



EXCLUSIVE

Glass Artist, Adventure
Enthusiast Pg. 6

Did You Know?

Santa over the
years Pg. 10

Michael Lich

A Musical
Odyssey
Pg. 18

The High Desert

PALETTE

December, 2020, Vol. 1 No. 4

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WELCOME TO

The High Desert Palette

Willcox is full of creative artists and craftspeople. Almost any art media you can imagine – and maybe some you might not – are represented. People of all ages, inspired by their own imaginations and by the natural beauty and heritage of this unique corner of Arizona, are creating extraordinary and unique art.

The High Desert Palette will introduce you to these artists and their work. We'll have original articles, interviews with area creatives, photographs, visual art, a calendar of events – to bring fascinating creatives and their output to you.

If you're a creative yourself, or if you admire the work they produce, *The High Desert Palette* is for you.

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December, 2020
Vol. 1 No. 4

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CORRECTION

The October *High Desert Palette* misidentified Kristen Hale as a contributing photographer and in the Table of Contents. It should be Kendal Lyn Hale. We regret the error.

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Casey Dennis in her workshop, photo by Jennifer Colby

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Hand Quilting Class
Saturday, January 2nd @3pm * The Palace

Kids Art Club
Friday, January 8th @4pm * The Palace

**Youth Creative
Writing Workshop**
Friday, January 8th @10am * Studio 128

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CASEY DENNIS

Glass Artist, Adventure Enthusiast

Did you expect glass art to become a large part of your life?"

"Not at all."

She may not have planned for it, but glass design is Casey's passion, talent, and favorite pastime.

A life well-traveled

Casey Dennis was born in Douglas, Arizona. She was raised on a ranch near Chiricahua National Monument and attended Willcox High School. After graduating, she left the ranching life behind and sought adventure.

Casey became a registered nurse and flew air evacuation during the Vietnam War. Following the war, she pursued a degree in anthropology from the University of Arizona. She then took on the role of educator, teaching archeology courses in

Cottonwood and Prescott. She also served as the director of an elder hostel association in the Verde Valley for 16 years.

How did art enter your life?

Casey and her thirteen-year-old daughter were living in Tucson at the time. On a search for some mother-daughter bonding, they came across glass art courses. The two became regular attendees, and Casey has continued creating ever since. Her daughter does not design as often but hopes to continue when she has more free time. "Whenever she wants a piece, she just asks me to make it."

“ I have always liked glass and I enjoy the creative process.

An outlet of expression

"I have always liked glass and I enjoy the creative process."

Casey cherishes every step, from selecting glass sheets to fine-tuning the details and then

displaying the piece for sale.

She can identify and date most of the glass she uses.

A little inspiration, and a lot of ingenuity

Several of Casey's designs are displayed throughout her home, but one stands out in her dining room.



"I was in Alaska at a gift store, and there was a beautiful raven on top of a high cabinet."
 The raven was made of dichroic glass, which displays two different colors in certain lighting conditions. "The lady at the store got it down for me, and it was \$1400. So I took a picture of it, came home, and started making my own." Casey's dichroic glass bird glistens in the sunlight through her windowsill. "I like working with this glass probably the best."

“ I was in Alaska at a gift store, and there was a beautiful raven on top of a high cabinet... The lady at the store got it down for me, and it was \$1400. So I took a picture of it, came home, and started making my own.”

Over a 37-year career, you become familiar with your style and ways to express yourself. Casey is inspired by

local wildlife, festive pieces, archeology, and "junk that I just like." Casey's designs have a certain flavor, but she adds variety in her work. "I also like to take commissions."

Casey has since retired and returned to Willcox. She is active in art design and has a small gallery

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in her home. Like many artists, her creativity comes in waves, but she is always seeking inspiration and keeps pieces on display for viewing or purchase.

Does everyone have the potential to be artistic?

“I think that being creative is a feeling that you have inside you.” However, she believes that art takes many forms and encourages everyone to find ways to express themselves.

Casey plans to teach glass art classes of her own soon through collaboration with Studio 128.



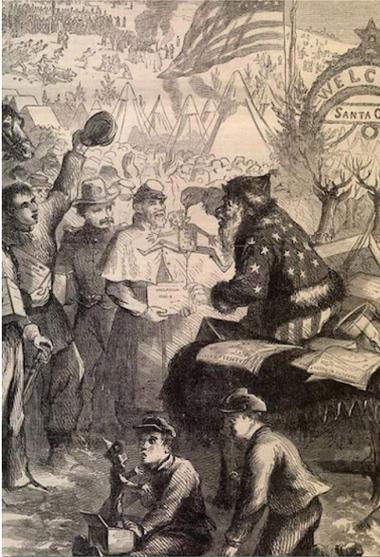
To view, purchase, or request a commission from Casey, she can be reached through 520-591-5699.

DID YOU KNOW?

Santa over the years

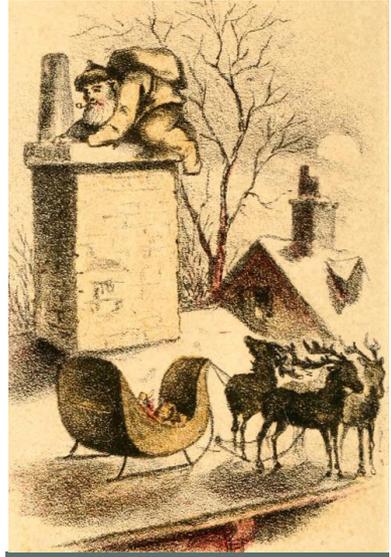
The fictional character Santa Claus. "...His eyes—how they twinkled! His dimples, how merry! His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry! His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow, and the beard on his chin was as white as the snow... He had a broad

face and a little round belly that shook when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly. He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf, and I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself..." Those are the words used by Clement Moore to describe him in his poem "A Visit from Saint Nickolas" written in 1822. The classic also bears the more recognizable name "The Night Before Christmas". That very poem was the one that would inspire cartoonists, painters, and advertisers for years to come.



-1863

Illustrated by Thomas Nast in a Civil War political cartoon, we see Santa follow this description strictly for the first time.



- 1864

In an illustrated version of the famous poem, "A Visit from St. Nickolas", we see that the red coat was not yet cannon.



- 1881

It wasn't until 1881 when Thomas Nast again depicted Santa in his piece, "Merry Old Santa" that he was seen with his iconic red suit. Though not yet a requirement in Santa's portrayal, this red suit would begin to become more and more of the norm. Nast used this look in many of his portrayals of the jolly old man and is credited with the invention of the modern Santa. It is supposed that Nast's artwork even popularized Santa's naughty and nice list and his living in the North Pole.



-1902

A representation of Santa on the cover of the book "The Life and Adventures of Santa Claus" by L. Frank Baum.

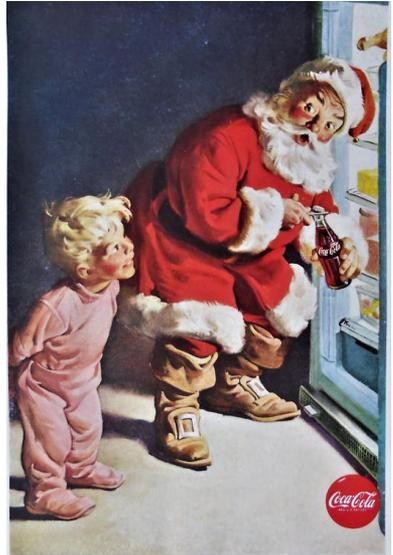


-1935

A portrayal of Santa by Norman Rockwell. He must be credited with his consistent depictions of Santa in the 20's and 30's.

Our timeline ends with the famous work of Haddon Sundblom. Hired in the 30's by Coca Cola to paint advertising for them, Sundblom created the face and outfit we all think of when we think Santa Claus. The outfit was complete with

white trim, black belt, and brown boots. It is worth noting that this outfit was done before, but was immortalized by Sundblom using it in prevalent advertising from the 30's into the 60's for Coca Cola. Below is just a small sampling of his work.



Paint Night
Saturday, December 19th @6pm * The Palace

Jam Session
Wednesdays @ 4:30pm * The Palace

**Creative Youth
Theater**

1st and 3rd Wednesdays @2pm * The Palace



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**Jonas
Kauffmann**

Friday
Sep. 18th @2:30pm
Saturday
Sep. 19th @6:30pm



**The Red
Shoes**

Friday
Oct. 9th @2:30pm
Saturday
Oct. 10th @6:30pm



Cinderella

Friday
March 19th @2:30pm
Saturday
March 20th @6:30pm



**Wise
Children**

Friday
April 16th @2:30pm
Saturday
April 17th @6:30pm

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December 2020

Christmas Lighted Parade and Crafts Fair, 12

Paint Night, 19

Christmas, 25

Vivaldi's Four Seasons, 22,24

Creative Youth Productions Theater, 22,26,27

January 2020

Hand Quilting Class, 2

Youth Creative Writing Workshop, 8

Open-Mic Night, 14

Live on Stage - Kilted Spirit, 30

Willcox Historic Theater 84th Birthday, 29-31



Willcox Theater and Arts presents

Ho Ho Ho!

The Santa Claus Chronicles

BY
PAT COOK

**TUESDAY,
DECEMBER 22 |**

6:00

**SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 26 |**

6:00

**SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 27 |**

2:00

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MICHAEL LICH

A Musical Odyssey

One-Man-Band

For Michael Lich, music came naturally. After starting out playing electric guitar as a kid, everything kind of fell in place. He continued to further his learning by taking classes in Jazz in high school and trying out different instruments.

After high school, Michael quickly came to adore the pure

utility and variety afforded by the guitar. Living in northern Illinois among the cornfields, there was a lack of people to play with. Michael realized he could utilize his skill with the guitar to act as a one-man band, or depending on the genre, a one-man orchestra. To Michael, "It was the perfect instrument to play when you didn't have a lot of people around."

A Quick Detour

// It was the perfect instrument to play when you didn't have a lot of people around.

Later Michael journeyed to New Mexico continuing his one-man band and there received his

bachelor's degree in guitar performance at the University

Michael Lich December Set List

Bear.....Michael Lich
Preludio.....Anon
Greensleaves.....Anon
Bianca Fiore.....Anon
Etude #17.....Leo Bouwer
Travis.....Bela Fleck arr. M. Lich

-Intermission-

Prelude in G Major BWV 1007.....J.S Bach trans. M. Lich
Serenade.....Michael Lich
Apricot Jam.....
Speed Goat.....
Snowflight.....Andrew York
O'Holy Night.....Adolph Adam
Leyenda.....Isaac Albeniz

of New Mexico. Michael then headed to the University of Arizona and got his master's degree.

Before continuing his degree he had made a quick detour. After seeing a concert in the mid-90s featuring a banjo, Michael realized: "What was being played was like a mix of my Jazz background, classical guitar, and love of bluegrass music."

This was even further exemplified when a friend later gave Michael a banjo of his own. "Between New Mexico and Arizona I spent a year in Nashville where I went to play

“ I consider myself more of a performer who happens to teach.

bluegrass but also played a lot of classical guitar as there wasn't a lot of that there."

Around the World

When asked about where he's performed Michael chuckled and began, "I've performed all around the US including Alaska, did several concert tours in Brazil. I did Rio De Janeiro and then I've played in Frankfurt, Germany, and Busan, South

Korea. Most recently I've played in Mexico."

"It's really interesting to experience the differences in culture and sound depending on the country and setting."

But despite being around the world in exotic locales and multiple large concert halls Michael spoke fondly of smaller local destinations, “There’s something about being in a place like Willcox that has this sort of down-to-earth feel where you can interact much more with the audience around you.”

Performer, Teacher, Conductor, Composer

Michael has a more hectic schedule than most. He’s a teacher at three different schools in two different cities—while being a performer, conducting a guitar orchestra, and handling his own composing. When asked which field he identifies with most Michael had this to say: “I consider myself more of a performer who happens to teach. I feel like when conducting I need to know how to teach and performing helps

“ ...You have to be thick-skinned in this business and keep at it, just don’t give up.

me teach kids how to perform which all helps my composing.” On performance style, Michael said, “When performing I like to do a variety of styles and try to utilize most of my skills.”

Final Thoughts

On plans for the future, Michael is looking to his past. “I’m looking to perform more in Mexico, and I made some contacts in South Korea so I’m looking more international again like when I first started.”

Michael ended with advice for any aspiring musician. “If you want to be a musician it’s definitely doable. I’d say expect to have to adapt and diversify because trends change. Performers may get discouraged after a maybe so-so performance or something didn’t go as you thought it would. You have to be thick-skinned in this business and keep at it, just don’t give up.”



 Cheryl McLaughlin

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Contributor Guidelines

The High Desert Palette welcomes contributions that highlight creativity and creative people in Southeastern Arizona. We seek to explore the creative impulse, showcase creative product and inspire creatives in all fields. Original contributions in artistic and/or creative fields and articles or feature interviews with the people who create them will be accepted. Let us know of creative individuals we might highlight in future issues.

Please contact *The High Desert Palette* at 520-766-3335 or willcoxtheater@gmail.com to discuss your ideas.





**BEETHOVEN @
BIRTHDAY
BASH**

Friday Oct. 30
and Sun., Nov. 1
@2:30



**All American
Composers**

Sun., Nov. 29
@2:30



**Vivaldi: Four
Seasons**

Tue., Dec. 22
and Thu., Dec. 24
@2:30



**In Memoriam
- Hailstork
& Strauss**

Sun., Jan 24
@2:30

***Amore &
Mozart***

Sun., Feb. 14
@6pm

***Bach's
Influence
from Mozart
to Hamer***

Sun., Mar. 21
@2:30pm

***Portrait of
a Queen***

Sun., Apr. 18
@2:30

***Brian Ganz
Plays Chopin***

Sun., May 16
@2:30



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Open Mic Night
Thursday January 14th @ 7pm * The Palace

Retro Rewind
Thursday January 21st @ 1pm * The Palace

Open Exhibit Hours
Tuesdays @ 1pm-3pm * The Palace & Studio 128



ART LOOK

Pictured are gnomes crafted by Kathleen Johnston

About the artist and her craft:

Sixty years of crafting started with the weaving of pot holders. Kathleen went on to make a variety of homemade gifts and eventually began making her awesome sock gnomes after seeing a similar product at a store. Upon seeing it she suggested to herself, "I can make that," and went to work. She recycles other products in her projects.







LIVE ON STAGE GUEST ARTISTS



Cindy Rae

Friday
September 18th
@7pm



***Outlaw
Rebels***

Friday
October 9th
@7pm



Cindy Weir

Friday
November 13th
@7pm



***Michael
Lich***

Friday
December 11th
@7pm

Kilted Spirit

Saturday
January 30th
@7pm



***The Palace
Players***

Friday
February 26th
@7pm



***Acoustic
Eidolon***

Friday
March 19th
@7pm



***Brendon
Thorpe***

Saturday
April 10th
@7pm



SEASON 2020 - 2021

WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHT

Paint Night

Written by Geneviève
“Geode” Landman

The afternoon cloudburst on the last Saturday in August was followed by a rainy, windy evening. It made for a perfect night to relax indoors and practice painting. I stepped into the Palace Theater, said hello to our instructor for the session, Amanda Berger, and slipped into an open seat at a socially distanced table. Arranged at each station were a canvas on a

small easel, a flat-tipped brush, a pointy-tipped brush, a palette, and a cup of water with a paper towel for cleaning the tools.

Josie, an arts volunteer, supplied me with a spread of colors for my paint palette. As I looked around and listened to people chatting with one another, the mood inside the Palace was calm but inspired. Bursts of joking and laughter sprang up at the various tables as friends and relatives discussed their creations.

Amanda began the class by welcoming all of us—those of us who attended in person as well as those who tuned in via livestream—and introducing us to the painting we’d make. At first glance, it was a firefly in a jar on a moonlit night. However, she would show us how to make it more than that.





Some of my favorite takeaways from Paint Night were technical and others were social. I discovered a new technique for filling my background with a two-tone blend. Straight, linear brushstrokes look clean, yes, but on a canvas it can be smoother and faster to start the brushstroke in the middle of a “row,” push the paint to one side, and then come back to the middle to push more color to the other edge. The joint where the brushstrokes meet is easy to blend together as long as the paint is still wet.

More importantly, Amanda gave as much of the instruction as possible to all of the participants together. She occasionally encouraged the folks tuning in online to ask any questions in the chat feature. She was clear and enlightening when she demonstrated how to achieve different effects, and I appreciated her welcoming, inclusive attitude. After almost six months of pandemic-related social distancing and sheltering in place, it was refreshing to step into the Palace and experience a new sense of togetherness.

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