
Joining thousands of arts organizations, Masterworks VI: Bernstein 100! (May 2018) celebrated the late Leonard Bernstein’s upcoming 100th birthday anniversary, which fell in August. The concert, which was listed as an official centennial performance by the Leonard Bernstein Foundation online, was hosted by Michael Marsolé of Montana Public Radio (Missoula). In addition to a Facebook live broadcast prior to the concert, the entire performance was recorded, and portions were aired during a week-long celebration of Bernstein’s 100th birthday at MTPR in August, and are also available to be streamed online.
Also airing were clips from Maestro Allan R. Scott’s interview with Jamie Bernstein, eldest daughter of Leonard Bernstein. Using social media before, during and after the performance in May helped the HSO to reach and expand their audience and keep followers apprised to the MTTPR week-long programming, which highlights the Helena Symphony.

Following the boomerang announcement on Facebook and in the news that the Helena Community Credit Union (HCCU) had signed a multi-year commitment for the naming rights of Symphony Under the Stars, the HSO worked closely with HCCU to create new marketing strategies, such as a billboard ad and geo-fencing services, and they aided in a partnership with the Blackfoot River Brewing Co. which crafted “Galaxy Pale Ale” in honor of the upcoming show. The beer-making day and launch party were shared on social media, which began the day before the show, other partnerships with Carroll College, the BSA Scouts, AARP Helena Foundation, and 406 Recycling worked together to put on an entire event. A proprietary photo-sharing campaign launched at Symphony Under the Stars, which was attended by more than 18,000 people, and allowed concert-goers to share their own pictures and comments with all others in attendance in real time. The result of all efforts was a true community event.

Creating Relevance
Sunburst Foundation, Eureka: Community Soup Night is an event that takes place every Tuesday at the Tobacco Valley Senior Center. Local businesses and groups take turns providing a free meal to anyone in the community, or by donation. Donations help to maintain the building.
Sunburst’s arts director and board members volunteer to operate Community Soup Night four days throughout the year. This involves providing all ingredients, preparing and serving soup, rolls, salad and a dessert for up to 140 people, and cleaning up after. There is a commercial kitchen completely open to the dining room at the center for this activity so it is a good way to engage with the diners while working.

Sunburst also provides a variety of opportunities at the organization to get involved. Diners are families and individuals of all ages, as well as senior citizens who regularly frequent the center. This is a very social occasion and is also a very effective way to network with people and to promote upcoming Sunburst events by placing information at the tables and making announcements, and simply talking with people.
Sunburst has noticed an increase of older folks at its concerts, especially after one of the soup nights. The organization has a number of older volunteers, who have implemented a policy that all individuals 90 and over are free of charge to all of organization-sponsored events, which is a great way to cater to the group of active people over 90 in the Eureka area.
In a small town, Community Soup Night offers a perfect way to give back to the community, connect with existing audiences, and interest others who don’t normally attend. It is also a great way to connect with new people moving in to the area.

Return on Investment
Missoula Children’s Theatre (MCT, Inc.): This is an inspiring story from a parent of a student at Ulm School about an MCT residency.
“My son thought he was useless in school because he couldn’t ‘get’ anything. MCT gave him the opportunity to see that he could succeed at something and that it would just take him a little more time and effort than the other kids but he was just as good. During the play, he helped the other kids with their lines. "MCT is a wonderful opportunity to teach children to overcome fears of being in front of people, or to just try something new, to dress up in a costume and use their imaginations. I have seen other children who are labeled as having a single issue." "MCT is a wonderful opportunity to teach children to overcome fears of being in front of people, or to just try something new, to dress up in a costume and use their imaginations. I have seen other children who are labeled as having a single issue."

Missoula Children’s Theatre (MCT, Inc.): Inspiring kids to believe in themselves with productions like “Johnny Appleseed.”

MCT, Inc. is a wonderful opportunity to teach children to overcome fears of being in front of people, or to just try something new, to dress up in a costume and use their imaginations. I have seen other children who are labeled as having a single issue.”
MAP Update: Insights on the business of art

By Rickie van Berkum

MAP – Montana Artrepreneur Program (MAP) starts a new year of training visual artists to develop a sustainable business of art. In 2020, three cohorts will meet in Great Falls, Missoula and Three Forks with coaches Annie Allen, Rickie van Berkum and Liz Chappie-Zullo respectively. We have a diverse and dynamic group of artists looking forward to our 12-week journey – intense, information-packed and potentially transformative experience.

One of the most rewarding and challenging parts of MAP is working with artists to articulate their story, the “why” of their art. The story becomes the foundation of the marketing tools that the artists create, such as their promotional materials, social media presence, booth, and other strategies for reaching new customers. Achieving a well-articulated story often directly impacts the artist’s artwork, resulting in growth in their artform.

The 500 Montana artists who have completed MAP are busy creating their art and developing markets for their work. November and December are busy show season. In the past year, I caught up with a couple of MAP artists who brought me up to date on their business of art.

Shilling of KALICO (threadsandpoetry.com), MAP 2014: While my art has evolved since I first participated in MAP, the basic principles learned then have kept me on track towards building the business side of my art. When I show my work or interact with the public, I have more confidence that I am presenting myself and my art at a professional level.

Trev Castillo (www.acastillocreations.com), MAP 2019: What a journey! I am truly grateful for MAP. It gave me an opportunity to grow my business and present my work in a way that I thought was more professional and took control of my work. I was superintendent of the very first Native American Arts Show at the Western Montana Fair in 2019. Due to the artwork I did, I currently am a board member of the Jeannette Rankin Peace Center. Opportunities include making t-shirt logos for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women awareness and presenting my art at Diverse U.

More opportunities are in the works. I have more energy and passion for the business of art. It feels like I could have my own business and that it could happen. For now? Rest.

Amanda Bielby (www.amandapaints.com), MAP 2019: After developing a successful past painting contract business, I decided to change my focus to art. But I felt lost because the art world was too unknown. What is my art worth, where do I start to sell it, what is available? When I searched online, there was a ton of contradicting advice, “do this, don’t do that.” Art school ads poured into my inbox, some costing a year’s worth of my wages.

MAP was not only affordable, but my art coach and classmates who face to face, I received one-on-one coaching. Before I knew it, I found myself in a community of professionals that just like me, helping and cheering each other on.

For my first year of promoting myself as a professional artist, I quadrupled my sales in art while still working on my contract business. I learned how to move forward within my means while accomplishing a top-notch presentation. I just did my first fine arts show, and because of the skills I learned, all the other artists were coming over to my display and commenting on how professional it was. I built my booth to save money and stick to my roots, but because of MAP, I know how far to take it.

What is MAP?

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

Instruction is focused on advancing proficiency in your chosen medium, articulating your story, and presenting yourself 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.

Applications to the next MAP instructional year will be accepted through May 15, 2020. To learn more about MAP, visit art.mt.gov/map or contact Monica Grable, Arts Education Director, at 406-444-6532.

Alisha Shilling of KALICO

Alisha Shilling of KALICO (kalsilo.com), a new community art space in Kalispell, is among the change-makers selected for the Creative Community Fellow’s fifth cohort. Over the next six months, this intergenerational group will work with National Art Strategies (NAS), faculty partners, mentors and each other to test, adapt and build on their work. “The community of practice cohort model of the Creative Community Fellows is one of the program’s lasting strengths,” said program director Tracy Widmann. “The Fellows’ unique perspectives will contribute to transformational learning experiences throughout the program, shaping and elevating their capacities to drive change.”

State of the Arts asked Shilling to elaborate on the new art center and her experience as a Creative Community Fellow:

Can you tell us more about KALICO?

Opening a community space for the arts was a dream my husband, Adam, and I had 20 years ago. The condensed story goes like this: We were on our honeymoon in Calgary sitting at a coffee shop, dreaming of what we wanted to do with our lives. We got out a notebook and drew the plans out for creative space which back then included a coffee shop... We fielded the drawing away and headed to college. Adam has been an art teacher for the past 15 years at Summit Prep School and I studied photography and psychology. I have spent the past 15 years raising our four kids, being a photographer, volunteer art teacher at my kids’ school and a bookkeeper. The time seemed right to open a space and so we began to resurface two years ago during a time of growth in the Flathead Valley. In September 2018, I found a donor to help us get started and Flathead County Foundation became our fiscal sponsor. I spent the past year networking with local community leaders and business owners.

We formed our board of directors in May 2019 and just secured our first location at 149 Main Street. We are set for a soft opening in January and a grand opening in February.

Our mission: KALICO Art Center is a flexible space for all ages and abilities to create, connect and experience contemporary art by offering dynamic classes, events, exhibitions and studio space.

What inspired you to apply for the fellowship, and how do you feel it can benefit your organization?

One of our board members emailed me the information about NAS (National Art Strategies) Creative Community Fellows. It was inspired to apply because honestly, starting a nonprofit is super hard and I was hitting a wall of what the next step was.

This program is specifically geared towards creative change-makers who have started a project but need help moving their ideas from concept to reality.

We started our work in September with monthly modules that are each focused on various topics, for example, field research, equity, design, budgeting and crafting a pitch.

This course work was critical to keeping the idea of KALICO moving forward. I have felt supported with knowledge and resources that especially being a small community have been a hurdle. It has challenged me to think about our project in ways I may not have without this opportunity.

What have you learned so far at cohort meetings?

Our first of two in-person trainings happened from Oct. 28-Nov. 5 in Vermont. I gathered with 24 other cohorts along with the NAS team, University of Pennsylvania faculty, and mentors and individuals in various art fields.

This experience was so thoughtfully crafted by NAS. Learning in an intensely focused and mentorship and individuals in various art fields.

What is Strategic Investment Grant funds available

Strategic Investment Grant (SIG) funds are still available for upcoming projects and professional development. These grants provide up to $1,000 in matching funds for professional artists, nonprofit 501(c)(3) arts organizations and Pre-School-Grade 12 teachers in Montana, and are available in four categories:

- Professional development grants help build individual art skills and knowledge, art 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 activities help 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; contact Kristin Han Burgoyne (kburgoyne@mt.gov) or 406-444-6449 for more information.
Montanans Receive Artist’s Innovation Awards

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