

# ArtsPaper

Spring 2021  
News &  
Information on  
the Arts from the  
Huntingdon County  
Arts Council

## Arts Council Returns to Full Programming Exhibits, Art Walk, & More

The last year has been a challenging one for arts organizations around the country, including ours. Starting in March of 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic forced us to prematurely terminate our current art exhibit, cancel upcoming live concerts and cultural events, and put a variety of organizational activities on hold. Sadly, the decline in revenue also required us to vacate our home, **The Art Space** on 4th Street in Huntingdon.

But setbacks also can be opportunities to take stock and regroup, and we plan to emerge from the rubble with a full program

of events and activities in the coming year. As you will see in this newsletter, we are offering Spring Thaw again this year—an opportunity for local school students to exhibit their creative art and written work.

We also are planning an exhibition of works from the Arts Council's archives in May and June at The Playhouse at McConnellstown (see page 7). We are aiming for a full year of additional art exhibits.

Folk College will return again in May, although it will be a scaled-down, on-line event (see page 7). Nevertheless, it will allow diehard folk music aficionados a chance to

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*The Arts Council will resume exhibits starting with Spring Thaw, the youth art & writing exhibition. The exhibit opens April 29 at The Playhouse at McConnellstown.*

## Spring Thaw Returns

Spring Thaw is an annual event that showcases the artistic and writing talent of Huntingdon County school students from kindergarten through grade 12. We had to cancel the exhibit last year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. This was sad for a number of reasons: Children missed out on an opportunity to display their work, and we weren't able to offer what is usually our most popular exhibit of the year. The good news, however, is that Spring Thaw will take place this year, albeit with a few changes.

Spring Thaw 2021 Youth Art & Writing Exhibition will be held on Thursday through Sunday, April 29—May 9, between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. The new venue will be at The Playhouse in McConnellstown. The Playhouse is located at 11680 Raystown Road (Route 26 South) in Huntingdon.

To ensure public safety, and in contrast to previous years, we will not hold a reception or an awards ceremony. Nevertheless, as in previous years, judging will occur and awards will be given for various categories of art and writing within age groups. We hope you will come to see some great art and support the work of these talented young people! Please keep in mind that masks must be worn to the exhibit.

## Time to Renew Memberships

Spring is the time for people to renew their memberships in the Huntingdon County Arts Council. As noted above, we are planning a full range of exhibits, festivals, and concerts in 2021, and we trust that our members will continue to support our efforts to bring arts-related activities like these to our region.

All memberships begin on April 1 and end on March 31 the following year. Note that members receive cards that can be used to obtain multiple benefits. These include discounts on Arts Council sponsored events and all sales at our events, including the annual Holiday Shoppe, as well as future performances of Juniata Presents.

If you have not yet renewed and were a 2020 member, you will receive a renewal form in the mail. You also can renew on-line with a credit card by visiting our website: [www.huntingdoncountyarts.com](http://www.huntingdoncountyarts.com) and going to the *Get Involved* tab.

Also keep in mind that memberships make great gifts. Just go online and use the *Get Involved* tab on our website. We will provide you with a certificate that you can hand to the lucky person or include in a greeting card, and we will send the membership card directly to the recipient. What a great idea!



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The *ArtsPaper* is a publication of The Huntingdon County Arts Council. We are funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, local government contributions and *your* membership.

Memberships and contributions help us fulfill our mission to provide opportunities to experience the arts in Huntingdon County.



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Susan Wentzel

## Dear Member:

Spring is a time for renewal, and the Huntingdon County Arts Council is renewed and focused to bring you the arts and cultural programming that you have come to expect.

Nothing says spring like *Spring Thaw*, our annual youth art & writing exhibition. We look forward to seeing you at The Playhouse at McConnellstown over the two long weekends to view the creativity of our Huntingdon County youth.

We have planned more art exhibits at The Playhouse, a virtual Folk College (see page 7), a *live* Greenwood Furnace Folk Gathering, a *live* Fiber ArtsFest, Art Walks, art at the Huntingdon County Fair, and much more.

Of course, we could not do this without your support. Memberships run from April 1 to March 31 of the following year. If you have renewed your 2021 membership, *Thank You!* If you have not yet had a chance to renew your membership, please take a minute now and go to our website and renew online, or drop us a check (make sure to use our new address: PO Box 216). Your support makes all the difference to our many arts and cultural

activities.

But the Arts Council is not the only purveyor of arts in our area. The Juniata College Museum of Art currently has a wonderful exhibit (see page 3) and the Huntingdon Dance Academy will hold their ballet performance (see page 3) in May. Both events are listed on our *Arts Calendar* on our website.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for all you do to participate and support the arts in Huntingdon County. We hope to see you at an event soon.

John Kearns  
Executive Director



## CouncilNotes

### New Board Members

The Arts Council would like to welcome three new Board Members who signed up for two-year terms. Each of these individuals brings important skills, background experiences, and perspectives to our organization.

#### Rob Boryk

Robert (Rob) Boryk studied at Kent State University, where he earned Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees in Crafts and Art Education. He later received an MFA (Master of Fine Arts) degree from Southern Illinois University. Since the fall of 2013, he has been an Assistant Professor of Art at Juniata College where he teaches ceramics, 2-D and 3-D design, and sculpture.

Rob makes sculptural pieces as well as pottery, and he has exhibited his work at numerous shows and galleries across the United States (including **The Art Space** in Huntingdon). Recently he has been experimenting with ceramic chemistry and learning how to formulate clays to achieve specific effects—particularly iron reds that develop when cooling. As Rob states, his work involves “understanding

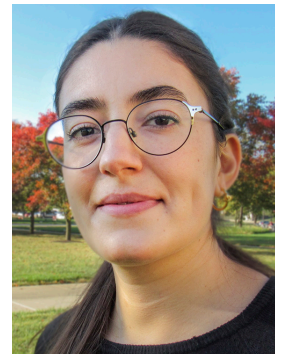


and utilizing the transformation that clay goes through during firing as it becomes ceramic.”

#### Bárbara Sánchez Castellanos

Bárbara Sánchez Castellanos was born and raised in Guanajuato, Mexico. She first came to Huntingdon to attend Juniata College as an exchange student from Universidad de Guanajuato, where she received a Bachelor’s degree in Fine Arts. Last May, she received a Master’s degree in Museum Studies at Indiana University.

As an emerging museum professional, Bárbara seeks to combine her passion for exhibit planning, curation, and collections care to create spaces that foster audience engagement with art. Over the last 10 years, she has developed an array of exhibits and artistic projects in various cultural institutions in both Mexico and America. She currently lives in Huntingdon and looks forward to contributing to the local arts and culture of the community.



#### Susan Wentzel

Susan Wentzel and her husband have been residents of McAlevy’s Fort since 1992. She has worked as a substitute teacher for the Huntingdon Area School District for the last 14 years—a job she loves. Although she teaches all grade levels, she especially enjoys the flexibility to spend

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# EventUpdates



## Huntingdon Dance Academy Performs Again

Once upon a time, in the year 2020 in the town of Huntingdon, there was a dance company who spent months rehearsing a ballet entitled *Three Tales of the Big Bad Wolf*. They worked and worked learning parts and making scenery and costumes. After much effort they were ready, and the dress rehearsal was about to happen!

Then a big bad pandemic came along and ruined all their efforts. The pandemic cancelled the show the night of the dress rehearsal and all the dancers were sad because they loved performing.

Like all good fairy tales there is a happy ending. The

## New Board Members

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a day in Kindergarten when, as she said, "I need a smile on my face and teenage angst is too much." Not surprisingly, the art classroom is one of her favorite places to be.

Susan's older son is a Penn State graduate and is currently employed full-time in Huntingdon. Her younger son took many art classes in high school and currently is studying graphic design at the Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport. As Susan said, "He is my inspiration to make art a more relevant part of my everyday life!"



Susan has participated in a variety of Arts Council events, including last year's plein air painting workshops. She has continued to paint outdoors since then is currently teaching herself color theory. Susan also enjoys creating vibrant abstract art with markers.

[www.huntingdoncountyarts.com](http://www.huntingdoncountyarts.com)

Huntingdon Dance Company dusted off their ballet shoes and went back to rehearsals one year and one day after the 2020 performance was cancelled.

*Three Tales of the Big Bad Wolf* is a story ballet in three parts and brings to life the well-loved tales of *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Peter and the Wolf*, and *The Three Little Pigs*. As you may have guessed, the wolf is key to all three stories! He is joined by a cast of 40 dancers who range in age from 7 to 70.

Come join in the fun and experience the wonder of dance. Performances are May 21 and 22 at 6:00 p.m. at the Raystown Lake Amphitheater at 7 Points. In recognition of how difficult this last year has been, the performances are free to the public.

Bring your own chair or blanket and if you are able. Donations to cover the cost of the production will be gratefully appreciated.



## Cups Galore

You never can have too many cups—only too few shelves—would appear to be the philosophy of BJ Watson and Rob Boryk, two Huntingdon ceramic artists currently exhibiting their collection of handmade cups at the Juniata College Museum of Art.

The exhibit, entitled *Half Full: The Cup Collection of BJ Watson and Rob Boryk* features 157 cups made by 112 potters—the result of nine years of collecting. The cups represent a variety of styles; some are relatively conventional whereas others stretch our definition of what a cup should look like. Yet each cup is unique and remarkable in its own way.

The exhibit asks visitors to imagine which of the various cups they would choose to take to a deserted tropical island. I saw at least three that I wanted: one for coffee, one for coconut milk, and one for rum.

BJ and Rob are both ceramics instructors, and Rob is a member of the art faculty at Juniata College. Rob also is a new Arts Council board member. Both are active and productive members of our local community of potters.

The exhibition is free and runs through May 15. The Museum is open Mondays through Thursdays between 1 and 8 p.m., and on Saturdays between noon and 4 p.m.

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*The Huntingdon County Arts Council is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.*

*The Huntingdon County Arts Council receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.*





Kay Sullivan Crotsley, and some of her art (right) at the Huntingdon Painters exhibit at the Juniata College Museum of Art.

## Remembering Kay Sullivan Crotsley

The arts community lost one of our own this December with the passing of Kay Sullivan Crotsley. Kay was a wonderful painter and a regular participant in Arts Council activities. Kay's paintings were featured in an exhibit at **The Art Space** in July/August 2014, along with woodworker James Hawkins.

Kay recently participated in our Plein Air painting workshops last September and was one of the eight women in the wonderful *Huntingdon Painters: 8 Women, 400 Years Combined Experience* exhibit at the Juniata College Museum of Art in October and November.

Originally from Brunswick, Maryland, Kay spent half of her time in Huntingdon and the other in Venice, Florida. It was at the Arts Festival in State College in 1979 that she first became interested in painting, and her artistic journey found inspiration in Pennsylvania and Florida. She completed the Botanical Illustration Certificate Program at the Ringling College of Art and Design in Sarasota, Florida, and participated in workshops on abstract painting in Germany. She was also a member of the Standing Stone Art League.

Her work was in juried exhibitions, including the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art, as well as those of the Standing Stone Art League. Kay strongly believed in supporting the Huntingdon County Fair where her award-winning work was also displayed.

We will miss you Kay.

## Arts Council Returns to Full Programming

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participate in a variety of workshops, jams, and concerts. We are exploring the possibility of sponsoring live musical events later in the year, and we will let you know when details are available.

The Arts Council also will be participating in upcoming Art Walks, as well as community events such as Mayfest and the County Fair. As life gradually returns to normal, we will step in, as circumstances allow, and continue our mission of furthering the arts in our region.

We have not yet determined what to do about a permanent home for the Arts Council. At the moment, we are comfortably situated in The Playhouse in McConnellstown. The Playhouse Board has generously allowed us to store our possessions there and use their space for various activities, such as last year's Holiday Shoppe. We look forward to working with The Playhouse even more closely as we adjust to new realities in the coming year.

We thank all of our members and supporters for sticking with us during the last year, and we look forward to a full year of events and activities that will entertain, educate, enrich, and energize the good people of Huntingdon County.

## BIRDFLOWERS

The goldfinches,  
green-grey all winter,  
with shoulder stripes  
of black and white,  
looking, at first glance,  
a lot like speckled siskins,  
have, in a week,  
left behind their khaki,  
bloomed with the daffodils,  
a skyward echo  
of exuberant gold.



Pam Kavanaugh  
2008

## SPRING CLOCKWORK

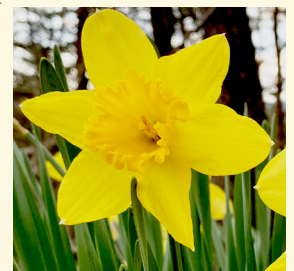
We've held on through  
dark, cold, snow, and ice.  
Now at last our side of Earth  
tips toward the sun again.  
On our spinning globe  
green shoots break through earth  
and pull water up through stems  
to tiny leaves, like clockwork.

Grass turns mutely green as  
our world whirls itself to spring.  
Like a turn of a clock's hands,  
phoebes call out their names and  
daffodils offer yellow brilliance.

Phoebes and daffodils  
do exactly what they need to do,  
but we April fools blunder  
through the beauty, breaking  
every delicate gear and spring.

We wake from our long sleep,  
still blind to our world.  
Forsythia and dogwoods  
fill buds and push new leaves  
into cold air.

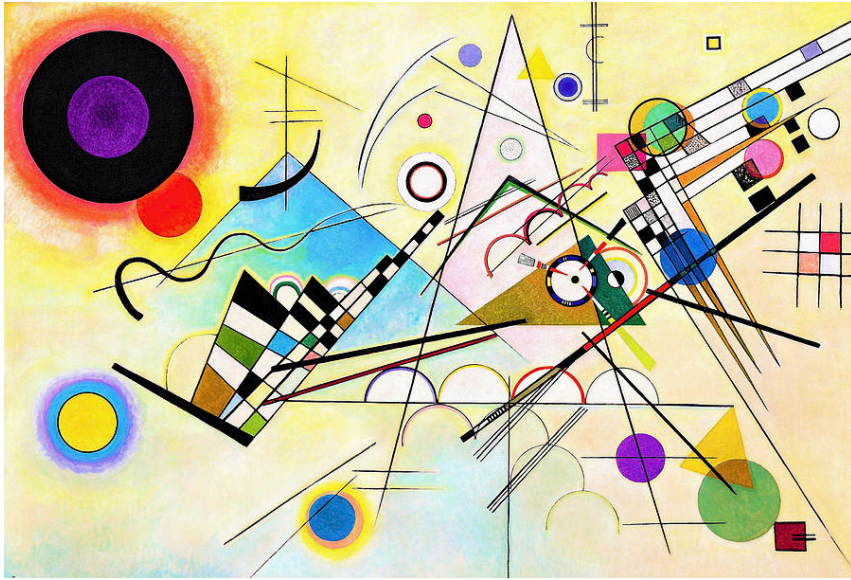
Claire Holzner  
2021



## What to Look for in Abstract Paintings

Many people think that paintings should be realistic images of landscapes, people, flowers, and bowls of fruit. But during the 20th century, abstract art—art that does not attempt to represent objects in the natural world—became popular. Yet, many people do not understand it, know what to look for in it, or appreciate it. That's a shame because abstract art can be intriguing, enjoyable, and even liberating. How can you learn to better appreciate this type of art?

First, don't worry about what a painting means. Comparable to most instrumental music, most abstract art doesn't mean anything. The goal is not to understand it but to experience it. For this reason, the titles of abstract works are often mundane, like *Composition Number 12 in Blue*, or playful, like *Autumn in the Nothing of Salad*. Some abstract works don't even have titles.



Wassily Kandinsky: *Composition VIII*, 1923

When you observe an abstract painting or sculpture for the first time, focus on your feelings. What captures your attention? What emotions does the work evoke? Artists will try to stimulate people's reactions with the tools at their disposal: color, line, shape, and texture. These are good elements to focus on.

The color scheme of a work is often the first thing that we notice. Warm colors like red, orange, and yellow are stimulating and exciting, whereas cool colors like green, blue, and brown are calming and relaxing. Moreover, lighter and darker colors of the same hue can make us feel either pleased and elated or pensive and somber. (Consider how you react to sky blue versus a deep shade of indigo).

Look at the lines and shapes. Some paintings have few lines. Instead, large patches of color tend to blur or run into one another. Artists who work in this style include Abstract Expressionists like Mark Rothko. These paintings are often large, and viewing them can make you feel like you are floating in an ocean of swirling color.

Other painters rely on solid lines to form distinct shapes. An example of this style would be the geometric art of painters like Wassily Kandinsky. These artists use squares, rectangles, triangles, and circles to create well-organized, structurally coherent works. Paintings like these can feel cool, rational, and analytic.

Consider textures too. Hatch marks, dots, and overlapping wiggly lines add variation to flat areas of color. Using impasto, some artists build up thick layers of paint on the canvas to create an almost 3-dimensional or sculptural effect. These textural qualities create additional interest and variety to an artwork.

Abstract paintings also contain elements of tension and harmony. For example, different parts of the work may contain clashing colors and textures. Yet other elements, such as connecting lines or common colors, can unite disparate parts of the work. Does conflict or unity predominate in a particular painting?

Because abstract art allows you to experience things that cannot be seen in the

## ON THE PRIVACY OF POPPIES

One day  
I shall stay up all night  
in May,  
when the Oriental Poppy's  
buds begin to split,  
spiky green covers giving way  
to lush red taffeta,  
the tripartite egg,  
enclosing blossom,  
hinting through the day  
at tomorrow's exuberance,  
readying itself  
for some nighttime explosion  
conducted in the private darkness,  
at midnight? two a.m.?  
that I have never seen.  
Perhaps this is the year  
I will sit vigil,  
awaiting the passionate  
reds of dawn.

Pam Kavanaugh  
2009

natural world, it provides a temporary liberation from the restrictions of everyday life. When you view abstract art, think of yourself as an explorer setting off for new worlds. Your enjoyment of the experience is limited only by your imagination and your willingness to let yourself be carried away to new places.

One final note: It's common for critics of abstract art to claim that "a child could do this." In fact, many abstract artists are well trained in the classical arts and are capable of painting in realistic styles. They paint the way they do because they choose to and enjoy it. And, of course, we should not underestimate the playful creativity of children. Being able to "paint like a child" is no easy feat and is something to which great artists of all persuasions have aspired.

Paul Amato



Mark Rothko: *Untitled*, 1952-53

# Artist Spotlight

## Jack Troy's Wood-Fired Kilns

Last March, potters and ceramic artists in Huntingdon were “all fired up” over events occurring on the edge of town. No, this wasn't a group of pyromaniacs setting fires and creating a public nuisance. It was Jack Troy and his colleagues firing up a kiln and creating a small universe of colorful pots, cups, plates, and objet d'art.



*Jack Troy cutting wood for the kiln firing*

Most modern potters use electric or gas powered kilns, mainly because they are convenient to operate. An anagama, in contrast, is fueled with firewood, and this requires a large commitment of time and effort. Indeed, it took 12 people, taking shifts of three or six hours, to keep the Pixiegama fire burning for three continuous days and nights. Preparation also involves a lot of hard work, because a substantial amount of wood needs to be cut and stacked to keep the fire burning hotly. And potters typically spend weeks or longer preparing clay pieces suitable for a wood-fired kiln.

During the firing of an anagama, ashes from the wood interact with minerals in the clay to produce a natural glaze. The color and texture of the glaze depends on a variety of factors, including where the pot is located in the kiln. Because the outcome is unpredictable, opening the kiln after it cools and removing the pieces can produce happy surprises as well as disappointments. In fact, the entire process is somewhat risky, and a firing that goes awry can result in many ruined pots.



*Pots waiting to be fired*



*A whimsical piece*

A large number of people contributed over 200 pieces to the recent firing. Although most participants live in central Pennsylvania, some came from as far away as the Hudson River Valley. Some of these individuals have fired with Jack for years and enjoy returning to meet up with old friends. Jack also encourages inexperienced potters to participate and enjoys teaching people about the process. Opening the Pixiegama this time revealed a

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*A recently fired pot*



*A unique plate emerges from the kiln*



*Jack Troy stoking the kiln*

# EventUpdates

## Arts Participation Survey

Perhaps you sometimes think, “No one ever asks for my opinion about anything around here!” If this describes you, then now is your chance to express some of your views about the local art scene.

The Juniata College Museum of Art is conducting a Community Arts Participation survey to gather information on how members of our community interact with the arts in general and with the Museum of Art in particular.

All responses to the on-line survey are anonymous, and the entire procedure takes only 5 to 10 minutes to complete. The information collected through the survey will help Museum faculty to better serve members of our community.

The easiest way to get to the survey is to get on the Arts Council website and click the link on the first page. Your input will help to shape the arts in Huntingdon, so please express yourself today!

### THE RANDALL POTTER'S WHEEL *To the memory of Ted Randall*

He dreamed them, scheming  
with aluminum and steel,  
the sketch, the calibration,  
the bend, the cut, the weld.  
The threaded bore-hole, nut and bolt.  
The final snugging-up.

The 4-point dead-true stance,  
the flywheel's hundred fifteen pounds.  
The double spindle bearings,  
the upright tapered shaft and mates:  
the bucket head and throwing head  
whose circles fix the bull's-eye  
for a potter's turning world.

The buttocks-cradling tractor seat,  
the peened and welded bearing guard.  
The way thighs open round  
the drip pan's spun aluminite.

The sense that somewhere  
one is always on the move,  
that while we sleep  
they whirl their dervish-selves alive,  
running for the fun of it,  
staying put.

Jack Troy  
2010

## Virtual Folk College on May 28 -29

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, for the second year in a row, Folk College will be a virtual festival. In these difficult times, when people have been feeling somewhat isolated, it is important for members of the Folk College community to come together (even if it is virtually) to learn, share, and entertain one another. Although face-to-face interaction and jamming are not yet possible, participants still want to learn new skills and become better musicians!

The virtual Folk College will be held during Memorial Day Weekend on Friday, May 28 and on Saturday, May 29. The Friday schedule includes an open mic, a concert, and a jam session. The Saturday schedule includes workshops during the day, as well as an evening concert followed by a jam session.

We invited some of our most popular teachers and musician friends to work with us this year, and we are thrilled to announce that the staff will include host band Simple Gifts; the award winning duo Atwater-Donnelly; and mandolinist, guitarist, and singer Henry Koretzky. We also will feature a new book, *How to Practice*, authored by Folk College teacher and Contra Dance leader, Judy Minot.

For Folk College concert goers, there will be special pricing to just view the concerts. Please mark your calendars for Friday May 28 & Saturday May 29 and check out [www.folkcollege.com](http://www.folkcollege.com) for full details.



Featured performers at virtual Folk College include (above) Aubrey Atwater & Elwood Donnelly of the duo Atwater-Donnelly, plus host band Simple Gifts, Henry Koretzky, and Judy Minot.

## Exhibit of Arts Council Prints in May

Back in 1975, Glen Campbell was singing “Rhinestone Cowboy” and the Captain & Tennille were topping the charts with “Love Will Keep Us Together.” That also was the year in which the Arts Council began to acquire a small collection of prints, drawings, collages, and other art works.

The Arts Council purchased some of these items directly, and artists who exhibited their work through the Arts Council donated others. The intention was to use these artworks in school sessions and workshops, and to loan the items to various institutions in the country for display.

During the next two decades, these artworks were shown in local schools, used in several Arts Council workshops, researched by Juniata College students, and exhibited at banks, offices, and retirement homes in Orbisonia, Mapleton, and Huntingdon.

One example from the collection is a combination painting-nature collage by Jean Anderson, a local artist who held a workshop for the Arts Council back in 1975. Other local artists who worked in different decades also are represented in the collection.

Occasionally in the past, the Arts Council awarded a premium print or piece of pottery to top level-donors. For a long time, however, these items have been in storage, and few people have seen them in recent years.

The recent relocation of the Arts Council led us to consider dusting off some of the items in our collection and showing them again. The result will be an exhibit of entitled *Selected Works from the Permanent Collection* at The Playhouse at McConnellstown in May and June, opening on May 20 and running through June 27. This will be a unique opportunity to view some interesting local artworks that have been “locked away in the vault” for many years.



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**Are You a 2021 Member?**  
Renew your membership today!



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## Jack Troy's Wood-Fired Kilns

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number of remarkable objects, a few of which are shown in the accompanying pictures.

Jack fires the Pixiegama every March and November, and the larger kiln, which he calls the "Komori," every June. The Komori ("bat" in Japanese) was named for the small flying mammals that once tried to move into it. Firing up the Komori is a major undertaking: It requires a crew of 18 to 20 people and, of course, an enormous amount of firewood!

As Jack said, "Each firing is an exercise in trusting one another and learning countless varieties of humility when events beyond our control seem to take vengeance on us and curse our work for sins of which we are unmindful. We must have thick skin, because we go right back to work, pursuing our favorite illusion: that we're making the world



*Unloading the kiln*

a better place one handful at a time, sins be damned. When a special piece comes out of the kiln, no matter who made it, we are all pleased at our common achievement, like a choir that knows they're all on pitch, often against the odds, and because they love the practice for its own sake."

## THE WIGGLY WAGGLY ROAD

We called it the Wiggly Waggly Road and couldn't wait for it on the two-laner from Grandma's house.

It was a border road, dropping down through the Ohio hills on our way home.

There were dips and dives, swerves and curves

and that wild sensation of "Whoah!"

as my Dad gunned his shiny tan '61 Impala over a hump with just enough speed

to let our stomachs feel the bottom drop out with that tingle of surprise.

We three boys, untethered in the springy back seat of that big, heavy car, rising up on knees

to peek over Dad's shoulder

when he announced "Here comes another one!"

as we urged him to "Go faster, Daddy!"

falling back in laughter and giggles,

sailing over the humps, everybody

crying "Whoah!" again and again

until the wiggly waggly road

came to its end.

*James Pingry*

2010