



CONTACT: Dominick Miller
millerd44@michigan.gov
Mackinac State Historic Parks
Phone: 906.847.3328
www.mackinacparks.com

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Artists Announced for Third Annual Artist-in-Residence Program on Mackinac Island

MACKINAC ISLAND, MICH. — Mackinac State Historic Parks is pleased to announce the artists selected for the third annual Mackinac Island Artist-in-Residence program, which is housed in the remodeled second floor of the Mackinac Island Visitor's Center, formerly the 1915 Mackinac Island Coast Guard Station.

The Mackinac State Historic Parks Artist-In-Residence Program is designed to promote and encourage the creation of artistic works inspired by the history, natural wonders, and beauty of Mackinac Island. The two- and three-week residencies will begin in early June and continue through early October.

The selected artist will provide one public presentation (workshop, lecture, reading, demonstration, etc.) on the second Wednesday of their residency at 7:00 p.m. and contribute one piece of their work to Mackinac State Historic Parks within 12 months.

The residents for 2021 include:

- Owen Wittekindt, June 7 – June 20, workshop June 16: Wittekindt is an emerging, self-taught artist, focusing on animal and natural imagery, with painstaking patience and attention to detail. He specializes in micro-dot stippling. He plans to spend his time on

the island taking a great deal of photographs for reference and making sketches of anything that inspires him. He will study both the natural beauty of the island as well as the many historic landmarks. Using his reference material, he will compose a scene through his drawing that best represents his vision of Mackinac Island.

- Kurt Anderson, June 21 – July 11, workshop June 30: Anderson is a painter, who, in the midst of a full-time career as a surgical PA in 1995, decided to rekindle his creative spirit through painting and has never looked back. A lover of the outdoors, he gravitated to plein air painting. He's looking forward to spending several days on the island exploring out-of-the-way scenes and the everyday life of full-time islanders. He's looking forward to painting "for himself," and not necessarily what any gallery is looking for.
- Elizabeth Klein, July 12 – July 25, workshop July 21: Klein is a writer who holds a BA in Professional Communications and has a decade of combined experience as a writer, poet, and editor. Her collection, *Upon a Shoreline Exile*, was set on Mackinac Island, and she plans on writing and editing several additional poems during her residency. The art she'll create and contribute during her residency will utilize the island's history, natural wonders, and beauty to not only entertain, but surprise and challenge.
- Elizabeth Spitz, July 26 – August 8, workshop August 4: Spitz calls her technique constructed watercolor. She starts with painting full sheets of the colors needed for a piece, then cuts and glues the shapes to create layered images. Spitz is a lifelong Michigander with a deep love for Mackinac Island. A theme for a new piece that's been dancing in her thoughts for a while has been historic buildings, which ties into her career as an architect. She'll also spend time on the island studying plants and gardens.

- Benjamin Bohnsack, August 9 – August 29, workshop August 18: Bohnsack is a woodcut artist and printmaker from the Upper Peninsula. He makes multi-color relief prints with representational designs, usually by reduction using soy based and environmentally friendly materials. He makes his woodcuts inspired by landscapes, creatures, and human enterprise in the world. As he works, he enjoys interacting with people, inviting them to “look over his shoulder” and visit about what he is doing. He’s a huge fan of Mackinac Island, and is excited for the opportunity to live, do art, and meet people while there.
- Raymond Gaynor, August 30 – September 12, workshop September 8: Gaynor has been working in photography most of his adult life. What started as a hobby turned into a passion and a business after his retirement from an international software business career. During visits to the island, he has often desired an extended period of time to be immersed in the natural beauty of the island. He’s excited to search out and capture ideal locations during golden and twilight hours. His images capture the way nature conserves itself through a process of growth and rebirth, through creative and unique perspectives of the vistas and preserves.
- Nicholas Hill, September 13 – October 3, workshop September 22: Hill is a printmaker who was named a Guggenheim Fellow in 2017. His residency brings him full circle in his professional career – while as an undergraduate student, he worked on Mackinac Island and exhibited his drawings at a small gallery. His studio work is embedded in “place, history and memory.” How one experiences and comes to know a place over time is of central importance to Hill. He is eager to learn more of Mackinac’s rich history and imagines many visits to the fort and other historic settings as a means to deepening his understanding of the island’s history and culture.

“Mackinac State Historic Parks is very pleased with the artists selected for the 2021 artist-in-residence season on Mackinac Island,” said Mackinac State Historic Parks Director Steve Brisson. “We have a diverse group of talented artists who look forward to being inspired by Mackinac and sharing their creativity through interactive workshops.”

A jury of representatives from Mackinac State Historic Parks, the Mackinac Island Arts Council, and the Mackinac Island Community Foundation selected from a pool of 45 qualified applicants. Selections were made solely on the basis of merit and how the artist’s work can advance the program’s goal of encouraging the creation of artistic works inspired by the history, natural wonders, and beauty of Mackinac Island

Mackinac State Historic Parks, a family of living history museums and parks in northern Michigan’s Straits of Mackinac, is an agency within the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Its sites—which are accredited by the American Alliance of Museums—include Fort Mackinac, the Biddle House, The Richard and Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum, Historic Downtown Mackinac, and Mackinac Island State Park on Mackinac Island, and Colonial Michilimackinac, Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse, Historic Mill Creek Discovery Park and Michilimackinac State Park in Mackinaw City. Mackinac State Historic Parks is governed by the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, established in 1895 to protect, preserve and present the parks’ rich historic and natural resources for the education and recreation of future generations. Visitor information is available at (231) 436-4100 or online at www.mackinacparks.com.

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