

A trip to Tamarack for teapots, time capsules

By Dawn Nolan
Special to the Gazette-Mail

Last month, Tamarack Foundation for the Arts' 2016-2017 Emerging Artist Fellows Rosalie Haizlett and Hannah Lenhart began a creativity-fueled trip across the state.

Their first stop: Wheeling. "Wheeling was very new to me. I had been there but never fully experienced it," said Lenhart, a Fairmont native and recent Fairmont State University graduate.

A native of Bethany — located less than 20 miles north of the city — and a senior at West Liberty University, Haizlett was much more familiar, but she too discovered a new side to the area during their visit.

"Growing up, you take a lot of places for granted," Haizlett said. "This is the first time I was experiencing it from a sort of tourist perspective. It was like a whole new realm."

Haizlett, a designer/illustrator, and Lenhart, a ceramicist, are using their experiences as part of a collaborative project titled, "Teapots and Time Capsules: An Artistic Exploration of West Virginia."

Lenhart's portion is the teapots, or tea sets, while Haizlett is creating the illustrated "time capsules."

"They'll be individual pieces of art — probably in watercolor or pen and ink — that represent the people, iconic or underrated places, and culture of an area. I also plan to join them together to make one big work," Haizlett explained.

The idea for Teapots and Time Capsules arose in a brainstorming session the first time the two met in Fairmont over the summer. Haizlett credited Generation West Virginia's Executive Director Natalie Roper's videos from her participation in the Millennial Trains Project as a source of inspiration.

"She visited several different cities out west, and she noticed that, along with recognizing their strengths and weaknesses, each one had a set identity that they celebrated," Haizlett said.

"So, she asked people on Facebook, 'What makes West Virginia what we are, or what we wanted to share with the world?' That definitely played



"Allie Teapot," 2016, by Hannah Lenhart.



TAMARACK FOUNDATION | Courtesy photos

Tamarack Foundation for the Arts' Emerging Artist Fellows Hannah Lenhart (left) and Rosalie Haizlett prepare to go on air with Steve Novotney and Erika Donaghy on The Watchdog Radio for the Oglebay Institute Arts Hour.

into what we wanted this project to be about. We hope this is a community building project that will inspire people to gain appreciation for where they are."

"We want to get people from West Virginia excited about what this state has to offer because they might not fully realize the value of what we have," Lenhart added.

The Tamarack Foundation for the Arts, in consultation with state folklorist Emily Hilliard and author/sculptor Carter Taylor Seaton, worked with Haizlett and Lenhart to identify potential places of interest. She is also working to identify hosts for the fellows in each area. "They'll serve as connectors or a point person between the fellows and those in the community," said program director Emma Pepper.

In Wheeling, Haizlett and Lenhart were set up with Charlotte Karges, owner of Etc., a boutique gallery, as their host, and over the course of three days, they took in the sights,



"Black Strawberry Tea Set," 2017, by Hannah Lenhart.



As part of their fellowship, Rosalie Haizlett and Hannah Lenhart visited with artists like potter Betsy Cox, whose studio is pictured here.

ate at local restaurants and visited with artists, business owners and other individuals including: Amanda Carney, owner of Cat's Paw Art Studio; historian Sean Duffy; Marc Harshman, West Virginia Poet Laureate; painter Thomas Wharton; Monica Mull, Young Artists of Wheeling leader and photographer; potter Betsy Cox; sculptor Robert Villamagna; painter Cecy Rose; Mayor Glenn Elliott and Glynis Board of West Virginia Public Broadcasting.

"It was incredible," Lenhart said. "I'm so thankful for the opportunity to have met so

many cool people already."

"I'm blown away by the experiences we've had so far and all the inspiring people we met in Wheeling," Haizlett added. "The Foundation has also been a constant source of encouragement."

The two also share positive feelings about their budding friendship.

"Our trip to Wheeling was only the second time Rosalie and I had met in person. I thought it'd be awkward, but it's like I was with a friend I had known for years," Lenhart said.

"I couldn't ask for a better

fellow artist to share all of this with," Haizlett said.

Other possible stops for Haizlett and Lenhart throughout the next few months include Berkeley Springs, Martinsburg, Elkins, Buckhannon, Thomas, Davis, Charleston, Huntington, Fayetteville, Hinton, Alderson and Lewisburg.

"I really don't know what to expect," Haizlett said. "I've traveled quite a bit but not much in my home state. I'm excited, though."

"I haven't spent much, if any, time in these places, so I'm looking forward to it," Lenhart added.

Once the project is completed later this year, Tamarack Foundation will host a joint exhibition of Haizlett and Len-

hart's work. "Some of the places we've visited so far have also expressed interest in featuring our art. We hope that galleries will want us to come back," Haizlett said.

Those that want a sneak peek of Haizlett and Lenhart's travels can follow #teatime on Instagram. Find Hannah Lenhart (@hannahsclycreations), Rosalie Haizlett (@rosaliehaizlett), the Tamarack Foundation for the Arts (@tamarackfoundation). Updates will also be posted on facebook.com/tamarackfoundation.

Applications for the 2017-2018 Emerging Artist fellowship will be available in the spring. Sign up for notifications online at tamarackfoundation.

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Emerging Artist nominees a cross-section of W.Va.

A total of 17 students from seven different colleges and universities — Fairmont State University, Glenville State College, Marshall University, Shepherd University, West Liberty University West Virginia University and West Virginia Wesleyan College — were nominated for the Tamarack Foundation for the Arts' 2016-2017 Emerging Artist Fellowship.

"For this pilot year, we offered the opportunity to artists in the beginning stages of their career," said Emma Pepper, program director for the Tamarack Foundation for the Arts.

An individual committee, comprised of artists and arts administrators including: Chris Dutch (Chris Dutch Stained Glass and DUTCHHAMMER), Jeff Fetty (Jeff Fetty Designs), Molly Baker Halstead (Tamarack: The Best of West Virginia), Keith Lahti (Lahti Art Clay Studio); and Megan Schultz (formerly Marshall University) and Matthew Thomas (Thomas|Work), evaluated the work and accomplishments of those submitted.

"We were looking for individuals that not only exhibited artistic excellence, but also an aptitude for success in the business world," Pepper said. "We had an exceptional pool of talent."

The 2016 Emerging Artist Fellow nominees include:

- Tanya Abbett (Marshall University)
- Amanda Abbott (Marshall University)
- Courtney Chidester (West Virginia Wesleyan College)
- Courtney Childers (Marshall University)
- Kristen Cosner (Glenville State College)
- Patrick Facemire (Shepherd University)
- Nathan Fouchs (Marshall University)
- Michael Gallimore (Marshall University)
- Allie Gay (Fairmont State University)
- Andrew Gornik (Marshall University)
- Rosalie Haizlett (West Liberty University)
- Hannah Lenhart (Fairmont State University)
- Ashley Loftis (Marshall University)
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