

HEART OF THE HOLTER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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From the Director's Corner

Dear Holter Friends and Family,

At the Holter, we believe that art museums are, at their core, educational institutions. Yes, we preserve and celebrate remarkable works of art that prompt us to think about new ideas and stand shoulder to shoulder with our neighbors to expand our perspectives. We aim to exhibit and share artwork that serves as a window into new and different worlds, while also being a mirror in which we can see our own reflection and identity. Our deeper purpose is to connect people of all ages, backgrounds, and life experiences to the transformative power of creativity. This belief drives everything we do, and April is always the best month to see this purpose in action.

If you had the pleasure of reading last month's newsletter article, you heard me mention that we have been dealing with some growing pains- especially in our education programs. I also wrote about how our education programs have been reimagined based on our audience and their needs. Well, late last week, we were thrilled to be awarded a Dennis & Phyllis Washington Foundation grant to support expanded staff capacity in our Lifelong Learning, Museum Education, and Volunteer programs. This \$45,000 grant over three years is an investment in our community, and it means we can continue and expand our adult programs, many of which are free or low-cost, reducing barriers to connection, artmaking, and exhibition engagement.

Providing more staff capacity to innovatively serve our adult community means that we can also better serve as a place for our youngest community members to find and express their voices.

April (and May) is the time of year that our galleries are filled with the colorful, thoughtful, and joyful artwork from K-12th graders in our beloved Youth Electrum Exhibition (opening on Friday, April 17th). We also share the work of emerging 2nd-year artists from Helena College's art program in Helena College Capstone- this year's exhibit is titled *The Cost of Living*. These two powerful annual exhibits aim to celebrate the next generation of working artists, makers, and most importantly, art-lovers.

Learning doesn't stop at graduation, either. Recently, we received a small grant from the Montana Arts Council to support our fledgling Creative Aging Workshops. We hope to continue to bring CAW to our age 50+ crowd, so look out for more information about this upcoming series. In addition, the Washington Foundation grant also supports our monthly Collection Chats and Curator Talks. While originally intended for adults, we have learned that curiosity and connection around the arts are universal needs for all ages- really bringing a big shining light on our "Art is for All" mission.

Spring is a wonderful and extra-busy season for the museum. Our current growing pains simply confirm for us what we have always known: that investing in art and art education for all ages is investing in people and our community. We are deeply grateful for the partnerships we have that help the Holter and our community connect, inspire, and grow.

With much love,
Christina

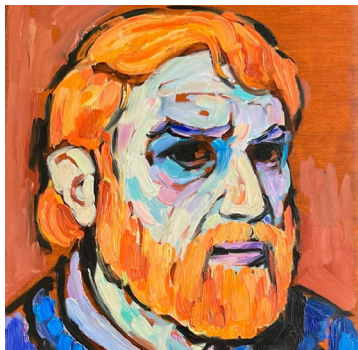
UPCOMING EVENTS

Exhibition Reception:
Il Maestro!
April 3, 6-8 p.m.

Curator Talk:
Myths & Legends
April 8, 6-7 p.m.

Exhibition Reception:
**Youth Electrum &
Helena College Capstone**
April 17, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Exhibitions



Il Maestro!

Works by Morton Levin, A Centennial Celebration

BAUCUS GALLERY

APR 3 - MAY 31

This unique exhibition features the work of Morton Levin (1923-2020), a master artist whose passion and unbending desire for art making and mastery led him on an intriguing life journey touched by the effects of war, love, family, life, and teaching. Presented by Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art, curated by Nicole Maria Evans.



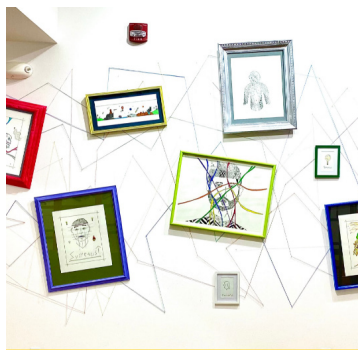
Youth Electrum

K-12 Youth Artists

BAIR GALLERY

APR 17 - MAY 30

This longstanding annual showcase featuring student artwork throughout the Helena School District is back for another great year! Youth Electrum gives students an opportunity to exhibit their work alongside their peers in a museum environment, and a chance to share their incredible art with the wider Helena community.



The Cost of Living

Helena College Capstone

MILLIKAN GALLERY

APR 17 - MAY 3

The annual Helena College Capstone Exhibition features the second-year art students at Helena College unveiling their capstone art projects. Join us in congratulating these accomplished students as they launch their careers as artists and creatives.

UP UNTIL APRIL 12

Jason Elliott Clark
Myths and Legends

The Art Center
Unusual Words

OPENING RECEPTIONS

Il Maestro! & Kessler Mural
April 3, 6:00-8:00 pm

Youth Electrum & Helena College Capstone
April 17, 4:30-6:30 pm

**Receptions
are always
FREE and
open to the
public.**

Exhibition support by:

**MONTANA
ARTS COUNCIL**



Partial funding for this project was provided by Montana's Cultural Trust.



Additional support from coal tax placed into Montana's Cultural and Aesthetic Projects Trust Fund.

Broad Vision by Gianna Sherman, Curator



The Cost of Living

Every spring, the Holter hosts second-year Helena College capstone students for their end-of-year exhibition. This year, they titled their exhibition *The Cost of Living*, which I love, because it encapsulates one of the most pressing issues for college-age people, especially artists: the widening gap between the cost of living and what people, even hard-working and educated, can afford. It wasn't long ago that I realized firsthand how inaccessible the bohemian lifestyle I had dreamt of had become. The idea of balancing artwork and odd jobs I had in my head was a romantic notion from the distant past. Working and going to school full-time barely covered my living costs, even in Bozeman. I literally watched the cost of housing double over my five years there. My first two-bedroom apartment was \$425 a month, and by the time I left, the same place cost more than double. The square footage hadn't increased. The quality of the apartments hadn't improved. Wages hadn't risen, but I felt the constricting effect of rising expenses. By 2020, I was priced out of Bozeman and moved to Helena, hoping for slightly higher pay and lower rent. Still, the central struggle remained—building a dignified life amid relentless cost increases.

Since 2020, we've all seen the cost of living skyrocket while the minimum wage remains at \$7.25, unchanged since 2008, despite rising productivity over the last 50 years. If workers build more wealth for corporations, why haven't their wages kept pace? We're constantly reminded that Millennials and Generation Z face a lower quality of life than their parents, often questioning the value of hard work when wages are stagnant, and costs continue

to soar. Financial security, once considered a given for those who work hard and get an education, now seems out of reach for many, as wages fail to keep pace with the rising expenses of daily life.

This decline can be traced back to the deregulation of the 70s. Conveniently, at the same time, organized labor was also on the decline. Coincidence? Certainly not. Nothing we enjoy as workers has been handed to us. Not weekends, not pensions, not holidays, not even the 8-8-8 rule - eight hours of work, eight hours of rest, eight hours of recreation. Hell, corporations probably would've stuck with child labor if workers didn't organize against it. Actually, I think they're trying to bring that back as we speak.

So why does this crisis persist? Greed, corruption, and shareholder interests all play significant roles. I may not have all the answers, but I urge us not to ignore how the high cost of living is reshaping young people's lives—delaying or preventing marriage, children, and fueling anxiety and depression. Ensuring people can exchange their labor for wages that guarantee dignity is not only a personal concern but one of the defining challenges of our time. We must not lose sight of the fact that fair compensation for work is fundamental to a just society.

I encourage you all to attend the reception for *The Cost of Living* and Youth Electrum 2026 on April 17th from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. and show your support for young, aspiring artists from kindergarten through college. Let's all celebrate the immense talent we are so lucky to have here in Helena!

From the Holter Vault:

Featured work from our
Permanent Collection

Beth Lo *Easter*

Ceramic, n.d. Permanent
Collection of the Holter
Museum of Art, gift of Miriam
Sample.

Internationally-acclaimed
ceramicist Beth Lo is known
for her distinct illustrative style
and her visual commentary on
Asian-American identity. This
set of stacking vessels features
a different pair of figures on
each side.



BECOME A HOLTER MEMBER

Memberships are a great way to support us, and now we're delighted to offer even more perks for members! We offer 5 standard levels of membership based off your annual level of giving. With the introduction of museum admissions fees, membership is the way to go if you want to show your support and receive some great benefits!

Benefits for Trailblazer level and ABOVE:

- At least 1 Holter membership card and FREE admission
- 10% off in Holter Museum Store and on Classes
- 10% off classes at Gentle Healing Wellness Center
- 10% off your purchase at MT Book Company
- 10% off All Art Supplies at Queen City Framing & Art Supplies
- 10% off your purchase at Fire Tower Coffee House
- \$1 from your first drink at The Hawthorn goes to the Holter
- Free beer every month at Ten Mile Creek Brewery
- \$1 off your first drink at Gulch Distillers
- \$5 off any \$15 purchase at Café Zydeco
- Free sprinkles with single cone purchase at Big Dipper

Image: Soojin Choi, *Cruel Sweet* (detail).



[Click to Become a Member!](#)

Meet Pun!



Hi everyone! My name is Thanit “Pun” Herabat, and I am from Bangkok, Thailand. I serve as a Programme Manager at the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Thailand, a non-profit international organization, where I manage and implement projects focused on labour issues, trade unions, and international affairs.

I am thrilled to be in Helena, Montana—a small city with a big heart—as a Civic Engagement Fellow at the Holter Museum of Art. This is part of the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative Professional Fellows Program (YSEALI PFP), a U.S. Department of State program that provides six weeks of hands-on experience with American organizations while fostering professional growth and cross-cultural exchange.

One project closest to my heart back home is the Thai Labour Museum Revitalization. Workers lay the foundation of any nation, and the labour movement has always been closely linked with democracy. While the museum plays a vital role in preserving this history, it faces challenges such as limited resources and support. Our revitalization project aims to reinvigorate Thailand’s labour history and highlight the meaningful contributions of workers to our society. With this in mind, I am eager to learn how non-profit, cultural institutions like museums can foster dialogue, preserve historical memory, and engage communities. I hope to draw inspiration from the Holter Museum’s approaches to administration, outreach, fundraising, and program development, and adapt best practices to strengthen my work in Thailand. I also look forward to sharing my experiences for mutual learning.

This fellowship’s impact can extend far beyond Thailand. By sharing experiences in non-profit management and community engagement—from Thailand and the U.S.—we can foster cross-cultural understanding, inspire meaningful civic participation, and work toward a more just and equitable society for all.

I am grateful for this opportunity and look forward to contributing and bringing new ideas back to my home country. My heartfelt thanks go to the U.S. Department of State, the American Councils for International Education, the Maureen & Mike Mansfield Center, the Holter Museum of Art, and my host family—Jen, Chris, and Parker—for making this fellowship experience possible.

With appreciation and solidarity,
Pun

Weekly Classes: Spring

ArtFeeds (Middle School) **Mondays, 2:30-4:00 p.m.**

This workshop allows Middle School kids to work with artists exploring ways to use visual arts and writing to help navigate life while expressing in a space shared with peers.

[learn more](#)

D&D with Adventures in Cardboard **Tuesdays, 3:30-5:30 p.m.**

Explore the realm of AiC through Dungeons and Dragons tabletop gaming. Ages 8-16.

[learn more](#)

Adventures in Cardboard: Armory and Games **Thursdays, 3:30-5:30 p.m.**

Join us for a class that sneaks in structural engineering and sculptural practice with a dose of cardboard and whimsy. Ages 8-15.

[learn more](#)

Imagine That! **Mondays, 2:30-4:30 p.m.**

Explore and play with new-to-you and familiar materials in guided hands-on art making lessons with creative imaginative results! Ages 7-11.

[learn more](#)

Art for Survival **Tuesdays, 3:30-5:30 p.m.**

A visual arts and writing workshop that allows High School participants to work with artists exploring ways to use visual arts and writing to help them navigate life.

[learn more](#)

ArtSmart **Tuesdays, 3:30-5:30 p.m.**

Art history meets creative making! Learn about a different artist each week, exploring their artistic style and medium before breaking out to create your own piece of art. Ages 8-12.

[learn more](#)

After School Teen Arts Council **Wednesdays, 3:30-5:30 p.m.**

ATAC is an opportunity for creative-minded teens to come together and become advocates for the arts among their peers as well as the community as a whole.

[learn more](#)



A Mural for Kessler School

During the exhibition reception on April 3, stop by our Bair Gallery for a sneak peek of a very special mural before it moves into its new home at Kessler Elementary! The artist, Paul Blumenthal, will speak at 7:00.

Painted by Paul Blumenthal and sponsored by Mosaic Architecture, this mural is the product of a collaboration between a local artist, the museum, the Helena School District, and a local business. This is the second mural project this year that Paul has created in collaboration with elementary school students in Helena. We are grateful to be involved! Thank you to all who help facilitate building community through the transformative power of the arts.



Psst...there are still Summer Camp spots open!



Puppet Puppet Yes Yes

August 10-14, 9:00 am-1:00 pm. Ages 12+

Create your own Muppet-inspired puppet with professional puppeteer Ryne Sorensen.

Cardboard Pinball Madness

July 20-23, 1:00-4:00 pm. Ages 8+

Using a pinbox3000 and cardboard enthusiasm, we will create our own pinball machines!

Adult Programs

Courage 2 Create (Morning)

Weekly on Tuesdays, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

- ◆ Art-making for Veterans, Active Duty Military, and Caregivers.

Courage 2 Create (Evening)

Weekly on Thursdays, 5:00 - 7:00 pm

- ◆ Art-making for Veterans, Active Duty Military, and Caregivers.

Figure Drawing Studio

Weekly on Wednesdays, 6:30 - 8:00 pm.

- ◆ The Holter provides a model and the space for participants to come study as artists new and experienced engage in their own artistic practice. All levels are welcome! Bring your own media.

Mark-Making Workshop with MT Historical Society

April 23, 6:00 - 8:00 pm.

- ◆ Join us at the new Montana Heritage Center to develop your mark-making skills with local teaching artist Sky Angove.

Cabs and Slabs

April 24, 6:30 - 8:30 pm.

- ◆ Join the Holter for a happy hour with clay! With a drink in one hand and some mud in the other, create a masterpiece while getting messy with friends, family, and new acquaintances!

Wine'd Down: Creative Prose

April 29, 6:00 - 7:30 pm.

- ◆ This relaxed evening blends mindfulness, creative expression, and the tactile joy of analog writing via typewriter.

“Drawing Sound” Theremin Art Workshop (next month!)

May 23, 1:00 - 3:00 pm.

- ◆ Transform visual imagery into sound and follow it up with a jam session! Join Thereminist Marla Goodman for a 2-hour workshop that transforms sound into imagery and back again!

***Click on the
class titles
to learn more
and register!***

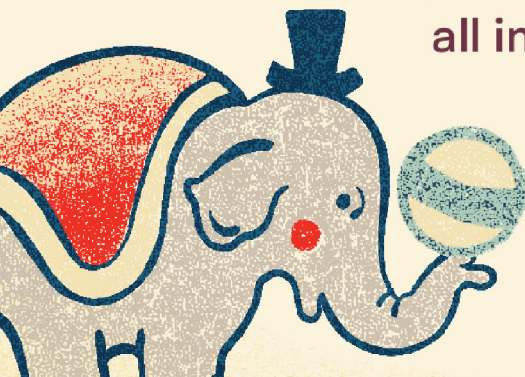
LE
CIRQUE



HOLTER GALA 2026

HELENA CIVIC CENTER • MAY 15 • 5:30-10:00 PM

Join the Holter for an evening of art, spectacle,
French-inspired indulgence, and unforgettable surprises -
all in support of local art and artists.



Don't wait! Get your tickets today!

CLICK HERE

Interested in volunteering for this event? See the next page...

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Exhibitions:

The Holter is seeking volunteers to assist with the installation and de-installation of spring exhibitions. If you are comfortable handling artwork, patching walls, etc, please consider signing up to assist. You do not have to attend every session, nor do you have to attend a session in full.

- Youth Electrum Install: April 14, 15, 16 — [SIGN UP HERE](#)
- Youth Elecrum & Il Maestro Deinstall: May 31, June 1, June 2 — [SIGN UP HERE](#)

Gala:

It's gala season here at the Holter, and we need all hands on deck to make the night a success! The museum is seeking volunteers for **May 14 and 15**. Volunteers who work at least 4 hours will receive 1 ticket to the event. Volunteers who work at the event will receive time for a food break, 1 drink ticket from the Holter Bar, and access to hospitality drinks and snacks. [CLICK HERE](#) to see all slots and sign up.

PS: Costumes and circus-themed attire are encouraged!

Collections:

Our permanent collections registrar is seeking volunteers to assist with digital data entry. This work will be done on either a computer or iPad. You will be trained and given assistance whenever needed. If you are detail and process-oriented, this may be a good fit for you! Please contact Hannah at hannah@holtermuseum.org to learn more.

At the Holter Shop

HOLTER ART KITS



Did you know the Holter Shop carries a variety of art kits? Perfect for gift-giving or sparking your own creativity, our selection includes acrylic paint and canvas sets, cyanotype sun photography kits, design-your-own tote bags, sketchbooks, and weaving kits.

Know a student exhibiting their work in our upcoming Youth Electrum show? These art kits make a thoughtful congratulatory gift to celebrate their achievement—and inspire them to keep creating!

Event Space Rental



Host your next event at the Holter Museum!

- Staff Meeting / Corporate Training
- Holiday Parties
- Birthday Parties
- Memorial Services
- Weddings and Receptions
- Small Business Networking Events
- Comedy Events
- Luncheons
- Corporate Social Happy Hours
- ...and MORE!

Holter Museum of Art
12 E. Lawrence Street, Helena, MT 59601

FOR MORE INFO EMAIL: DEVELOPMENT@HOLTERMUSEUM.ORG OR CALL (406) 204-3401



NEW PROGRAM!

MONTANA INSTITUTE FOR BOOK ARTS

The Montana Institute for Book Arts is a summer program that brings together fine artists, craftspeople, and motivated students from across the country to share their professional knowledge and their love of bookmaking. The two sessions are split between a historic research station on Flathead Lake and the University of Montana's campus in Missoula. Students will be able to choose from a range of courses, including bookbinding, papermaking, letter carving, and a printing workshop on a 1936 Hacker Test Press, home of Bear Scratch Press.

The Institute supports high quality craftsmanship within a flourishing arts community. Between immersive workshops, there will be opportunities to visit the Montana Museum of Art and Culture, where teachers at the Institute will display their art, readings, wilderness excursions, cozy nights under the stars, and a chance to meet fellow lovers of the printed word.

The University of Montana will be awarding one scholarship to a dedicated UM student, and one scholarship to a Missoula community member. Please email robert.stubblefield@mso.umt.edu for scholarship details.

- Session 1 will take place between August 3rd - August 7th, 2026 at the University of Montana in Missoula, under the golden face of Mount Sentinel. Missoula is the cultural hub for western Montana, and its downtown scene and First Friday art walks are just minutes from a vast expanse of wilderness.
- Session 2 will be held from August 10th - August 14th, 2026 at the Flathead Lake Biological Station, a university-owned lodge at Yellow Bay, close to Glacier National Park. The area is famous for its jaw-dropping vistas and Flathead cherries, among other charms.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE