

The High Desert

PALETTE

March, 2022, Vol. 2, No.7

EXCLUSIVE

Joy of a Jeweler, Pg. 6



J SCOTT HOWARD

Nuts and Bolts, Pg. 16

SUPPORTING CREATIVITY

Learn about the Bowie Unified School District's art program, Pg. 22

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WELCOME TO *The High Desert Palette*

Welcome to *The High Desert Palette!* In our first year's nine issues, we brought work from local artists to these pages to share – from painters to blacksmiths; writers to culinary artists; photographers to musicians – and we've barely made a dent in the list of talented creatives in the area.

Art is meant to be shared: every page will share something intriguing and creative, and every issue is something that you can share with others after you've read it.

You can share with us your knowledge about more artists and creatives, so that our future issues will bring their work to the fore and for writers, share your writing in these pages.

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Vol. 2 No. 7

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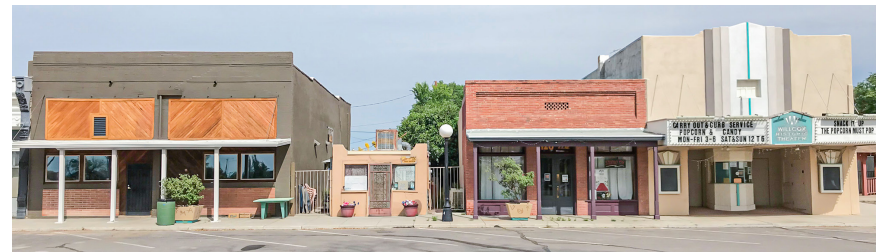


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Julia Hamel

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JULIA HAMEL

Joy of a Jeweler By Josh Allred

Carnelian, snakeskin agate, azurite, malachite, and lavender turquoise may be unfamiliar words to many, but to Julia Hamel they are an exciting topic of conversation! The professional jeweler uses these and many other gemstones to craft a variety of

beautiful pieces ranging from earrings to bracelets.

Julia approaches her craft in an artful way, rarely duplicating any one project in preference for unique and individualized jewelry. Part of this attitude towards jewelry making surely comes from her love of the natural beauty of gemstones. "I like to buy my stones in very weird, odd shapes. I can't stand when I go in and it's all rounds or squares. I just don't care for it."

For her, going in often means attending the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show to purchase handpicked gemstones for her projects. An outing she suggests she "geeks out" over. "I can screw myself into the ground just turning and looking at everything!" Once home with her tiny treasures the real work begins.

Playing with Fire

Two walls of Julia's small workshop are occupied with tables and shelving engulfed in the implements of a work in progress. Her work station follows a flow from left to right, starting with her storage



of gemstones and various metals and ending with a finishing table.

After the purchase of gemstones and metals such as copper, bronze, and silver her jewelry is made entirely by hand. A large part of that process is the soldering work done with a propane and oxygen torch to enclose metal rings and attach additional decorative metal accessories. The task is aided by adjustable pegs used to hold segments of the unfinished jewelry in place

while a steady hand and solder attaches minuscule additions to the project.

Julia's approach to making jewelry mirrors her taste in gemstones as something creative and intuitive rather than measured and exact. "My favorite part about jewelry making is the challenge of working with fire and getting it all to come together. Because I don't measure things, I just eye-ball it! During and after assembly the product is cleaned with a combination of pickling,



a process involving a strong acid, baking soda, and clean water before the jewelry is truly finished and ready to sell.

Always a Rock Hound

Julia's interest in jewelry, and gemstones in particular, was fostered from a young age. "I have always been a rock hound; I blame my mother. Any place we ever went on vacation - because we were that family, the family that had the little trailer that you pull and who'd go to different national parks and wherever - my Mom; she would steal a rock! You're not supposed to do that! It would always be something that was really neat; maybe something that was petrified or crystallized, or just whatever. I swear that's rubbed off on me."



An interest in fascinating rocks developed into a career as she grew older. "I thought, 'well, this has always interested me, I'll just see what I can do.'"

Her pursuit of the craft led her to a mixture of online videos and formal classes including taking classes from a local man who she is pleased to still be in contact

// I thought, 'well, this has always interested me. I'll just see what I can do.'"

with and a series of workshops at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show. "A while back whenever I'd go to the gem show I would go every day for like ten days. They would

have free classes that you could go to. You got to play with their tools and they would bring all the metals - they don't let you keep the metals, I tried-."

While some argue that a self taught approach is the best



approach for any creative endeavor, Julia swears by the sort of classes she benefited from, especially for people new to jewelry making. "Definitely start by taking a class. If you want to get into it, you need to do a class."

Connection and Craft

Currently she sells in two art galleries, the Tombstone Art Gallery, and Stronghold Art Gallery. "In Tombstone we get people from all around the world. So my art gets to go out the door with people from all around the world. That's pretty cool I think."

Before limiting her work to two galleries she would put on seasonal shows where curious customers could peruse her merchandise. Sometimes those curious customers would become loyal patrons. "I would have multiple people who would come look for me, and who would buy from me every season. That was always really nice" Some clients still reach out to Julia on occasion for custom order requests.

Julia's giddy attitude towards gemstones, the pleasure she gets from assembling a finished piece, and the meaningful connections she has made with people is evidence that jewelry making is right for her. "Obviously I'm never going to retire wealthy or anything, but I enjoy it! And the people that buy my work really like it."



✉ LJLHamel@gmail.com

Artwork can be found on display at Stronghold Art Gallery, 1036 E. Eastland Rd, Cochise AZ and Tombstone Art Gallery, 317 E Allen St, Tombstone, AZ 85638.

THINGS TO DO AT WILLCOX THEATER AND ARTS!

We have something at Willcox Theater and Arts for everyone. Take a look – discover something new, learn a skill, or just have fun! Head over to our website at willcoxtheater.com for more information and to register for events!



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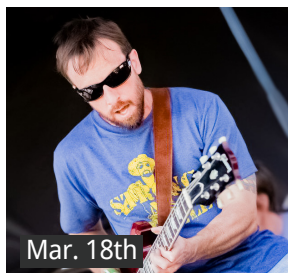
Daily



Jam Session

Join a group for adult musicians to meet and "jam" together for the purpose of entertainment and proficiency.

Mar. 15th



J Scott Howard

Enjoy the solo performer Scott Howard as he strips down the many songs he's written and pays homage to his diverse influences.

Mar. 18th

Paint Night

Paint your own masterpiece under the instruction of our talented instructor, Amanda Berger.



Mar. 19th

ACE of Arts

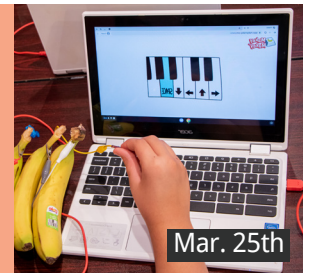
Be a part of this creative endeavor led by Monica Cronberg. Bring your own lunch for a mid-day social break!



Mar. 23rd

Smartmaker

Join instructor Paola for a STEM oriented workshop designed to get your gears turning!



Mar. 25th

Kids Art Club

Have a creative kid? Maybe a kid that would be interested in artistic activities? Well this free art club is for them!



Apr. 1st

DID YOU KNOW?

Digital Painting

By Josh Allred

Advances in technology continuously introduce more efficient or alternative ways to do things. The same has been and continues to be the case with art!



Hardware and Software

Digital painters incorporate a stylus, drawing tablet, and software of their choice in their work. A drawing tablet and stylus act as pen and paper, allowing an artist to manipulate their monitor displayed artwork in real time. Software provides the digital tools to do so. While software choices vary widely, Adobe Photoshop is considered industry standard.



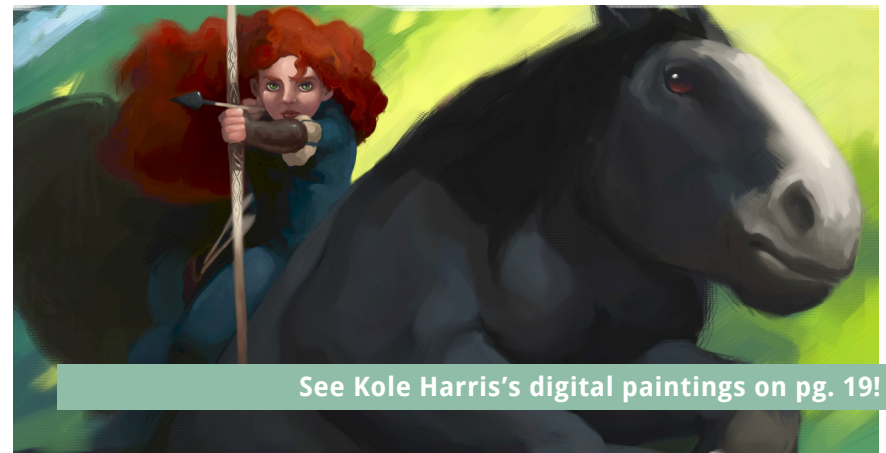
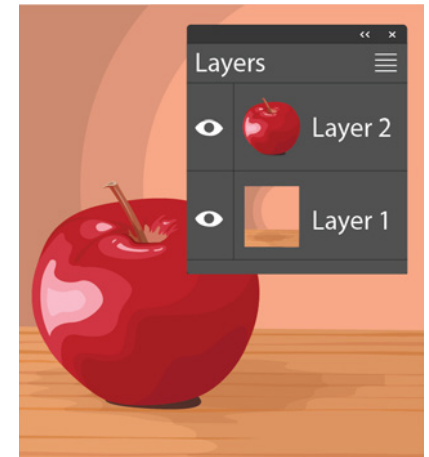
What is it?

One such contribution was digital painting. This relatively new medium mimics the look of traditional painting media such as watercolor, impasto, and oils using tools unique to modern technology. This art form is most professionally common in concept art for movies, video games, and television.



Pros and Cons

It can be said that no art form is better or worse than another, only different. In the case of digital painting an artist can make changes and amend mistakes with ease. For example, different elements of an artwork can be manipulated exclusively from each other through the use of layers. A drawback of digital artwork is the inability to incorporate tangible texture.



See Kole Harris's digital paintings on pg. 19!

Experience

Much like any art form, digital painting is a skill that must be developed. An artist must learn how to use unique software and tools as well as universal art elements such as color, line, and shape and principles such as balance, contrast, and emphasis to create visually pleasing artworks. In every facet of art, skill matters more than the medium.



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'HEDY! The Life and Inventions of Hedy Lamarr'

See the one woman wonder, Heather Massie, perform 'HEDY! The Life & Inventions of Hedy Lamarr'!



Jan 29th

Carolyn Camp and Joe Baker

Appreciate music inspired by the string bands of old Appalachia and the early stars of country music!



Feb. 18th

J Scott Howard

Enjoy riveting renditions of tunes ranging from Motown hits to Texas Troubadour classics.



Mar. 18th

Sticks and Tones

Embark on a voyage of heart and mind with this duo's performances of classical, flamenco, jazz, ragtime, and world music



Apr. 30th

J SCOTT HOWARD

Nuts and Bolts By Taylor Belden

For any style of art, self-expression factors in to some extent. For J Scott Howard, it factors in a lot. "I don't really know how this seeped in, but being creative was always kind of the goal. Not let's copy this, or sound like that. It was always to express something."

His first experiences with music were creative ones, "My dad fiddled around with the guitar when I was younger. My sister and I both loved when he would improvise songs about us; what we were doing. I think that was the spark."

He went on to take a couple guitar lessons when he was little, but lost interest quickly. "I didn't really know what I wanted to play, so they were teaching me how to read music. That did not last. A couple lessons and I was done with that." Despite this, he played the drums throughout high school.

It wasn't until later, while in the Air Force and stationed at the Philippines, that he began playing the guitar. He shared that, while there, a lot of the guys he was stationed with were taking guitar lessons from a Filipino guitar teacher. He decided he would learn through his buddies. All the while his goal was still to create something new. "You learn what you can from other people - songs that you like - but even then, those are the nuts and bolts of music. That was always the goal; to use that to make something different."

Nerves and Self Expression

J. Scott eventually moved out to Arizona from Montana in 1997. He went to ASU for a master's degree in American Literature, thinking he was going to be a writer. He may not have become an author, but he did write some of his own songs shortly after moving. "I wrote a couple songs and thought they were pretty good and felt like I wanted to play them in front of people. I was a really shy kid, so that was a big thing for me."

He talks about how he started going to Open Mic Nights in

"I don't really know how this seeped in, but being creative was always kind of the goal. Not let's copy this, or sound like that. It was always to express something."



Scottsdale, Arizona. "I would go in there sober as a judge and my stomach would rumble. That was trial by fire." He met supportive people there and got to see performances of people varying in skill level and confidence as he got more and more comfortable

performing. "Now I'm so much more comfortable with it. As I've gotten older and done it so much. I still get a little nervous, but it's definitely not the challenge it used to be.

Another challenge he has had to overcome is the balance

between entertainment and self-expression that a lot of musicians grapple with. "For me, the hardest part about being a musician is the line between being entertaining and energetic versus my natural inclination to play my own songs. Between playing cover tunes that people know or playing my own acoustic songs, whether they're energetic or not."

Self-expression and creativity has been and continues to be important to J Scott Howard as a musician. It's what ignited the spark when he was a kid, what got him on the stage, and

what he loves about his job. His love for creativity is reflected in his advice for aspiring musicians. "I think there's a lot to be said for studying the people that you like and then taking the nuts and bolts and creating something different with them. You have to know the basics, but you shouldn't be a slave to doing things 'the right way'. I always enjoy when somebody that is just starting comes up with stuff you wouldn't expect. So, my advice is to not be a slave to what preceded you."

"I think there's a lot to be said for studying the people that you like and then taking the nuts and bolts and creating something different with them... My advice is to not be a slave to what preceded you."

See J Scott Howard perform live at The Palace of Art and Theater!



J SCOTT HOWARD

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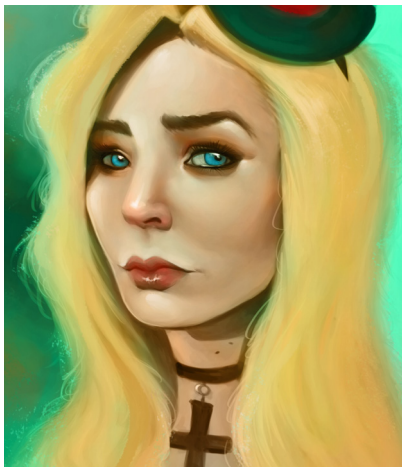
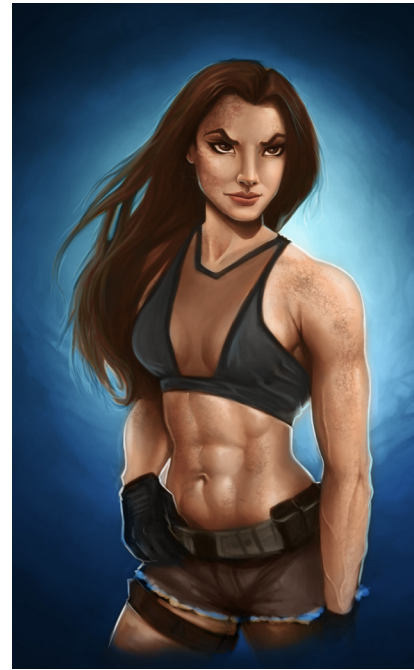
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ART LOOK

Kole J Harris, Willcox High School graduate (2004), attended Azusa Pacific University, graduating in 2007 with a bachelors degree in Graphic Design. He was apprenticed at Cyber Graphix Animation Studios, worked for Disneyland teaching guests to draw Disney characters, and was the lead art director for Prolight Skateboards (a skateboard company that incorporated LED lights in the actual board). Kole currently runs a part time art business, Kole Harris Designs, which includes murals, logo design, airbrushing, traditional art, and sign painting.

- Kole Harris



Learn about digital painting on Pg. 12!

SUPPORTING CREATIVITY

By Taylor Belden

The Bowie Art Program began in August 2019 when the Bowie Unified School District reached out to us at Willcox Theater and Arts (WTA) for help with an art program. "Helping to provide arts opportunities for youth is one of our key goals, and this gives us the chance to bring art right to the classroom." Gayle Berry, WTA's Executive Director, said about the arrangement.

Through the program an instructor meets with kindergartners

through eight grade students every other Monday in the school library. Every meeting the kids are exposed to fun and educational art activities where they are able to create artworks unique to them. This has been very beneficial to Bowie Schools. "It is wonderful for the students of Bowie Unified that Willcox Theater and Arts is

able to provide such a creative outlet for them. The community should be proud. Supporting creativity is supporting learning." Says Caila Block, one of the teachers at

Bowie Unified, whose students participate in the program.

Colorful Collection of Crafts

Longtime Bowie community member and Branch Manager

“The community should be proud. Supporting creativity is supporting learning.”



of the Bowie Library, Richard Bergquest, took on the instructor role in Fall of 2021 with his helper, Teresa. Richard is a graduate of Chouinard Arts School in Los Angeles with a background in clay.

Today, he also enjoys making artworks with paint and pastels and is a member of the Arizona Pastel Artist Association and the Willcox Art League, where he learned about the Bowie teaching opportunity. "I saw that you were looking for somebody in Willcox Art League

newsletter. I thought, 'well I would be perfect for that, I think.' I made some inquiries and we decided we would go ahead. And I'm glad, because it's been really rewarding."

His experience with visual art as an artist and with children working in the library has allowed him to present a colorful collection of projects for the kids he teaches. "The one that I just finished was for neurographic art. The kids loved it. That was the first time I had a class that was so intent on

what they were doing that you could hear a pen drop.”

Richard has many plans on different art projects in the future, including the clay and sculpting that he has a background in, and hopes that the program continues and can grow into more. Maybe bringing other forms of art like dancing and music, but for now is thrilled to be a part of the program.

The Looks on Their Faces

School Arts programs provide unique instances of social interaction, self expression, and creative problem solving, but they also provide fun. “The Bowie students love seeing new people and are always excited to try new things. My daughter, as an example, is always in high spirits every time she gets to do art lessons.” Marsha Gepiga, another involved teacher said about the program.

Dan Erickson, Bowie Unified School Superintendent, agrees, saying, “It has been well worth the investment to see the look on the student’s faces.”

“ The students in Bowie Unified love attending the Willcox Theater and Arts program and look forward to the art projects. This is a great new addition to our school that engages students in a new activity each time they meet. The students enjoy the opportunity to work alongside Richard and learn new art techniques. It has been well worth the investment to see the look on the students' faces.”

- Superintendent Dan Erickson



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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.

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