

The High Desert

# **PALETTE**

September, 2020, Volume 1, No. 1

**EXCLUSIVE**

Rebecca Collins,  
Driven to Create  
pg. 6



**CINDY RAE**

A Passion for Music,  
Performance,  
& Community, pg. 16

**ART LOOK**

Photography by  
Amanda Berger  
pg.28

**FAR ABOVE THE DESERT**

Short Story by  
Luke Kauffman  
pg.24

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# WELCOME TO:

## The High Desert Palette

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**W**illcox is full of creative artists and craftspeople. Almost any art media you can imagine – and maybe some you might not – is represented. People of all ages, inspired by their own imaginations, and by the natural beauty and heritage of this unique corner of Arizona are creating extraordinary and unique art.

The High Desert Palette will introduce you to these artists and their work. We'll have original articles, interviews with area creatives, photographs, visual art, a calendar of events – to bring fascinating creatives and their output to you.

If you're a creative yourself, or if you admire the work they produce, The High Desert Palette is for you.

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The High Desert Palette is published nine times per year by Willcox Theater and Arts, Inc. 134 N Railroad Avenue, PO Box 217, Willcox AZ 85644. The High Desert Palette is distributed free to Willcox Theater and Arts, Inc. Guest Artist Season Patrons and Willcox area businesses. The online version is published at [willcoxtheater.com](http://willcoxtheater.com).



# Table of Contents





6. **Driven to Create**  
Rebecca Collins - The life of a creative
  
11. **Did You Know?**  
A look back at the first known photographs ever taken
  
14. **Coming Soon...**  
Upcoming events in the community
  
16. **A Passion for Music,  
Performance, & Community**  
Cindy Rae tells her story
  
20. **Art Look**  
Original photography by Amanda Berger
  
24. **Far Above the Desert**  
Open-ended original story by Luke Kauffman
  
28. **Support the Arts**  
Become a donor today!

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## On the Cover -

Photograph by Amanda Berger - Dos Cabezas Mountains

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If you would like to be featured in an issue please email us at [willcoxtheater@gmail.com](mailto:willcoxtheater@gmail.com)

**Kids Art Club**  
Friday October 2nd @4pm \* The Palace

**Art in the Afternoon**  
Monday October 5th @1pm \* The Palace

**Paint Night**  
Saturday October 24th @6pm \* The Palace

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“These are valid emotions from when I felt and wrote them, but I don’t feel that way anymore.”

# REBECCA COLLINS

Driven to Create

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Last August, singer/songwriter and guitarist Rebecca Collins felt trapped and eager to leave for college after completing her senior year, but by school’s end, she found herself reminiscing about what she missed out on. This August saw the release of her first single, “Unexpected”, that chronicles the premature “lasts” of her senior year disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

One song influence was the inspirational posters at Willcox High School, which she always mocked for their cheesiness and optimism, but then began to miss after in-person school ended.

“This is exactly how it feels to have all the stuff you don’t care about in the moment taken away,” Rebecca said about her track. “Once I knew every word of the song, I could let it go.”

## Inspiration

Rebecca finds inspiration in life events, other music, and novel melodies she invents on her piano. There is no concrete process to her

## “ This is exactly how it feels to have all the stuff you don't care about in the moment taken away

---

composing. She relies on bursts of inspiration, such as with “Rainy Days”, where she “had an epiphany” on finding a fitting accompaniment. The adrenaline kick from that moment sent her straight to the piano to figure out the song.

“Rainy Days” had not been released when this article was written, but it will use a rain sound effect throughout the song, inspired by a low-fi track with a similar effect. Rebecca loves integrating sound effects into her work, so we expect more in her upcoming album highlighting her senior year.

Rebecca captures distinctive feeling within her work. Not abstract, broad strokes of joy, gloom, or jealousy, but specific emotional concoctions which have highlighted her life. She wants to make art that reaches people.

### Song-Writing Savvy

Family members and friends help Rebecca realize her dream and potential. She shares a love for music with her grandmother, often going to her for advice or showing new work. She also had to absorb knowledge about music theory, vocal range,



chord relationships, and chord arrangements to help bring her visions to life. She listens to any genre which interests her, eager to learn about niche music and the people who listen to it.

Rebecca also connected with the Creative Team at Studio 128 to record her music as she completed her songs. As the Studio 128 team learned about Rebecca's project, they loaned her a Midi keyboard to help her create and store her work digitally. The Midi became another element for her to master. With the help of fellow artists, she plans to

use the appropriate instruments, melodies, and sounds to complement her lyrics.

### The Next Stage

Rebecca is attending Auburn University in the Fall to study sociology, and while she regrets having to leave her weighty piano at home, she hopes to make plenty of music on campus. She is sometimes suddenly compelled to start playing and doesn't want to miss out on flashes of inspiration.

Rebecca appreciates what her community has

“ She's sometimes suddenly compelled to drop what she's doing and start playing.

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given her, but she feels that college will move her beyond any local ideological bubble. Subtle differences in people's behavior fascinate her and she wants to delve into the fractured nature of societies and their traditions, beliefs, and predispositions to better understand others and express herself.

Rebecca needs to have passion in her work to feel accomplished, and music is her outlet. Her first album is worth waiting for, but her first single, "Unexpected", can be found now on YouTube, Spotify, or other music platforms (look for it under the artist name "Becca K").



The song  
"Unexpected"  
By Becca K  
is available on music  
streaming apps NOW!

Give her a listen, and  
support our local  
composer!

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**Open Mic Night**  
Thursday September 24th @ 6:30pm \* The Palace

**Jam Session**  
1st & 3rd Wednesdays @ 4pm \* The Palace

**Palace Players**  
1st & 3rd Thursdays @ 5:30pm \* The Palace

# DID YOU KNOW?



## Early history of the Camera

The world's first photograph was taken by Joseph Nicéphore Niépce in 1826 or 1827. The shot was taken from an upstairs window at Niépce's estate in Burgundy.

1826 or 1827

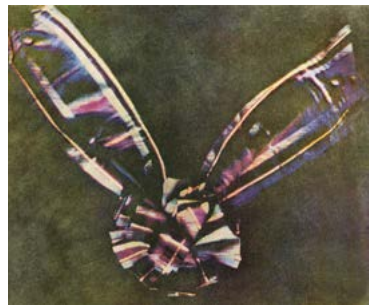


The earliest known photograph to include a recognizable human form, was taken in Paris, France, in 1838 by Louis Daguerre.

1838

In 1861, the first colored photo was taken by James Clerk Maxwell, by photographing it three times through red, blue, & yellow filters.

1861



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**Jonas  
Kauffmann**

Friday  
Sep. 18th @2:30pm  
Saturday  
Sep. 19th @6:30pm



**The Red  
Shoes**

Friday  
Oct. 9th @2:30pm  
Saturday  
Oct. 10th @6:30pm



**Cinderella**

Friday  
March 19th @2:30pm  
Saturday  
March 20th @6:30pm



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Children**

Friday  
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Saturday  
April 17th @6:30pm

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# Coming Soon...

## September 2020

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Art in the Yard, 26

## October 2020

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Movie Premier - Between Horse and Hat, 2

Rex Allen, Jr Concert, 2

Rex Allen Days, 2-4

Wild Bunch Film Fest, 2-4

Cars for Kids, 3

Willcox Wine Festival, 16 -18

Boulder Dash 13k/30k Trail Run, 17

Paint Night, 24

Halloween Trunk or Treat, 31

## November 2020

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Red Carpet Shindig, 7



Friday Oct 2nd - 3pm  
Saturday Oct 3rd - 11:30am  
Sunday Oct 4th - 10am  
at The Willcox Historic Theater

Join us for a family fun weekend in Willcox, AZ, and experience a film festival competition solely for the western genre and sub-genres!



“I can listen to the radio all day and only hear two songs.”

## **CINDY RAE:**

A Passion for Music,  
Performance, and Community

**C**indy Rae has performed in the Willcox area scores of times, both as a solo act and with her band, Cindy Rae and the Ripchords. She’s done it all – traveled for music festivals, played for weddings and funerals, and starred at the local Silver Bullet nightclub (now closed).

During Rex Allen Days in 1979 the bleachers on Railroad Avenue outside the Palace Saloon were filled with people who came out for music and dancing courtesy of Cindy Rae and the Ripchords. Four decades later, Cindy Rae performed two doors down from

the Palace in Studio 128 during Willcox Theater and Arts, regular Season of Guest Artists. She enjoyed the intimate confines of Studio 128 in her half dozen appearances there, but now she is back in the Palace – though it’s not a saloon anymore.

In 2020, Cindy Rae inaugurates both the 2020-2021 Season of Guest Artists and the newly renovated Palace of Art and Theater, transformed by Willcox Theater and Arts from a long-vacant saloon into an art studio and performance theater. She will perform country standards and more. Despite the contrast to the 1979 Rex Allen Days event, Cindy appreciates the new Palace venue and knows the audience will savor the music.

### **Music in the Family**

Cindy Rae grew up with her parents and three siblings in the Midwest and Southwest, traveling from town to town for her father’s work. Her father, Pete Peterson, played in several bands during her childhood and beyond, although he could never read music. Her father taught Cindy Rae how to strum the guitar and both of them prefer that instrument for its accessibility and portability.

The Gibson guitar Cindy Rae plays was originally a gift from the family to her father in 1976, the only good guitar he ever owned.

---

## Country/Folk

Hank Williams, Patsy Cline, Willie Nelson, Merle Haggard, Dolly Parton, Jimmie Rodgers, John Denver

In accompaniment with Will Johnston and Isaac Garay

---

It has scars on the neck from his fingernails digging in. Cindy Rae plays the Gibson exclusively, the sound getting richer and deeper the more she plays. "It could be my dad's spirit lives on through my playing," she says.

Cindy Rae went to thirteen different schools during her K-12 years before arriving in Willcox. Because of her turbulent education, Cindy swore to remain in Willcox so her children could stay in one school and she has spent nearly fifty years in the community. She considers it her spiritual hometown and treasures the connections and opportunities she has found here.

### Love of Music

Cindy Rae is mainly inspired by particularly stimulating melodies or lyrics and since she has listened to music her whole life, a piece that perks her up is

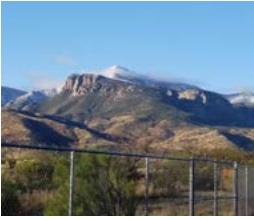
significant. She sings in genres from country rock to soul, but many of her favorite artists, Merle Haggard, Dolly Parton, Hank Williams, and Patsy Cline, reside in traditional country.

Cindy Rae has performed plenty of times, but she is no music junkie, only adding her voice to songs which resonate with her. "I can listen to the radio all day and only hear two songs."

She has never been concerned about money or going on tour. "I do it because I love the music, not because I want to make a living."

That attitude captures Cindy Rae's connection with music. She wants to enjoy herself and give the audience a good time, and she plans to continue blessing the Willcox area with her performances.





 Cheryl McLaughlin  
 

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## ***Contributor Guidelines:***

The High Desert Palette welcomes contributions that highlight creativity and creative people in Southeastern Arizona. We seek to explore the creative impulse, showcase creative product and inspire creatives in all fields. Original contributions in artistic and/or creative fields and articles or feature interviews with the people who create them will be accepted. Let us know of creative individuals we might highlight in future issues.

Please contact The High Desert Palette at 520-766-3335 or willcoxtheater@gmail.com to discuss your ideas.





**Brown Bag History Talk**  
Thursday October 8th @12pm \* The Palace

**Retro Rewind**  
Thursday October 15th @1pm \* The Palace

**Open Exhibit Hours**  
Sundays @1pm-4pm \* The Palace & Studio 128

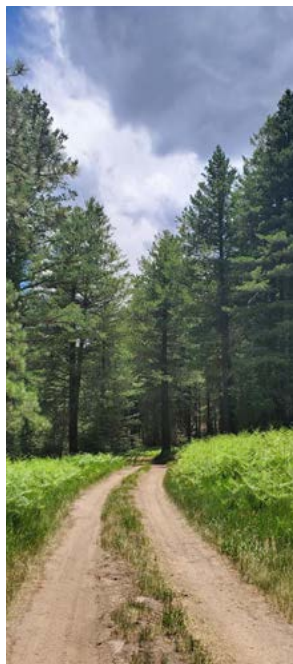
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# ***ART LOOK***

Photographs of nature taken in  
and around willcox, AZ  
-By Amanda Berger





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***Cindy Rae***

Friday  
September 18th  
@7pm



***Outlaw  
Rebels***

Friday  
October 9th  
@7pm



***Cindy Weir***

Friday  
November 13th  
@7pm



***Lich/ Lee  
Duo***

Friday  
December 11th  
@7pm

***Kilted Spirit***

Saturday  
January 30th  
@7pm



***The Palace  
Players***

Friday  
February 26th  
@7pm



***Acoustic  
Eidolon***

Friday  
March 19th  
@7pm



***Brendon  
Thorpe***

Saturday  
April 10th  
@7pm



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"Far Above the Desert" was inspired by the painting on the next page. This is an open ended story by Luke Kauffman. We would love YOU to continue it. Submit your story to [willcoxtheater.com](http://willcoxtheater.com) for a chance to have it published in next month's issue.

*The word count cannot exceed 650 words. Please keep the story open ended to keep it going.*

## **FAR ABOVE THE DESERT**

Written By Luke Kauffman

---

**H**arriet swung her spyglass to the north, trying to make out any features of the approaching crafts. The basket creaked around her, coarse ropes straining against the polished wood platform. Excess heat from the burner wafted around the girl and balloon, distinct from the mild air. Whirring twin rotors propelled the balloon slowly forward.

Below Harriet the world stretched out like a simplistic map. The purple desert was stitched together with long-dry riverbeds and dotted with black crags. In front of her, right of the falling sun, was a spiraled tower built in defiance to the sky itself. A staircase snaked in and out of the massive corkscrew of a monument. Harriet's father had shown her the spire as soon as she was brave enough to fly with him, but the flowing, hand-carved stone still took her breath away.

He always said the spire was one hundred and one stories tall, and each consecutive level once held a greater mystery than the one before.

There was once a city at the base of the tower, but only the crumbled remnants of stone dwellings were visible against the violet-stained wasteland. The spire itself was visibly worn, and its top third threatened to topple from its corroded moorings. As Harriet watched, a massive stone fell from one of the highest stories and plummeted out of view. She waited for the sound of impact, but it never came.

The colorful dots in the sky swelled slowly, angling themselves to converge at the twisted monolith. Harriet counted five of them, but there were several other unignorable blips in the heavens. She checked the altitude to find herself slightly above the tip of the tower and turned off the burner. Level approaches weren't her favorite, but this balloon was built for power, not endurance. Wind permitting, she would arrive in around twenty minutes, shortly

before those on the horizon got close enough to taxi down. She just needed to know what to do with that time.

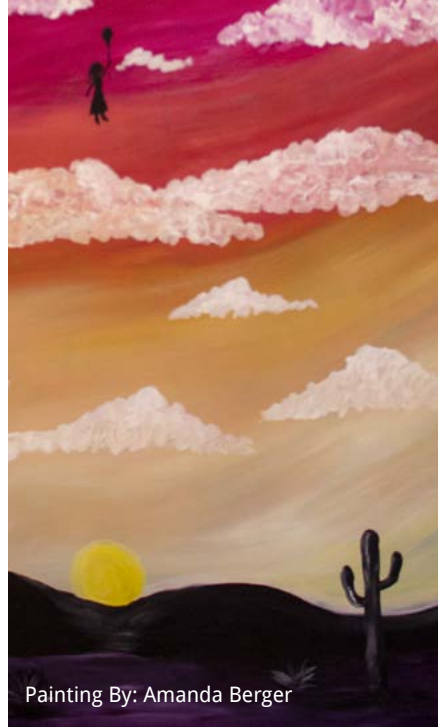
Around her sat woven baskets full of charts, supplies, and devices. Hundreds of scribbled and etched notes lay on every available surface, from the scorching walls of the burner to the railing. On the south side of the balloon was a lightweight wooden desk with a cluttered top and four locked drawers.

Harriet slipped under the desk gently, careful not to rock the basket, and felt around until she felt a latch. Pulling it back and forth didn't work, so she jiggled it violently until she heard a CLICK. A compartment glided down from the bottom of the desk and a piece of weathered parchment drifted down. Harriet laughed in triumph and crawled out.

The paper was the bottom-left corner of a map which had been cut long ago, as even the severed edges were worn. It was stained and yellowed, but on its back was a fiercely scrawled message.

“Do not land atop, dock on floor 51”

Harriet recognized her father's handwriting, but she did not know what to make of the message. Descending would waste lots of



Painting By: Amanda Berger

perfectly good hot air, and while she could easily hitch her craft to the tower, there was always the danger of falling debris.

The map itself displayed the once-sprawling city underneath the monolith, complete with a burgeoning river in thick, blue ink. Harriet tried to find it underneath her, but could only make out its parched, off-white ghost.

A bird of prey shrieked a war cry as it dove towards the north. Harriet grabbed the spyglass again and made out a golden insignia of a quill pen on the nearest balloon. Harriet stepped back from the lens and eyed the craft, wondering who was looking back.

## ***Willcox Theater and Arts***

**S**INCE 1914, Willcox and the surrounding communities have looked to the local theater for entertainment. The current theater building opened in January 1937, showing “The Gorgeous Hussy”, with Joan Crawford. The brand-new Art Deco theater featured a sloped floor, leather seats, a balcony, modern 1930’s projection equipment, and a stage for vaudeville and other performers, with dressing rooms and backstage facilities.

In 1990, the 1937 theater building underwent a major modification in which the single screen was converted to two screens. The lobby and concession area was moved to the center of the building from the front and a new entrance created on the side. A larger marquee was also added at this point.

Reopened in 2013 after a one-year closure, the Theater was completely renovated in 2015, retaining the historic Southwest Art Deco exterior and recreating an opulent interior in authentic Art Deco style. State-of-the-art digital projection and sound system were installed to provide a film experience second to none.

In 2016, the Theater purchased the adjacent building to serve as a community arts and activity space. After significant remodeling and renovation, this 1914 building, called Studio128, opened in 2017. Growing demand for programming brought the dilapidated and vacant Palace Saloon building to WTA as the solution. Fully renovated, the Palace opened in 2020.

Today the Willcox Theater, Palace and Studio 128 feature art, stage theater, the latest movies, STEM/STEAM programs, guest artists, talks, art exhibits, workshops, jams and so much more.

See You All at the Theater!!

**Smartmaker Lab**  
Friday October 23rd @ 1pm \* Studio 128

**Open Lab**  
Thursday @ 4:30pm \* Studio 128

**Youth Program**  
Wednesdays @ 4:30pm \* The Palace

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Artist Amigo.....\$1000 - \$2499  Sustaining Benefactor.....\$2500+

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Free small popcorn		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A guest pass for Live on Stage show of choice			2	2	4	4
Credit toward WTA merchandise				\$15	\$15	\$35
Free movie poster				1	2	4
Major donor video scroll					✓	✓
Reception with performer					✓	✓



## ***Willcox Theater and Arts***

thanks the following individuals, foundations, businesses, and government agencies who are supporting our programming during the 2020/2021 Season





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