Governor appoints two new members, four returnees to MAC

The Montana Arts Council recently announced two new board members—Angela Russell of Lodge Grass and Corby Skinner of Billings. Russell replaces Lynne Montagne, who was appointed in 2015 and served one term, and Skinner fills the vacated term of Arlene Parisot, which ends in 2023.

“Lynne brought the perspectives of an artist, an educator, a member of the cultural community, and a profession as an advocate for children and juveniles to the arts council,” says MAC Executive Director Tatiana Gant. “Lynne served on several MAC committees, including the monthly review of Strategic Investment Grant applications. She thought deeply about every comment she shared, and she will miss working with her.”

Gant also expressed the Council’s sadness over the loss of longtime council member Parisot, who died Nov. 23. “We will miss her warmth, brilliance and humor,” she wrote in the winter issue of State of the Arts. “She listened carefully, spoke honestly, and the council respected her insight.”

The two new members, Russell and Skinner, add a valuable perspective to the council.

“At recent meetings, the council has been looking at ways to address the inequity of access to cultural resources across Montana,” Gant says. “Having two new members from the eastern part of the state will help us understand the priorities of the residents in their communities.”

She notes, “Corby has been so deeply involved in the cultural community of Billings, and Angela has accomplished so much around not just preservation and cultural arts, but encouraging contemporary expression.”

Gov. Steve Bullock also reappointed four members: G.B. Carson, Sean Falcon Chandler, Mark Kuipers and Jean Steele will serve until 2025.

“This has been such an extraordinary group of leaders, and our new members will add so much,” says Gant.

Corby Skinner, an independent marketing professional in Billings, is regarded across Montana for his capacity to assess issues and create positive, effective messages. He’s worked in all aspects of performing, visual and literary arts.

As director of The Writer’s Voice since its beginning in 1991, Skinner has coordinated seven Big Read programs for the National Endowment for the Arts and 17 consecutive High Plains Book Festivals featuring authors from a seven-state region and three Canadian provinces.

MCT lay off 66 actors/directors, cancels tour

By Kristi Niemeyer

As the world knows by now, the COVID-19 virus is unfolding in ways that are both rapid and unprecedented, and the arts world is certainly not immune.

As a result, the Missoula Children’s Theatre, an organization with roots grounded in Montana and branches that spread across the nation and around the world, was hit particularly hard.

The staff at the Missoula-based theatre met March 13 to assess the unfolding public health crisis, and decided to cancel the last five shows of “The Spitfire Grill,” a community theatre production, as well as an upcoming children’s day camp, “Beauty Lou and the Country Beast,” that had 66 kids enrolled.

There were no cases in Montana when we went into the meeting, and by the time we got out, there were five,” says Terri Elander, MCT’s International and Public Relations director.

By Monday, March 16, schools were closing in Montana and nationwide. In the face of school closures, and strict guidelines coming from the state and federal level, MCT cancelled 254 tour residencies through May 20 and was forced to lay off 66 actors.

“It’s pretty devastating for all of us right now,” says Elander. “But the tendency, the statistics and the wisdom we’re hearing is that it may get worse.”

The estimated economic hit to MCT is $1.5 million in lost revenue, and much more if the summer tour to military bases around the world is cancelled.

Indigenous people have also long been exploited for their cultural identity and artifacts, while their traditions and imagery have been appropriated or represented without context or reverence.

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Artists in the Age of COVID-19

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We are in this together

As world events become local, we thank our constituents for postponing and canceling events and making accommodations for staff and volunteers. MAC is committed to everything possible to be flexible and understanding with deadlines and grant funding. We will continue to monitor resources for the creative sector and share them across our social media feeds.

The National Endowment is also tuned in, as reflected in this message from NEA Chair Mary Anne Carter: “As America confronts this period of unprecedented change and uncertainty, we want to assure you that one thing will not change: our support for the arts across this great nation.

“The National Endowment for the Arts is open for business. Our staff, while working remotely for the next several weeks, is available to you via phone or email, as usual … We know that there are more than five million Americans who make their livelihoods in the broader arts and cultural sector across the country and are potentially at risk. We also know that the arts provide comfort, resilience, wisdom, and the means for self-expression and connection, perhaps even more so during challenging times like these. “As you focus on the health and safety of yourself and your loved ones, please know that we are in this together, and you can continue to rely on us for full support.”

MAC seeks program officer

The Montana Arts Council is seeking a program officer to join its staff in Helena. The position was posted on the state hiring website, mstatjobs.tales.net, March 11 and the first review of applicants is April 6. The position will remain posted until filled.

According to the job description: The Montana Arts Council (MAC) is the agency of state government established to develop the creative potential of all Montanans, advance education, spur economic vibrancy and revitalize communities through involvement in the arts. MAC is looking for a team-oriented, hard-working and fun-loving individual with an aptitude for learning new skills who will thrive in a small office environment.

MAC is a dynamic agency where all members work strategically to address issues of diversity, equity, access and inclusion.

The Program Officer will:

- Represent MAC across Montana and nationally.
- Promote grant programs like The Cultural Tourism Grant, Investment Grants and Artist’s Innovation Awards.
- Develop, refine and implement all aspects of grant programs.
- Contribute content for MAC’s social media channels.
- Provide assistance to artists, educators and non-profit organizations.

Knowledge of the arts is not necessary – a love of learning and creativity is required.

To apply for this position, submit a resume and cover letter through the State of Montana Career Center. The cover letter should describe how your knowledge and skills align with the duties of this position. Only electronic application will be accepted.

For more information, email Jeniffer.Alger@mt.gov or call 406-444-6489.

Making Native Nations visible

Twice in the past six months, I’ve had the opportunity to hear presentations on the research and findings behind “Reclaiming Native Truth,” available at the website of the same name. In developing the report, researchers examined the understanding and perceptions of Native Americans by their fellow Americans. Among the findings:

- 46% of Americans don’t believe that Native Americans are a living culture.
- 72% of Americans rarely receive information on Native Americans, past or present.
- 34% of media includes Native characters.

According to “Becoming Visible: Examining mass media publications to the research referenced, the public school education system is the most powerful tool for shaping public opinion of their nation-wide assessment, researchers note the decades-long efforts of the National Indian Education Association to advocate for a curriculum that accurately represents our history and contemporary Native issues and accomplishments.

While these efforts, 87% of history standards don’t mention Natives after 1900.

It’s been wonderful to see my social media feeds flooded with images of the artists and the exhibits.

The nonprofit IllumiNative, formed to make substantial change and uncertainty. I encourage you to look at the Gazette’s other pieces. It’s been wonderful to see my social media feeds flooded with images of the artists and the exhibits.
CONGRATS TO …

Rising Voices at Browning High School, which was selected as a winner of the 2020 Library of Congress State Literacy Awards. The poetry club will receive $2,000 in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the promotion of literacy and reading in their community and state. Rising Voices is a student-led writing group established in 2014 under the direction of Amy Andreas, the school librarian. Approximately 100 teens have been active members of the club. Since its development, Rising Voices students have worked with writers from Montana and across the country to help hone and inspire their writing. The group has inspired a new generation of writers from the Blackfeet Nation and has helped students find the power of sharing their strong and creative voices with others. Each year culminates with the Rising Voices Literacy Night when 50–100 students, staff, and parents come together to listen to students share their work and celebrate their creative efforts. “This is very exciting,” Andreas said. “The students are, of course, exceedingly pleased to receive more state and national recognition for the group. They don’t understand how our ‘rag-tag’ group of writers has received so many accolades for just getting together, writing, and supporting each other’s creative efforts.” The money is also used to help publish student poetry each year, bring in some visiting poets and writers and help students experience some literary activities in other areas of the state. The group was nominated by the Montana Center for the Book.

Helena potter Sarah Jaeger, who was named this year’s People’s Laureate by Montana Clay, a statewide organization of ceramic artists. Jaeger received a BFA from Harvard College and a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute. Her functional porcelain pottery is often thrown and altered, then glazed using wax resists, which creates layers of color. She has taught at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University, and Pomona College in California, and has been workshops at schools and art centers nationally. She also served on the board of directors for the Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts for 10 years. Jaeger was the recipient of the 1996 Montana Arts Council Individual Artist Fellowship and the 1991 Emerging Talent Award from the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts. In 2006, she was awarded a Target Fellowship from United States Artists; she was also among the artists profiled in the PBS documentary “Craft in America.” Her work is in public and private collections and, most recently, an exhibit of her work is hanging around the country. “Sarah has been an active and productive member of the clay community in Montana for decades,” writes Alison Reintjes of Montana Clay. “In addition to being an active and productive member she has willingly shared her knowledge with others.” In recent years she has shown resilience while dealing with health issues and, at the same time … been developing a strong new body of work.

Radius Gallery owners Jason Neal and Lisa Simon, on moving to their elegant new space at 120 N. Higgins Ave. (formerly the Uptown Diner), in Missoula. Refashioned and revitalized, Radius opened in January with an array of new works by the gallery’s stable of artists and a major exhibition of works by iconic artist Rudy Autio. In celebration of the new gallery, the couple plans to continue their mission of exhibiting thoughtfully made, eye-catching and thought-provoking contemporary artworks by artists from across the region and beyond.” The two-story space, complete with floor-to-ceiling windows and museum-caliber lighting, also features an upstairs gallery devoted to showcasing “Montana’s abiding role in the ever-expanding field of ceramic arts.” Another upcoming space includes an extension of Montana’s rich artistic and cultural heritage. The building’s owners, Karen and Brian Sippy, have an ambitious vision to foster a thriving, sustainable arts economy and to attract creative artists and collectors alike. In addition to the studio, the site will include Art Vault, a business providing state-of-the-art storage for precious collectables; and a mural program on the exterior of the old half of the building. Neal and Simon first opened Radius in 2014 at 114 E. Main St.; their new digs were designed by Don MacArthur of MMM Architects. Artist Julia Galloway told the Missoulian, “This gallery is a treasure to have in Missoula, and raises the bar for the art gallery in Missoula. Gallery 16, named for the street where the first storefront sat, was launched by nine women who pooled their resources to keep the doors open. It was both a place to sell their work and create in the studio space. “They said it couldn’t be done,” says longtime gallery member and Great Falls ceramic artist Judy Erickson. She reports that when the cooperative gallery was formed five decades ago “by those brave women, the comment was that no group of women could get along together well enough” to sustain a business. But by the gallery’s 16th birthday, there were 15 members celebrating at its former address on 16th St. “And now we’re 50!” says Erickson. Since its inception, the cooperative gallery has been moving to other downtown locations, leading the gallery to its current home at 600 Central Ave., where nearly 100 artists – men and women – are represented.

The five recipients of Arts Missoula’s annual Arts & Culture Awards, which honor individuals and organizations whose outstanding work in the arts and humanities have made a significant contribution to the community’s quality of life. This year’s Cultural Ambassador Award honored someone who has consistently supported the arts community and cultural diplomacy, goes to Nancy Matthews, volunteer and board member for several arts organizations, who has helped bring international art exhibitions to Missoula; the Patsy Waas Visionary Award, celebrating someone who has shown exceptional achievement in their chosen craft, goes to Margaret Baldridge, concertmaster for the Missoula Symphony Orchestra, violinist for the String Orchestra of the Rockies and the SAPPHIRE Trio, and longtime UM Music professor. The Arts Educator, honoring an outstanding local educator who has devoted a career to teaching the arts, is awarded to John Combs, fine arts supervisor for Missoula County Public Schools, and former band instructor at Hellgate High School. The Business Support for the Arts, given to a business that has provided long-term support to Missoula’s arts and arts organizations, is awarded to Blackfoot Communications; and the Cultural Vision Award, honoring artists who are championing those artists, goes to the Zootown Arts Community Center, with its new facility located in downtown Missoula. The recipients “are prime examples of what Missoula is known for: exceptional people, place and work and live,” said Arts Missoula Executive Director Tom Bensen. Due to COVID-19, the annual awards luncheon has been postponed. For more information, visit www.artsmissoula.org.

The family of longtime Flathead Valley artist Marvin Messing (1922-2014), whose drawings, “The Art of the Cross,” are on display in St. James Episcopal Cathedral’s gallery in Chicago Feb. 26-April 12. The display is composed of his large, detailed color drawings and depicts the classic devotional service commemorating 14 events in Christ’s journey typically referred to as The Passion of Christ. The Story of the Passion or The Stations of the Cross. Messing portrayed three further views of the story, expanding his series to 17 drawings. Although the artist is known for his colorful surrealistic paintings, he chose black and white with touches of burnt sienna for “The Art of the Cross,” hoping the scenes would evoke deeper emotions while capturing the gravity of the story. At the time Messing drew the pieces, he was actively involved in the inter-denominational Cursillo movement in Montana. The sketches were first viewed at a gathering in 1991 and subsequently were shown in many churches in the Flathead Valley. Messing’s daughters, Kris Messing of Stevensville and Pam Messing Long of Whitefish, have mounted the series so the works are protected and can be displayed more easily. Honoring their father’s wishes, they say the collection may be used by any denomination and all people should feel welcome to view the works.

Bozeman filmmaker Paula Mozen, whose film, “Life Interrupted: Telling Breast Cancer Stories,” has reaped awards at a number of notable festivals in 2019. The film was named Best Documentary Feature at the Long Beach Independent Film Festival, took Best in Show at Docs Without Borders and the Women’s International Film Festival, and was an award finalist for the Polish Independent Film Festival, Changing Face International Film Festival and the Flathead Lake International Cinefest (FLIC). The film by the Emmy Award-winning filmmaker and two-time breast cancer survivor shares intimate stories about women confronting a life-altering diagnosis who refuse to step down. Notable for its unflinching view of the often-dreaded process of diagnosis, treatment, and support, the documentary also offers useful insights into the emotional and physical aspects of the disease. Featuring women from across the United States, “Life Interrupted” was produced in Bozeman and funded by many organizations including the Greater Montana Foundation and the Montana Film Commission. More Congrats on next page

Send us your good news
Artists, writers, musicians, artists educators and arts administrators: Please let us know about major awards and accomplishments, especially beyond the borders of Montana. Send your good news to Congress, c/o Kristi Niemeyer 207th Ave. E, Polson, MT 59860; or better yet, email kristi@livesivv.com. If you include a digital photo, please make sure it’s at least 200 lines per inch (lpi or dpi) and a file size of over 500KB.
Welcome to William Harning, the new education director at Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art in Great Falls. He received his BFA from Montana State University in May 2017, with a focus in ceramics, and begins his work as education director while completing his artist residency at The Square, culminating in an exhibition and workshop series. He currently serves as an educator/mentor for the Square’s Community Art Center, which he helped create.

Congratulations and best wishes to Jennifer Asebrook, an old hand at Whitefish Theatre Company who quietly assumed the mantle of executive director on Jan. 1 after serving as development director since 2013. She takes over from Gayle MacLaren, executive director since 2002 and a member of the WTC staff since 1999, who remains with the company in a part time capacity as operations manager. “I am so excited for this new opportunity,” says Asebrook. “I have really enjoyed learning about and experiencing administrative life of this wonderful community theatre. The best part is that our incredible staff has remained intact with these changes and Gayle can continue to be my mentor and source of support.” For MacLaren, the transition offers “the best of both worlds” – an opportunity to semi-retire, “but still spend time in a place that I love and with community that I love to see.”

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Crow voices in Chicago

Throughout the exhibit space, which flows through several rooms, music and language by Apsáalooke people is broadcast over the sound system. The language meshes with drumbeats, chants, and songs by hip-hop artist Supaman.

“Everyone who walks in there, every single Crow — is just overwhelmed with emotion because it’s so powerful,” said Velma Pretty, a band member of Supaman.

“I'm just happy that I got to work and be a part of it,” she added of Sanders’ work.

With perspectives of fellow tribal members, Sanders presents Apsáalooke culture through a historical lens while also showing modern po- tery and art. Their artistry and knowledge are shared through modern beadwork, fashion, video animation, painting, sculpture and photography alongside historical artifacts and sacred items, also made by tribal members.

Along with the war shields, historical items dating from the 1850s to 1890s include war shirts, elk tooth dresses, cradleboards, and medicine bundles from the Field Museum’s permanent collection. Items can be traced back to the late 1800s when collectors and field researchers approached Native people to collect objects, many of which ended up in museums with little context or were sold and traded throughout the world.

Such objects, Sanders believes, have their own agency. “When they chose to leave the community when they did, it was an incredibly painful experience to all the families,” she said.

Sanders describes a belief among the Apsáalooke that such sacred objects made the choice to leave and come to these museums. “The prayer has always been to come back to us, and that we will be reunited,” she said.

Apsáalooke People and Warriors exhibit and a monumental exhibit, visit billingsgazette.com

Spring 2020 • State of the Arts

Large portraits of indigenous women and historic war shields of the Crow tribe dating back to the late 1800s are displayed the Field Museum’s new Apsáalooke People and Warriors exhibit.

(Photograph by Anna Paige/Billings Gazette)
The arts in the age of Coronavirus

By Kristi Niemeyer

The cascade of cancellations and post-ponements started as a trickle March 9 when the CM Russell Museum announced that it was postponing The Russell Auction – the centerpiece of Western Art Week in Great Falls – due to concerns about the potential infectious risk posed by COVID-19 to attendees and the community.

“We take this decision very seriously,” said Tom Figarelle, executive director of the museum. “The Russell Exhibition and Sale has a beloved 52-year tradition in Great Falls and is a primary source of revenue for the museum, but given the potential and likely spread of the Coronavirus at The Russell event, we feel postponement is in the best interest of the Great Falls community and our patrons, staff, volunteers and partners.”

By March 15, most of the remaining art auctions and shows that make Western Art Week an international attraction, followed suit, creating a significant hit to the communi-ty’s economy. As of this writing, the museum planned to announce the rescheduled date by the end of March and anticipated holding The Russell within the next six months.

Western Art Week is by no means the only casualty. By March 13, event cancellations were pouring in to LivelyTimes.com and Mont-ana’s only statewide event calendar. And by Monday, March 16, most major events within a two-week to month-long span were either cancelled or postponed, and many venues, including art museums, theaters and art centers, had announced closures ranging from two weeks to a month.

The nonprofit arts community is especial-ly reeling. Jen Asebrook, executive director of Whitefish Theatre Company, says the organization is faced with cancelling at least three of the season’s final five shows, which include a mix of concerts and community the-a-tre productions. “And it is possible the entire remainder of the season will be cancelled, so it’s a big financial hit for us,” she says.

The company, housed at the O’Shaugh-nessy Center in Whitefish, suspended business operations at least through March 29. Re-hearsals were also cancelled for an upcoming performance of “Sense and Sensibility,” and the perfor-mance itself will be rescheduled.

“We are hoping for season ticket-hold-ers — and perhaps some of our sponsors and others who have pre-bought tickets — will help us weather the storm a bit.”

Montana Actors’ Theatre in Havre was planning to present the musical “Mama Mia” March 13-28, but postponed the production when the state closed schools.

The Myrna Loy Center, an institution in the valley for between 80 and 90 actors,” Elander adds. “These productions are MAT’s main source of revenue and without them we find it difficult to maintain ourselves in a difficult position,” wrote the company’s executive producer, Jay Pyette and “Dervish are high-tailing home while they can,” says the arts center’s executive director, Krys Holmes.

In addition to owing $7,000 in refunds for Dervish tickets, The Myrna also cancelled its annual fundraising gala, slated for March 14, and a concert of the Ras-trelli Cello Quartet on April 9.

“We will dip into savings to support our staff as much as possible,” says the Myrna’s general manager, Trish Rodrigue. She added that many of the presenters she works with have come together and pledged to be here through tough times. We all need music, laughter, and great movies to get us through. Maybe we can do it differently.”

Rural performing arts groups are ending their seasons early too. Mission Valley Live! in Polson and Ronan cancelled a concert March 20 and announced a few days later that Stringfever, a band from the United Kingdom that was slated to play eight concerts across Montana in April, had cancelled their tour.

“No one expects this virus to start to wane until the fall,” writes board member Trish Rodrigue. She added that many of the presenters she works with have come together and pledged to be here through tough times. We all need music, laughter, and great movies to get us through. Maybe we can do it differently.”

Museums and galleries on hiatus

The Clay Studio of Missoula cancelled its annual Potstick fundraiser, slated for April 9 at the University Center, as well as the preview reception and Potstick Awards lunch. Dis-ussions are underway on rescheduling the event for later this year, or moving the auction of ceramic art and drawings to an online platform. Spring classes are also postponed.

“This has been a tough and heartbreaking week for all of us, and a huge blow to all the small businesses and organizations in Missou-la and beyond,” writes the studio’s executive director, Shalene Valenzuela. “But above all, we value the safety of our community members.”

The Archie Bray Center for the Ceramic Arts in Helena also shuttered its public facil-ities March 16, including classroom spaces and its sales gallery.

“We are planning for alternative offerings in our education program but for the safety of those who instruct and attend classes, we will be ceasing community class activities during this time,” wrote resident artist director Steven Young Lee.

Meanwhile, resident artists’ studios, offices and classroom spaces remain open. Although the buildings are closed to the public, clay orders and gallery sales are still available via phone or email.

Most of the state’s major museums were temporarily closed, at least through the end of March. The staff at Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art in Great Falls was plan-ning to use the two-week interval to develop...
The Verge Theater in Bozeman, which offers live theatre and comedy, is dark at the moment. “We hope that by helping ‘flatten the curve’ of infections locally, we can play a small part in allowing our first responders to do their best to keep everyone healthy,” says executive director Hilary Parker.

For now, the Verge is postponing classes, rehearsals and shows. “One of the best aspects of Verge is its sense of community, so we know you will stay focused on taking care of one another,” she wrote in an email announcement.

“Let’s use this time to connect and find a deeper appreciation for all that we have as well as to support those in need,” writes Parker. “We’ll be here, ready to welcome you back to Verge Theater in the very near future.”

Resilience is a theme echoed by Holmes at The Myrna. “I feel for what suffering is coming,” she writes. “And at the same time I think we are made for times like this. We’re resilient, generous, and strong. We will help each other through.”

Private sector hit hard too
Bars, restaurants and other gathering places were temporarily closed, especially in light of federal recommendations that gatherings be limited to 10 people or fewer. Local businesses, the clubs, the largest concert promoter, postponed all live events for at least 30 days, beginning March 15. Logjam, the city’s largest symphony, has cancelled its annual Spring Festival, which is recruiting a new music director, postponed the last concert of the “Pass the Baton” season, which was slated for April 18-19.

“The final finalist, Zoe Zeniodi, resides in Greece and clearly she is unable to travel to the U.S. at this time,” says executive director Tom May Salonen. The Missoula Symphony Association office was temporarily closed in mid-March and employees were working remotely.

“As with the rest of the world, we take this situation day by day, hour by hour, in an effort to keep our musicians, patrons, staff and volunteers safe,” she adds.

Likewise, the Bozeman Symphony is searching for a new music director, and the season’s final concert, still on the calendar for May 2-3, features Janna Hymes, the sixth and final candidate for the position, along with featured soloists traveling from across the state and region.

Whether these performances happen depends on ever-changing health guidelines. “Each day seems to present new information and new challenges,” says executive director Emily Paris-Martín.

The organization has cancelled Symphonies in Schools rehearsals until further notice and plans to reschedule several events including Symphonies at the Snake and the annual Underwriters Appreciation Reception, which was slated to showcase talented cellist Tristan Hernandez, runner-up for the 2019 Montana Association of Symphony Orchestras’ Young Artist Competition.

“Music serves as a healing force and we need that now,” says Paris-Martín. She also appreciates the support of the symphony’s board of directors, a strong network of colleagues across the state, “and symphony orchestras nationwide who are taking vital steps to move our organizations forward and provide an essential platform for resources.”

The Billings Symphony postponed its major production of “West Side Story.” While acknowledging that it was a difficult decision, the organization saw it as the best way to protect its well-being of our patrons, donors, musicians, guest artists, and all our symphony family.

The Glacier Symphony Orchestra and Chorale has cancelled its annual Spring Festival, April 25-26, and the Butte Symphony’s final concert of the season, “Unlikely Loves: Symphonies of Great Composers” on April 11 “is on hold until the COVID-19 situation is brought under control,” according to a Facebook post.

More on page 8
Montana Heritage Center moves forward

Gov. Steve Bullock ceremonially signed a bill June 16 that provides funding for construction of the Montana Historical Society’s new Montana Heritage Center. Bullock was surrounded by proponents of Senate Bill 338, and noted that the ceremonial signing was the crowning achievement of the decade-long effort to build the new facility. He added that the new Heritage Center is for all Montanans, as well as all visitors to the Treasure State.

“We have incredible treasures … and this is an opportunity to see what we have, not just for people here but for people across the world,” Bullock said. “It’s exciting that Democrats and Republicans came together and said ‘Let’s finally get this done.’”

“This is not the Helena historical society, but the Montana Historical Society,” he added. “It’s a treasure everyone in Montana should enjoy and share.”

The new structure and renovations to the existing building are expected to cost about $52 million. After an in-depth study on where it will be located, the Department of Administration decided last fall to build a new facility on the Capitol campus, just a few feet from the Capitol building.

The new facility will be constructed across Sixth Street from the current home of the Montana Historical Society, and the old building will be renovated. Along with housing Montana’s history, the facility will provide public and legislative meeting space, food service, and other amenities for everyone who comes to the Capitol to experience Montana.

Funding for the project was authorized by the 2019 Montana Legislature. Some of the construction and renovation costs will be covered by accommodations tax revenue, which is estimated to provide about $38 million. Existing bonding of about $6.5 million is available, and the Montana Historical Society has committed to raising private contributions of $10 million for galleries and exhibits.

New director takes helm at Humanities Montana

Randi Lynn Tanglen was named executive director of Humanities Montana in 2002 to research the cultural, literary and historical significance of Montana women’s contributions to society. She used that grant to travel the state, visiting local libraries and civic organizations.

Tanglen earned her doctorate in English from the University of Arizona. Since 2008 she has taught at Austin College in Sherman, Texas, where she has benefited from the Humanities Montana – an academic division of the Center for the Book that engages in deep-thought-provoking discussions about literature. Humanities Montana has been serving as interim executive director.

Johnson’s appointment to Humanities Montana as director of the State Center for the Book since 2015, her innovative and creative leadership has transformed the center into a model faculty-development program.

Tanglen notes that as a faculty member, she has benefited from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and local foundation philanthropy to enhance her teaching and research. “I am eager to work with the Humanities Montana staff and board of directors to ensure the future viability and support of humanities outreach in my beloved home state.”

We are simply delighted that Randi is coming back to Montana to share her leadership and vision with Humanities Montana,” said Butte’s St. Patrick’s Day parade – an event that typically draws thousands of revelers to the Irish-centric city – was cancelled, as was Butte’s first Art Walk of the season on May 1. As is the case across Montana, live music venues are closed, and gigs are cancelled or postponed until further notice.

Everett hopes that the folk festival’s dates in mid-July – nearly four months from the onset of the Coronavirus in Montana – will allow the show to go on. “So we are moving forward, planning the festival as if the world had not changed in the last few weeks and at the same time planning to adapt or postpone the festival depending on how high the risks remain for our audiences,” he writes.

“Social distancing is the recommendation to flatten the spread of the virus among us, but it is also the death of festivals that bring people together to dance in the streets and celebrate the joy to live music in the fullness of the short sweet summer in the Northern Rockies.”

His advice: “Wait and hope for a change in the situation and wash our hands a lot.”
Russ Nasset: He was Singin’ This Song

Missoula’s honky-tonk–music icon Russ Nasset, who of the barrel-burn voice and fleet-footed slide licks, has added another (mostly) solo CD. He has accompanied on a few numbers, but mostly it’s just him, his distinctive harmonica sound, gravelly and expressive, and a guitar.

Joining him on this stockpile of folk and cowboy pieces is a couple of family members: son Sam (who plays with his dad in The Revelators) plays sleek electric guitar on four tracks, and granddaughter Ella sings on Glen Lurie’s “My Montana.”

John Parker adds an old-time feel with clawhammer banjo on the traditional “Rez Rider,” a slowly rocking instrumental that shakes the hips and sounds like film music.

Russ Nasset, he of the burn-barrel voice and sizzling electric. Russ sings the lyrics with his voice doubled, too. It’s perfect.

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How to submit a Book for State of the Arts

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

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

Books submitted to State of the Arts appear in this newspaper at the Montana Arts Council’s discretion and as space permits, and will not necessarily be reprinted at LivelyTimes.com.

State of the Arts • Spring 2020

Voices of Yellowstone’s Capstone: A Narrative Atlas of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness

By Lyle Olson and Travis Parrie

This unique collaboration between writers, artists and cartographers travels both the physical and intellectual terrain of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. The atlas – true to its name – is made up of 28 engaging essays paired with richly illustrated maps by artists and map-makers, including Courtney Blaizon, Travis Burdick, Monte Dolak and others. The long list of writers includes Dan Aafland, Susan Austin, Doug Chabot, John Clayton, Seabring Davis, Shane Doyle, Gary Ferguson, Peter Halstead, Ed Kemmick, Scott McMillion and Bernard Quetchenbach.

Editors Truette Parrie and Jesse Logan are both long-time veterans of the Forest Service. The book is published by the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Foundation, a nonprofit group devoted to supporting stewardship of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness “right in front of you where you’re working spontaneously.”

The Meditation Process: Raja Yoga and Buddhist Shamatha

By Lyle Olson

The Meditation Process is a practical study of concentration meditation for intermediate and beginning meditators. Based on more than 40 years of wide personal experience and research, the book offers a close look at what the meditation actually does.

Author Lyle Olson offers concise, practical suggestions for posture, breathing, dealing with thoughts, brain hemisphere functions, etc. The book also offers a comprehensive, detailed consideration of process that will save this helpful guide to building a meditative practice for patients, faculty and everyone interested in meditation.

On his return to the United States, Olson was named the Best Popular Book for 2020 by the Society for American Archaeology, and was lauded by SAA president, Dr. Joe Watkins, as “outstanding contributions to archaeology.”

Six Hundred Generations: An Archaeological History of Montana

By Carl M. Davis

Accomplished Missoula archeologist Carl Davis takes a fascinating look at the archaeological evidence of Montana’s long Indigenous human occupation.

The fourth largest state encompasses everything from snow-capped peaks and their forested flanks, to rolling prairies, wide river valleys and eroded badlands.

“Over the millennia, people from the Columbia Plateau, Great Basin and Great Plains came to this place we now call Montana to live, hunt, trade, rad and socialize with each other, making the area a crossroads,” he writes. “This convergence and interaction of Native groups from different regions is what makes Montana archeology both fascinating and complicated – it tells not one story, but many.”

Davis focuses on 12 unique archaeological sites, taking readers on an extraordinary journey through the lifeways and cultures. Beginning with the First Americans who followed mammoths into this landscape, he describes how Native Americans evolved, and flourished here for thousands of years. At the same time, Davis offers insights into the study of archaeology, “the scientific recovery and analysis of material remains – ancient garbage!” He also traces the cyclical changes in climate that effectively determined the migrations, hunting and foraging of ancient peoples.

More than 70 color photographs and numerous illustrations by the author accompany the 320-page book’s engaging and accessible writing.

Published by Riverbend Publishing of Helena, Six Hundred Generations was recently named the Best Popular Book for 2020 by the Society for American Archaeology, and was lauded by SAA president, Dr. Joe Watkins, as “outstanding contributions to archaeology.”

Raised in Dillon and a graduate of the University of Montana, Davis worked for years as an archaeologist for the Forest Service, retiring in 2015 as the regional archaeologist for the U.S. Forest Service Northern Region in Missoula. In 2018 he was honored with the Montana Heritage Keeper Award from the Montana Historical Society.

It Comes Around Again: A Memoir

By Rudy Autio

This memoir, published posthumously, offers an intimate look at iconic Montana artist Rudy Autio, one of the important figures in the contemporary clay movement rooted in the 1950s.

Through the early 1990s, Autio sporadically worked on a memoir, which he wrote for his children, but hoped would be relevant to artists as well. “We knew about the memoir and we’d always enjoyed it, so we thought why don’t we use that? Let Rudy tell his own story,” his daughter, Lisa Autio, told the Missoulian.

The family worked with award-winning authors Dennis Kern and his Rattlesnake Valley Press. To ensure the modernity of the memoir, and a true work documenting the art world, the book was reviewed by Montana Arts Council and publication at the University of Minnesota.

The memoir focuses primarily on Autio’s early days growing up in a Finnish immigrant family in Butte, his time in the Navy at the end of World War II, and the founding of the Archie Bray Foundation in Helena with another ground-breaking clay artist, Peter Voulkos, and how he built his early murals using brickyard clay.

Later he helped noted historian K. Ross Toole, the new director of Montana Historical Society Museum in Helena, with a number of dialogues, and was hired by the University of Montana in 1957 to build what would become a nationally known ceramics program. Autio also became one of the early groups to support the arts in the community.

The book is reviewed here for the first time. It will not necessarily be reprinted at LivelyTimes.com.

Rediscovering America: A 21st Century Journey

By Brian Kahn

With Rediscovering America, Brian Kahn – the host of Montana Public Radio’s “Home Ground” interview series – takes the reader on an extraordinary journey.

During a trip to Moscow, he was invited to accompany the Russian TV journalist Vladimír Potéz and an 11-person Russian film crew on a 50-day, round-trip drive across the United States, following the route taken by great Soviet journalists two decades before the Great Depression. As the Americans and the Russians met, they traded stories of the moment where Autio focused on the people and the places they encountered – a diverse and enlightening spectrum of the American audience what America and Americans were really like. As it turned out, the book is a clear-eyed look at the conflicted reality of these dark times, to offer hope for an American life “more real, more relevant — and always poignant.”

The book also shows the work of Kahn’s travels over the course of many decades, with many stories and anecdotes about the making of a living and supporting a family as an artist.

Kahn is also the author of Real Common Sense: The Meditation Process and Buddhism for America, and was named the Best Popular Book for 2020 by the Society for American Archaeology, and was lauded by SAA president, Dr. Joe Watkins, as “outstanding contributions to archaeology.”

Ron Olson is a retired high school counselor and teacher, who turned to the study of various religious traditions and Eastern philosophy to answer such perennial questions as “what is life for?” He entered the graduate school of Philosophy and Science and Philosophy at the Humalayan University and served as photographer for Yoga International and the institute for 15 years, including two years spent in Indian ashrams.

Ron Olson is known for his work as a writing coach, and for looking for a comprehensive, detailed consideration of process that will save this helpful guide to building a meditative practice for patients, faculty and everyone interested in meditation.

About Books section for inclusion in the About Books section of State of the Arts for the past 12 months by a Montana author. To submit a book, authors are encouraged to send a brief sampling of those remarks. Books submitted to State of the Arts appear in this newspaper at the Montana Arts Council’s discretion and as space permits, and will not necessarily be reprinted at LivelyTimes.com.
About Books

After moving to western Montana, Troxel grew up “in a $39 dollar shack on 10 acres by the railroad tracks” on the Flathead Reservation in Arlee. After earning a degree and taught English and creative writing at Butte High School for 23 years and conducted writing workshops around the state. In 2015, she wrote and published a book of poetry, Mean Dog Blues, and contributed to the collection Biscayne from the Heart.

Montana Quick Facts
By Josh Quick
Missoula-based author and illustrator Josh Quick says he marvels at trail placards in state parks, instructional illustrations and hand-drawn maps, losing himself “in their simple beauty.” Montana Quick Facts is his own effort to offer “fanciful facts,” depicted as hand-sketched interpretations.

The 112-page collection of original illustrations shares strange but true stories about Montana. Discover the contents of a Butte coal miner’s lunch, learn why many intercontinental ballistic missiles are housed in Hi-Line silos, meet pioneering modernist painter Isabelle Johnson, and find details on the Grateful Dead’s one Montana concert.

Quick told the Lake County Leader that the book originated when he began illustrating interesting facts about Montana with custom typography, and posting them to social media in his spare time. By the time he acquired 20 to 30 hand-drawn facts, he decided to strive for 100 facts, and compile them in a book.

In his own words, the Montana Quick Facts explores “the weirdness of life playing out in the West.”

The Blaze
By Chad Dundas
Having lost much of his memory from a traumatic brain injury sustained in Iraq, Army veteran Matthew Rose is called back to Montana after his father’s death to settle his affairs, and hopefully to settle the past as well. It’s not only a blank to him, but a mystery.

Why an ex-football coach left town – not to mention a dark secret she’s been keeping about the eccentric neighbors – not to mention a dark secret she’s been keeping about a house go up in flames, and it turns out a local college student has died in the first place?

Or: On his first night back, Matthew sees a house go up in flames, and his new job is to be a local college student has died in a wildfire – and this event sparks a memory of a different fire, an unsolved crime from long ago, a part of Matthew’s past that might lead to all the answers he’s been searching for. What he finds will connect the oil fire and the new, a series of long-unsoled mysteries, and a ruthless act of murder.

The Associated Press lauds the book as “both a cleverly plotted mystery and a touching account of a wounded veteran trying to rebuild his life and the lives of those close to him.”

“Dundas’ assured hands, one man’s search for answers makes for a lyrical, engaging mystery,” writes Associated Press.

Dundas earned his MFA from the University of Montana, and his short fiction has appeared in the Beloit Fiction Journal, Sycamore Review, Story Writer and Drudge. Since 2001, he’s worked as a sportswriter for national outlets including ESPN, NBC Sports, Sporting News, as well as local and regional newspapers. A fourth-generation Montanan, he lives with his wife and children in Missoula.

The Small Crimes of Tiffany Templeton
By Richard Fifeid
Templeton King meets Girl in Pieces in this moving and darkly funny story about a teenage girl coming of age and learning how to grieve in small-town Montana.

Tiffany Templeton is tough. She dresses exclusively in black, buys leather jackets that are several sizes too big, and never backs down from a challenge. She’s known for a goodnight sound like a local college student has died in a wildfire – and this event sparks a memory of a different fire, an unsolved crime from long ago, a part of Matthew’s past that might lead to all the answers he’s been searching for. What he finds will connect the oil fire and the new, a series of long-unsoled mysteries, and a ruthless act of murder.

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the river you forgot my name
by corrie williamson
in her second collection, poet corrie williamson travels between early 1800s virginia and missouri and present-day western montana, a place where “bats sail the river of dark.”

three of the book’s five sections trace williamson’s experiences while living for five years in western montana. the remaining two are persona poems written in the voice of julia hancock clark, wife of william clark, who she married soon after he returned from his western expedition with meriwether lewis.

clark writes for a poet’s voice in montana narrative and enriches the historical perspective of the poetry, providing a female voice to counterbalance the often male-centered discovery and frontier narrative.

the collection shines with all-too-human moments of levity, tragedy, and beauty such as when Clark names a river Judith after his future wife, turns a curious and critical eye on the motives and impact of expansionism, unpacking some of the darker ramifications of American hunger for land and resources.

we sit within a small circle of light and listen to williamson’s unbur-

dened voice. “why would be the title of it. So, I think it all fits. That’s what these poems are about – man wanting to ‘tash a world.”

the book, the man himself
published october 2019 by main street rag publishing company, was nearly 30 years in the making. Some are narratives, drawn from childhood and experiences stung in his psyche; others were crafted during graduate school – he earned a degree in english from the university of voice as it tells us, ‘hush now, a jew will be revealed, which is how we must dwell on this earth, too – with patience and a sense of time’s great arc and return. I’m grateful for the echoing music made in the space between present and past,” writes kevin krlipphammer, author of all its charms.

the author has taught writing at the university of arkansas, helena college and carroll college and worked as an educator in yellowstone national park. the river where julia was a montana book award honor book in 2019, and her first book, sweethook, won the 2014 perugia press prize.

the man himself
by al nyhart
years ago, when he was a teaching assistant at the university of montana, poet al nyhart picked up a textbook on writing to use in the english comp class he was teaching.

“reading through it one day i came across a line that said ‘style was the man himself.’ I thought that if i’d write a book something that would be the title of it. So, I think it all fits. That’s what these poems are about – man wanting to ‘tash a world.”

nyhart says he marvels at trail placards in state parks, instructional illustrations and hand-drawn maps, losing himself “in their simple beauty.”

the resulting poems, writes david keplinger, author of the bluest eye, “cut and scrape against the lining of the heart, with poems that mark the behaviors of ‘the only animal who refuses to be what he is.’ All the more, with white and glorious clarity and tenderness, the work awakens and freedom. Though they have traveled great distances, the poems land with impeccable timing and musical control. Here you will find, in nyhart’s words, ‘the way back as becoming.’”

the author, who lives in white sulphur springs, has been a painting contractor for more than 40 years. His poetry has appeared in many publications, including Berkeley poetry review, big sky journal. exsultant. and elsewhere.

sweetclover
by shann ray
grounded in the physical while asking metaphysical questions, the poems in sweetclover detail love, wilderness, fracture and union. They speak of wildflowers, the slant scale the Beartooths to find the bones of an eagle, exult in mercy, forgive-
Preservation Road Show heads to White Sulphur Springs

The Montana Preservation Alliance (MPA) in partnership with USDA Forest Service Region 1 brings the next Montana Preservation Road Show to White Sulphur Springs, June 10-13. This preservation conference highlights the history of Meagher County and central Montana.

The Road Show launches from a different small town every other year with the mission of immersing participants in the history and culture of rural Montana, spotlighting local preservation efforts, and raising awareness of the importance of preserving Montana’s historic buildings and natural landscapes.

In White Sulphur, the conference will spotlight lesser known landmarks and local preservation stories, including the Castle Museum, the Bair Family Museum and local ghost towns. A cadre of recognized historians, authors, professors and rural preservation experts will also explore the history of landmark local families like the Ringings, Gordons and Doig.

During the conference, the MPA will dedicate a special evening to celebrate the people and organizations that help protect vital and endangered heritage sites. The board and staff will help present the Montana Preservation Awards and outstanding preservation efforts from across the state.

Participants don’t have to be an historian or profession preservationist to join this conference—just an enthusiastic traveler, listener and lover of history.

“White Sulphur is a town that we just fell in love with,” said Outreach Coordinator Madeline Westrom. “MPA began work there a few years ago to help survey the potential of historic buildings in downtown and our staff knew early on that it was an excellent candidate for hosting the Road Show.

“With rich culture, a strong community, and easy access to a number of major historical sites, it is going to be tough for folks to decide which all-day and half-day tours they want to take.”

A parberry crown—one of the hidden treasures visitors to White Sulphur Springs will discover during the Montana Preservation Road Show.

For those who can’t attend the full conference, a one-day registration option is available for tours on Saturday.

Road Show Highlights

• Opening reception on the Castle Museum lawn in downtown White Sulphur Springs.

• Explore the history of Central Montana with stops at the Bair Museum, Harlowntown and surrounding ghost towns.

• See Meagher County through the eyes of the famous Ringling Circus family.

• Delve into the history of White Sulphur’s many industries and the Jawbone Railroad.

• Journey the historic Old Kings Hill Highway into the Belt Mountains with local and regional experts.

• Discuss the challenges facing small communities.

• Look behind the scenes at some of White Sulphur’s most beloved historic buildings during the all-access walking tour.

• Choose a Saturday tour or workshop to hone preservation skills or see the barns of Meagher County.

To get the latest information, updates, and registration information about the Road Show, visit www.preservemontana.org/2020-road-show or follow Montana Preservation Alliance on Facebook.

Cohesion Dance Project stages “Resonance”

Cohesion Dance Project (CDP) presents a new version of “Resonance – an evening of Art Inspiring Art” at 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 15, at the Helena Civic Center.

With dance and sculpture at its core, “Resonance – Evolved” is an artistic confluence of sculpture and performance. The production features professional and local community dancers weaving seamlessly in and out of three original kinetic sculptures by Helena artist Richard Swanson, accompanied by spoken word, poetry and live, original music.

The new production stems from CDP’s original production, which debuted in 2018 at The Myrna Loy in Helena and toured around the state in 2019. Cohesion’s artistic director Myra Call emphasizes how instrumental Swanson’s sculptures are to the core of this production. While each artistic contributor is based on one of the other art compositions created for the project, there really would be no production without the metal sculptures he designed and fabricated specifically for this production.

In addition to Swanson’s sculpture, other pioneering contributions include spoken-word poetry by award-winning poet Tyler Knott Gregson, and an original music score by professional percussionist and accompanist J. Gregson, accompanied by spoken word and poetry and live, original music.

The new contributions come from an array of local talent, including Sean Hill (poetry), Lenny Eckhardt (music), Katie White Swanson (viola), and others.

Call and other Cohesion choreographers Amber Moon Peterson and Jylynn Wildman have created new pieces for a cast of more than 20 professional and local dancers ages 12 through adulthood.

In addition to this unique performance, CDP’s “Resonance” elucidates the ripple effect of creative energy and cyclical inspirations with Resonance-inspired art installations. Cohesion leads students through a multi-genre artistic creative process, providing tools to create in a variety of media and experience first-hand the cycle of art inspiring art. For details, visit cohesion-dance.org.

Cohesion Dance Project stages “Resonance”

The series “attempted to reach an audience who does not normally visit museums and galleries and dispel this myth.”

Glueckert and his guests also sought to increase visual literacy while showcasing the vitality of the arts in Montana.

Glueckert, a prolific artist and Curator Emeritus for the Missoula Art Museum, is a Montana native who received a BFA from the University of Idaho and a master’s in art education from Western Washington University. He has taught at The University of Montana, the University of Papua New Guinea, and throughout the Pacific Northwest. In addition to being a practicing artist, he has written extensively about contemporary artists living and working in Montana.

These interviews were funded in part by a grant from the Montana Arts Council’s Cultural and Aesthetics Projects grant program. The collection is available online at www.youtube.com/channel/UCyb5e5SHjw-ws- woe5pN3Cr6NW.

Two Montana museums host Art in Bloom

Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art in Great Falls and the Yellowstone Art Museum in Billings each plan to host Art in Bloom this summer. Art in Bloom is a nationwide festival of fine art and floral design held at museums across the country that originated at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston in 1976.

Art in Bloom: Spring Awakening! is slated for June 4-7 at Paris Gibson Square. Floral designers and garden club members plan to present creative displays interpreting works of art in the galleries. Each day will include a special program, including workshops, lectures, a cocktail party, champagne brunch, family activities, and daily docent tours. The museum is now accepting applications from professional florists and designers to create floral arrangements in response to contemporary works of art in the museum’s collection and spring exhibitions. For details, visit www. the-square.org/art-in-bloom-2020.

The Yellowstone Art Museum’s inaugural event is set for July 9-12. For more information, visit www.artmuseum.org special-events/art-in-bloom-2020.

Montana’s 2020 Festival of the Arts

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Stephen Glueckert interviews Kate Davis during “Look Before You Speak,” an interview program now available via YouTube.

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Stephen Glueckert interviews Kate Davis during “Look Before You Speak,” an interview program now available via YouTube.

“Look Before You Speak,” an arts interview program on Missoula Community Access Television (MCAT) hosted by Stephen Glueckert, is now available online via YouTube. The series, which ran from 2016-19, took a different interview approach each season, starting with professional scholars who were writing about the arts, then interviewing gallery and museum curators, and eventually visiting with artists in their studios. Many of the artists were at different stages in their careers, but each guest was serious in the pursuit of a consistent body of work.

Each guest was encouraged to bring in, or talk about, up to a dozen images. While traditional television maintains an image on the screen for no more than two seconds, the series kept a still on the screen for much longer—up to a half-dozen images. While watching, the guests were asked to talk about the artwork in front of them, and make careful consideration of the image we were seeing.

“With rich culture, a strong community, and easy access to a number of major historical sites, it is going to be tough for folks to decide which all-day and half-day tours they want to take.”
**About Visual Artists**

**Betsey Hurd: Where the Wild Things Are**

Through May 15 at Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art, Great Falls

**Artist’s Website: betseyhurd.com**

Montana artist Betsey Hurd is interested in the secret life of animals, wild as well as domesticated—including the dogs and horses that she lives with and observes daily. She reflects upon their relationships and interactions with each other, their hierarchies, fears and loves. The contemporary artist is known for her sculptural ceramic work, as well as her paintings of horses. The work she creates rarely depicts humans. Instead, it reflects her fascination with the inner life of animals. When humans do appear, they are typically combined with animal forms in a style Hurd describes as “polymorphic fabulism.” These sculptures are meant to be non-specific in species and remain gender fluid.

“All my life, I’ve been a horse girl and have gotten to do just about everything on horseback, from foxhunting in Virginia to trailing cows in the Missouri Breaks of Montana; showing jumpers to starting colts,” she writes. “As a painter and sculptor my strength comes from depicting what I know: horses and cows, sheep—do all the four-leggeds that I live with, and observe, daily.”

She notes that cows and sheep, with their blocky forms and tendency to “lie around a lot,” lend themselves to abstraction; horses, on the other hand, carry weight and power “on perilously thin legs, balanced and beautiful, stalwart and frisky. It’s hard to better an honest horse.”

Hurd received her BFA, cum laude, from the University of Montana in Missoula in 1984, with concentrations in ceramics and drawing, and has made a living as an artist for more than 30 years. Her artwork is exhibited and acquired by collectors throughout the United States.

Connie Herberg: Wild Montana Skies

Continuing through June 28 at the Carbon County Arts Guild Satellite Gallery at the Roosevelt Center in Red Lodge

**Artist’s website: www.connieherbergfineart.com**

Connie Herberg masterfully evokes dynamic moments in the sky in this collection of large-scale oil paintings. The artist attended both North Dakota State University in Fargo and Eastern Montana College (now MSU Billings), when she earned a bachelor’s of fine art degree. She’s since honed her skills in an amalgamation of workshops, peer influences, self-study, practice and passion. Herberg maintains a studio at her home in Shepherd, where she paints and occasionally teaches.

The landscape remains an integral part of her life and an overarching theme in her work. Her paintings have been included in many local, regional and national shows and competitions, and were featured in a Northlight publication on drawing. Her work has been purchased by the Department of the Interior, Stockman Bank and the Richland County Museum, and is included in business, corporate and personal collections nationally.

**Marion Lavery: 20/20 Vision**

May 1-June 3 at 4 Ravens Gallery in Missoula

Missoula artist Marion Lavery says the visual world informed and inspired her artistic development, beginning with high school classes at the Philadelphia Institute of Art, followed by earning a bachelor’s in applied art from Pennsylvania State University.

She furthered her academic interests with graduate-level classes in painting, art history and ceramics at the University of Minnesota in Duluth, Western New Mexico University in Silver City, and the University of Montana in Missoula.

She has worked as a graphic designer, pre-press designer, professional potter, bookbinder, and studio artist.

“My primary focus in recent years has been acrylic collage, print-making and artist’s books,” she says. Her works on display at 4 Ravens Gallery, Sutton West Gallery and the Missoula Art Museum in Missoula, the Holter Gallery in Helena, the Runnings Gallery in Seattle, and at the Philadelphia Country Club in Lower Merion, Pennsylvania.

Neltje: Tell Me, Why Flowers? Marion Lavery: 20/20 Vision at the Western New Mexico Art Museum, Billings

**Artist’s website: neltje.com**

Neltje’s paintings, like the artist, are intense, complex and larger than life. The well-known contemporary artist is prolific and focused, working through each series until she feels it is complete. This exhibition features two series, which she painted between 2016 and 2018.

In her late 30s, Neltje began her excursion into the discipline of Sumi-e painting. That practice became the core of her later work. She often starts a painting with a gesture of bold color and works in a counter-clockwise pattern, alternating between quick, expressive physical movements and intense deliberation. Colors sing like musical notes.

Neltje finds a source of energy as well as solace in nature’s beauty. “Tell Me, Why Flowers?” is composed of lyrical abstractions linked to “lies of life. The well-known contemporary artist is prolific and focused, working through each series until she feels it is complete. This exhibition features two series, which she painted between 2016 and 2018.

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**Arts Education**

**Students deliver powerful poetry at POL state finals**

*By Tom Kuglin*

Reprinted with permission from the Helena Independent Record (helenair.com), March 9

For someone with a fear of public speaking, center stage of Grandstreet Theatre in Helena might have been the loneliest microphone in the state of Montana. But for 16 high school students, it was their chance to bring poetry alive.

The 2020 Poetry Out Loud Montana State Finals, held March 7, featured students memorizing and reciting classics to contemporary works in an event that is part competition and part art. Now in its 15th year, students must compete at school and regional events before coming to the Montana finals with the chance to go to Washington, D.C., next month for the national competition.

Flathead High School sophomore Isabella Shinn stepped to the microphone. After a deep breath, she delivered an emotional and thoughtful rendition of “For the Dogs Who Barked at Me on the Sidewalks in Connecticut” by Hanif Abdurraqib that earned her the applause of the crowd and title of state champion.

“I think I just saw the (poem’s) title and that interested me,” she said in her interview. “Then I read it and it was powerful and really makes you think about it.”

Shinn competed in Poetry Out Loud last year as well and says she enjoys the travel, meeting new people and reciting the poetry. Of course the experience of getting up in front of a crowd and delivering the words from memory is not easy.

“It’s scary – I was so nervous last year. This year I wasn’t as much but whenever you stand on stage you start shaking,” she said, adding that going to nationals comes with its own level of nerves.

Shinn was just one of many students bringing stellar recitations to the state finals.

Butte High junior Katy McCumber’s rendition of “When You are Old” by William Butler Yeats earned her second-place accolades, and Belt High School senior Adelle Meissner received the third-place nod from the judges for her delivery of “Broken Promises” by David Kirby.

Montana Poetry Out Loud is offered to students through a partnership between the Montana Arts Council, Montana Poetry Out Loud, and the AISC grant project.

“The top three finalists at 2020 Montana Poetry Out Loud State Finals, held March 7 in Helena, are (left to right): Adelle Meissner, Belt High School (third place); Isabella Shinn, Flathead High School (first place); and Katy McCumber, Butte High School (second place).”

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

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**Artists in Schools & Communities**

**MAC’s Artists in Schools and Communities (AISC) grant program has maintained a tradition of helping to pair professional artists with learners of all ages for nearly five decades.**

Under the current program iteration there are three subcategories: Grants $1,500-$5,000, Arts Learning Partners and Grants Under $1,500. The latter serves as an entry into grant writing for many Montana applicants and offers grantees an opportunity to gain first-hand experience with what an AISC grant can accomplish.

Supported by State and National Endowment for the Arts funds, AISC grants are awarded with a 1:1 match requirement; first-time grantees and Class C (or smaller) schools, however, need only to meet a 2:1 match. This means that for a project with an expense budget of $1,800, the AISC award would cover $1,200 of the project expense, with just a $600 match required.

Matching funds may not include other federal funds, but may partially include fees paid by participants. For more information contact Monica Grable, 406-444-6522 or Monica.Grable@mt.gov.

**Carbon County Arts Guild addresses community need**

**By Monica Grable**

Arts Education Director

This past fall, first-time applicant Carbon County Arts Guild in Red Lodge used an Artist in Schools and Communities grant in the Under $1,500 category as a way to address a community need. A reorganization of the art program in the Red Lodge School District – shifting instruction to a grade 4-12 model meant that teachers in grades K-3 (not all of whom felt confident teaching art) would need to dig into the poet’s words, thoughts and feelings and interpret them for the rest of us to connect,” said Tatiana Gant, executive director of the council.

“Those words are in you forever,” she continued. “You accomplished an amazing thing by inspiring people all along the way, in your classroom contests, in your school contests, at the regional, and thank you for letting us be a part of that.”

**Flatead High School sophomore Isabella Shinn cinched top honors with her rendition of “For the Dogs Who Barked at Me on the Sidewalks in Connecticut.”** (Photos by Katon Knight)

National Endowment for the Montana Arts Council. The program helps students master public speaking skills, appreciate poetry and earn awards and cash prizes. For her win, Shinn receives $200, an all-expense-paid trip to nationals (which has been canceled due to COVID-19) and a $500 stipend for her school to buy poetry materials.

Monica Grable, the council’s arts education director, noted that the former chairman of the NEA, Dana Gioia, saw the need to keep poetry alive in schools and became a driving force behind Poetry Out Loud. Every state in the country sends one champion to the finals, which includes a free trip with a parent or guardian.

“Even while the event crowned a champion, organizers emphasized the difficulty and subjectivity that comes with judging anything artistic,” she said. “I have to say, that what you tackled today is one of the more difficult art forms, much like a dancer translates a choreographer’s work, or an actor a playwright’s, you had to dig into the poet’s words, thoughts and feelings and interpret them for the rest of us to connect,”

Second grade students created life-size birds after learning about migration and bird habitat. (Photo by Kim Kapalka)

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**With the guidance of teaching artist Dominique Paulus, third grade students learned the basics of one-point perspective and applied the concept to their own work.**

In the words of Carbon County Arts Guild Executive Director Kim Kapalka, “From the perspective of the Arts Guild, the highlights of this grant project included being able to provide an art opportunity for K-3 students, hire an artist whose passion for the arts and science was contagious, and be able to provide a way to engage classroom teachers in the arts.”

Over the course of the two-week residency, 126 students and eight teachers benefited from Paulus’s residency, and – given the response from students, staff, administration and the Carbon County Arts Guild itself – the partnership is likely to continue into the next school year.
MAM launches remote access platform for students

By 2022 MAM hopes to have schools participating from all seven American Indian reservations in the state. This access and engagement with contemporary art and artists serves the education and well-being of all Montana youth,” said Kay Grissom-Kiely, curator of education at MAM. She notes that the program meets several Montana State Content Standards for educational curricula.

During the Museum as Megaphone LIVE DAY at MAM, students and teachers were virtually placed in the museum’s largest gallery, looking directly at Rick Bartow’s artwork, while MAM’s art educators led students on an inquiry-based tour.

“Students were energized and engaged in dialogue and discussion about a prominent contemporary American Indian artist on display hundreds of miles from their school,” says Grissom-Kiely. “This virtual portal, created in partnership with Inspired Classroom, expands MAM’s reach and amplifies the voices of rural and tribal students across the state.”

Following the LIVE DAY, students had two weeks to complete their own expressive paintings in their classrooms. Students watched the Museum as Megaphone videos and followed instructions in order to express themselves through paint in their classrooms without an art teacher present.

“I’m starting to go through the modules and I am really excited to bring this to my students. The platform is very user friendly.”

– Teresa Heil, Frazer School, Fort Peck

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The Arts and Passion-Driven Learning Institute (APL), held Aug. 3-5 at Harvard University in Cambridge, MA, explores the importance of the arts in the awakening and developing students’ personal passions, and how those passions are vital to deep and meaningful learning experiences.

In a rapidly evolving 21st century, educators need tools and resources to tap into students’ personal passions and connect with them individually and in culturally competent ways. APL provides professional development for K-12 educators to connect students’ passions to meaningful learning by drawing upon the efficacy and power of arts experiences to engage and inspire students across academic subjects and in a variety of school settings.

APL features faculty from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, artists from the Grammy-winning Silkroad Ensemble, and seasoned educators from the U.S. and abroad.

Who should attend?

• K-12 classroom teachers, arts specialists, artists who teach, school administrators, and counselors.

• Teams of teachers/artists and administrators from the same school, district or organization.

• Teaching artists in youth development programs and after school programs.

• Educators working in culturally vibrant urban, rural, and indigenous communities.

Early application, in advance of the priority deadline of June 22, is strongly recommended as applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. The final application deadline is July 6.

For more information and to apply, visit: www.gse.harvard.edu/ppc/program/arts-and-passion-driven-learning-institute.
Making a Montana Bridge Infamous
A look back at “The Untouchables”

By Allison Whitmer
Montana Film Commissioner

The gangster thriller, “The Untouchables,” turned a central-Montana bridge into a star when director Brian De Palma continued his run of action films that began with “Scarface” and “The Wiseguys.” Based on real events in 1930s Chicago, the film centers around the illegal activities of Al Capone, who regularly and publicly flaunts attempts by the Bureau of Prohibition to shut down his liquor supply and distribution activities. In the end, tax evasion is his downfall.

The production researched and filmed in historic Chicago locations, and then began reaching out to find a location for a pivotal scene at the U.S./Canadian border. By 1986 the Montana Film Office had been in existence for 12 years, and in that time had hosted “Thunderbolt and Lightfoot” with Clint Eastwood and Jeff Bridges, and “Telefon” with Charlie Bronson in the Great Falls area. Production companies were using Montana on a regular basis. Paramount Pictures worked with Gary Wunderwald, head of the film office at the time, to scout for a 1930s era bridge to serve as the U.S./Canada border crossing for a confrontation in the film as Eliot Ness, played by Kevin Costner, intercepts illegal booze shipments from Canada and begins to crack the crime organization.

Wunderwald had some tough requirements. The bridge had to be closed to traffic. It needed to have distinct looks on both sides to imply the border crossing and had to be realistic to the 1930s. It also had to be low enough to the river for safe stunt work. After scouting several bridges that were too high, under construction, or had too much traffic, the production settled on the Hardy Creek Bridge, located on the frontage road between Cascade and Wolf Creek. Constructed in 1930, this Warren-through-truss, three-span bridge became the star of the moment. The bridge sits in the spectacular Adel Mountains Volcanic Field, which is more than 75 million years old.

The production team arrived in October 1986 and transformed the area for 10 days. To make the bridge look more isolated, 600 trees were planted, and houses were covered in 50,000 square feet of camouflage netting and canvas. Locals were cast as Canadian Mounties. Model ‘T’s were rented by nearby farmers and ranchers, trains were rerouted, and the public had a front seat to watch the action live.

Wunderwald estimated that the production spent close to $1 million in the area as they prepped and filmed at the bridge. The film premiered on June 3, 1987.

The New York Times gave the film a positive review, calling it “a smashing work” and saying it was “vulgar, violent, funny and sometimes breathtakingly beautiful.”

One of the production crew was Great Falls resident Rick Moore. He sent us several photos from the shoot for this article.

Moore had worked on Miller beer commercials in Denton, and through referrals started working craft service on the film. “During production Sean Connery told me he loved fruit, and I bought him fruit every day,” he recalls. Connery went on to receive the Academy Award for “Best Supporting Actor” for his role in “The Untouchables.”

TIME magazine rated it as one of the best films of 1987. And “The Untouchables” producer Art Linson’s son, John Linson, and Kevin Costner are now back in Montana filming the TV series “Yellowstone,” which just got picked up for a third season.

As for the Hardy Creek Bridge, it’s now on the National Register of Historic Places. We encourage you to watch the film and then take a Sunday drive out to the Hardy Bridge!

Learn more about films made in Montana, incentives, crew and locations online at montanafilm.com and follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

International Wildlife Film Festival embraces digital festival experience

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the 43rd International Wildlife Film Festival, typically held at the Roxy Theater in Missoula, will go digital April 18-25. The IWFF LABS, described as an incubator for science filmmaking, has been postponed.

IWFF organizers aim to create “a virtual festival experience that will honor films, sponsors, guests and educators, and exemplify the way media can be utilized in a new reality.” As usual, the film competition will be juried.

The public may buy passes and tickets to films and live streaming events at wildlifefilms.org. Organizers hope to attract “people across the nation who will crave this kind of interactive content come mid-April.”

What Does Calm Say

Disturbance in earth’s core. What does calm say, sinking into its dark-shinned ditch? What does peace say, in the continuous line-making of its horizons? What does oil say, the figure we have chosen for our voice?

– Melissa Kwasymsn, from Pictograph (Milkwed Editions 2015)

Montana Poets Laureate

Spring snow comes softly into the tiny mountain town, from the canyons, which have already turned opaque. A church bell is ringing, anachronistically. No suicide bombs, no gang rape, no nuclear winter, no drone strikes, no polar extinctions. Just a village buried in inconsequence. As if it were a dream we can’t re-enter. In the beginning, the authors say, the world was black and white, before the clay wrapped itself around itself, forming an inside and outside. Hole in the bedrock where the water breaks. Dear Sister Outsider. Our Lady Underground. Atmosphere, a ripped frock. As if it were a dream we can’t re-enter.

“What Does Calm Say”

By Melissa Kwasymsn and M.L. Smoker

As co-poets laureate and women from marginalized communities, Montana Poets Laureate—Melissa Kwasymsn and M.L. Smoker—aim to celebrate poetry as an art that fosters connection, relationships and bridge building. State of the Arts will feature their poems on an alternating basis during their two-year term.

Montana Poets Laureate

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Melissa Kwasymsn and M.L. Smoker (Photo by Barbara Weissberger)

See more about films made in Montana, incentives, crew and locations online at montanafilm.com and follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

International Wildlife Film Festival embraces digital festival experience

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 Nine Montana organizations receive NEA grants

The National Endowment for the Arts released the first results from the nation’s largest, most representative survey of adult participation in the arts. The new Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) records the different ways that American adults (age 18 and older) engage in the arts, where that engagement takes place, and why adults participate in these activities.

The survey report also tracks demographic characteristics of those who participate and respondents' perceptions of the availability of the arts in their communities. The report covers both national and state-level data as well as selected urban areas.

Since 1982, the Arts Endowment has partnered with the U.S. Census Bureau to produce the SPPA, with this edition analyzing data from 2017. In previous studies – some sponsored by the NEA in this round of fiscal year 2020 funding – the Endowment has worked with the U.S. Census Bureau to produce the SPPA, with this edition analyzing data from 2017.

Key findings from the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts

Montana consistently scored above the national average in the new report, which tallies respondents' perceptions of the availability of the arts in their communities.

Among adults who sang, made music, or performed in the arts – either as creators or performers – 62 percent did so to spend time with family and friends. By contrast, most adults who created visual artworks or creatively inspired did so to get mass gatherings or large community events ready for Coronavirus (covid.org). It’s also the go-to site for virus protection and hygiene tips, and the latest federal regulations. The American Alliance of Museums, www. aam-us.org, offers advice applicable to museums and other cultural venues. The Theatre Communications Group has posted a Coronavirus Preparedness Webinar on vimeo.com, and the Event Safety Alliance’s webinar, “Prepare Your Organization for the Coronavirus Disease Outbreak,” (event safet yalliance.webinarninja.com), may be helpful to performing arts groups.

The League of American Orchestras’ Coronavirus Resource Page (americanorchestras.org) includes sample audience communications as well as other recommendations.

Americans for the Arts (blog.americansforthearts.org) offers basic individual prevention measures to share with attendees, program participants and employees.

Resources for Employers/Employees

U.S. Department of Labor & Industry: www.dol.gov/coronavirus


The Governor’s Coronavirus Task Force: covid19.mt.gov

The Montana Department of Health and Human Services: dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/coronavirus

NEA releases latest public participation survey

The National Endowment for the Arts recently released the full results from the nation’s largest, most representative survey of adult participation in the arts. The new Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) records the different ways that American adults (age 18 and older) engage in the arts, where that engagement takes place, and why adults participate in these activities.

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In previous studies – some sponsored by the Arts Endowment – arts participation has been positively linked with emotional well-being, social and civic activity, and tolerance and receptivity, among other factors. Regular measurements of the nation’s arts participation present valuable insights into why people engage in the arts, but also for public leaders and policy makers looking to improve societal outcomes.

Key findings from the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts

Montana consistently scored above the national average in the new report, which tallies U.S. adults (aged 18 and over) who over a 12-month period:

• Used electronic media to access artistic or arts-related content (73.6 percent, or 175 million adults). Montana: 77.2 percent
• Read books not required for work or school (44.2 percent). Montana: 51.5 percent
• Attended artistic, creative or cultural activities (54.3 percent, or 128 million adults) to give live music performance the most frequent activity. Montana: 66.4 percent
• Created or performed (33.4 percent). Montana: 30 percent
• Attended an art exhibit (23 percent). Montana: 33.5 percent

Other participation findings are:

• Among adults who participated in the performing arts – either as creators or performers – 62 percent did so to spend time with family and friends. By contrast, most adults who created visual artworks reported doing so because they felt “creative or creatively inspired” (61 percent).
• More than half of adults who attended artistic, creative or cultural activities did so more than twice a year.
• Among adults who sang, made music, danced or acted, 63 percent did so in the home, while 40 percent did so in a place of worship.

Comparisons between the 2017 SPPA and the previous report in 2012 can be found in U.S. Trends in Arts Attendance and Literacy Reading: 2002-2017. The raw data, along with online analytics, are at the National Archive of Data on Arts & Culture, a free, public data repository funded by the Arts Endowment.

The Arts Data Profile webpage features research briefs, maps and tools on state trends in arts participation. Find the research at www.arts.gov.

COVID 19: State and National Resources

The National Endowment for the Arts offers a fact sheet aimed at applicants and awardees (www.arts.gov/COVID-19-FAQs), as well as a handy list of resources and links for the arts community: www.arts.gov/covid- 19-resources-artists-and-arts- organizations.

Other National Resources

ArtReady (artready.org) and the National Coalition for Arts Preparedness and Emergency Response (ncaper.org) are regularly updating their sites with arts-specific resources and advice. ArtsReady has also circulated practical examples of measures being implemented by cultural organizations.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers guidelines on how to get mass gatherings or large community events ready for Coronavirus (cdc.org). It’s also the go-to site for virus protection and hygiene tips, and the latest federal regulations.

The American Alliance of Museums, www. aam-us.org, offers advice applicable to museums and other cultural venues.

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The Montana Department of Health and Human Services: dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/coronavirus
The 3 Rs at work in Montana

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

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

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

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

C.M. Russell Museum, Great Falls: Each year, the museum produces a calendar featuring the art of Charlie Russell. It is sold in the store year-round and is consistently a sought-after item. However, museum members at the Sustaining Membership level and above receive the calendar free of charge.

The process in years past has been to mail out calendars in the fall for the upcoming calendar year. Last year, however, museum staff hand delivered the calendars to those members in our immediate community. We knocked on doors and businesses and personally gave the gift of the calendar to the member. This allowed a face-to-face thank you to the member and created a great opportunity for further dialogue and cultivation.

We were able to extend personal invitations to member openings and other member-exclusive opportunities and as a result, saw an increase in attendance of member-specific events. Our biggest lesson learned was face-to-face interaction with our community is the best way to engage and inspire people to walk through our doors!

Creating Relevance

Emerson Center for the Arts and Culture, Bozeman: Last spring, the Emerson hosted The Compassion Project’s production, exhibition, lecture, and reception of the organization’s citywide art project.

The Compassion Project was founded by Dr. Kayte Kaminski, Montana State University’s director of Health and Human Development. Her vision sprang from a similar program in LaCrosse, WI, invited school-aged children and the community at large to participate in workshops revolting around compassion and explore how to understand, observe, and participate in a more compassionate life.

At the end of each workshop, participants created an original artwork on an 8” x 8” wood panel. At the end of the workshop series, more than 6,000 individual panels were created.

The next step in the program’s mission was to exhibit these original artworks, host lectures and performances relating to the mission, and educate the viewers on the importance of this project and its continuation into the future.

The Compassion Project’s biggest challenge was finding a location with enough space, time, facilities and manpower to install these works. That’s where the Emerson stepped in. We installed 4,555 of the panels in the Weaver Room Gallery, second floor hallways, and the west wing stairwell and hallways.

The process began in our backstage and theater storage spaces, where for over a week The Compassion Project, Emerson staff, and volunteers sorted, nailed ID tags, and stored thousands of pieces of community art. The following 10 days were strictly devoted to installation.

In the end, the visual impact was overwhelming. Rows upon rows, columns of colorful painted tiles were displayed, each with a unique and personal story all tied in compassion. The events that followed spanned a month’s time, and included speakers from around the county, professional artists, school children and their families, dozens of volunteers, university students, Emerson staff, and community members. It is the largest community art project installed within the city of Bozeman to date.

Our participation in this project was an honor and privilege. We were able to show our support of a new, local non-profit, display the works of almost 5,000 community members, and engage with hundreds of artists, volunteers and supporters.

The Emerson’s partnership with The Compassion Project spurred a long-lasting connection to Montana State University, school children and their families and many, many others from the Gallatin Valley and beyond.

The whole installation was on display for three months, with smaller sections coming down gradually. More than 6,000 pieces remain. These works will remain installed into perpetuity. The Compassion Project plans to turn exhibition and educational materials into curriculum to other cities in Montana and beyond. Our connection as the host site for the first project of its kind in our state will continue to have a lasting impression on our constituents and all project participants.

Return on Investment

Grandstreet Theatre, Helena: Grandstreet brings high-quality theatre to Helena all year long. This means that community members are coming together to create a collaborative work of art, which gives local artists an opportunity to stretch their talents and learn new skills. The company’s productions invest heavily in local businesses in order to create theatre, purchasing goods and materials for sets, costumes and props.

Grandstreet is always interested in new partnerships that encourage patrons to stay downtown and enjoy other businesses. And besides all of the material and business benefits, Grandstreet believes that bringing people together from all manner of different perspectives and backgrounds helps to create a better community and gives people an opportunity to grow and, hopefully, be more community minded.

As to the theatre’s impact on people’s lives:

“Grandstreet Theatre and its school have turned our family of four into a true and strong family of many. Because of GST, our teenage daughters will move into their adult lives passionate and eager, fierce and kind, and with a much stronger sense of humanity and empathy because they have been consciously taught to always seek to understand what it feels like to walk in another person’s shoes,” writes Chris Vogl.

Call for Cultural & Aesthetic Project Advisory Committee

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

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

As we turned the corner into 2020, three new cohorts of the Montana Artrepreneur Program (MAP) began their journey, continuing the Montana Arts Council’s commitment to serving and supporting individual artists. MAP coach Liz Chappie Zoller is convening a cohort of six visual artists in Three Forks, an eight-person cohort is underway in Missoula led by Rickie van Berkum, and a third cohort of five participants is being convened in Great Falls, with the coach Annie Daniel Clark. Each cohort will experience four weekend workshops – 40 hours of professional learning – as well as interim meetings designed to provide continuity and connection. They’re each very engaged and enthusiastic, focused and committed to the work and the process,” says certified MAP coach Liz Chappie Zoller of her sixth cohort. “I’m both pleased and proud of how well they’ve honored their generous and supportive nature towards each other.”

This particular aspect of the Montana Artrepreneur Program is regularly cited as a meaningful and transformative outcome of MAP, and is particularly important in a far-flung state where artists may feel distant from the broader Montana arts community.

MAP artist Jennifer Ogden offers this reflection on her recent experience: “MAP has helped me to become more comfortable with marketing my work and expanding my reach as a rural Montana artist. Our MAP cadre continues to flourish and I appreciate and rely on those personal and professional friendships cultivated through some very apt Montana Arts Council programming.”

A current member of Annie Daniel Clark’s cohort, Virginia Niccolucci, is already feeling the empowerment of exploring her artistic potential and developing her business: “I retired from my job as an Internal Revenue Service auditor several years ago and am now exploring the latent artist in me!”

The Montana Arts Council sees that the investment in our citizen artists becomes an investment in our shared Montana economy, where the arts are increasingly recognized as a driver. Further, this dedicated programming is designed to foster personal fulfillment and provide a support system for the artists on their journey toward a viable arts business.

MAP participant Nikki Schaulub offered this reminder of the spirit of MAP, reflected in a quote by author Stephen King: “Life isn’t a support system for art. It’s the other way around.”

Applications open in April for next round

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

Instruction is focused on advancing proficiency in the artist’s chosen practice, articulating their story and purpose as an artist, strategically seeking patrons for their art, and engaging in the arts community. MAP instruction is centered on four weekend-long workshops held roughly eight weeks apart. Applications to the next MAP instructional year will be open in April. To learn more about MAP, visit art.mt.gov/map and, to system up to date on the upcoming application timeline, like Montana Arts Council on Facebook or contact Arts Education Director Monica Grable at 406-444-6522 or Monica. Grable@mt.gov.

Public Art Archive celebrates 10th anniversary

The Public Art Archive (PAA), powered by the Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF), celebrates 10 years in 2020. Over the past decade, the archives have documented over 14,000 international public artworks and provided free access to explore those works on both desktop and mobile sites.

Managed by a team of specialists from the public art and collection management fields, the archive is a free, constantly growing online and mobile database of comprehensive public art records. Artists and art enthusiasts can explore public art on the go with the location app, or browse online by artist name, collection, material or work-type. The archives are integrated with Google Maps to support mapping features for virtual or on-site exploration, and offer filters that aid in research and education.

In a blog post by PAA manager Lori Goldstein, posted Feb. 25th in honor of the archives’ 10-year anniversary, she notes how PAA “has grown from a collection of ideas attempting to fill a resource gap into a continually growing repository and suite of services built to ‘make public art more public.’”

Goldstein notes that public art is increasingly integrated into urban planning, placemaking, and the development of cultural tourism. “The commissioning of public art has prompted a growing network of public and private stakeholders, researchers, students, and public audiences that desire educational resources about the content, depth, and breadth of public art that currently exists.”

Eligibility Requirements

The archive recognizes the wide variety of practices and forms that public art takes. This includes objects and experiences that range from the permanent to the ephemeral, traditional sculpture to projects focused on social exchange, as well as those works supported by public or private funding sources (or a combination).

To qualify for inclusion in the Public Art Archive, a work of public art must meet two requirements:

• The work must be publicly viewable;
• The work must be sanctioned, commissioned, placed, or displayed through an official acquisition process.

For more information, visit www.publicartarchive.org.

Deadline for next round of TourWest grants extended to May 1

Due to developments surrounding COVID-19, WESTAF has extended the TourWest 2020 application deadline to May 1.

TourWest is a competitive grant program that provides subsidies to support community organizations in the 13-state WESTAF region, which includes Montana, for the presentation of out-of-state touring performing and literary artists. Supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, TourWest standard performance grants are available in an amount of up to $2,500 or 50% of the artistic fees, whichever is less. Eligible projects in the 2020-2021 cycle must take place between Sept. 1, 2020 and Aug. 31, 2021 and include one public performance and one educational outreach activity. Grant applicants can expect to be notified of their award status in July. Visit tourwest.gosmart.org for application guidelines and policies.

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 help build individual art skills and knowledge, arts careers and/or arts businesses.
• Market expansion grants help increase exposure and improve marketing or promotion opportunities for exhibition, performance and/or sales to a wider or new audience.
• Grants for public outreach activities fund ongoing or one-time activities that are designed to reach a new or expanded audience.
• Challenges and emergencies grants provide resources for artists or arts organizations experiencing challenges or emergencies that impede the ability to continue work.

The application deadline is the 15th of the month. For guidelines and more information visit art.mt.gov/sig; contact Kristin Han Burgoyne (kburgoyne@mt.gov or 406-444-6449) for more information.
Crow Tell Their Own Story in Major Exhibit

Pages 1 & 5

State of the Arts is provided free of charge upon request. An alternative accessible format is also available upon request. Call 406-444-6449

Pre-Sorted Standard U.S. Postage Paid Bozeman, MT Permit #120

Crow Tell Their Own Story

Poetry Out Loud

Adam Langston of Belt accepts his participation certificate for the Montana Poetry Out Loud State Finals from Montana Arts Council Executive Director Tatiana Gant, as other finalists look on. Read more about this year’s contest on page 14.

(Photo by Katie Knight)