

LARAMIE PUBLIC ART COALITION

STORIES OF ART IN PUBLIC PLACES |||| LARAMIE, WYOMING

2021

PROJECTS
NEIGHBORS

ARTISTS
FRIENDS

Laramie Public Art Coalition (LPAC) enhances the unique visual and cultural vibrancy of Laramie and Albany County, in a manner that encourages participation and engagement from all our citizens and visitors.



PROJECTS

Courthouse Entrance
Snowy Range Rotating Sculpture Program
Utility Box Murals, Fire Department,
Recreation Center Front Desk

ARTISTS

Letterpress in Laramie

NEIGHBORS

Wyo Theater: the past and future

FRIENDS

Gifts + gratitude

hi.

the annual Laramie Public Art Coalition newsletter highlights the stories and artworks shaping our shared landscape of Southeast Wyoming.

a note from director Laura McDermit:

I am awed by the energy and passion of the Laramie community.

Together, we accomplished so much during this past year, even with the ever-present challenges of a pandemic. We created moments of joy and opportunities for growth and reflection.

As we envision the future, public art can play a huge role in how we move forward. I look forward to continuing this work alongside you.

And now, let's celebrate the art of 2021!



MURAL PARTY: Artist Meg Thompson Stanton, pictured on the right with LPAC director Laura McDermit, gave remarks on her mural commissioned by The Ranger Bar & Liquor Store in September 2021.

Sunset at the Oasis illustrates the unobstructed landscape in each direction seen at dusk with a silhouetted pronghorn and ferruginous hawk. Each wall features a significant celestial event.

In June, a group of six community members interviewed four artist groups. The artists, narrowed down from over 100 applicants, presented proposals for a permanent artwork to be sited inside the renovated north entrance of the Albany County Courthouse.

Artist team Owens + Crawley from Indianapolis, Indiana were selected to complete their proposed design entitled *Current*. The artwork will reflect the water system of the Laramie region and our human connection to nature.



The artists, Quincy Owens and Luke Crawley, visited Laramie in September. We toured the watershed with local artist and water advocate Paul Taylor, went on a geology tour of Pilot Hill with geologist Kelli Trujillo, visited the University of Wyoming's Art Museum with curator Michelle Sunset, explored the murals of downtown with Laramie Mural Project volunteer Jessica Flock, and hiked Vedauwoo and the Snowy Range.

Look for *Current* to be installed in 2022.

hello, neighbor



Visitor in front of *Carnival* by Ginnie Madsen and *Forever View* by Jon Madsen.

LPAC installed a temporary exhibition in the north entrance of the Albany County Courthouse. On view from May 2021 to January 2022, the exhibition celebrates the community and connection. Each featured artist calls Albany County home. After over a year of being apart, the artwork and artists answer the question: "What do you want to say to your neighbors?"

In Laramie, we are a community of different folks who want simple things: a quiet home to watch the sunrise, a kind face next door who's saying, "Hello." |||| Halle Hill, selection committee member



Howdy Neighbor, Kayla Clark



The Snowy Range Rotating Sculpture Program, a collaboration between the City of Laramie and LPAC, saw the first round of artworks installed on the Snowy Range viaduct in early spring. The works, *Exhaling Dissolution* by Sarah Deppe and *Taking Flight* by Clifton Cox, were selected by a committee of community members who listened to collected feedback: Laramie wanted to see something different. The two works will be in Laramie until 2024. Upon installation, the works instantly generated animated discussion and fresh perspectives.



Artist Clifton Cox of Lexington, Kentucky had never been to Wyoming. In October 2021, it was his third visit in six months. Cox returned to Laramie to participate in the annual University of Wyoming Iron Pour, hosted by sculpture professor Ashleyhope Carlisle. It is a fitting place to see Cox; the artist has always loved the hard work of large-scale sculpture. His work in Laramie, *Taking Flight*, is hand-formed, welded stainless steel, weighing about 1,000 pounds.

"Creating *Taking Flight* was a very long and physically challenging process that took well over 600 hours to complete," explained Cox. "Extremely physically and mentally demanding, and I loved every minute."

The abstract artwork has a personal meaning to Cox, but he gets more excited about what viewers take away from the work. "I just want them to have their own understanding, ownership, or relationship with the form."



ROTATING SCULPTURE PROGRAM

Based in Madison, Wisconsin, artist Sarah Deppe is also no stranger to Laramie. She has family in the area and has spent time exploring southeast Wyoming.

"I see this sculpture fitting into Laramie's natural landscape," said Deppe. "While hiking I've seen many cottonwood trees and have always felt a strong connection to the earth."



Exhaling Dissolution, a thirteen foot tall human head constructed with cottonwood bark gathered after a storm, represents humanity. Deppe explained: "Its mouth is open as if it were speaking or breathing or exhaling and engaging in conversation. The primary focus is to initiate conversations about social issues such as the environment and giving a voice to nature."

Having work in public space excites Deppe as it provides an opportunity to engage with community and *Exhaling Dissolution* provides a conversation starter. "I hope that viewers can think about their relationship with the natural world and how connected we are."



**What do the Snowy Range sculptures inspire you to feel or think? There isn't a wrong answer.
Art impacts each one of us in unique ways.**

Images of Exhaling Dissolution by Sydney Edwards. Images of Taking Flight by Allison John Pluda.

PROJECTS

The fun never stops at LPAC!

This year, we helped with temporary activations, started a new mural program, and worked with the City of Laramie on projects to enhance public facilities.

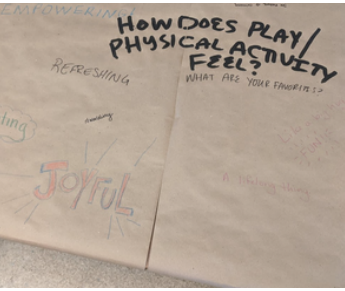


Projection Mapping at Washington Park DJ/VJ Culture Jamming was held at the Washington Park bandshell in August. The free event featured the work of artists Dreadlock Sage, Jane daPain, and Osvinci.



Parklet at 2nd and Iverson Avenue Designer Kayla Clark created the City of Laramie's first modular parklet. The City and Laramie Main Street Alliance commissioned Clark to build a space where people could gather to enjoy take-out and relax Downtown. LPAC worked with Clark to gather community responses on what they loved about Laramie. Clark incorporated the feedback into playful acrylic cutouts adorning the parklet.

parklet: public space, usually a parking spot, transformed into a place to gather and engage with neighbors



Recreation Center Front Desk Artist Ashley Quick was selected to create a mural for the front desk of the City of Laramie's Recreation Center. Quick collected feedback and ideas to inform the artwork at a "Meet the Artist" evening and met with Recreation Center employees. The 34 foot mural will be painted onto panels framed on the desk.



Fire Training Facility Artist Brandon Russell is starting work on a sculpture, *The Vitruvian Firefighter*, for the City of Laramie's new Fire Training Facility. Russell studied sculpture at the University of Wyoming. He is currently a fire fighter for the City of Laramie.

Once completed, the welded steel artwork will stand about 10 feet high outside of the facility.



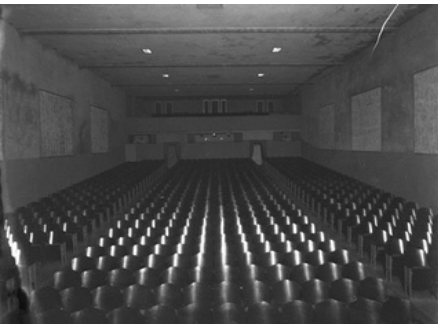
Utility Box Mural Program Four Laramie-based artists are finishing the first murals for the newly created Utility Box Mural Program. The artists are working with Laramie print company Digital Blues to install vinyl wraps on utility boxes. The program is supported by the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund, Laramie Main Street Alliance, and Daniel and Elizabeth Minton. Look for the boxes by Mary Katherine Scott, Nancy Marlatt, Nathanael Reitzel, and Meg Thompson Stanton coming soon.



Ray Kasckow, a board member of Laramie Main Street Alliance, gives the scoop on the historic Wyo Theater and what's to come.

Have you noticed a bright blue building on 5th street and thought to yourself: "That doesn't seem like it fits in"? Did you know it's a historic building built in 1925? I didn't know either; I just thought somebody got a little crazy with a paintbrush!

The building has always been a theater (it has definitely seen more movies than me)! It debuted as the Crown Theater and had a different look with a brick facade rather than the present stucco walls.



Historic images of the Wyo Theater courtesy of Laramie Main Street

When the 1950s came around, the name changed to the Wyo Theater, and the theater had an evolution to reflect the era and incorporated Art Deco details. The 1950s remodel is what we see today, with some modern additions as the building changed ownership throughout the years.

And here we are now, in 2021, 96 years later, and the building is still standing strong. And although it is not active, it is still an essential piece of Laramie's history with memories of first dates, first time seeing a blockbuster, and first jobs. Currently, the building is owned by Laramie Main Street Alliance, and a team of volunteers is working hard to revive the building and make it a part of the community again.

Renovations have begun on building, including a new roof, and a report on next steps was prepared by an architecture group.

Learn more about the project, submit memories of the Wyo, and pledge to help the project move forward here: laramiemainstreet.org/thewyo

Get ready to make new memories at the Wyo!

While the Wyo waits for it's next act, LPAC has facilitated a rotating mural program. In 2021, two new murals popped up.

Laramie March for Our Lives, designed by Parker Jackson and Scott Duncan



March for Our Lives is a national youth-led movement focusing on ending gun violence and raising awareness about issues such as racial injustice, mental health, immigration and economic inequality.

Painted by volunteers, the mural spread awareness of gun violence and highlighted youth empowerment through inspirational quotes. The hand prints of volunteers created the fields of flowers below the Wyoming mountains.

Let the People Party, Drew Yerkovich and Isabel Leininger



Yerkovich explained the mural's significance:

"Isabel and I named the mural this as a celebration to the people of Laramie and the arts. We intended to create a vibrant piece that reflected Laramie's ability to foster such a supportive community and long lasting connections.

Whether it be visual art, theater, dance, performance, music, or film the Wyo theater has been a long lasting place that has assisted and provided artists around Laramie with plentiful opportunity. With the revival of the theater it felt necessary to incorporate a visual that communicates the potential that the theater holds in the near future."



In the basement of the Laramie Plains Civic Center, a hulking machine from 1870 sits ready to create. Artist Jim Jereb's oldest letterpress machine was made in New York; he found the press at a storage facility in Denver and it made the trip to Laramie. It was indeed a feat to move the heavy machinery here. Letterpress, it seems, is a journey.

Letterpress is one of the oldest forms of printing. Raised letters and shapes leave a relief print in paper when pressed in a mighty machine.

The history and tradition is what drew Jereb to the process and the hands on nature of creating: "You can get away from a computer screen and literally assemble your thoughts."

Artist Kayla Clark appreciates that sentiment. Starting off as a digital graphic designer, Clark became tired of not using her hands to create. Said Clark: "With letterpress, you have to stop. There is no quick workaround. It is a meditative and beautiful experience."



WITH KAYLA CLARK + JIM JEREB

Clark, who teaches at the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Wyoming, introduced the letterpress craft to her students. For COVID times, the University created 22 portable machines for students to letterpress at home. "The typographic terminology we use in graphic design came from letterpress," noted Clark. "Creating through letterpress makes the process more fulfilling and when students get to the computer, it becomes muscle memory."



Both Clark and Jereb have found Letterpress to be a way to connect with other artists. Jereb recently completed a book for the Brinton Museum in Big Horn, Wyoming. The collaboration between the museum, the artist, and Jereb took almost a year to complete. Most of the time is spent setting up the project, so as not to make a mistake. Jereb, who appreciates the details, said: "You need a fair amount of effort doing it right the first time."

Clark creates process videos to share on social media and participates in a postcard exchange with printers across the world. Said Clark: "It is important to share and connect with people. Once you roll the paper across the letters, it is magic."

Connect with the artists:

kisscutstudio.com

jimjereb.com

Images of Jim and Kayla by Sydney Edwards



FRIENDS

With the support of our friends and neighbors, LPAC enhances the vibrancy of Laramie and Albany County. Every gift is used to further that mission by helping to turn the mundane into magic and amplifying the work of our artist community.

A pledge to build organizational capacity

ConnectGen, the energy corporation completing the Rail Tie Wind Project in Albany County, has pledged to support LPAC for the next five years. The gift will provide operational support for staff. In a time of transition and growth for LPAC, this capacity funding allows us to promote LPAC's part-time staff member to full-time status, and to offer more opportunities to artists.

"ConnectGen's commitment to Laramie Public Art Coalition is a transformational one for our community, as it will expand our long-term capacity to engage Laramie and Albany County in visual and performing arts," says LPAC board chair Katrina McGee.

Want to know more about ConnectGen and the Rail Tie Wind Project?

Check out railtiewind.com for how ConnectGen plans to impact Albany County through renewable energy.

2021 at a glance

8 free
public
programs



20 neighbors
served on artist
selection committees



29 artists
paid
to create



2021 is made possible by:



Community Friends:

Ali Grossman Andrea Graham Ann McCutchan Brandon Gellis Brian Harrington
Carrie Romant Cass and Brett Kvenild Cathy Connolly Daniel Minton
Eliasabeth Kasckow Elizabeth Stannard Ellen Nibbelink Erin Pryor Ackerman
Fred Schmechel Heidi Nibbelink Jennifer Power Joshua Watanabe
Karl Nibbelink Kathleen Bertoncelj Katrina McGee Kelli Trujillo Kris Whitfield
Laura and Matt McDermit Maggie Bourque Margaret Brown Margaret Wilson
Mary Katherine Scott Matthew Cox Meg and Emily Stanton Micah Richardson
Pete Gosar Ray Kasckow Richard Pribyl Rob Lotzer Sara Haugen
Sarah Stannard Sue Ibarra Susan Moldenhauer Susan Scott Sylvia Parker
Terry Zorch Trey Sherwood Valerie Bundy

A vibrant Laramie starts with YOU!

Your gift can help enhance our shared landscape with art! Give today to see, hear, and enjoy artwork tomorrow.

LPAC is a 501c3. Gifts are tax deductible.



Pins designed by Laramie artist Emma Adams.

laramiepublicart.org/donate



BACK COVER ARTWORK

A sketch from animated film *Chaser*.

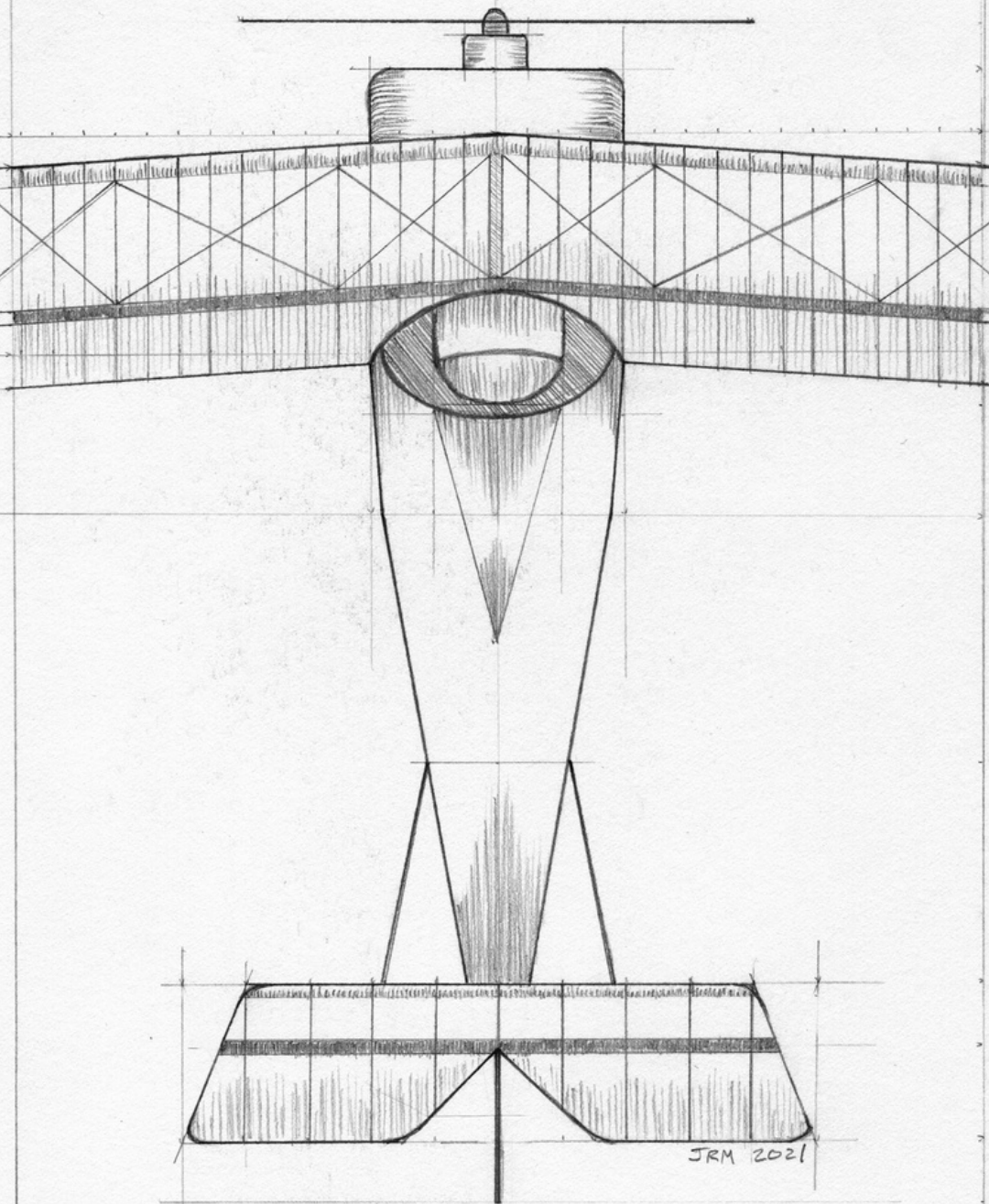
LPAC worked with local artist John McAmis on funding from Wyoming Humanities Council for a public screening and talk back for the film. Stay tuned for the premiere!

Chaser is a coming of age animated short film set in Laramie, Wyoming. Eloise Kearney is a 12-year-old Wyomingite who dreams of following in the footsteps of her daredevil mother, but after a medical condition threatens Eloise's dream of obtaining a pilot's license, she has to re-evaluate her reality and abilities.

About the artist:

John McAmis is currently a Masters of Fine Arts candidate within the University of Wyoming's Creative Writing program. He graduated from the University of Tennessee in 2017 with a degree in Animated Film Production. He is a filmmaker, writer, and former professional baker. *Chaser* will be his third animated short, and his fourth short film.

<https://johnmcamis.art/>



JRM 2021