Montana Poets Laureate
Melissa Kwasny and M.L. Smoker
share title and responsibilities
Melissa Kwasny and M.L. Smoker were appointed by Gov. Steve Bullock in July as Montana’s next poets laureate – and the first to share the position since it was established in 2005. “The Montana Arts Council is inspired by this innovative approach and encouraged by Gov. Bullock’s selection,” said MAC Executive Director Tatiana Grant. “We look forward to seeing how Ms. Smoker and Ms. Kwasny will build on the work of past poets laureate to promote poetry.” The Montana Poet Laureate is a two-year honorary position created by the state legislature in 2005 and administered by the Montana Arts Council. Kwasny and Smoker take over from outgoing Poet Laureate Lowell Jaeger, and serve through Aug. 1, 2021. As co-poets laureate and women from marginalized communities, Kwasny and Smoker “aim to celebrate poetry as an art that fosters connection, relationships and community, Kwasny and Smoker “aim to celebrate poetry as an art that fosters connection, relationships and community, as well as with the broader historical legacies and events of our time.”

Artist’s Innovation Awards
The response to the Artist’s Innovation Award application process was fantastic, according to MAC grants director Kristin Han Burgoyne. “Thank you to everyone who applied!” Application deadline is Oct. 1, and the winners will be announced in the winter issue of State of the Arts.

Crow storyteller Grant Bulltail named National Heritage Fellow
Crow storyteller Grant Bulltail is among the National Endowment for the Arts 2019 National Heritage Fellows. Bulltail joins Heritage Fellows Dan AnDOToppe, a Basque musician and tradition bearer from Boulder, CO; Beth Smoker, a decoy carver from Marion Station, MD; Las Tesoros de San Antonio, featuring Beatriz (La Paloma del Norte) Llamas and Blanquieta (Blanca Rosa) Rodriguez, a tejedor from San Antonio, TX; and Bob Fulcher, a folklorist and state park manager from Clinton, TN.

“Belief” born again
Julie Cajune takes one-woman play to NYC
"Belief: Lives and Stories of Montana’s Salish Women," a one-woman show featuring Salish tribal member, cultural historian and actress Julie Cajune, was selected for a one-week run Sept. 18-22 at the historic Gene Frankel Theatre in New York City. The play draws Cajune's personal life experiences and the true stories of generations of the women in her family living on the Flathead Indian Reservation in Northwest Montana. The stories told in “Belief” offer a rare opportunity for audiences to participate in a genuine cultural exchange, and to gain insight into the daily lives of people in a Native American community as they grapple with the human condition, as well as with the broader historical legacies and events of our time.

“Belief” had run its course," says Cajune. “But life has many surprises.” Cajune forgot about the dream until a friend who came about through her connection with Scottish historian James Hunter. “We thought ‘Belief’ had run its course,” says Cajune. “But life has many surprises.”

The New York performance started with her daughter’s vision. “She called me and told me that she had this vivid dream of us in a large city walking down the street and seeing a poster for ‘Belief.” Cajune forgot about the dream until a friend who was living in New York City dropped by for a visit, was intrigued with “Belief,” and suggested Cajune bring the play to New York.

At that exact moment, I remembered Sarah’s dream and so I said OK, but how would I go about even finding a space to host me?”

“Belief” born again
Julie Cajune takes one-woman play to NYC

Julie Cajune rehearses “Belief” with musician Swil Kanin.
I had the good fortune to be in Billings for North East Northwest, activities curated by Billings Cultural Partners to spotlight the richness of Montana’s metropolitan center. Regional board members Tony Linder and Lynne Montague keep me updated on the health and vibrancy of the cultural scene, but nothing replaces being present. I had a whirlwind of conversations with the leadership of some of the community’s cultural anchors such as the Yellowstone Art Museum, the Alberta Bair Theater, SCLA Billings, the Western Heritage Center, and the Northwest Steele Gallery at MSU Billings. Corby Skinner and Anna Paige invited me to chat with them on Yellowstone Public Radio. I got a peek at the home and studio of Jane Waggoner Deschner and Jon Lodge while meeting artists from across the region. I wandered through a special Art Walk on a beautiful fall evening. I was able to experience a delightful performance at Billings Studio Theatre and catch the haunting presentation of “The Other Mozart” in Petro Theater at MSU Billings.

In a brief break for a cup of coffee, I struck up a conversation with a fellow patron, only to discover that it was Mark Fee, a prolific poet and social activist that I had been communicating with by email. I literally couldn’t turn around without encountering experience in Billings. Billings has an active community of support; it is connected, collaborative, and inspired. The Montana Arts Council will be conducting the winter business meeting in Billings. I look forward to hearing about their impressions.

Active community engagement

While my time in Billings is fresh on my mind, active community engagement is what keeps the arts relevant in Montana. I was in Whitefish to attend the North Valley Music School’s scholarship luncheon and witnessed the commitment to keeping music education accessible. During my visit to northeastern Montana for the Fort Peck Theater’s 50th anniversary, I could see the way in which that cultural anchor draws together a community of theatre professionals, from across the state and country, to develop the skills that serve as the foundation of successful careers.

The same is true of Montana Actors’ Theatre in Havre, and their internship that hands power of producing and presenting theatre productions, along with a summer camp, to young professionals.

The United States Senate voted Aug. 1 to confirm Mary Anne Carter as chair of the National Endowment for the Arts. Carter has served as an acting chair of the agency since June 5, 2018, and becomes the Endowment’s 12th chair since its inception in 1965.

“I look forward to continuing the legacy of a talented and dedicated staff of professionals in our important work of ensuring that every American – in every community and in every neighborhood – has access to the arts,” Carter said.

“From the moment that she became involved with the NEA, Mary Anne Carter has placed a high priority on listening and being East Coast,” says MAC Executive Director Tatiana Gant. “She has demonstrated that she is an adept leader and values the roles of state arts agencies. I’m thrilled to have her confirmed as chair and look forward to welcoming her to Montana.”

“From inspiring thousands of arts administrators and supporters in cities and states across America, to representing the United States abroad in demonstrating the importance of collaboration and communication across cultures at the International Federation of Arts Councils, the NEA is an adept leader and values the roles of state arts agencies. I’m thrilled to have her confirmed as chair and look forward to welcoming her to Montana.”

“Americans for the Arts is grateful to have a partner who shares our steadfast commitment to providing access to the arts for all Americans, and we look forward to working with Mary Anne in the coming years,” The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASA) also praised her appointment. “Her deep engagement with state arts agencies demonstrates her dedication to the federal-state partnership,” said NASA President and CEO Robert L. Lynch.

“Grant Bulltail is a National Heritage Fellow, I had difficulty finding information on him. As I spoke to those who were familiar with him and heard the tales that he has preserved, I was humbled to think of the extraordinary commitment, across generations, to protect Apsáalooke culture.

I am so fortunate to have colleagues across the region, from Wyoming to Utah, who have been carefully capturing his knowledge. We can be sure that through audio, video, written word and, most importantly, live storytelling, we can be sure the art endures.

Mary Anne Carter confirmed as new NEA Chair

Mary Anne Carter

Lauren Pan, the Montana Arts Council’s new business specialist, joins the agency with 10 years of experience in education, international relations, program development, grants and budget management. Having spent the past seven years studying and working in China and in various cities along the East Coast, Pan is excited to be back in Helena serving the mission of the Montana Arts Council.

She has a bachelor’s in international studies and enjoys exploring new places and sharing her love of Chinese language and culture with anyone who will listen. As business specialist for the MAC team, Pan will be responsible for managing council data and supporting grants, accounting, and office administrative functions for the agency. She can be reached at 406-444-6510 or Lauren.Pan@mt.gov.

Grant Bulltail: Preserving stories across generations

When I received the call that Grant Bulltail would be recognized as a National Heritage Fellow, I had difficulty finding information on him. As I spoke to those who were familiar with him and heard the tales that he has preserved, I was humbled to think of the extraordinary commitment, across generations, to protect Apsáalooke culture.

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Montana: Committed to the long game

All of this makes me wonder: what could we risk if we don’t keep arts opportunities widely available? What if there wasn’t the chance for a child in Whitefish to learn music, and all of the joy that comes with that? Or for a theatre student to spend a summer developing professional skills that can launch a career? Or the chance to hear the story of the land we are on and appreciate the gift we have?

In my job, I am often looking to data linked to return on investment to demonstrate value, generally in a relatively short time frame. This string of experiences has cemented for me that Montana is committed to the long game, knowing that this opportunity builds to a future full of beauty.

MAC adds business specialist to team

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**CONGRATOS TO ...**

Billings artist Judd Thompson, 36, who was asked by Pendleton Woolen Mills to create a design for one of their world-famous wool blankets. The invitation came at the Denver Summer Art Market, where a Pendleton representative invited the artist to submit some of his work for a potential blanket design. After a year of gathering images of his work and preparing for the presentation, Thompson submitted 13 designs. Pendleton selected “A Horse Named Paint,” which Thompson described to KTVO.com as a dreamlike “silhouette of a horse running through this snow-covered field.” Thompson grew up around his parents’ business, The Custer Battlefield Trading Post Cafe in Crow Agency. “Because of the store, I constantly had artwork around me and artists coming into the Trading Post, selling art out of the back of their truck, and I thought that was cool,” Thompson said. The blanket featuring his artwork made its national premiere in late September, and a limited number were available during Crow Fair at his family’s trading post. They are currently available there, at the Stapleton Gallery in downtown Billings, as well as other Pendleton outlets.

**Pendleton blanket design by Judd Thompson**

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Missoula artist Barb Schwarz Karst, whose acrylic painting, “Fearless,” recently won the Richeson/Shive Award in the National Society of Painters in Casein and Acrylic’s (NSPCA) 65th annual national juried exhibition. The NSPCA displayed her artwork at the Salmagundi Club in New York City in June 2019. Schwarz Karst has been juried in, and displayed with NSPCA in the Big Apple for the past 13 years and this is the second national award she has received. The first was the Judy and Elias Newman Memorial Award, given for her painting of Chief Joseph. She is best known as a contemporary painter, whose acrylic series, “Shifting Winds,” emphasizes how the West is still intriguing and often romanticized; her “Montana Rust Belt: Abandoned Industries” depicts abstract close-ups of the machines used centuries ago during Big Sky Country’s early labor development.

Great Falls artist Jay Joseph Contway, who was honored Sept. 6 by the Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame and the C.M. Russell Museum with the Saddle of Honor award during a chuck-wagon barbecue at the museum. “Montana’s Storyteller in Bronze” has spent a lifetime creating western sculpture. His knowledge and respect for the working cowboy shows clearly in his art, and his sculpture displays an appreciation for history, his own native ancestry and the people and animals of the West. Contway was inducted into the Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame in 2015, and now joins last year’s Saddle of Honor recipient Charles M. Russell. The event is part of a pilot project currently taking place between the Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame and the C.M. Russell Museum to find a home for all honorees of the Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame. Both organizations share the mission of honoring the Montana cowboy as integral to defining the values of the “Soul of the American West.”

**Jay Joseph Contway**

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Montana artist Sandra Dal Poggetto, whose artwork is featured in the Fall 2018 issue of Minding Nature and graces the front cover of the journal. In an article titled “Landscape art” senior editor Anya Clauss interviews Dal Poggetto about her paintings, which Clauss says “cross temporal and spatial scale, creating an amazing array of pulsing and colorful canvases.” The artist, whose artwork and accompanying essays have been published in several academic and literary journals, says of her abstract works: “The natural world is a profound place. It really is a place that never ends. And if you’re truly engaged in your art and if your artwork or your painting is about landscape, it is a never-ending discovery.” Read the interview at www.mindingnature.org/fall-2018.

**Minding Nature, cover art by Sandra Dal Poggetto**

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Whitefish author Jeff Giles, who was recently hired by Vanity Fair to hold the newly created position of executive Hollywood editor for the magazine’s Los Angeles bureau, Giles, who joins full-time after serving as a VF contributing editor and as a contract writer for The New York Times, will oversee the bureau and be charged with assigning and editing entertainment stories across all platforms. In the entertainment journalism realm, Giles is well known for his long run as an editor at Entertainment Weekly where he oversaw the team and weekly coverage from 2006 to 2014. He has also held editorial positions at Rolling Stone, The New Yorker and was a senior editor at NewswEEK where he led arts coverage and created that publication’s Oscar Roundtable franchise. A bit of Giles personal trivia: He appeared as an extra in an episode of The Lord of the Rings while writing about the franchise. While living in Whitefish, he published two young-adult novels, centering on the northwest Montana: The Edge of Everything and The Break of Darkness.

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Missoula artist Teresa Garland Warner, whose oil painting, “Sunrise Glow,” was accepted in the National Oil and Acrylic Painters’ Society 28th Best of America National Exhibition at Montgomery Lee Fine Art Gallery in Park City, UT. The exhibition is on display Sept. 27-Oct. 27.

**“Sunrise Glow” by Teresa Garland Warner**

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**Fearless** by Barb Schwarz Karst

“Fearless” by Barb Schwarz Karst, whose acrylic painting, “Fearless,” recently won the Richeson/Shive Award in the National Society of Painters in Casein and Acrylic’s (NSPCA) 65th annual national juried exhibition. The NSPCA displayed her artwork at the Salmagundi Club in New York City in June 2019. Schwarz Karst has been juried in, and displayed with NSPCA in the Big Apple for the past 13 years and this is the second national award she has received. The first was the Judy and Elias Newman Memorial Award, given for her painting of Chief Joseph. She is best known as a contemporary painter, whose acrylic series, “Shifting Winds,” emphasizes how the West is still intriguing and often romanticized; her “Montana Rust Belt: Abandoned Industries” depicts abstract close-ups of the machines used centuries ago during Big Sky Country’s early labor development.

**“Fearless” by Barb Schwarz Karst**

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Montana State University film graduates Charles Burt and Omar Parker, who traded in their post-commencement academic regalia for tuxedos for their first trip as filmmakers to the Cannes Film Festival in France. Burt and Parker traveled to the prestigious European film festival with the short independent film, “Anna.” The duo and Eigertown Crescent Productions, a company they formed while MSU students, were executive producers for the film. Written and directed by Dekel Berenson and made in the Ukraine, Israel and United Kingdom, the 15-minute “Anna” was one of 11 films that vied for the 2019 Palme d’Or in the festival’s short film category.

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The MAPS Media Institute, an award-winning educational non-profit based in Hamilton, which was recently awarded a five-year, U.S. Department of Education 21st Century Community Learning Center grant, which specifically funds afterschool and summer programs. Since 2004, MAPS’ free-of-charge media arts courses have served 8th to 12th graders in Ravalli County, and in recent years outreach workshops have been offered in a number of rural locales, including on the Flathead, Blackfoot and Fort Belknap Reservations. Beginning in November, MAPS will add year-round after-school media arts classes for students in grades 8 to 12 in Helena and Helena, modeled after the Ravalli County program. The new MAPS – Lewis and Clark County program was inspired by a collaboration with the Holter Museum of Art in 2018 that resulted in the student Emmy Award-winning mini documentary “Art for Survival.” A narrative film, “EAST,” also was created with East Helena students in 2019 as part of a Myrna Loy Theater project. “MAPS was so inspired by the students’ excitement and commitment, that we immediately started brainstorming how we could bring a year-round afterschool and summer media arts program to this part of the state,” said MAPS Executive Director Clinton Harff. Half of the 21st Century Community Learning Center grant funds are earmarked for MAPS – Lewis and Clark County. MAPS will find a new home with some old friends at the Holter Museum of Art, which will house a new media arts studio. For its inaugural year in Lewis and Clark County, MAPS is offering two after-school classes: a graphic design class on Mondays and Tuesdays and a filmmaking class on Wednesdays and Thursdays from November to May.

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The Billings Symphony Orchestra and Chorale (BSO&C), which recently received a $25,000 grant from the Tippet Rise Fund of the Sidney E. Frank Foundation for its Explore Music! program. The music education and community engagement grant awarded to the BSO&C was created to share symphonic music with as many people as possible while cultivating a lifelong appreciation for the performing arts, and reaches tens of thousands of children, youth, adults, and seniors each year. The $25,000 grant will expand the already successful outreach program and bring symphony concerts and programs to more Montanans in towns across Stillwater and Carbon counties. The funds help support Musicians in Schools, Rural Rhythms concerts, Adventures in Music Day, the family concert of “Peter and the Wolf,” and master classes for high school students.

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**“True Grit” by Janice G. Bogy**

Janice G. Bogy, whose scratchboard of a grizzly bear titled “True Grit” has been selected for the international “Animals in Art” exhibition of the Society of Animal Artists. The prestigious show opened at the Briscoe Western Art Museum in San Antonio, TX, on Sept. 19 and continues through January 2020.

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The Edge is an annual celebration of Montana’s alternative culture, centered in northwest Montana: the living in Whitefish, he published two young-adult novels, centering on the northwest Montana: The Edge of Everything and The Break of Darkness.

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Congrats, Transitions and Condolences compiled by Kristi Niemeyer for State of the Arts
TRANSITIONS

Congratulations to Emily Paris-Martin, who was recently promoted to the position of executive director of the Montana Symphony. Paris-Martin comes from within the organization, having played violin (2002-2015), and served as arts/education manager, director of marketing and orchestra operations, director of communications, and director of business operations. Paris-Martin holds a bachelor’s in business from Montana State University and a master’s in communications from the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University. She makes her home in Bozeman with husband Charlie Martin, a cellist in the orchestra, and 4-year-old daughter Iris. Paris-Martin was recently selected as one of 35 orchestra professionals from across the country to participate in Essentials of Orchestra Management, the League of American Orchestras’ premier educational course for developing and innovative orchestra administrators. This past May, held July 8-18 in Los Angeles at the University of Southern California, represents the gold standard of orchestra management training, offering a powerful curriculum and invaluable career network for the future. “This experience had the utmost impact on the work and vision I have for the future of the Bozeman Symphony, from the relationships formed with an outstanding group of professionals from across the country to working directly with executives from today’s most innovative orchestras,” she says.

Welcome to Jo May Salonen, who was hired as executive director of the Missoula Symphony Association after a months-long search. Salonen served as the association’s interim executive director for the past seven months and applied for the job, along with a large number of national and international applicants. Salonen is a longtime resident of Missoula, working in the community in a variety of marketing and public relations roles. She is the former owner/partner of Salonen-Smith Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations, and was a working freelance marketing professional since before joining the MSSA. Classical music has always been her passion and she continues to play the cello in small ensembles. MSSA President Jim Valeo believes her knowledge of the organization and the community is a plus. “Jo May undertook the interim job with enormous enthusiasm and brings pertinent experience and continuity,” said Valeo. Salonen is excited about her new endeavor, “especially as we head into a new concert season where five finalists will vie to be the new music director for our orchestra and chorale.” She praises the organization as “a strong group of musicians, staff and board members – all working tirelessly to bring the highest quality of classical music to our community.” It’s an honor to be a part of the organization.”

Welcome to Lowell Stuck, who was named new executive director of the Great Falls Symphony following the retirement of Mark Hayden, who served the symphony for 13 years. Stuck comes from Butte from Portland, OR, and brings experience in business and the arts, a passion for Butte and the symphony, and a strong vision for its future. Recently retired from the commercial printing industry, he has been active in music and the arts throughout his life. Stuck attended the University of Michigan where he was business manager and student conductor of the Men’s Glee Club, and performed in The Friars, the university’s longstanding a cappella performance group; he also attended further music classes at Portland State University. From his first job to Butte seven years ago, Stuck says he “just plain fell in love with the city, its history and that ‘Butte Pride’.”

Welcome to obist Dr. Paul Chinen and violinist Luis Angel Salazar, who join the Great Falls Symphony for the 2019-2020 season. Chinen is the new principal obist in the symphony and the new conductor of the Chinook Winds, the symphony’s resident wind quintet. He succeeds Lauren Blackerby, who was recently appointed principal oboist of the Boise Symphony. Prior to joining the Great Falls Symphony and Chinook Winds, he held the position of second oboe with the Miami Symphony Orchestra, and second oboe/English horn with the Palm Beach Symphony and Florida Grand Opera Orchestra. He has also performed with the Miami City Ballet, New World Symphony, Greenville Symphony Orchestra, American Festival Pops Orchestra and Fairfax Symphony, among others. He recently received his doctorate in musical arts from the University of Miami Frost School of Music and earned a master’s from the Lynn Conservatory of Music and a bachelor’s from George Mason University where he also studied saxophone. Salazar is the interim principal second violin in the symphony and performed with the Cascade Quartet for the 2019-2020 season. He fills in for Mary Papoulis, quartet member and co-conductor of the symphony who is taking a well-deserved leave of absence after 29 years of service. Salazar has toured nationally and internationally as a soloist, chamber musician and educator. He joined the South Bend String Quartet in April 2014, performed with the group throughout Europe, Canada and the United States. Cascade Quartet member and violinist Karol Markus plays the role of symphony cocentermist.

Welcome to Dr. Coreen Duffy, who recently joined the position as artistic director of the Missoula Community Chorus, a 90-voice mixed choir and select chamber ensembles. Duffy is director of activities at the University of Montana School of Music, where she conducts the Community Chorale and University Choir, teaches conducting and choral methods, and supervises student teachers. Before joining Montana, she studied at the University of Miami Frost School of Music; she is an active clinician as well as a composer, weddings. Choral works are published by Walton Music, ECS Publishing, and Pavane Publishing and regularly featured in reading sessions and as repertoire. A specialist in Jewish choral music, Duffy has designed performance sessions dedicated to Jewish repertoire at two National American Choral Directors Association Conferences; she also founded the Second Avenue Jewish Choral of South Florida.

Welcome to Nicole Maria Evans. Evans recently joined Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art in Great Falls as the new curator of art. Evans brings a diverse knowledge of historical and contemporary art to her new post. She co-founded Itinerant Arts Collaborative, an artist/historian-led exhibition group in San Francisco and was current research associate at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston for the “Exhibiting Veda: Order & Disorder.” In addition, she helped write educational content for the C.M. Russell Museum of Art in Great Falls. Evans resides with her family in Great Falls, and is excited to join the downtown Square’s team. “It’s a perfect fit for the organization, Evans brings the Square’s permanent collection of contemporary and outsider art. Evans received her master’s from Tulis University in Art History and Museum Studies, with an emphasis in modern and contemporary art of the Americas. While obtaining her graduate degree, she was granted a fellowship at the Smithsonian Latino Center at the Smithsonian Institution. In addition, she has taught art history at multiple colleges including Massachusetts College of Art and Design and Otis College of Art and Design.

Welcome to Joanne Feinberg, who was selected to serve as the guest-programming director of the 2020 Big Sky Documentary Film Festival. Joining the institute to helm the selection process for the 17th annual festival, Feinberg succeeds long-time director of programming Doug Hawes Davis, who is on sabbatical, and senior programmer Michael Workman, who began his MPA in documentary film and video at the Stanford School of Art and History this fall. Feinberg is an award-winning filmmaker and curator who served as the programming director at the Ashland Independent Film Festival for 11 years, and graduated with honors from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts.

So long (although he’s not going far), and best wishes to Eric Whitney, who recently stepped down as Montana Public Radio (MPR) news director and is moving on to a new job with National Public Radio (NPR) where he’ll serve chief for the Montana Public Radio. Whitney will still be based in Missoula but will be travelling a bit more, he says. During his time at MPR, he oversaw all of the station’s programming, including on coverage of public lands, politics and the Legislature, wildlife and health care, and more. His leadership established two news podcasts, sabbatical and Richard in the West, which was dubbed a “must listen” by The New Yorker. Whitney is also a fellow in the Corporation for Public Broadcasting’s Editorial Integrity and Leadership Initiative.

So long and best wishes to Matt and Emily Free Wilson, who are moving their popular Helena ceramics studio, Free Ceramics, to the Oregon Coast. Matt and Emily’s business has been Montana for 35 years and Emily’s for 17 years. Together, they built Free Ceramics and Studio Art Center, located in an old Nabisco factory on Boulder Ave. According to a story in the Missoulian, the two will now serve as proprietors of Free Ceramics, continuing to provide workshops in conjunction with exhibits and installations, as well as grow the Square’s permanent collection of contemporary and outsider art. Emily notes that leaving Helena is “bittersweet,” and says the couple will guide WESTAF’s policy, a new role that will work with executives from today’s most innovative orchestras.” She says.

Dr. Coreen Duffy

Nicole Maria Evans

Emily Paris-Martin

State of the Arts • Fall 2019
Nicholas Vrooman was always larger than life, and generous with his knowledge and counsel. He was the sort of person you could turn to for advice when you needed it, and he would always help you, even if it meant sacrificing his own time. He was a true friend to everyone who knew him, and his presence will be deeply missed. His passing has left a void in the hearts of many who loved him. The Helena Symphony, under the direction of Vrooman, has dedicated a concert to his memory in honor of his contributions to the arts and music community of Helena. This concert will be a fitting tribute to the incredible impact Vrooman had on the lives of so many. 

A native of Montana, Vrooman was born in Helena in 1933. He grew up attending local schools and was an active part of the Helena community from a young age. He was an accomplished musician, known for his skills on the piano and the flute, and he used his talent to bring joy to others. He served as the music director of the Helena Symphony Orchestra for many years, and during his tenure, the orchestra grew in size and reputation, gaining national recognition for its excellence. Vrooman was also known for his love of travel, and he often incorporated elements of different cultures into his musical performances, making his concerts a true celebration of diversity. 

His impact on the Helena community was profound, and he will be greatly missed. The Helena Symphony, along with the rest of the community, will continue to honor his legacy by carrying on his work and performing to the highest standards. His memory will live on through the music he created and the lives he touched.
State of the Arts • Fall 2019

ARTS EDUCATION

Montana Teacher Leaders in the Arts: Cohort 4 on the Rise

By Monica Grable
Arts Education Director

August marked the beginning of another yearlong course of study for a dozen innovative and inspiring Montana educators recently invited to join the fourth cohort of the Montana Teacher Leaders in the Arts (MTLA) program.

A partnership between the Office of Public Instruction and the Montana Arts Council, MTLA has been in existence since 2015. The program was originally designed for professional learning directed toward the development of coachees, mentors and advocates who would go on to support fellow teachers, schools and administrators with the adoption of the newly-updated Montana Arts Standards. MTLA has since evolved to focus on arts integration through a culturally sensitive lens and, more generally, on advocacy for the arts in education.

Since beginning, three previous cohorts (17 educators in total) have graduated from MTLA and gone on to become advocates for arts education in Montana, leading integrated lessons, workshops and in-service programs to the benefit of schools across the state. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) provided funds to begin the program initially and has continued to support MTLA since its inception, recognizing the need for this type of peer-to-peer support in a state as geographically vast as Montana.

Following a year’s hiatus during the 2018-19 school year as the agencies awaited word of continued grant funding, the Office of Public Instruction was notified by the National Endowment for the Arts in late spring that it would be the recipient of a new two-year grant to support the program. The second year of grant funding will enable MAC and OPI to bring together all four MTLA cohorts as a combined resource team available to provide professional development in arts education statewide.

Summer Institute

The launch pad for the current cohort was a six-day Summer Institute, held Aug. 4-10 on the campus of Salish Kootenai College in Pablo, a superb environment for cross-curricular study. Indian Education for All (IEFA) integration, and hands-on learning across arts disciplines. Returning MTLAs led workshops throughout the week along with guest teaching artists from around the region, including photographer David Spear, poet Susan Hill and Lowell Jaeger, violinist Tim Fain, and artists Jennifer Ogden led students in a session titled “Post Model: Tableau Vivant,” which offered participants an opportunity to bring art to life.

Returning MTLAs included MTLA Cohort 1 member and teaching artist Chris Stevens of Chief Joseph Middle School; Chrissie Tharp of Sunburst School District; and Julynn Wilderson of Three Forks School; and Laurie Lutgen of Cayuse Prairie School; Keely Perkins of Miles City Schools; Marlene Schumann ofSacajawea Middle School; Becca Stevens of Chief Joseph Middle School; Chrisiss Tharp of Sunburst School District; and Julynn Wilderson of Cohesion Dance Project in Helena.

Following monthly online meetings and webinars, Cohort 4 will convene again in April to share the results of their fieldwork with their peers at the April Capstone Weekend in Livingston.

Susan Luinstra: An exemplary Teacher Leader in the Arts

By Monica Grable
Arts Education Director

The education realm, and arts education in particular, is filled with exemplars who put teachers of great heart, depth of knowledge, innovation and dedication to collaboration. Susan Luinstra is one of those exemplary educators, and her teaching – no doubt – will be with her students for life.

In 1974, fresh out of college, Luinstra began a 38-year journey at Bynum School, a one-room schoolhouse near Choteau, where she remained for the entirety of her lively career. Teaching every possible combination of K-8 throughout those years, she has had the privilege of being the sole teacher for many students whose school years were spent at Bynum.

A member of the first cohort of Montana Teacher Leaders in the Arts, Luinstra’s sense of leadership in the arts is a great inspiration to her peers. Her passion for the arts and its influence in developing self-confidence and a sense of community is her driving force, fueled in part by the upkeep of a tradition begun by her predecessor, Ira Perkins, who also spent his career of 53 years in Bynum.

Each day, as beautifully chronicled by NBC’s Harry Smith in early 2017, Luinstra and her students (as with Ira Perkins and his students before her) began each day by putting on vintage records and dancing, as well as singing along to old-time traditional songs. Visual art also held a place of prominence in her classroom teaching, and as one component of integrated learning. Named Montana Rural Teacher of the Year in 2007, Luinstra’s profile was elevated even further the following year when she was named National Rural Teacher of the Year by the National Rural Education Association, leading her to speaking engagements and panel discussions in front of her national peers. Although she retired from the classroom in June, Luinstra is continuing to serve as the arts education community through her role as president of Choteau Arts, a community arts organization offering classes, concerts and outreach experiences and through availing herself as a resource for colleagues across Montana.

Susan Luinstra: Passion for the arts and its influence

Members of Cohort 4 pictured with Arts Integration and Teaching for Creativity workshop presenter Jenny Bevill (holding heart on a stick). (Photos by Monica Grable)
In educational facilities across Montana, a creative transformation has unfurled. During the fall of last year, young people in juvenile detention centers, high school classrooms and alternative learning facilities dove into a semester-long exploration of Montana’s history, culture and literature with a special focus on the ways our home places shape our identities. The project, titled “I Am Montana,” asked students to reflect on their own lives while crafting honest and thought-provoking responses through poetry and prose.

The resulting anthology of student work, *I Am Montana: Student Reflections on Identity and Place*, is a mosaic of meditations and questions sprouting from adolescent life that helped students from Pine Hills Youth Correctional Center write, “Montana is not perfect. Drugs are sold, guns are held in the palm of the unknown … But the people, we the people, are something else.”

*Signature from Big Sky* began with the teaching and support of Montana’s Association for Gifted and Talented Education (MT AGATE) and the Montana Association for Early Learning and Assessment (MATELA). In addition, the project gave students across the state the opportunity to share their experiences, to break down social barriers, and to creatively express themselves while educating their communities.

To learn more about this project and about Free Verse, visit www.freeversesproject.org or find the organization on Facebook @freeversewritingproject. For information about Second Season, visit www.wolfstarparisite.com/secondseason or find them on Facebook @northerncheyenneondseason.

Copies of the book may be purchased on Amazon or from This House of Books, 224 N. Main, in Billings. All proceeds benefit the *I Am Montana* project.

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**Explore Indian Education for All at MAM**

The Office of Public Instruction’s Indian Education Specialist, Mike Jettly, joins the Missoula Art Museum’s Educator Coordinator Jenny Bevill for a free workshop, 4-6 p.m. Oct. 29 at the museum (two PIR credits available).

Connecting with the newly updated Seven Essential Understandings of Indian Education for All (IEFA), participants will explore Native American artist Rick Bartow’s exhibition, “Things You Know but Cannot Explain,” on view through Feb. 15. Themes of self, dialogue, tradi- tion and transforma- tion will be explored, with space to amplify Native voices.

Teachers of all grade levels and disci- plines are welcome to explore IEFA through the lens of contemp- orary art.

Call 406-728-0447 or email jenny@missoulaartmuseum.org to register.

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**Signatures from Big Sky celebrates 30 years**

Montana’s Association for Gifted and Talented Education (MT AGATE) is seeking submissions for the 2020 edition of Signa- tures from Big Sky – the only publication that features the writing and artwork of Montana’s K-12 students. The 2020 edition will mark the magazine’s 30th anniversary.

In October of 1990, Shirley Olson and Del Siegel from MT AGATE and Jan Clineard from MATELA discussed the need for a student literary and art magazine in Montana and later convened with seven other educators at the MEA Convention in Bozeman. Three goals emerged from the collaboration:

- To provide an opportunity for young Montanans to write and publish;
- To make it a publishing experience, striving for excellence, not a contest; and
- To provide a resource for teachers and students in classroom work in the arts.

Several hundred pieces of writing and art were received in 1991: 85 K-12 students were published from 39 schools. Each selected contributor received one copy and another for his/her teacher.

*Signature from Big Sky* continued to reach out to as many Montana students as possible through various means. The publication welcomed Montana Arts Council Artists in Schools and Communities work in a special section when they were unable to publish their student work as they had in the past.

Signature board members were invited to present sectionals at the annual school conventions and other state meetings. Posters were sent to all school libraries and flyers were delivered to elementary and middle school principals, high school art and writing teachers, county superintendents and the list of submitting teachers from the previous year. In addition, Signature’s contributed student art for a Montana Health and Services Calendar for five years.

Every year, the publication receives hundreds of submissions and enjoys a robust selection from talented young people across the state. The work displayed in Signatures has shown what it has been like to grow up in Montana over the last 29 years, in small towns, cities and ranches, from foreign exchange students, fifth-generation Montanans and Native students whose ancestors go even further back than that.

“The perspectives are as unique as the art and writing itself and we are proud to share them,” says coordinator Mandy Maas.

Signatures relies on funding from MT AGATE as well as grants to continue publish- ing and has recently received financial support from the Montana Cultural Trust, the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, North- Western Energy, Humanities Montana, Town Pump Foundation and the Sweet Pea Festival of the Arts.

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**Poetry Out Loud begins a new year**

Poetry Out Loud 2019-20 has launched its new program year – the 15th year of the POL within individual classrooms, then schoolwide, and – for some – in regional contests across the state. From each regional event, four to five students will advance to the State Finals, scheduled to take place in Helena on March 7, 2020.

With access to the online anthology of nearly 1,000 poems, and an array of support materials and curricular resources, Montana Poetry Out Loud provides teachers with everything needed to begin a POL program in their school, or to join their fellow colleagues in engaging their students with poetry.

To learn more, contact Monica Grable, MAC’s arts education director and statewide Poetry Out Loud coordinator, at 406-444-6522 or by email at Monica.Grable@mt.gov.

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**Emma Krall of Red Lodge High School recites during the 2019 Montana Poetry Out Loud State Finals. (Photo by Carin Gómez)**
Crow storyteller Grant Bulltail

Bulltail also claims as his lineage Chief Wyo (Treaty of 1820), Chief Blinkty ( Treaty of 1868), Chief White Horse (Treaty of 1855), Chief Long Hair (Treaty of 1825), Chief Little Black Dog (Treaty of 1825). Bulltail’s second name implies this proud lineage – an individual earned the right to put the tail from a buffalo bull on their tipi to designate the chiefs of their lineage.

Bulltail learned most of his stories from his grandfather, Comes Up Red (1847-1947), and also from his grandmother’s cousin, Yellow Brow. Comes Up Red was a well-known warrior and respected storyteller. Bulltail learned his grandfather’s stories by listening far into the night and later going into a trance-like state to recite them.

The Iinnii Art Show, Oktoberfest in Kalispell and ImagineIF Library in Kalispell, hosted an exhibit called “Belief.” This was a series of battles, the use of edible and medicinal plants, and other cultural narratives.

After seeing the Marines, Bulltail spent a year at Utah State University studying with folklorist Austin Fife, where he continued his commitment to carrying out the cultural heritage of his people. He has shared his stories with classes at Little Big Horn College, at state and national parks (including Yellowstone and Grand Teton) and at places of importance to the Crow people, including Heart Mountain, WY, and Rainy Buttes, SD. He has also taught classes at Utah State University, home of the Fife Folklore Archives, where he is building a collection of Bulltail’s work.

Bulltail has represented the Crow on Ken Burns’ “The War” series, where there were Parks Yellowstone and Glacier Through Native Eyes” and for the BBC’s “Unnatural Histories: Yellowstone – From Air to Earth.” It was a key contributor for the Bighorn National Recreation Area’s Ethnographic Resource Overview. From 1994 to 1998, he worked on Yellowstone National Park’s Ethnographic Resource Overview, a project that drew consultants from a dozen tribes historically connected to the landscape of what became the nation’s first national park. Bulltail is a founding member of the Native Memory Project and currently serves on its board of directors.

Sharon Kohun, PhD, who wrote this profile, nominated Bulltail for the Heritage Fellow in hopes of efforts to revitalize the histories of the Crow people’s stories that have largely disappeared or been replaced by colonizers’ histories. She has worked with Bulltail for about 20 years on various endeavors, including the Native Memory Project, which records Native perspectives from Montana and Wyoming.

“Belief” born again (from page 1)

Cajune notes that not only was she an unknown in the Big Apple, but so are Native people in general, and her tribe in particular. Her friend, however, was connected with the arts community in Lower Manhattan and put her in touch with Gail Thacker from the Gene Frankel Theatre – a small nonprofit, with no sponsorship or funding capacity.

“Then I had to raise funds to pay for all of the expenses.”

She reached out to friends and family, who responded with modest donations. One was made in memory of her “sister-cousin Gyla Swaney,” who died in July, and the first performance was dedicated to her. Finally, Peter Buffet’s NoVo Foundation stepped forward with funds for the project, with the money arriving just two days before the crew left for New York.

Placed Gary Stroutos, pianist David Lanz and violinist Swit Kamien created the play’s original music score. Stroutos funded his own way to New York, crafted new studio work for the show with musicians David Reveilli, Mark Fauver and Tony Garone, and performed on stage with Florence.

“All of this was done gratis,” she says.

“On a wing and a prayer people have lifted the project with remarkable and loving gifts. “So here we are,” she adds, “the day before our first rehearsal in the theater, headin out to the copy store with the script and then a walk to the Brooklyn Bridge.”

“I believe we are standing in a state of grace to be here. Regardless of the size of the audience, I believe there is someone here to hear one of these stories, and for that it is worth the time and effort.”

About “Belief”

Cajune’s mixed heritage is a direct consequence of the collision of people and cultures. “I am the sum of many stories from many places,” she explains. “My mother was Salish, my father was Caucasian. So therefore, my father was Chipewa and French. These different stories and places all occupy memory and space inside of me, but the largest part of my identity is Salish and it is my Salish homeland that holds my affection. It is where I grew up and live today.”

“Belief” originated seven years ago as an idea to weave music, story and poetry into a theater piece that would portray the lived experiences of Native women. The play was written by Cajune and poet Jennifer Finley, and directed by Linda Grinde.

Eyapaha offers glimpse of Indian Country

In Rapid City, SD, two newspapers joined forces to create a publication named Eyapaha, offering readers and tourists a glimpse into the lives of the Native Americans in the region and to promote the culture and tourism sites of their Native Nations.

The idea came together earlier this year when Rapid City Journal publisher Matthew Tranquill and Tim and Jackie Giago, owners of the Native Sun News, decided to collaborate on a project. Tranquill, who was born in South Dakota, wanted to learn more about the state’s history, and at the same time, educate his readers. By mid-March, the idea for Eyapaha was born.

The special publication, which included stories about all nine reservations in South Dakota and one Montana reservation, ran in both newspapers as an insert on May 29. Its name means “town crier” in Lakota.

The Giagos and Tranquill hope to work together again in the future to continue to educate readers about Native American life and share Eyapaha on their respective publications’ websites in the near future.

– From Editorandpublisher.com, Aug. 13
Diagnosis Duo: Hands and Lips of Wind

In diagnostology, diagnosis describes the mastication of the physical and chemical changes occurring during the conversion of sediments to sedimentary rock. Researchers have an apt description for Helenens Heath Barnes, soprano, and Jennifer Bewerse, cello. They are purveyors of "modern-day folk music," throwing out accepted musical concepts to create something new.

On their debut album, the pair smash the traditional constructs of rhythm, harmony, melody, and phrasing and morph the shards into new sounds. They have also introduced the genre to electric guitar, bass, and piano. The deep cello sound creates a pensive mood.

Music in My Coffee is tightly woven, has cool chunky guitar chords and dissonant and foreboding "Bug of Insecurity" appeared contemplative, with lots of intricate interplay among violin, chin cello, and guitar. The deep cello sound creates a pensive mood.

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"Hold On" sports silky violin, ringing guitar harmonies, and a jazzy and syncopated style underpinned by creaky bass. Hunt channels a bit of Stevie Garpell, too.

"Playing in the Park" opens with the soft sounds of guitar and violin walking up the scale; it's bright and airy. In contrast, "Chelsea's Tune" is contemplative, with lots of intricate interplay among violin, chin cello, and guitar. The deep cello sound creates a pensive mood.

"Bug of Insecurity," by Jon Anderson, drums; Ryan Rebo, bass, and Lenny Eckhardt, keys. Harmony vocals are courtesy of Jennifer McCarthy.

"Well of Sorrow" has unison lead and some "ooh." Both singers possess territorial control, making it easy to synchronize breath and phrasing. They finish with their will-palpable dynamics and lovely inflections, reminding us how terrific they have been over the years. You'll find lots of love on this intimately produced recording. Hooray for retrospectives!

Regan Clancy: Give Up Your Salt

Helena's Regan Clancy, a self-taught guitarist and songwriter, has released an album of rockin' originals. Clancy has fronted various bands and enjoyed a solo career ever since she picked up a guitar at 16, is also the bassist for the synth-punk disc band Hard Hugs.

"Indie folk rock\'s amalgam is heavy with fuzzed-up guitar and pretty melodies. He is joined here on vocals and harmonica by Jon Anderson, drums; Joshua Loveland, pedal steel, keyboards and horns; Ryan Rebo, bass, and Lenny Eckhardt, keys. Harmony vocals are courtesy of Jennifer McCarthy.

Counties among his influences older bands like Nada Surf, and current groups such as Parquet Courts and Broken Social Scene. He admires the Beatles, too, and built Spill, with its heavy electric guitar sound, has also played a role in his writing.

"Love to Share" is a tightly wrapped cooker with heavy electric guitar sound, has also played a role in his writing.

"Race to the Middle," with its cool intro riff of hi-hat and guitar, is an uptempo rocker. And "Love to Share," a tightly wrapped cooker, with sci-fi guitar effects to open. Clark says, "You're part of the working class now, you settled on a heart of glass."

"Gravy" featuring just guitar and drums, has massive, Bonanza-sounding guitar chords.

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Fiction

**Fall Back Down When I Die**

**By Joe Wilkins**

Joe Wilkins is renowned for his biographical novel, set in eastern Montana. Early on, he writes, “The moon came up white in thinwhish. A tooth, a claw, the thinnest blade.” *Style & Rock Review* notes that this is “a work of language and imagery that is both evocative and haunting.”

**Synopsis:**
- A true story
- A novel
- Involves themes of family, loss, and identity
- Written in an evocative, poetic style

**About the Author:**
- Joe Wilkins is the author of three poetry collections, most recent, *Hello, Love*. He is a member of the Montana Arts Council.
- He is the author of *Story of Our State*.

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**Sweeney on the Rocks**

**By Allen Morris Jones**

Sweeney’s story is a tale of the Corruption of a man who is myriad. His is a story that includes the death of his wife, his former wife cashing in favors, and Jones has delivered “a unique and tasty treat for crime-fiction fans.”

**Synopsis:**
- A cover image
- A brief description
- Title, author, and publisher
- A description of the book

**About the Author:**
- Allen Morris Jones is the author of *Bigfork*.
- His work has appeared in numerous literary journals, and his memoir, *The Mountain and the Fathers*, is a bestseller.

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**You, Me and Mr. Blue Sky**

**By Craig Lancaster and Elisa Lorello**

Novelist Craig Lancaster and Elisa Lorello are partners in fact and in fiction, with the release of their co-authored romantic comedy, *You, Me and Mr. Blue Sky*.

**Synopsis:**
- A cover image
- A brief description
- Title, author, and publisher
- A description of the book

**About the Author:**
- Craig Lancaster is the author of *Story of Our State*.
- Elisa Lorello is the author of *Hello, Love*. She has been featured in *The New York Times*.

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**Chai Another Day**

**By Leslie Budewitz**

Pepper Reece probes murder while juggling a troubled employee, her mother’s house burn, and a fisherman who’s set his hook for in Bigfork author Leslie Budewitz’s latest mystery.

**Synopsis:**
- A cover image
- A brief description
- Title, author, and publisher
- A description of the book

**About the Author:**
- Leslie Budewitz is the author of the *New York Times* bestseller series featuring the character Edith Stanion: *Restless Drive to Save the West*, *Political Hell-Raiser: The Life and Times of Senator Grinnell*, and *Could it Pursue Manifest Destiny Without Destroying its Natural Beauty?*.

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**Dirty Money**

**By Robert Hughes**

Dirty Money is the second Livingston author Robert Hughes’s Brian and Darcy McKay mystery novels, following his debut, *Bone Mountain*. College student Darcy and her uncle, ex-FBI agent Brian McKay, risk their lives as they investigate the murder of Darcy’s boyfriend in the office of a cop-busting telesco- pa company. A string of killings by a greedy and twisted cabal of corporate garages at Belco, Inc. ensues.

**Synopsis:**
- A cover image
- A brief description
- Title, author, and publisher
- A description of the book

**About the Author:**
- Robert Hughes is a Livingston author.

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**Down From the Mountain: The Life and Death of a Grizzly Bear**

**By Bryce Andrews**

In searing detail, award-winning writer, Montana rancher, and conservationist Bryce Andrews tells the story of a grizzly sow, who descends from the Mission Mountains on the Flathead Indian Reservation to seek food for her two cubs. Miller is a fate, strong, cunning, fiercely protective of her cubs. But raising these cubs – a challenging task in the best of times – becomes more difficult as the mountains change, the human and grizzly population grows, and people crowd the valleys. There are obvious dangers, like poachers, and subtle ones as well, like the corefield that draws her out of the foothills and sets her on a path to a reef and to the end.

**Synopsis:**
- A cover image
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**About the Author:**

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**About Books**

State of the Arts • Fall 2019

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How to submit a book for the State of the Arts

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

- **Title, author, publisher, and month/year published**
- **A brief description of the book**
- **A cover image: minimum 200 dpi in pdf or jpg format**
- **If other publications or authors have reviewed the book, send a brief sampling of those remarks.**

Books submitted to State of the Arts appear in this publication at the Montana Arts Council’s discretion and as space allows. Manuscripts will not necessarily be reprinted at Lively Times.com.
**Montana's Big Hole Valley – Montana Pioneers of the Old West – Vol. I**

*Published by the Big Hole Valley Historical Society*

A new 448-page book, years in the making, recounts the settlement of Montana's Big Hole Valley from 1806 through 1930.

"From the gate of the Big Hole, Divide, through Dewey, Wise River, Wisdom, Briston, Fox and Jackson, we visit our vibrant communities as well as places no longer here and tell the stories of the many families and individuals who helped settle this historic area," said Ruth Nelson Little, president of the Big Hole Valley Historical Society and lead editor of the work.

The book includes hundreds of stories of early-day settlers and the struggles they went through to establish a way of life in this high-altitude valley, preserved against the mountainous border with Idaho. Several hundred black and white and color photographs also depict the area historically known as the "Land of 10,000 Haystacks," in part for its innovative "beaverslide" hay stacker.

CHAP. II:

Chapter two also cover such subjects as the Lewis & Clark Expedition's visit to the area in 1806, the Native American presence in the valley, early explorers, the famous Battle of the Big Hole in 1877 between the U.S. Army and the Nez Perce, mining, trapping, logging, agriculture, family histories, and much more.

The book is available from the Big Hole Historical Society at Box 487, Jackson, MT 59736, or from Stoneydale Press, 800-735-7006 or www.stoneydale.com.

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**Birches of Every Color**

*By Sneed B. Collard III*

Birches are among the first signs of spring, with their striking color and graceful form. This book explores the diversity, functions and sources of these spectacular hues.

There is a world of beauty to be explored in the birch category. From the birches of the eastern United States to the birches of the Far East, these trees are a marvel to behold.

The book features stunning photographs by the author and his son, Braden Collard, an accomplished birder and photographer, and a student at Hultig High School in Missoula.

Collard is the author of more than 80 books for young people and the winner of many awards, including the prestigious Washington Post-Children's Book Guild Nonfiction Award for his book of work. Together, Sneed and Braden write a weekly birching blog at FatherSonBirding.com.

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**Earth to Charlie**

*By Justin Olson*

"Charlie's mother has been abducted by aliens," says Charlie. "Snedick send his nights with an eye out for UFOs, hoping to join her. After all, she said the aliens would come for me."

Charlie will admit that he doesn't have many reasons to stick around, he doesn't get along well with his father, he's constantly bullied at school and at home, and the only friend he has is his 600-pound neighbor Geoffrey, and Geoffrey's three-legged dog, Tickles.

Then Charlie meets popular, easy-going Seth, who shows him what real friendship is all about. For once, he finds himself looking around at the life he's built, rather than looking up. But can he expect Charlie to have a decision: should he stay or should he go?

Olson's story of one losing something and finding it again, told in the voice of an easily datable protagonist as he faces the ups and downs of friendship and family, writes Booklist. "Pignet and yet hopeful, this is a lesson in grief, loneliness, and what it means to truly dream."

Olson taught high school English and theater in Montana before moving to Los Angeles, where he continues to write novels and is an independent film and TV producer. Earth to Charlie is his debut novel. He currently splits his time between California and Montana.

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**Bear in the Bathtub**

*By Kathleen Dent and illustrated by Alii DePuy*

"Mia has an amazing gift, and the thing she loves most is being outdoors in the big, beautiful world. Every day, she races out the door, eager to explore, experiment, play, and learn. She doesn't want to end her fun – not for dinner, and especially not for a bath. Mia's in luck, though, because every night she finds a bear in the bathtub, so her skeptical mom is forced to send her off to bed without a bath. But what is that bear doing in the bathtub, anyway?"

Elementary and middle school students from across the U.S. were asked to imagine a situation where they would find themselves in a cartoon and write a short story about it, with Alii DePuy bringing lively text from Kathleen Dent to life. A non-fiction section based on the research of carnivore ecologist Dr. Michael Sawaya explains the science behind bathing bears everywhere and why it is important to understand their behavior in our changing climate.

This collaborative effort aims to ignite curiosity about bear behavior and then teach children the biological reasons behind that behavior using text that is interesting, approachable, and based on published research and a current scientific study in Yellowstone National Park.

Inspired school co-owner Dent and DePuy each live in Missoula, where they run an education technology startup that’s focused on building, delivering, and facilitating educational content via in-depth virtual learning experiences and projects with a real-world focus. Learn more at inspiredclassroom.com.

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**Montana Center for the Book Prize winners**

From early childhood reading programs to writing workshops with at-risk youth, Humanities Montana recognizes the passionate work being done across Montana with the annual Montana Center for the Book Prize.

This year's winners, celebrated Sept. 14 during the Montana Book Festival in Missoula, are:

- *Alyxaree Lending Library*
- *Children's Festival of the Book in Bozeman*
- *Rising Voices High School Poets writing group in Browning*
- *Empower Place in Missoula*
- *Free Verse in Missoula*
- *Bigfork Dingers, and Miles City* Learn more at www.humanitiesmt.org and the Montana CenterfortheBookweb.
Montana Art News

Four public art pieces unveiled in Missoula

The City of Missoula Public Art Committee celebrated four new public art pieces Sept. 7 at the Dana Gallery.

Three of the four pieces are part of the community’s Traffic Signal Box Art Project (TSB). For 12 years the committee has worked with the state and local agencies, local organizations, businesses and individuals to enrich Missoula’s street corners. The boxes serve as “canvases,” enhancing the community and the visual surroundings.

This year’s TSBs were created by Brian Thomas, Jen Ryan Hickes and Cameron Kline.

In addition, a new mural, “We Are But One Thread” by Lillian Nelson, was unveiled at the Van Buren 1-90 interchange. In an ongoing spirit of collaboration, the City of Missoula Public Art Committee and the Montana Department of Transportation have joined with the Rattlesnake Neighborhood Council to install public art on one of the retaining walls at one of Missoula’s newest roundabouts.

This year’s TSBs are funded by the Montana Public Art Grant program.

Bozeman sculptor’s work installed at Story Mill Park

A sculpture by Montana State University art professor Jim Zimpel that was inspired by Bozeman’s natural, cultural and agricultural wheat. The boat frame is made of two sculptures selected for the park by a design committee organized by the nonprofit Trust for Public Land. A sculptor and visual artist Stephen Fairfield has also installed two sculptures of public art located in the nature sanctuary in the downtown city park.

Styled as a whimsical boat frame, Zimpel’s powder-coated, welded steel sculpture rises 25 feet. Its design references industrial windmills and the frames of boats. He said its crossed paddles that move kinetically in the wind recall traditional paddles from various cultures; the birds in the park’s wildlife refuge, which include nesting sandhill cranes; and agricultural wheat. The boat frame is silver blue, which will allow it to blend into the surroundings in some light and appear to float, and the paddles are orange.

Zimpel said the sculpture addresses the historic uses of the area from the era of nomadic foraging through industrialization, urban housing (part of the site was once a mobile home park) and now leisure. “The piece has a rich history, including use by indigenous populations. It is a public space for all people, and I think (the piece) represents the past,” Kirk said.

Clark.

“Carrol Schmidt, MSU News Service

Aunt Dofe’s Gallery reopens in Willow Creek

Aunt Dofe’s, a gallery on Main Street in Willow Creek, re-opened its doors this summer with works by acclaimed contemporary artist Sandra Dal Poggetto, on display Aug. 16-Sept. 27.

“Carrol Schmidt, MSU News Service

“Carrol Schmidt, MSU News Service

“Carrol Schmidt, MSU News Service

“Carrol Schmidt, MSU News Service

Artists’ websites: tomostudio.com; www.facebook.com/corycsholmes

Sculptors Tom Otterness and Cory Holmes Artists from New York City and Havre join forces in a photography and sculpture show. Attitudes Gallery, located on the upper level of the Atrium in Havre.

The most famous anonymous sculptor in Montana, Cory Holmes of Havre, shares his eccentric, welded fence art in a tandem exhibition with another sculptor, Tom Otterness, who ventures into panoramic photography for this show.

To create his sculptures, Holmes welds together found steel objects. These materials could include machine gun links, buggy parts or railroad spikes.

Among his better-known works are the Iron Buffalo on Main St. in Havre, giant iron spiders crawling on rooftops, or more abstract objects that appear on random fence posts between Havre and the Bear Mountain mountains. Some are graced with poetic, but enigmatic titles like “Angels Wept,” “In Dunum of Sloth” or “Robbed of All Dignity.”

Holmes has installed more than 750 sculptures in 17 states and four Canadian provinces in the last 22 years. He roams the country in a pickup alongside his toughest critic, wife Charlotte Miller-Holmes, or with a small gang of retired railroad workers. After choosing a fence post for the sculpture installation, and using Zen-like intuition, Holmes records the sculpture’s exact location with a GPS.

“Cory’s populist impulse in his work as the ‘Fence Post Bandit’ is almost like a 3D version of the train graffiti that travels on boxcars,” says Otterness, who came to Havre with his partner, the filmmaker Coleen Fitzgibbon, 30 years ago. They have returned with their daughter Kelly every summer since.

After a mysterious iron sculpture with the title, “A Twinges of Renunciation,” showed up on one of the couple’s fence posts west of town, Otterson asked people in Havre who the anonymous artist was and eventually tracked down Holmes. The two families have remained friends for the last 20 years.

Otterness may well be “the world’s best public sculptor,” as the art critic Ken Johnson opined in The New York Times in 2002. Public art is his focus, and Otterness has had major outdoor exhibitions of his sculptures throughout the U.S. and around the world, with more than 35 permanent installations in locations ranging from small towns in western Washington to the Doha International Airport in Qatar.

He typically casts his smiley-faced cartoon-figure sculptures in bronze, and many pieces are designed with children in mind. However, having grown up in Kansas, flat landscapes are nothing new to him. Inspired by the plains and the endless sky of the Hi-Line, he began using the panorama setting on his camera to craft the fluid, painterly image on display in “Loopy Landscapes.”

Melanie Alvarez-Home Gun, Portraits of the Blackfeet Through Nov. 22 at the Emerson Center for Arts and Culture in Bozeman

Melanie Alvarez-Home Gun, who was born in Browningville, TX, of Mexican and American heritage, finds inspiration in the Mexican muralists, Diego Rivera and Orozco, and Frieda Kahlo and Tamayo.

Her work focuses on the human condition and indigenous people, depicting “the raw side of life that we all come from, where endurance is recognized and the spirit of humanity is revealed.”

She was co-owner of the Catlin Gallery in Missoula, which became the Melanie Alvarez Gallery, from 1999 to 2004, when she moved to the Blackfeet Reservation with her husband and four children. For the past 11 years, she taught on the reservation and along the Hi-Line and became part of the second cohort of the Montana Teacher Leaders in the Arts.

Alvarez-Home Gun is currently teaching special education at Castle Rock Middle School in Billings, a move that allows her two children to attend school in a more urban environment. She’s also completing her doctorate in curriculum and instruction at MSU Bozeman, with an emphasis on “the importance of using the arts in education for at-risk children."

Her exhibit at the Emerson pays homage to her husband’s tribe: “the culture and values of the Blackfeet and the benevolence and the strength that they have given, shared and taught me.” The titles of her paintings reflect these values: “Strength,” “Wisdom,” “Mother and Child,” “Warrior,” “Elder,” “Woman – Medicine Man,” “Warrior Woman,” a tribute to “the beauty and strength of the Blackfeet women and how they have taught me about my position as a woman on this earth, my role and my identity.

Carla Potter: Go Figure

On Saturday, July 20 at the Clay Studio of Missoula, with a reception during First Friday Artist’s website: carlapotter.com

For her solo exhibition, “Go Figure,” Helena-based ceramic artist Carla Potter creates several small vignettes that parade historic artists or impersonate contemporary artists she admires and knows.

Potter, who spent most of her life in Alaska, says a long-term residency at Helena’s Archie Bray Foundation in 2005 “shook me loose from the hold of that vast domain.” She went on to earn her MFA at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, and spent 15 years presenting workshops in the public school system in Alaska, including collaborative projects with institutions such as the Monterey Bay Aquarium in Monterey, CA, and the Sheldon Art Museum in Lincoln.

At the same time, she taught on the Blackfeet reservation and, for 15 years, exhibited her work across the U.S., while finding time to serve on the board of directors of the Holter Museum of Art. “My service on the board has been a wonderful context for deeper conversations and relationships with art supporters,” she says. She was recently elected chairman of the Holter board and is embracing that role with an increased commitment to the museum and its vital role in the Helena community.

Working from her studio in Helena, Potter uses hand-building techniques and works primarily with porcelain. Her work has taken a dramatic shift from the exuberant colorful sculptures inspired by her Alaskan environment to making delicate unglazed porcelain vessels and figurines that weaver her own personal narrative with her experience of nature, Catholicism and the history of European art.

As her website professes, “Work is a place to be absolutely free and wonderfully devious.”

“Wisdom” by Melanie Alvarez-Home Gun

“Oregon Grape” by Anne Appleby

“Doing the Holy Dishes” – in reference to Tony Marsh, by Carla Potter (Photo by Tom Ferris)

“Loopy Landscapes” (Photo by Corycsholmes.com)

Fall 2019 • State of the Arts

Send your submissions for About Visual Arts in Montana to kristi Nienhuis at kristi@livelytimes.com with About Visual Arts in the subject line.
**SYMPHONY SPOTLIGHT**

**New season begins for Montana’s seven symphonies**

**Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale**

**Venue:** Lincoln Center  
**Connect:** billingsymphony.org or 406-252-3610

The Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale (BSO&C) begins a historic year at the Lincoln Center for its 2019-2020 season, while the Albert Bair Theater closes for renovations. The Lincoln Center is located at 415 30th Street, in downtown Billings.

In the words of Maestra Anne Harrigan, “The 2019-2020 Season will be one of the most exciting seasons in the history of the BSO&C as we start the ramp-up to the reopening of the Albert Bair Theater. From Gershwin to Stravinsky, and from Celtic to “The Night Side Story,” we have programs that will capture the imagination of our diverse audiences. I can’t wait for opening night!”

The BSO&C’s 2019-2020 season features an array of special guests ranging from American composer and pianist Conrad Tao, who opened the season Sept. 21; returning favorites Celtic fiddler Jeremy Kittel, who joins the orchestra Dec. 21 for Celtic Christmas; and for the first time in Montana, a quartet of Broadway stars for “West Side Story in Concert,” March 14.

This season highlights Montana Association of Symphony Orchestras (MASO) Young Artist Competition winners Tanner Jorden, piano, and former BSO&C intern Rosie Weiss, violin. The BSO&C also continues its community engagement program, Explore Music!, providing over 90 community outreach events. The Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale is the largest professional orchestra in Montana. Established in 1951, the organization strives to enrich lives through music. Consisting of over 135 musicians, the BSO&C serves a regional population of 400,000 people located throughout southern, central and eastern Montana and northeastern Wyoming by introducing music to children, youth, adults and seniors through Explore Music!, its community engagement program.

**Bozeman Symphony Orchestra**

**Venue:** Willson Auditorium  
**Connect:** www.bozeman Symphony.org or 406-582-9774

The Bozeman Symphony’s 2019-2020 concert season features world-class guest artists such as pianist Mischa Maisky, violinist Baiba Skride, and cellist Angela Ahn. The BSO&C’s 2019-2020 season features a wide range of music, including orchestral, choral, and chamber music. The season begins Sept. 28-29 with “Nights in Africa and Spain” and concludes May 2-3 with “Te Deum.”

The organization’s board of directors will host the finalists over a span of two weeks as each participates in guest conducting rehearsals and performances, along with scheduled activities. Music director finalists also participate in the season’s programming with each presenting a “conductor’s choice” piece, highlighted during the concert series performances at Willson Auditorium. The season begins Sept. 28-29 with “Nights in ‘The Gardens of Spain’” and concludes May 2-3 with “Te Deum.”

Relying heavily on community input, a new music director will be appointed at the end of this search season. For a complete schedule, visit www.bozeman symphony.org.

**Butte Symphony**

**Venue:** at the Molder Theatre  
**Connect:** www.buttesymphony.org or 406-723-5590

The Butte Symphony opens its 70th anniversary season with the dramatic Lalo Cello Concerto in D Minor, featuring cellist Adam Collins of the University of Montana, on Oct. 26, in a program titled “An Evening of Cello, Fire and Dances.”

As Montana’s original and oldest symphony, the orchestra continues its mission to provide music to southwest Montana under the baton of Luis Millan, serving his 10th season as musical director. Other concerts for the season include “Holidays with the Symphony” on Dec. 14, and “Silent Films and their Music” on Feb. 22. The season ends April 11 with “The Unfinished Symphonies of Great Composers.”

The symphony also plays a free concert each summer at the Original Headframe featuring silent films and their music. The symphony serves its 10th season as musical director.

The Butte Symphony Orchestra and Round Rock Symphony, six finalists were recently announced and each takes a turn at the podium this season. Finalists are:  
- **Stefan Sanders**, music director of the Spartanburg Philharmonic Orchestra,  
- **Andrew Crust**, assistant conductor of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and Memphis Symphony Orchestra, conductor of the Memphis Youth Symphony, and cover conductor of the Kansas City Symphony;  
- **Norman Huynh**, associate conductor of the Oregon Symphony;  
- **Wesley Schulz**, associate conductor of the North Carolina Symphony and music director of the Auburn Symphony (Washington State);  
- **Thomas Heuser**, music director and conductor of the San Juan Symphony in Santa Fe;  
- **Janna Hynes**, music director of the Carmel Symphony (Carmel, IN).

For more on events, visit www.buttesymphony.org.

According to Maestro John Zoltek, The Year of the Piano recognizes the recent donation of a “beautiful Steinway nine-foot Concerto Grand Piano” made to the symphony by the Flathead Valley Live On Stage organization.

The season began Sept. 21-22 with Equinox Music - Generation Next featuring five award winners from the Montana Association of Symphony Orchestras Young Artist Competition as part of the symphony’s “Youth Music Experience” education program.

Other highlights include the Glacier Chorale in concert, Handel’s Messiah and Holiday Pops in December; and the Spring Festival Finale, April 25-26, featuring Beethoven’s sacred masterpiece Missa Solemnis and four guest soloists.

The 12th annual Festival Amadeus, held in August, was heralded by Zoltek as another “great success.” It included a fully costumed opera performance of Mozart’s “Cosi Fan Tutti.”

**Great Falls Symphony**

**Venue:** Mansfield Theater  
**Connect:** gfsymphony.org or 406-455-8514

The Great Falls Symphony kicks off its 61st season Oct. 5 with “Legends,” a program filled with epic tales of myth and magic, including Respighis’ Pines of Rome, and film scores from “How to Train Your Dragon” and “The Lord of the Rings.” The orchestra also offers musical thrills.

The Butte Symphony is made up of volunteer musicians who continue their musical careers with a mission of providing classical music to southwest Montana through concerts, outreach programs to schools and rural areas, as well as special events. A chamber music concert will be held in the spring and a series of recitals are planned for the historic Clark Chateau in Butte.

**Billings Symphony:** Maestra Ann Harrigan (Photo: Photography)

**Butte Symphony:** at the Molder Theatre (Photo: Billings Gazette)

**Great Falls Symphony:** American with Béla Fleck
“God Help Us!” with Ed Asner returns to Montana

The Montana Actors’ Theatre of Havre and the Billings Studio Theatre are partnering to bring “God Help Us!” starring legendary actor Ed Asner – to Billings Oct. 4-6.

The political comedy, features Asner as God – a wise, cantankerous and wildly funny deity. He confronts two political pundits with a romantic history: Lawrence (a liberal) and Randi (a conservative). He is not at all pleased with our divisive politics or what humans have done to his Creation, and grills the pundits on the dismal state of affairs on Earth.

Director Mitch Levine directs the show, which was written by Samuel Warren Joseph and Phil Proctor. The comedy speaks to audiences of all political persuasions with one essential argument: that we have to listen to each other so that we can all live – at least, together.

This marks the second time that Asner has teamed up with Montana Actors’ Theatre. Performers Jay Pyette and Atera of Havre and the Billings Studio Theatre are partnering to bring “God Help Us!” – with Ed Asner returns to Montana.

Asner started acting in credited roles in the 1950s but rose to stardom with his role as the irritable but warm-hearted and lovable news director Grant, which earned him five Emmys and three Golden Globe Awards. He has been nominated for 20 Emmy Awards, and won eight. As Asner says, “The guy is an A-List actor.”

Tickets are available through the Billings Studio Theatre’s website (www.billingsstudiotheatre.com) or by phone, 406-248-1141.
Here in Montana, filmmakers have utilized real towns and authentic spaces for sets. Historic Virginia and Nevada Cities were famously shown in “Missouri Breaks” and “Return to Lonesome Dove.” Actors’ spurs clanked along real boardwalks. Bannack Ghost Town came alive in “The Ballad of Lefty Brown,” hosting tense rifle fights and showdowns in the hotel. Sometimes, the script demands more than what filmmakers can safely do at a historic site where buildings are delicate and meant to be preserved. Intense fight scenes with flying furniture, breaking glass, and old-west standoffs will put any historic preservationist on edge. The filmmakers worked closely with Montana officials to avoid damaging Bannack’s structures, while creating intense drama. You’ll notice on careful viewing that there are no bullet hits on the buildings, windows or interiors. This is where a standing set really shines. Directors can control and manipulate the environment. Sometimes the walls are made of foam, to cushion the actors as they slam against them. Jail cells have removable bars, and the railings at the town bar breakaway at the moment. It’s not a leap to envision the 1950s westerns — a dusty pistol, it’s a cream yellow Cadillac and a tense rifle fighter and a showdown in the hotel. A tense rifle fight and a showdown in the hotel.

Heritage Keepers honored at Montana History Conference

Filming Gunslinger Gulch and Yellowstone Film Ranch

By Allison Whitmer
Montana Film Commissioner

This summer, theaters across the country have been screening the latest Bruckheimer and Leonardo DiCaprio film. “Once Upon a Time in Hollywood,” which features the exploits of a fledgling film star, Di Caprio, and his faithful stuntman, Pitt. It’s a story about work, look for, and encounter a group of young hippies in their neighborhood.

A pivotal sequence in the film happens at the Spahn Movie Ranch, a faded, dusty western town that Pitt’s character once used to film TV westerns. A tense standoff ensues, only instead of nervous horses and dusty pistols, it’s a cream yellow Cadillac and a tense rifle fighter against an unsavory white women. It’s not a leap to envision the 1950s westerns the ranch once used as a standing set.

Places like Paramount Ranch, Pioneer Town and Old Tucson Studios have a permanent set of buildings, props and movable elements that a film director can walk into and begin filming right away. The sets are “standing,” or ready to use. This is different from a “backlot,” which is literally the back lot of the film studio, separate from the soundproofed studio spaces. No film jargon lives alone, so some studio operations have standing sets on their backlots.

Wanting to move off the backlots, filmmakers sought more remote locations. These movie ranch standing sets can be found in the sandstone formations and scrub brush hills of Great Basin, Nevada and Arizona since the early days of filmmaking on the West Coast.

Each year the Montana Historical Society’s Board of Trustees honors individuals or groups who have made exceptional contributions to the study and preservation of Montana’s past. This year, board members presented the Heritage Keeper award to Mardell Plainfeather,feather of Billings and the Extreme History Project of Bozeman. Additionally, the board recognized an additional heritage Guardian: Larry Len Peterson of Sisters, OR.

According to MHS Board president Kent Kleinkopf of Missoula, these awards recognize the highest honor the Historical Society can bestow upon those doing the daily work of saving Montana’s past for future generations. Their contributions and their level of devotion are amazing.

Mardell Plainfeather’s Crow name – Baa Huk, or Always Working – reflects her tireless spirit and dedication to preserving, documenting, promoting and teaching the history, culture and identity of the Crow Apalachee people. She is an enrolled member of the Crow (Apsalooke) Tribe, a member of the Chief Lodge clan, and a Whistling Waters child.

She speaks fluent Crow and is adopted in the Sacred Tobacco Society of the Crow – the original “medicine” of the tribe. Over the past 20 years, Plainfeather has been instrumental in developing and completing a wide range of museum, tourism and public outreach projects on Crow history through partnerships with a wide variety of organizations. From public presentations, museum exhibits and tribal tourism initiatives, to extensive oral history projects, articles and books, her collected work comprises an invaluable contribution to the permanent record of the Crow people.

Marsha Fulton and Crystal Alegria founded the Extreme History Project in 2011. Dedicated to bringing attention to underrepresented communities and overlooked historical subjects, the Extreme History Project began with Fulton and Alegria’s research on the first Crow Indian agency at Fort Parker. The result was, in 2015, the preservation of Fort Parker along with the collection of more than 15 oral histories with Crow tribal members.

The Extreme History Project continued to grow with the launch of its website, social media platforms, and public lecture series in 2012. Since 2013, Extreme History has championed efforts to draw attention to a wide range of lesser-known histories through both conventional and offbeat presentations that reach a wide audience. “After Dark” ghostly living-history tours, “Red Light” district tours, bus tours, workshops, plays and college courses call out hidden-away history and show how it informs us today.

Dr. Larry Len Peterson, a Montana native born and raised in Plentywood, was recognized for his outstanding efforts to preserve and promote Montana history and culture by writing engaging books about Montana’s lost art- ists. Through these publications, Peterson has not only dedicated his efforts to well-known artists like Charlie Russell and L. A. Huffman, but also brought to light lesser known, but extremely significant Montana artists like John Clarke, John Fery and a variety of artists who worked in Glacier National Park.

Peterson has published a prolific eight books relating to Montana’s lost artists; his most recent, 2017 masterwork, American Trinity: Jefferson, Custer, and the Spirit of the West, has won several prestigious awards.

The honorees were recognized Sept. 27 during the Montana History Conference. For more information visit mhs mt.gov.
Poet Laureate Joy Harjo visits Billings for Big Read

The Writer’s Voice received a $15,000 National Endowment for the Arts grant to host the Big Read in Billings Oct. 10–Nov. 10. An initiative of the NEA in partnership with Arts Midwest, the Big Read will focus on Joy Harjo’s poetry collection, How We Became Human. Harjo, who was recently named the U.S. Poet Laureate, will read from her collection at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 9 at the Petro Theatre on the campus of MSU-Billings.

Writer’s Voice director Corby Skinner said Harjo’s poetry collection “provides leadership and inspiration, and her work speaks to the resilience of Native cultures.”

As Harjo explains, “A lot of my poetry is inspired by injustice, love, the move for balance and compassion. This debris of historical trauma, family trauma … stuff that can kill your spirit is actually raw material to make things with and to build bridges over that which would destroy you.”

The Big Read kicks off Oct. 11 during the High Plains BookFest with a reading featuring Indigenous writers Dallas Hunt, Susan Devlan Harness, Chris La Tray and Valerie Storms. At 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 14 in Petro Hall on the MSU-Billings campus. Through work informed by pre-contact culture, Hill advocates for indigenous sovereignty – cultural, linguistic and personal.

Joseph McGeachick of the MSU-B Native American Studies program, offers a lecture titled “Waiting for the Earth to Move: The 1890 Ghost Dance,” at 6:30 p.m. Oct. 24 at the Yellowstone County Museum. Contemporary indigenous writers share their work at 6:30 p.m. Oct. 31 in LA-205 on the campus of MSUB; and Montana’s two new poets laureate, Melissa Kwanzy and M.L. Smoker, join former poet laureate Tami Haaland for a reading at 6:30 p.m. Nov. 7. The Big Read culminates with Harjo’s reading on Nov. 9.

All events are free and open to the public.

For more information contact Corby Skinner, Corby@skinnerbenoit.com.

Lewis & Clark Library centers Big Read on Lab Girl

The Lewis & Clark Library in Helena received $15,000 to host the NEA Big Read in Lewis & Clark County, with activities taking place in October. In mid-September, the library began distributing 1,200 copies of Lab Girl, a memoir by Hope Jahren “about the life of a woman in science, a brilliant friend, and the profundity of trees.” Copies of the book, as well as a full schedule of events, are available at all Lewis & Clark Library locations.

During October, the library will host an array of activities centered around the theme of the book, including lectures, panel discussions, a writing workshop, activities for kids, tea and trivia nights, films, a 21-day health challenge, art and crafts for all ages, nature walks, book discussions and more.

Highlights include:

• Telling Stories One Scientist to Another: Lab Girl and Carroll College’s Women in Science, a panel discussion, 7 p.m. Oct. 3 at Carroll College, hosted by Dr. Jennifer Głowienka.

• Author Jim Robbins and The People Who Plant Trees, 7 p.m. Oct. 7 at the library; the well-known local author discusses David Milarch, the central figure in his book, The Man Who Planted Trees, and tree scientist Hope Jahren, and explores how both have a passion for the simple yet incredibly complex world of trees and the hope they inspire.

• Creating Your World: A Writing Workshop with Virginia Reeves, 6 p.m. Oct. 15: In her memoir Lab Girl, Jahren asks, “What if the landscape wasn’t setting the stage for the plants, but the plants were setting their own stage?” With this year’s Big Read as inspiration, acclaimed novelist Reeves explores the same question as it pertains to the landscape and setting of fiction in this workshop (sign up at www.lclibrary.org or call 406-447-1690).

• Reading: Montana’s Pioneer Botanists, noon Oct. 25 at the Montana Historical Society: Join editor Rachel Potter as she shares stories of botany and history from the book she co-edited with Peter Lesica. Montana’s Pioneer Botanists brings together more than 30 biographies of Montana botanists and traces the growth of botanical knowledge in this wild and beautiful state.

• Plant One Tree This Year: Inspired by Lab Girl, the Lewis & Clark Library and Growing Montana offer Cooperating Friends of Helena to plant one tree, or more, in the coming year. Learn more about the Big Read in Helena by calling 406-447-6681 or visiting www.lclibrary.org.

Legacy of the Land

Philanthropist’s book project helps preserve history of Paradise Valley

In Fall 2017, Arthur Blank, businessman and owner of the Atlanta Falcons and Atlanta United, commissioned a history project focused on his family’s Mountain Sky Guest Ranch and West Creek Ranch, located in Paradise Valley. The project was intended to preserve and chronicle the rich history of the ranches and was turned into the book, Legacy of the Land, written by Sarah Grigg and photographed by Arnica Spring Rae, both of Paradise Valley.

The book team set out to write and produce a story that avoided Hollywood tropes about “Cowboys and Indians.” They aimed to offer the most truthful version of history they could, as told through the players themselves or their descendants, and to honor the struggles that so many on the Montana stage endured.

The narratives in the pages that lie ahead represent our best attempt at capturing and preserving the rich history and characters linked to Paradise Valley – from the Native American tribes that hunted its river banks to the pioneers and homesteaders who created the first cattle camps in the late 19th century; to the ranches and the challenges that so many on the Montana stage endured.

The story of these two ranches in the Paradise Valley carried the team into the lives of people from Sheridan, WY, to Crow Country, from Pray to the heart of the Blackfeet Nation; from the basement of the Yellowstone Heritage Center in Gardiner to the digital archives of the Smithsonian Institution. The project took 10 months to produce, and then another eight months of post-production. The result is a 249-page coffee table book detailing a 500-million-year ranch history, which includes geology and natural history, Native American history, the homestead era, the dude ranch era and the story of the ranch today.

The team collaborated with more than 150 museums, private collections, artists, essayists and individuals to pull together the final project.

Copies of the book are available for sale at the Mountain Sky and West Creek ranches, as well as several local institutions, including: Gallatin History Museum in Bozeman, Montana State University Library Special Collections and Archives, Yellowstone Gateway Museum in Livingston, Yellowstone Heritage and Research Center in Gardiner, Montana Historical Society in Helena, and the Buffalo Bill Center of the West in Cody.

Learn more at www.sarah-grigg.com.
The 3 Rs at work in Montana

Public Value Partnerships

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

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

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

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

Building Relationships

Stumptown Art Studio, Whitefish: Our specific technique? Provide something for everyone and make it easy to access us! Our physical presence in downtown Whitefish draws in people constantly. Thousands of visitors stop on the main street going through Whitefish to admire our “Windows on Whitefish” mosaic murals, depicting life in the beautiful Flathead Valley. Our outreach programs broaden our audience to include the less mobile, and those with special needs. This past year we began to offer “make and take” art opportunities in response to visitors from out of the area who wanted to create art but were only in town for a short time. We also expanded our adult Canvas and Cocktail classes to offsite locations including local breweries. This has brought in more attendees from outside Whitefish, as did starting an after-school art club in Kalispell. Additionally, last year we upgraded Stumptown’s website using a portal that allows patrons to register and pay for classes online. We saw an immediate increase in enrollment – people prefer the easiest way to sign up for events (one-click shopping).

Creating Relevance

Fort Peck Fine Arts Council: The Jake Etchart Fine Arts Scholarship honors Jake Etchart, who grew up spending summers at Fort Peck Lake with much of his time spent around the Fort Peck Theatre where his family actively served as volunteers. Jake passed away Nov. 22, 2006, of complications from a progressive neuromuscular disease. Jake’s family and friends established a theatre scholarship fund in his memory which is invested within the Fort Peck Theatre Preservation Endowment of the Montana Community Foundation. The interest from this investment provides up to two scholarships per year for undergraduate students pursuing a career in the fine arts. The 2018 recipient of the Jake Etchart Fine Arts Scholarship award was a young lady who started performing as a community volunteer in 2015. She continued volunteering for the next two summers. In the fall of 2017 she began her freshman year at the University of Montana pursuing her interest in science and math. Even though these subjects had been her passion, she was questioning this as her career choice. She got the opportunity to be involved in the theatre at the University and soon changed her academic goals to pursuing a bachelor’s in theatre. This past summer she was an intern for the Fort Peck Theatre, not only helping and performing in the productions, but also serving as one of the lead counselors’ helpers for 3-12 grade students in the annual Performing Arts Camp. The camp, which draws youth from Washington, Canada and all over Montana, explores all areas of theatre as professional company members mentor the youth.

Fort Peck Summer Theatre provided her with the experience, skills and the knowledge which solidified her decision to pursue a career in the fine arts. The Fort Peck Fine Arts Council is happy to provide a place and opportunity for people to experience the arts in our part of the state which is often geographically isolated from the theatre.

Return on Investment

Arts Missoula: Arts and Economic Prosperity 5.1, a study compiled by Americans for the Arts every five years and released in June 2017, reveals that Missoula’s nonprofit arts organizations are a $54 million industry, which is a combination of over $20 million as direct impact from the organizations, and more than $33 million from audiences, excluding the cost of admission. This is more than three times as large as the median of cities this size, and half again as large as all American cities. The nonprofit arts sector is not simply healthy, but it is much larger and healthier than previously thought. It is also responsible for 1,913 FTE jobs. The medical industry and higher education, often recognized as the two largest industries in town, have 2,300 and 1,400 FTE’s respectfully. This changes the conversation in Missoula about arts, jobs, employment, and economic vitality, placing the decentralized industry of nonprofit arts in the same sentence with Missoula’s two hospitals and the University of Montana. Breaking down the study further, audiences spent $25.99 per arts event on food, drink, lodging, transportation, or anything else related to attending that specific event, excluding the cost of admission. This is nearly $6 more per person and per event from the previous study, released in 2012. The increase has been the most likely related to an improved view of the economy and one’s own fiscal confidence, which was quite low during the last study as it did in the midst of the major recession beginning in 2008. The study also separates locals from the cultural tourist. Roughly 20% of audiences are from outside Missoula County. Yet that 20% spends over $53 per event, while locals spend just over $18. The study thus shows great potential for increased cultural tourism in Missoula. The full study can be found at www.artsmissoula.org.

This study clearly shows that an investment in one’s community through the arts can reap great benefits. Missoula is a town that is currently experiencing a construction boom, while more and more businesses and individuals are choosing to relocate here. This is in large part because of the attractiveness of the town, and the arts play a large part in that.

Arts Missoula: MPC’s 5th grade students participate in Drama Arts Integration through SPARR – Arts Ignite Learning.

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/gac/individual

Organizations: art.mt.gov/gac/organizations

Schools: art.mt.gov/gac/schools

Programs and Services: art.mt.gov/ps

Arts Missoula: The Jake Etchart Fine Arts Scholarship fund in his memory which is invested within the Fort Peck Theatre Preservation Endowment of the Montana Community Foundation.

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State of the Arts • Fall 2019

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MAC News

Percent for Art announces new projects in Billings and Butte

The Percent for Art Program will have two projects beginning this winter. The Southwest Montana Veteran’s Home in Butte and the Life Sciences Building renovation and expansion at MSU-Billings will be requesting proposals.

To receive updates, sign up for Public Art eNews on the website: public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MTArts/subscriber/new.

Arts and Disability: Improving accessibility is key

Cezlidi Gómez, MAC’s administrative assistant and media specialist, recently attended the Kennedy Center’s Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) conference in Denver. LEAD brings experienced and new professionals together to explore practical methods for implementing accessibility in cultural environments, to share resources and knowledge, develop best practices, and experience accessibility in action.

“One piece that really stuck with me was the conversation around social media because it’s such a big part of our daily lives,” says Gómez. “You may have noticed descriptive texts on posts on all our social media channels, it’s our first step in making what we do accessible.”

The American’s with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law passed 29 years ago that prohibits discrimination based on disability. “It’s time to start thinking about how we can make all the work we do for our communities more inclusive,” says Gómez.

For more resources, visit ada.gov; for tips on improving accessibility to social media, head to the digital.gov/resources/federal-social-media-accessibility-toolkit-backpack/.
By Liz Chappie Zoller

**Montana Artrepreneur Program**

The Montana Artrepreneur Program (MAP) is currently in the process of establishing two cohorts (groups) of 10 artists, under the leadership of certified MAP coaches, which are scheduled to begin meeting in February/March 2020. The location for each cohort is yet to be announced.

MAP is an art-centered business development program taught by working artists and open to all Montana visual artists. It provides more than 40 hours of college-level instruction covering 35 practical marketing tools, and consists of 10, 10-hour, weekend-long workshops, taking place on average every two months. Four to six interim meetings are held during the months between workshops.

MAP coaches foster a safe and welcoming environment for artists as they work their way through this nationally acclaimed program. Training emphasizes each MAP artist’s ability to articulate the purpose and story of their art, to strategically target appropriate markets, and to engage in the arts community.

Workshop days begin with a practice called “Start with Art,” in which artists briefly present one piece of new work and talk about their art, as though they are speaking to potential collectors. Although this sounds intimidating, the level of improvement and ease each artist experiences by the end of the program is remarkable. Practice with, and insights from, supportive peers is so important, and MAP is proven to be very effective in this way, too.

Workshops are presented in topics that revolve around each artist’s story. In Workshop I: Discovering the Story, coaches work with artists to discover and articulate the story of their art as they write artist’s statements and learn best practices for beginning their art business journey. Workshop II: Showing the Story illustrates how best to present one’s art, including promotional materials and the design and creation of booths for shows and exhibitions. Workshop III: Telling the Story has artists advancing proficiency in their medium by pairing up for mentorships with professional artists, as well as deciding on business-of-art internships. Workshop IV: Funding the Story includes grant writing, proposals, marketing strategies, business plans, and more. Additionally, MAP covers branding, and general business practices such as recordkeeping—all necessary for creating a sustainable art business. The interim meetings are in-depth discussions of specific tools, and might also include studio visits to MAP artists who have completed the program.

MAP coaches are always excited to welcome new MAP artists into the very supportive community of more than 470 Montana artists who have completed this program in years past. At the end of the MAP year, artists are encouraged to certify by creating a comprehensive toolbox demonstrating their effective and appropriate understanding of each MAP tool as it is applied to their own art business. A panel of certified MAP coaches judges the toolboxes and award certifications thereafter.

Are you interested in becoming a MAP artist? MAP is right for you! MAP coaches are always available to answer any additional questions. Feel free to contact Rickie van Berkum at vanBerkumFiberArts@gmail.com, or Liz Chappie Zoller at PearlSnapStudio@gmail.com.

For more information and to apply, visit art.mt.gov/map.

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**Strategic Investment Grant Awards FY2019**

The Montana Arts Council Strategic Investment Grants provide up to $1,000 in matching funds to artists, nonprofit 501(c)(3) arts organizations and preschool-grade 12 teachers in Montana for: Professional Development Grants to help build individual art skills and knowledge, arts careers and/or arts businesses.

- **Market Expansion Grants** to help increase exposure and improve marketing or promotion, opportunities for exhibition, performance and/or sales to a wider or new audience.
- **Public Outreach Arts Activities** Grants for ongoing or one-time arts activities by arts organizations and/or artists that are designed to reach a new or expanded audience.
- **Challenges and Emergencies** Grants to provide resources for artists or arts organizations experiencing challenges or emergencies that impede their ability to continue their work.

For more information and to apply, visit art.mt.gov/sig; contact Liz Chappie Zoller at kburgoyne@mt.gov or Liz Chappie Zoller at PearlSnapStudio@gmail.com.

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**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 Preschool-Grade 12 teachers in Montana, and are available in four categories:

- **Professional development grants** to help build individual art skills and knowledge, arts careers and/or arts businesses.
- **Market expansion grants** to help increase exposure and improve marketing or promotion, opportunities for exhibition, performance and/or sales to a wider or new audience.
- **Challenges and emergencies grants** to provide resources for artists or arts organizations experiencing challenges or emergencies that impede their ability to continue their work.

For more information and to apply, visit art.mt.gov/sig; contact Liz Chappie Zoller at kburgoyne@mt.gov or Liz Chappie Zoller at PearlSnapStudio@gmail.com.

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**Strategic Investment Grant Awards FY2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization/Individual</th>
<th>Application Title</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art House Cinema &amp; Pub</td>
<td>Chine Billings</td>
<td>Missoula</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Above</td>
<td>The Things</td>
<td>Bozeman</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
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<td>Carol Barnone</td>
<td>Artist Workshop at the Triple D Ranch</td>
<td>Lewistown</td>
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<td>Mary Callahan Baumsatter</td>
<td>Golden重工</td>
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<td>Marcin Betka</td>
<td>Artisan in Residence</td>
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<td>Grace Broman</td>
<td>Learning from the Masters: Broom Making at the John Campbell Folk School</td>
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<td>George Buamann</td>
<td>Bird Language Workshop with Jon Young</td>
<td>Gardiner</td>
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<td>Lynn Cain</td>
<td>Western Art West Show and the Western Art Association Show</td>
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<td>Dolce Canto</td>
<td>Dolce Canto Outreach – Whispers of Nature</td>
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<td>Experimental Theatre Cooperative</td>
<td>Last Chance New Play Fest 2019</td>
<td>Helena</td>
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<td>Heidi Faessel</td>
<td>Workshop: Abstracted Painting</td>
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<td>Flathead Celtic Festival</td>
<td>Flathead Celtic Festival</td>
<td>Kalispell</td>
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<td>Fort Peck Fine Arts Council/ Busted Knuckle Brewery/ Stoney Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Rural on the East Side of the Busted Knuckle Brewery</td>
<td>Glasgow</td>
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<td>Nola Freestone</td>
<td>Tulp Time Artisan Market in Holland, Michigan</td>
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<td>Hermia Harold</td>
<td>JUNIOR (the band) West Coast Tour</td>
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<td>Carol Hartman</td>
<td>Paul Arpaatz Artist Residency</td>
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<td>Morgan Irons</td>
<td>Grand Central Artist Welding Drawing Bootcamp</td>
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<td>Neal Lovejoy</td>
<td>NFAT Conference</td>
<td>Polson</td>
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<td>Mineral County Performing Arts</td>
<td>Bravissimo Broadway Performance and Outreach by O Sole Trio</td>
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<td>Janet Moczar-Bruhn</td>
<td>Wild Bunch Art Show</td>
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<td>Montana Playwrights’/P. Mercner</td>
<td>Queen City Roundup for Cowboy Poets, Playwrights &amp; Storytellers</td>
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<td>Catharine Meurer</td>
<td>In the Winner’s Circle</td>
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<td>Mountain Time Arts</td>
<td>West Creative Placing Leadership Summit</td>
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<td>Fashion Show</td>
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<td>Omling</td>
<td>Las Vegas World Market Show</td>
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<td>Michael Panini</td>
<td>HalfLotte Art Collective</td>
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<td>Paula Petroulakis</td>
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<td>Matthew Pedale</td>
<td>Denver Pop Culture Con Booth Exhibition</td>
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<td>LeeAnn Ramey Art Gallery</td>
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<td>Breakfast in Montana</td>
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<td>Stoney Sasser</td>
<td>Artist-in-Residence Conference</td>
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<td>Stacey Smith</td>
<td>The Bench – Southwest Maker Symposium</td>
<td>Bozeman</td>
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<td>Jay Schumert</td>
<td>Collaborative Ceramics Project</td>
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<td>Sara Swartz</td>
<td>Fun’d Glass Art Festival Bound</td>
<td>Bozeman</td>
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<td>Alana Waksman</td>
<td>We Burn Like This Missoula</td>
<td>Missoula</td>
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<tr>
<td>Douglas Wales</td>
<td>Montana – Hawaii Bridge Project</td>
<td>Benicia</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laurent Wall-MacLane</td>
<td>Anya Cloud to Guest Teach at MDF 19</td>
<td>Missoula</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
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Montana's new Poets Laureate

State of the Arts

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October/November/December

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Symphony Under the Stars: Aretha! The Helena Symphony, with guest artists Ryan Shaw (above) and Capathia Jenkins, paid tribute to the Queen of Soul during its annual outdoor concert on the campus of Carroll College. (Photo by Jerry Kozak)