



MO

Humanities

SPRING 2024

INSIDE

2024
SIGNATURE
SERIES

**MISSOURI
MARVELS**

HUMANITIES,
DISCOVERY, AND
INNOVATION

CONTRIBUTORS'
PERSPECTIVES

St. Louis
World's Fair

Jimmy Buffett
& Mark Twain

Walt Disney

FY 2023 Statewide Impact



“KC Wheel in the Fog”
by Dave Roustio

Dave Roustio is an avid hobbyist in photography and filmmaking. He was the Communications Manager for Famous-Barr and The Jones Store and is currently the Director of Business Optimization at SS&C Health. He has won a Telly Award for Outstanding Corporate Video. In 2022, the Kansas City International Film Festival selected a documentary he produced and co-directed. He and his wife, Angie, live in Independence, Missouri, where they raised four children. They recently became grandparents.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT:

As a longtime “chaser of light,” the soupy fog and wet pavement of Kansas City was an irresistible subject. Out of it, the outline of the newly erected KC Wheel rose into the night sky on a surprisingly warm January night. A fixture reminiscent of the 1904 World's Fair, the Ferris wheel's history, like mine, runs through St. Louis. In my decades spent living on the western side of the state, I've witnessed the transformation of downtown Kansas City into a vibrant, glowing beacon, and this is my testimony.

390,800+

Individuals engaged in programs hosted and supported by Missouri Humanities across the state.

52,000+

Views and downloads of our digital programming, including podcasts and short video stories.

8,085+

Individuals participated in Missouri Humanities in-person events statewide.

Over 50

Cities and towns across Missouri hosted one or more Missouri Humanities programs.

\$581,802

Awarded in Mini & Major Grants to 80 cultural, community, and educational Missouri organizations.

2 Regional Emmy Nominations

For our short films “Si Otsedoha (We are Still Here): Remembering Cherokee Removal” and “Won’t You Feed My Neighbor.”

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MH MISSION STATEMENT

To enrich lives and strengthen communities by connecting Missourians with the people, places, and ideas that shape our society.

The Missouri Humanities Council (MH) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was created in 1971 under authorizing legislation from the US Congress.

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CELEBRATING OUR 2024 SIGNATURE SERIES

MISSOURI MARVELS

HUMANITIES, DISCOVERY, AND INNOVATION

LISA CARRICO & CAITLIN YAGER
PROGRAM DIRECTORS,
MISSOURI HUMANITIES

Missouri Humanities has quickly arrived at the midpoint of our 2024 Signature Series — Missouri Marvels: Humanities, Discovery, and Innovation.

From the beginning, our goal had been to honor Missouri's legacy of imagination and ingenuity, highlighting the individuals and ideas that have helped shape our state's identity. Through the groundbreaking work of multiple organizations, communities, and individual Missourians, Missouri's contributions to discovery and innovation remain profound and diverse.

Since the launch of Missouri Marvels, we've had the privilege of investigating the stories that inform our understanding of the intersections of science, technology, humanities, and the human experience. Through engaging in-person events and dynamic digital content, we've sparked conversations and connections that have enriched our understanding of Missouri's past and present. We've navigated questions surrounding space travel, ethics, and habitation, released multiple podcast episodes, and heard from a wide array of scholars, Missourians, and humanities enthusiasts at our 7th annual Springfield Symposium titled "Ozarks Marvels: Innovation for the Common Good."



Yet as we look ahead to the second half of 2024, we recognize that our journey is far from over. We are motivated by the words of Walt Disney, and we continue to dream and dare while we celebrate the visionaries who inspire us.

“First, think.
Second, dream.
Third, believe.
And finally,
dare.”

— WALT DISNEY



Stay with us as we journey through the remainder of our signature series, exploring new avenues of discovery and innovation while observing the foundations of Missouri Marvels. Stay connected with Missouri Humanities as we unveil upcoming events and initiatives by subscribing to our email list on mohumanities.org, following us on social media @mohumanities, and tuning in to Missouri Humanities on YouTube.

Together, we'll continue to explore and marvel at our state's past, present, and future.







A MISSOURI MARVEL: The St. Louis World's Fair

STEVE WIEGENSTEIN

The St. Louis World's Fair is remembered for many things. Today, most of us think of the St. Louis World's Fair as the setting of *Meet Me in St. Louis*, the delightful 1944 movie that starred Judy Garland. Or we have a vague recollection of the fair as the place where modern innovations made their debut, such as wireless telegraphy, the X-ray machine, and the ice cream cone.

But the fair was a far more complex event than these simple images suggest, and it had a dark side. As I researched the fair for *Land of Joys*, I realized that it was a revealing snapshot into the American mind of the turn of the century in all its optimism, energy, and innovation — and also in its vulgarity.

More than anything else, the fair was designed to be a spectacle. Exhibit buildings were constructed on an insanely grand scale despite the brief time of their intended use. To save on construction costs, most were built from a material called “staff,” which gave the appearance of stone. Of the twelve “palaces” that made up the core of the fair, only one — the Palace of Fine Arts — was built to be permanent.

One motivation for the fair's extravagance was a desire to refurbish the reputation of St. Louis, which had suffered some recent hits. A divisive transit workers' strike and a series of high-level corruption prosecutions had damaged the city's image. But more significantly, the rise of Chicago on the national scene threatened St. Louis' place as the dominant city

LEFT: Tarbox Beals, Jessie. Mrs. Wilkins teaching an Igorotte boy the cakewalk at the 1904 World's Fair, 1904, Public Domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

of the West. By the turn of the century, St. Louis had fallen behind Chicago in population, economic power, and political influence. When Chicago was selected over St. Louis as the site for the Columbian Exposition of 1893, St. Louis civic leaders began searching for an opportunity to mount a fair that would outperform Chicago in every way. The inconvenient fact that the Fair Board was dominated by the same small circle of wealthy businessmen (nicknamed locally “The Big Cinch”) who had recently been tarred in the corruption scandal was pushed aside.

The St. Louis organizers were determined that their fair would be larger than Chicago’s, more focused on scientific and technological achievement, more educational, and more wholesome. They managed to snatch the first North American Olympics away from Chicago as well to accompany the event. The Pike, the fair’s entertainment zone, was intended to be just as exciting as Chicago’s Midway, but not as shameful.

Planned for 1903, the hundredth anniversary of the Louisiana Purchase, the fair suffered from funding delays in Congress and was postponed to 1904. The delay gave organizers time to amass additional

displays and exhibits. A particular focus of the exhibition was to be the developing science of anthropology — the scientific study of human beings.

Nowadays, we cringe at some of the activities that took place under the name of anthropology. Most early anthropologists were enmeshed in the ethnocentrism that permeated American society, giving rise to anthropological claims that were based on faulty assumptions and expressed in biased language. Ethnic groups were routinely ranked from “primitive” to “advanced,” with white Americans of “Anglo-Saxon” or “Nordic” descent conveniently landing at the top of the heap. The St. Louis Fair embraced these practices, and under the leadership of WJ McGee, formerly of the Bureau of American Ethnology at the Smithsonian Institution, the fair directors embarked on an ambitious plan to make anthropology one of the central elements of the fair’s educational mission.

Showcasing anthropology took two forms. One was the construction of a separate Anthropology Building to house artifacts and host demonstrations of native crafts and customs. The other, far more attention-getting, was the display of human beings in individual and group settings.



A guidebook to the fair, Library of Congress.

Porter, Winfred C. Billboard in Minneapolis, Minnesota, advertising the 1904 World's Fair, 1904, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.



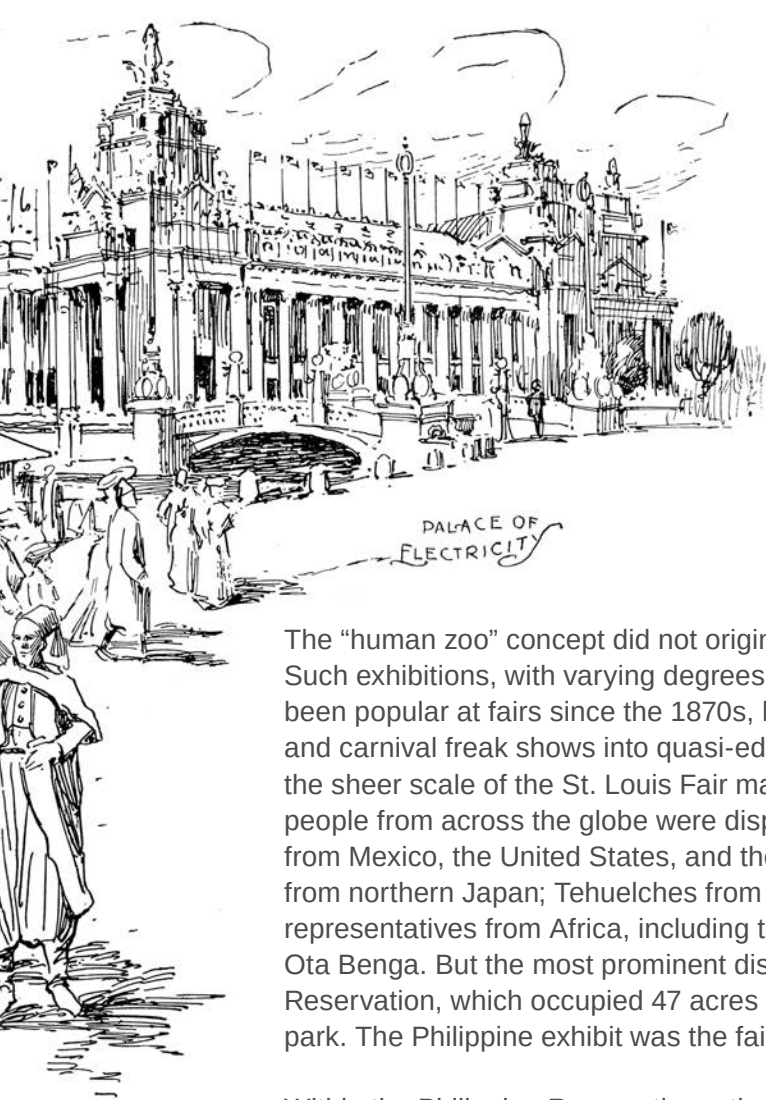


Illustration of the Palace of Electricity in a 1904 World's Fair booklet, Library of Congress.

The “human zoo” concept did not originate with the St. Louis Fair. Such exhibitions, with varying degrees of scientific pretext, had been popular at fairs since the 1870s, having evolved from circus and carnival freak shows into quasi-educational displays. But the sheer scale of the St. Louis Fair made it memorable. Native people from across the globe were displayed: Native Americans from Mexico, the United States, and the District of Alaska; Ainu from northern Japan; Tehuelches from Patagonia; several ethnic representatives from Africa, including the famous Mbuti (“pygmy”) Ota Benga. But the most prominent display was the Philippine Reservation, which occupied 47 acres in the southwest corner of the park. The Philippine exhibit was the fair’s most-visited attraction.

Within the Philippine Reservation, ethnic groups were sorted into model villages, with each group displaying the crafts and activities of its daily life. The groups were described and presented within a Social Darwinist framework of “advanced” and “primitive,” with the more Westernized groups portrayed as advanced. The most popular site with visitors was the model village of the Bontoc Igorot, from a mountainous region of Luzon, whose scanty dress and unorthodox eating habits attracted attention from visitors and the press. The Bontoc customarily wore little or no clothing, which scandalized the prim and excited the rest. And their ceremonial “dog feast,” which in their native land was a rare celebration, became commodified into a daily ritual performed for the entertainment and horror of onlookers.

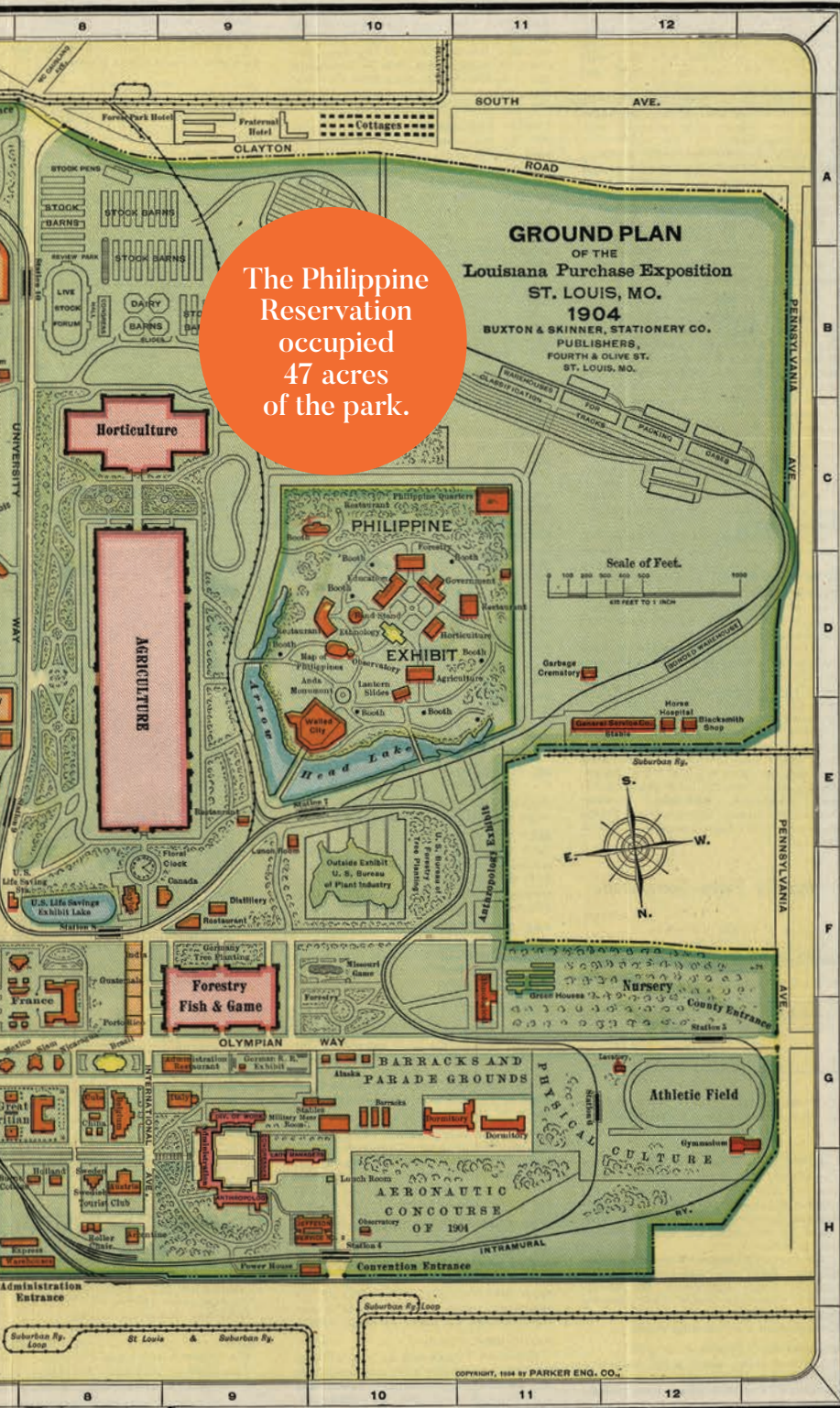
The Louisiana Purchase Exhibition was a true Missouri Marvel, a must-see event of 1904. It was a magnificent spectacle universally admired for its grandeur and beauty. It was also a celebration of America’s entry into the club of imperial powers and an unapologetic endorsement of the idea of white supremacy. It was all those things and more, and we owe it to ourselves to remember them all.



Steve Wiegenstein is the author of four historical novels and a collection of short stories, all set in Missouri. His most recent novel, *Land of Joys*, explores the St. Louis World’s Fair. He is a longtime professor at Culver-Stockton College and former dean of graduate studies at Columbia College, now retired.



The size and number of anthropological displays/buildings, colored in orange (along with the state buildings), can be seen in this map.

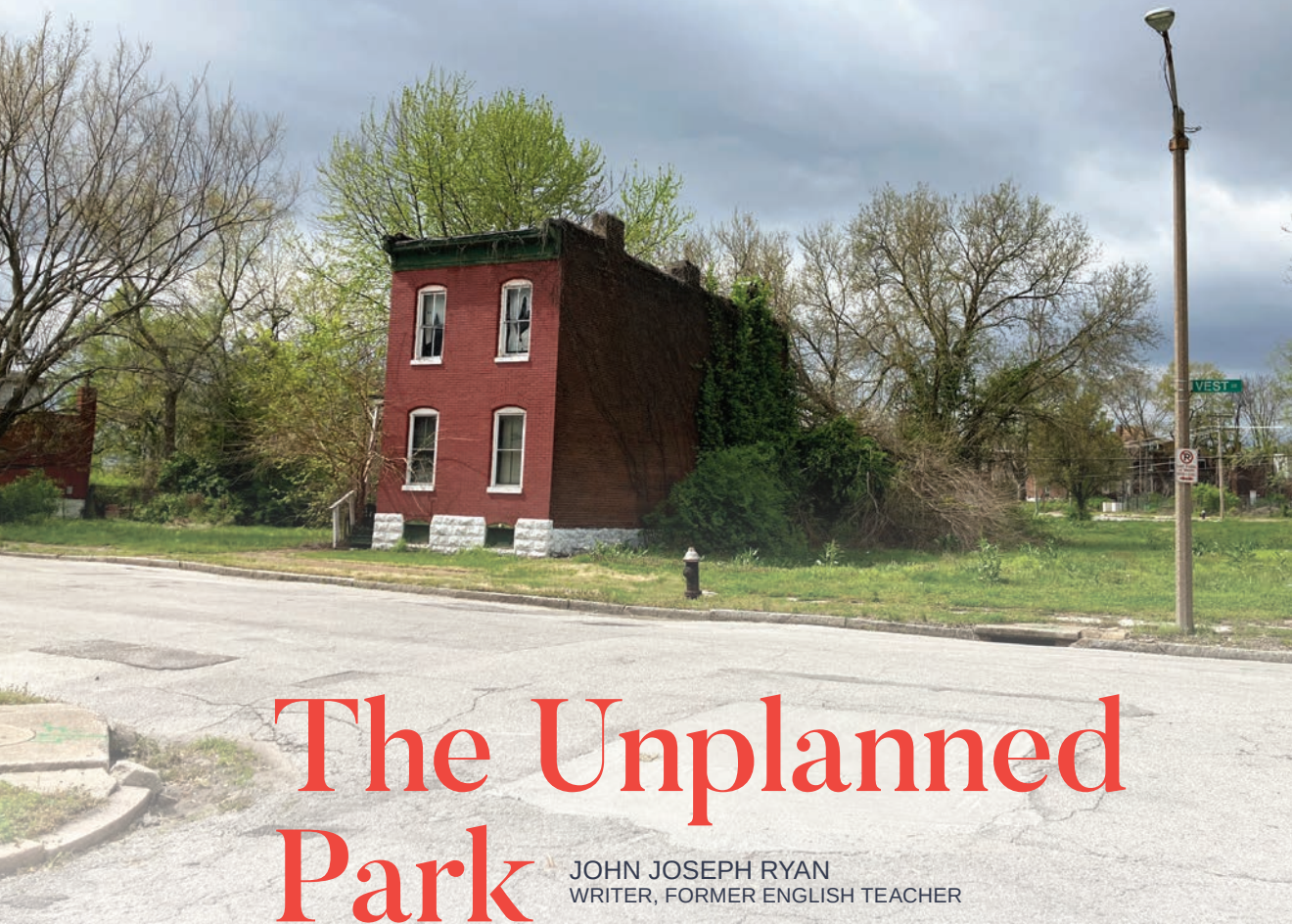


The Philippine Reservation occupied 47 acres of the park.

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Buxton & Skinner Stationery Co. Publishers, Fourth & Olive Streets, St. Louis, MO. Ground Plan of The Louisiana Purchase Exposition St. Louis, Mo. 1904. David Rumsey Map Collection, David Rumsey Map Center, Stanford Libraries.



The Unplanned Park

JOHN JOSEPH RYAN
WRITER, FORMER ENGLISH TEACHER

My mother's childhood home still stands on 25th Street in North St. Louis, but most of its neighboring houses have been hauled off as piles of red-brick rubble. All that remains across the cobblestone alley out back is one partially collapsed house. Fire scoured the way for scraggly woods to grow up along, and inevitably within, the house's shell, mirroring a process of natural reclamation across North St. Louis. Taken together, these tangled woods, flourishing on long-vacant lots, comprise a loose regional network of unplanned parks.

Some blocks away from my mother's old home, across from a heating and cooling company with barred windows, a trash can fire smolders at the edge of a lot rife with the haphazard growth of trees given life by indifferent birds. A neat pile of logs cut from those trees and a ratty chair

sitting near the smoking barrel attest to human presence, though no one is in sight. In the same area — not quite neighborhood, not quite wasteland — an unplanned park materializes from another vacant lot, resin chairs surrounding an improvised fire ring. Yet another, undiscoverable on any Google map, quietly advertises itself as "Promise Park" in red letters neatly painted on a homespun wooden sign. Unlike planned parks, with their hired crews and special tax districts to fund and maintain them, unplanned parks are so evanescent, they lack the luck of official recognition. Several shaggy weed trees and overgrown tufts of hay-colored grass constitute Promise Park; it is, after all, a set of conjoined vacant lots. But what strikes the eye is the little free library with a handful of books inside, the clean wooden picnic benches in the park's center, and the overall lack of litter. People gather here. The patrons





of such makeshift parks double as their caretakers, and they include the housed and the unhoused among their number, thus granting unplanned parks tenuous tenures: they exist as long as humanity's caprices allow.

Opportunists, pioneers, and adventurers have always taken advantage of St. Louis' resources. This historic confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers drew fur traders and missionaries, sellers of the enslaved and abolitionists, mercenaries and reformers, plunderers and pioneers. All of these groups shared the common interest of a fresh field for their endeavors, and plants are not much different. In contrast to well-funded and maintained natural areas, almost any wooded area in or near St. Louis

is "contaminated" with unwanted or invasive plants. St. Louis' unplanned parks often comprise loads of them, such as cottonwood, mulberry, bush honeysuckle, and mimosa. Most of these species were introduced in the Eastern United States — or, more properly, let loose there to spread westward in a kind of fever.

Clematis terniflora, despite its heady smell and attractive sprays of flowers, is regarded as a pernicious intruder in Missouri, choking off native growth. Yet to see it curled abundantly over the remains of a collapsed chain link fence bordering a burned-out house complicates the aesthetics of botanical purists. The mulberry tree, *Morus alba*, introduced from China in the 1600s to encourage silkworm breeding, led to "mulberry mania" as people eagerly engaged in domestic silk production. Of course, it escaped cultivation, and



The patrons of such makeshift parks double as their caretakers, and they include the housed and the unhoused among their number, thus granting unplanned parks tenuous tenures: they exist as long as humanity's caprices allow.

now this invader's surfeit of burgundy-colored berries each summer makes for bird mania, — often among starlings, another invasive species — and car finishes bear their variegated droppings that the summer sun bakes dry. The mulberry, too, is pervasive in unplanned parks.

But some specimens are native to the region. One of them, the *nonpareil* of the unplanned park, is the black walnut, *Juglans nigra*. Even more opportunistic than the mulberry, the black walnut will grow out of every crack, crevice, or span of parched ground available. Seedlings spring from overfull gutters rich in accumulated nutrients, and saplings cling diagonally out of chinks between red bricks. Untended, the tree can grow over 100 feet tall; it's not uncommon to see mature specimens soaring out of the collapsed interiors of two-story brick houses in Old North, taller even than their wrecked mansard roofs. The tree's hard fruit, falling from such a height, strikes a car's hood with the sound of a gunshot. This black and sticky fruit, prone to stain anything it touches, hides inside a green hull that resembles the avocado color of American kitchen appliances from the 1970s. Like the avocado, its color-inverted twin, the black walnut fruit is nutritious and, especially in the Midwest, highly sought after. Its black pigments once made for a cheap and ubiquitous fabric dye. During the Civil War, when mourning attire practically became contemporary fashion, families economized by dyeing white garments black with the fruit. So, while the black walnut is associated with death, or maybe serves as a memorial to a life that once was, it might also connote hope for new life — especially if that life is its own. An allelopathic plant, the tree poisons its plant neighbors. No wonder the black walnut can colonize so effectively, so

seemingly ruthlessly. Setting aside the shrubby bush honeysuckle, *Juglans nigra* is the chief opportunist among the region's uncultivated plants.

Well, credit to these tenacious hardscrabble plants. Unplanned parks provide a safe harbor for coyotes, stray dogs, and the unhoused. Black walnuts feed both people and squirrels. Mulberries nourish cardinals, blue jays, and orioles, and you can make a pie or even wine out of them. When these "invaders" get their act together and start a forest, they help dampen the heat island effect of the St. Louis metropolitan area through shade and transpiration, improve air quality, and provide places for people to gather, talk, drink, and rest. Unplanned parks testify to the city as a historic crossroads of commerce, diverse people, industry, and art, from the indigenous mound builders a millennium past to the latest generation of civic pride people who are convinced that *this* decade is the one when the city will regain its former glory.

And ultimately, unplanned parks serve as a reminder that life's hold upon a place is often tenuous, no matter the species.



John Joseph Ryan's work has appeared in *River Styx*, *McSweeney's*, and *The Dark City* (U.S.), and in international publications such as *Mystery Magazine* (Canada), *Channel* (Ireland), and *Samjoko* (Republic of Korea). He is the author of a crime novel set in St. Louis, *A Bullet Apiece* (Amphora Publishing Group, 2015), and he contributed a chapter on Walt Whitman and Abraham Lincoln's relationship to the textbook *Teaching Lincoln: Legacies and Classroom Strategies* (Peter Lang, 2014). John lives in St. Louis.

Commute

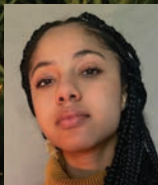
*(Thoughts
from I-44)*

MALAYKA WALTON

When I drive through the countryside I
understand the farmer's belief in God.
Her majesty is severe, for each hesitant speck
of rain was once the screaming sea.
Her blaring sunsets and solemn hills
must surely know in infinity.

My childhood self looked for Her in trodden
cracks of suburban pavement,
Leather school bus seats and clippings from
lawns extremely square.
They said if I don't find Her to keep
looking — She must be somewhere.

Nowadays I breathe city smog and lie city lies.
Even though I wasn't there when it happened
— I know how She died.
I drive past Her body each morning
unsympathetically.



Malayka Walton is a student and library associate with St. Louis County Library. She is from Wildwood, Missouri, and has always had a passion for art, activism, and dance. This poem is their first literary publication and hopefully the first of many.

Music of the Mountains

JOY MYERS

The U.S.'s cultural melting pot has created a vibrant mix of musical identities. Each area has a unique voice, from California surf music to East Coast sea shanties to New Orleans jazz. Missouri is no exception; part of our musical identity is built on Ozark Mountain music. This genre ranges from comic, narrative lyrics, to bouncy, quick fiddle tunes, to somber, reflective laments. Though years have passed and culture has changed, echoes of mountain music still reverberate through Missouri and the Ozarks.

The Ozark region, Justin Hunter of the University of Arkansas explains, stretches from “St. Louis, Missouri, south and west to Mountain View, Arkansas, and Northwest Arkansas.” Most sources include parts of Kansas and Oklahoma in this definition. It is this area that produced what we know as Ozark music.

Ozark music began when Scottish and Irish settlers moved into remote parts of Missouri after the

Louisiana Purchase, according to the Branson Regional Arts Council (BRAC). Many of these settlers went first to the Appalachian Mountains, then moved across the Mississippi River into the Ozarks’ rough terrain. As BRAC explains, “To sustain themselves in what could have been a very stark life, the Scots brought their fiddles with them and continued with traditions established back in their homeland generations before. These agrarian settlers imprinted the Ozarks with

its first music.” This Scottish and Irish music soon took on a uniquely American — more specifically, Ozarkian — identity. It became a staple in nearly every community.

In “Old Time Fiddling,” Allen Gage emphasizes the importance of music, especially fiddlers, in early Ozark communities. He says, “The fiddler was in great demand in pioneer societies which were starved for recreation. His small, lightweight instrument was easily brought west in the wagons, and its music was a welcome antidote for the lonely days of labor.” Gage goes on to talk about a musical family from Nixa, Missouri, the Wilsons: “When they were ready to play, they’d signal over the telephone line. Everyone would take down the receivers and listen to the Wilson family fiddling.” The music of the Ozarks provided not only entertainment but also a getaway from settlers’ rough lives.

Ozark music sounds similar to Appalachian folk music or bluegrass, but it’s not quite the same. A major point of distinction is the lyrical content. Like Appalachian music, Ozark music is known for its ballads — songs with narrative lyrics. As opposed to Appalachian music, however, Ozark music often includes specific details about times, places, and people in the lyrics, connecting the songs to concrete locations.

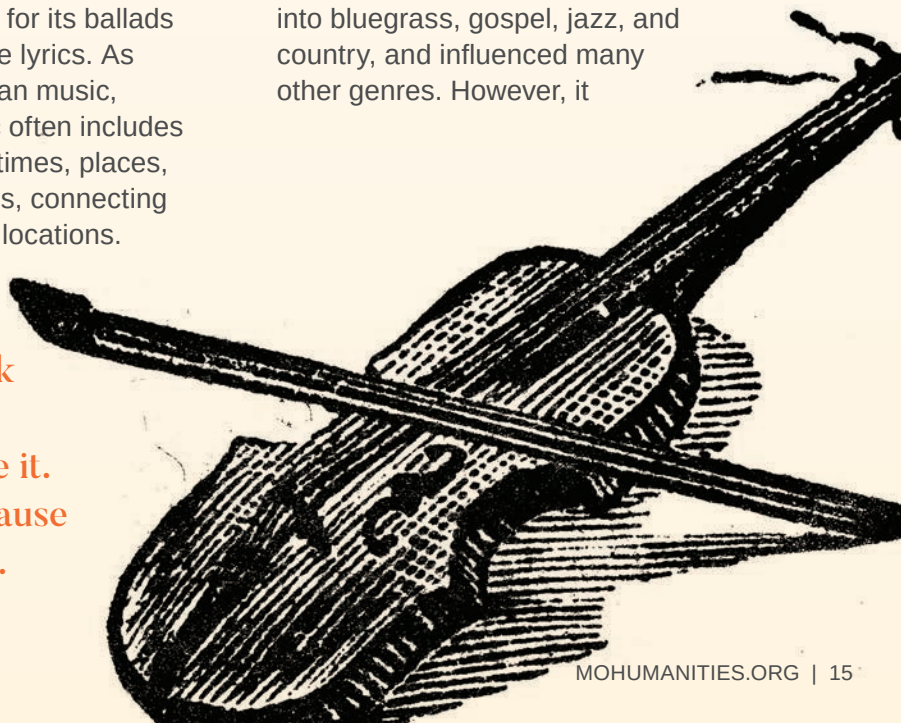
The soul of Ozark music lies in the people who make it. It is timeless because they are timeless.

The titles of Ozark songs are often simple and reflect their rural, countryside origins. For example, in a playlist of classic Missouri fiddle tunes by Janet B. of My Banjo World, titles include “Arkansas Traveler,” “Blackberry Waltz,” “Fat Meat and Dumplings,” “Jimmy in the Swamp,” “Salty River Reel,” and more.

Ozark music is also known for catchy instrumental tunes, mainly with “the fiddle, banjo, and mountain dulcimer,” according to Hunter. In later years, guitars and basses entered the mix. While the fiddle came from Ireland and Scotland and the banjo from West Africa, Ozark players developed their own American playing style.

Allen Gage, discussing the unique style of Ozark players, says, “Old-time fiddlers have a different way of bowing and using their wrists. Some do not tuck the fiddle under their chins, but hold it lower, playing with quick short strokes. Perhaps the main characteristic of Ozark fiddlers is their individuality. They are influenced by one another, but are not imitators.”

Ozark music eventually splintered into bluegrass, gospel, jazz, and country, and influenced many other genres. However, it



However, it never died out. Today, there are many Ozark music festivals throughout the region that draw large crowds. Some groups teach Ozark music to the younger generation through music classes, camps, and competitions. As a result, this music genre remains a staple of our region, overcoming the changes of time by drawing people to its simple, honest, nostalgic sound.

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The impact of this music is not isolated to the Ozarks, however. Technological advancements have given Ozark music a bigger platform, transforming its audiences from small households and communities to anyone with internet access. The Springfield-Greene County Library, in partnership with Missouri State University, houses the Max Hunter Folk Song Collection, “An archive of almost 1,600 Ozark Mountain folk songs, recorded between 1956 and 1976.” This collection is also digitized for online access to the public. KSMU,



Ozarks Public Radio based out of Springfield, Missouri, hosts a weekly segment called “Seldom Heard Music,” which started in 1982. Among other things,

this show “features new releases and historic recordings of bluegrass and acoustic music,” including “old-time and traditional Ozark music.”

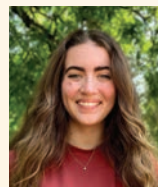
With increased visibility and access, bands that compose and perform Ozark-style music have emerged.



For example, the Petersens in Branson, Missouri, a four-sibling music group with an Ozark and folk style,

give live concerts as well as digital performances on their YouTube channel. They get anywhere from one hundred thousand to forty million views per video, which speaks to the current demand for this music.

Ozark-style bands continue to pop up around Missouri and the rest of the country, proof that the soul of Ozark music lies in the people who make it. It is timeless because they are timeless. Its ability to create community and enjoyment has remained intact through the centuries of its existence. It has adapted to current trends but still manages to keep its unique qualities and sound. Missouri owes much of its musical identity to the music of the mountains.



Joy Myers is a writer and editor based in Springfield, Missouri. Joy graduated from Evangel University in December 2023 with a BA in English and is now employed at the Assemblies of God national office. Her work has been featured in publications including *Creation Illustrated*, *Ink Bowl*, *Malu Zine*, *The Palisades Review*, and *Down in the Dirt*.



The Original Ellis Fischel Cancer Center Demolition by Nicole Wells.

The original Ellis Fischel Cancer Center built in 1938 on Business Loop 70 West in Columbia, MO, was the first free-standing cancer center west of the Mississippi. Demolition of the building began in late 2022 and was completed in the summer of 2023. In January 2023, Nicole Wells began documenting the demolition process, and this photo was taken May 30, 2023.



Nicole Wells is a documentary and street photographer from Columbia, MO. After living in Atlanta for several years, she returned to the area in 2017 and began her photography journey in late 2020. Today, you will often find Nicole (with camera in hand) out supporting the local arts and artists, traveling to her favorite cities to visit museums, and out in the streets capturing life as it happens.



Storm's

JANET GOTTMAN HURST

The weatherman looks harried as he points to the large map of Missouri. “This one is going to be a doozy,” he says. “We won’t get by with less than 8-10 inches of snow. Then we can expect the sleet.” He predicts a Midwestern squall.

Just listening to him sets the nearby community into hyper mode. People flood the grocery store as if it is the last chance they will ever have to buy milk and bread. Most of the shoppers look concerned, as if they had just been warned of an impending attack.

Out in the country, there is a different scene in motion. I, too, take heed but with thoughts pertaining to rural life. Immediately my mind turns to my stock: *24 dairy goats. My mental checklist appears before me: check the water tank, make sure it is full, and drop in the heater. Put down fresh straw just in case those nannies kid tonight. Wouldn't hurt to throw out an extra bale of hay.*

Before I venture out, there are things at the cabin to tend to. I put a pot of

coffee on the stove to warm up my insides when I return. Venison stew is simmering nicely on the wood stove and adding a few carrots and potatoes to the pot ensures a hardy meal. A glance at the wood box adds another item to my morning chores. I struggle into the apparel of the season. A farm woman in gum boots, coveralls, wool hat, and warm gloves is a formidable force. I call the dog, who does not respond except to give me a look expressing no interest in joining me in what he probably considers my foolish pursuits.

Then it's time to head to the pasture to take a good look at those nannies who don't appear to be showing signs of labor. I offer up a farmer's prayer that they will hold off a little while longer. In general, goats like to kid on the worst weather day of the year! With the nannies accounted for, I proceed with the business at hand. Much better to do it now before the

A farm woman in gum boots, coveralls, wool hat, and warm gloves is a formidable force.

Comin'

snow starts flying in earnest. Today is not a day for procrastination.

I join the animals as the water tank fills. They are gratefully munching on fresh straw, picking through it for leftover bits of grain. Old Tarzan, the donkey, comes closer for a scratch on the head, checking my pockets for his daily apple. I have a few minutes to stand and survey the scene. I often wonder why it is I choose to live this somewhat difficult life. A few years back, it was to teach my son responsibility. In the beginning, it was a fun novelty. Over time it has become a part of me, the driving force behind who I am.

I head back into the warmth of the little house and appreciate the slightly smoky scent from the wood stove. Dinner is coming along nicely. I take off my garb and hang it up, making sure everything is ready for the next time out. After pouring a steaming cup of coffee and falling into my favorite chair by the stove, a wonderful warmth sinks through my bones. No sooner than I am settled, the sleet begins to pelt the windows. A broad smile comes across my face — the feeling of contentment and security is almost overwhelming.

I often wonder why it is I choose to live this somewhat difficult life. A few years back, it was to teach my son responsibility. In the beginning, it was a fun novelty. Over time it has become a part of me, the driving force behind who I am.

For once, the weatherman was right. When I look out about midnight, lacy flakes are swirling in the faint glow of the February moon. I get dressed again for one last check of the animals. With lantern in hand, peering into the barn, the goats look quite surprised to see me at this hour. They are, of course, wiser than me and bedded down for the night. Taking my cue from them, I make my way back to the cabin, sinking deep in snow each step of the way.

The old hound dog barely raises his head from his position in front of the stove. I sink, finally, into the quilt-laden bed and briefly hear the wind howl. The peace that can sometimes be so elusive in the daylight hours is found once more in winter's night.



Mark Valenzuela is the project manager of accreditation and academic compliance at Washington University in St. Louis. He moved to St. Charles, MO, in 2021 to serve as the Associate Provost of Engaged Learning at Lindenwood. Prior to moving, he served 22 years as a professor of civil engineering and an administrator at the University of Evansville, where he developed a love of film photography. He earned his Ph.D. from Cornell and his bachelor's in engineering from Vanderbilt.



ARTIST STATEMENT

"My education as a structural engineer trained me to look for strength and beauty, which is certainly evident in the Saint Louis Abbey Church. As I think about my practice in photography, I am drawn to the shadows of trees that fill the blank canvases of building envelopes, crossing well-planned lines and curves. Having grown up as Catholic in the South and recently moved to the St. Louis area, I have developed deep respect for the place that the archdiocese has in the life of the Catholic Church in the United States. The space-age form of the thin-shelled Abbey church was built in the same year that the Second Vatican Council opened, both heralding an ancient church embracing a modern world. Just a year earlier, Archbishop Joseph Ritter of St. Louis (who had invited Benedictine monks in the 1950's to found the precursor of the present Abbey) was created a cardinal. And just one year later in 1963, Cardinal Ritter served as one of five American cardinals to serve as elector of Pope Paul VI after the death of Pope John XXIII. But the shadows of the trees help me to imagine the founding of Catholic institutions west of the Mississippi in the early 1800's, the ghosts of trees long ago felled to make way for places of worship where beauty is expressed in order and ritual."

Chained to the Sky

THE SCIENCE OF
BIRDS, PAST & FUTURE

For millennia, birds have fascinated the minds of scientists around the world. Today, birds face growing challenges of climate change and habitat destruction, creating a need for new research and climate action planning. The Linda Hall Library of Science, Engineering, and Technology's current exhibition, *Chained to the Sky: The Science of Birds, Past & Future*, is a free three-part ornithology exhibition featuring rare books from the Library's collection and items on loan from Chicago's Field Museum that tells the story of the human relationship with the avian world, the threats birds face today, and what we can do to protect them. These sources work in tandem to give visitors one of the most comprehensive histories of ornithology assembled in North America.

"Those who study birds actively are warning about the dire state of North American birds. Bird populations on our continent have declined by more than 3 billion in the last 50 years, causing dramatic changes in our natural animal and plant ecosystems," said Dr. Eric Dorfman, President of Linda Hall Library in Kansas City, Missouri. "*Chained to the Sky* celebrates groundbreaking ornithology throughout history and shows how we can make a difference in our own backyards and neighborhoods. The exhibition aims to inspire visitors to learn from the past, raise concern for our dwindling bird populations, and promote further study and conservation."

THE EXHIBITION CONSISTS OF THREE FOCUS AREAS THAT VISITORS CAN EXPERIENCE IN ANY ORDER:

The Study of Birds Throughout Time

The high visibility and aesthetic appeal of birds have captured the human imagination from ancient times to today. The gallery features exceptional books from the 16th through 19th centuries by Ulisse Aldrovandi, Francis Willughby, Mark Catesby, Alexander Wilson, and John and Elizabeth Gould. In this gallery, trace the history of ornithological studies from early scientists and artists describing and classifying birds to today's biologists working in laboratories and in the field.



Among the items displayed are bird study skins.

This gallery also showcases birds lost to history, presenting extinct and nearly extinct bird study skins on loan from the Field Museum, including the extinct Ivory-billed Woodpecker, Passenger Pigeon, and Carolina Parakeet, as well as the Snow Egret, nearly hunted to extinction in the early 20th century for its plumes in the millinery trade.

Audubon and Darwin

The legacies of Charles Darwin and John James Audubon are reminders of the importance of studying and protecting the natural world. In this gallery, explore the landmark works of Audubon and Darwin that continue to inspire and inform our place in the natural world.

The exhibition features a limited-edition facsimile reprint of John James Audubon's *The Birds of America*, vol. 1, published in 1971. It is open to display a flock of the now-extinct Carolina Parakeets.





An exhibition visitor takes in a display of birds, on loan from the Field Museum, commonly found in Kansas City, from a Barred Owl to a Ruby-throated Hummingbird.

Conservation at Home

Discover the threats facing birds today and what science and the public can do to protect them. In this gallery, learn practical tips to create bird-friendly habitats in your own backyard and explore how recent initiatives in Missouri have enhanced bird conservation, such as the Brown-headed Nuthatch, which was recently reintroduced in the Ozarks after becoming extinct in the state 100 years ago.

In addition to the exhibition, Linda Hall Library's 14-acre arboretum is an example of bird conservation strategies in Kansas City. More than 20 unique bird species can be found using the arboretum for feeding and nesting. Visitors are encouraged to spend time in the arboretum and observe our native species using the same methods pioneered by the likes of Darwin and Audubon.

The exhibition is free and is open through July 13, 2024, Monday – Friday, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM and 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM the second Saturday of each month at the Linda Hall Library, located at 5109 Cherry Street in Kansas City, Missouri. For more information, visit lindahall.org.

ABOUT THE LINDA HALL LIBRARY

Since 1946, the Linda Hall Library has been amassing collections that have powered investigation, innovation, exploration, and inspiration. Today, the Library is a leading independent research library widely known for the breadth and depth of its collections across 82 languages, its role as an international destination for scholarship and research, its support of teachers of STEM curricula, and the vast resources it provides to learners of all ages interested in scientific exploration and discovery.

Learn more at lindahall.org.



MISSOURI MARVELS

HUMANITIES, DISCOVERY, AND INNOVATION

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NOW STREAMING!

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PODCAST ON YOUR
PREFERRED APP.



Margaritaville to

JIMMY BUFFETT AND MARK TWAIN

CINDY LOVELL

When the world bid farewell to Jimmy Buffett on September 1, 2023, a global chorus of grief arose. It echoed Buffett's legacy of joy and was profound in its pain. His song "Margaritaville" had become a brand. His songs immortalized adventures, paid tribute to heroes, and set laughter to lyrics. Jimmy Buffett smiled through it all.

While most people conjure hits like "Margaritaville" and "Cheeseburger in Paradise" when they think of Buffett, Mark Twain fans and residents of Hannibal, Missouri, tune in to a more specific example of Buffett's work. After all, when he created his baker's dozen list of desert island books, Mark Twain, whose real name was Samuel Clemens, was the only author with two titles on the list: *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *Following the Equator*.

Several Buffett songs paraphrase Mark Twain or reference his writing, including "That's What Living Is To Me" (1988), "Take Another Road" (1989), "Fruitcakes" (1994), "Barefoot Children" (1995), and "Remittance Man" (1995). And as much as Twainiacs love these songs, it was a project for the Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum in Hannibal that emphasized Jimmy's deep reverence for Sam Clemens.

In 2010, members of the Mark Twain community took note of the centennial of Sam Clemens's passing on April 21, 1910. The entire year was filled with tributes, memorials, and planned events to honor Mark Twain. The Mark Twain Project at the University of California, Berkely published the first volume of Mark Twain's autobiography, which Clemens specified should not be published until 100 years after his death. The long-awaited tome was an immediate best-seller.

As executive director of the Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum at that time, I had been working on

The mission of The Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum Foundation is to promote awareness and appreciation of the life and works of Mark Twain and to demonstrate the relevance of his stories and ideas to citizens of the world.



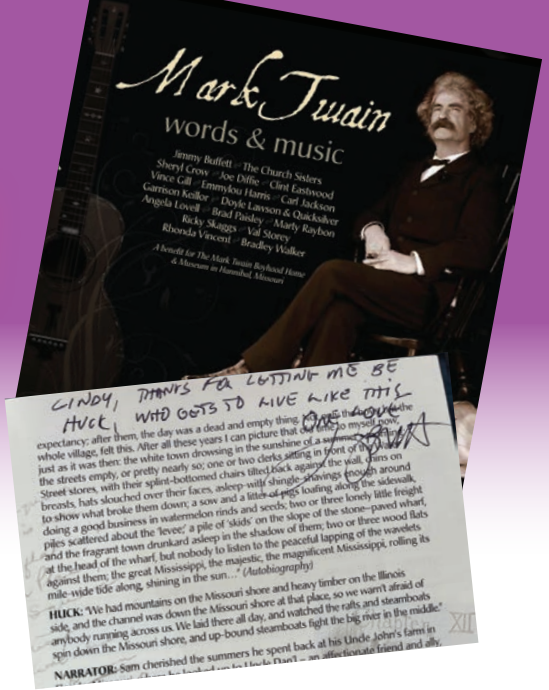
Missouri

my own project to honor Hannibal's native son. Grammy award-winner Carl Jackson, a childhood friend and gifted musician, singer, songwriter, and producer, agreed to help. We ultimately created *Mark Twain Words & Music*, a double-album CD that tells Mark Twain's life in spoken word and song.

Having only served as executive director of the Museum since October 2008 at that point, I had quickly learned of the need to grow the Museum's endowment. With seven buildings to maintain and tourism dollars unpredictable, I knew the best work I could do for the Museum was to focus on the endowment. The board of directors agreed all proceeds from the project would go directly to the endowment fund.

With that goal in mind, we got busy. I scripted spoken word narration and selected passages by Mark Twain to include. We curated a collection of song titles that would evoke unique waypoints of Clemens's life story. In some cases, Carl and others wrote brand-new songs for the project. One new song, "Run Mississippi," recorded by Missouri native Rhonda Vincent, would go on to win a Grammy when Vincent included it on her live album a few years later, which won the Grammy for best bluegrass album.

To properly honor Mark Twain, we hoped to attract talented performers who also shared our affinity for Sam Clemens. Jimmy Buffett was the first name to come up. He talked about Mark Twain in interviews and onstage



Mark Twain Words & Music CD cover, with a CD insert signed by Jimmy Buffett.

and had even created a character in his first book, *Tales from Margaritaville* (1989), who rode a horse named Mr. Twain from Wyoming to Key West, stopping in Hannibal along the way. Long shot that it was, we aspired to secure Jimmy's participation.

I sent him the script and overview. Knowing how busy he was, I never expected him to join in. However, I didn't want him to come across the project once it was complete and wonder why we hadn't reached out. After all, his admiration for Mark Twain had been evident for decades. I let him know I'd be attending his St. Louis concert if he'd like to talk about it.

Jimmy's involvement transcended mere participation. When we met in St. Louis, his excitement was palpable. He eagerly offered to provide the voice of Huckleberry Finn in the narrative portions of the album. In fact, it was his idea to add this component, and it certainly elevated the storyline. He even offered to release the album on his own label, Mailboat Records. And in another generous show of support, he joined other artists on



LEFT: Cindy and Jimmy.
BELOW: Cindy's signature on
Jimmy's behalf in the Mark
Twain Cave in Hannibal.

the project in donating his royalties to the Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum's endowment fund. Jimmy's involvement at this level provided a tangible pillar in the preservation of Mark Twain's legacy.

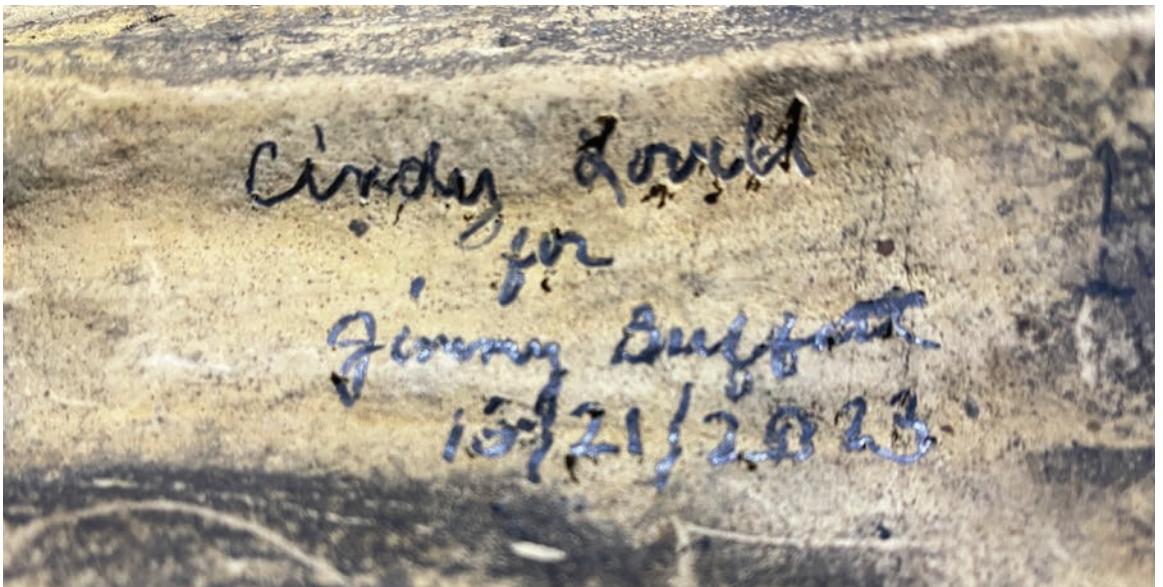
Fast forward to 2019. After decades of searching, I discovered Sam Clemens's boyhood signature inside Hannibal's Mark Twain Cave. We kept the news quiet for months while other Twain scholars worked on authentication. The only person I confided in was Jimmy because he had a penchant for magical moments. He was delighted and wanted to see the signature for himself and add his own name at the cave owners' invitation.

In January 2020, Jimmy and I met at the Mark Twain House in Hartford, Connecticut for a special behind-the-scenes visit on a day the House

was closed to the public. That visit played out like a dream, including Jimmy singing along to his guitar in Sam's billiard room. We talked a lot of "Twain" that day and discussed a visit to Hannibal. Sadly, the COVID-19 pandemic halted travel plans shortly after our visit. Jimmy would spend the rest of his time privately battling cancer and working on his final album, *Equal Strain on All Parts*, released two months after his death. Our trip to Hannibal never happened.

After Jimmy's passing, the cave's owners extended to me the solemn privilege of inscribing the cave on Jimmy's behalf. This created mixed emotions that were more bitter than sweet. The act of standing in for a hero felt sacrilegious, but my shaky, pencil-drawn scrawl was my heartfelt tribute to someone who did so much to honor Missouri's most beloved literary son.

The legacies of these two intertwined legends live on in their work for all to discover and appreciate. You don't even have to be from Missouri to recognize Clemens' and Buffett's impact.



Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors



Volume 13

COMING NOVEMBER 11, 2024

Volume 12 is available for purchase!

“Emotional work by veterans of U.S. military conflicts from World War II to Afghanistan, in creative nonfiction, poetry, fiction, and photographs. . . The poems are really something.”

– ST. LOUIS MAGAZINE

Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors is a creative writing anthology of poetry, fiction, essays, and photography submissions by and about veterans from across the nation. It is an annual series first released in November 2012.

The anthology preserves and shares military service perspectives of our soldiers, veterans, and their families, spanning generations. Each submission is a combined product of self-expression and a historical documentation of our nation’s wartime experiences. Submissions are reviewed by a panel of judges for inclusion in the anthology, with a \$250 prize in each of the four genres listed above.

Keep an eye out for *Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors* volume 13 to be released on Veterans Day, 2024!



To learn more about this program, how to submit your work to future volumes, and to purchase *Proud to Be* online, visit mohumanities.org/veterans.



Humanities Tv

EXPANDING DIGITAL STORYTELLING

CAITLIN YAGER,
PROGRAM DIRECTOR
MISSOURI HUMANITIES



Humanities Tv (H-Tv) is Missouri Humanities' streaming service dedicated to providing curated digital programming rooted in the humanities to help tell stories of how we connect to one another and the world around us.

This national platform features accessible, on-demand content that offers an opportunity for audiences to explore the role of the humanities in our everyday lives. Subscribe today for free and immerse yourselves in films and docu-series geared toward creating a more thoughtful, informed, and civil society.



Available to watch online and on your TV or mobile device! Learn more and join the community by scanning the QR Code.



Want your project on H-Tv?

Contact Caitlin Yager at Caitlin@mohumanities.org





In Case You Missed It

Can Our Earthly Ways Thrive in the Cosmos?

In February, Missouri Humanities joined Erika Nesvold, author of *Off Earth: Ethical Questions and Quandaries for Living in Outer Space*, and Elaine Cha, host of St. Louis Public Radio's St. Louis on the Air, to discuss ethical and cultural factors for consideration around outer-space settlement.

Ozarks Marvels: Innovation for the Common Good

In April, Missouri Humanities hosted our 7th annual symposium in Springfield, *Ozarks Marvels: Innovation for the Common Good*. This free event invited attendees to explore and experience innovations meant to strengthen communities around the Ozarks.

Military Service, Literary Solace: A Conversation with Veteran Writers

In April, Missouri Humanities partnered with the University of Missouri's Center for the Humanities and the State Historical Society of Missouri to host four distinguished veteran writers in Missouri. During the event, these writers shared insights on how their military experiences influenced their creative work.

"This Work of Fiends": Confederate Guerillas Descend on Centralia, Missouri

In May, Missouri Humanities brought together scholars to exam the lasting impacts of the Civil War in Missouri. In September 1864, a double-barreled massacre of Union troops unfolded in Centralia, a railroad town in northern Boone County. This incident is recognized as one of the most horrific atrocities of the Civil War.

UPCOMING EVENTS

H-Tv Vignettes

Throughout 2024, keep an eye out on Humanities Tv for specially curated short-form videos that reveal the groundbreaking innovations and ideas fostered in Missouri.

Think-N-Drinks

Join Missouri Humanities in St. Joseph in June and Rolla in August for our Think-N-Drink series. Enjoy a beverage and engage in illuminating conversations surrounding the humanities.

Heartland Book Festival

On October 12, Missouri Humanities will be hosting our 2nd annual Heartland Book Festival in Kansas City, Missouri, in partnership with the Kansas City Public Library.

To see more humanities-focused events around Missouri, or for more information on the events listed, please visit our Community Calendar at mohumanities.org/calendar or by scanning the available QR code.



AmeriCorps Advancements in Missouri

CHRIS KEMPKE
PROGRAM DIRECTOR,
MISSOURI HUMANITIES

At Missouri Humanities, we are constantly seeking ways to promote and support humanities institutions around the state. To fulfill this goal, Missouri Humanities provides humanities institutions with programming opportunities, workshops, and thousands of dollars through grant funding annually. This year, MH is working to create a new resource to offer these invaluable partners. With a planning grant from the Missouri Community Service Commission, we will be researching and developing a program to support historical societies, museums, and archives in rural Missouri through the assistance of AmeriCorps members. Once developed, this program will be a key asset in helping rural historical organizations accomplish their goals and instrumental in training the next generation of Humanities leaders.

What is AmeriCorps?

With roots going back to 1964, though formally founded in 1993 by then-President Clinton, AmeriCorps is the federal agency for national service and volunteerism.

AmeriCorps provides opportunities for Americans to serve their country, address our most pressing challenges, and improve lives and communities.

Through this program, the Missouri Community Service Commission receives funds to administer the Missouri AmeriCorps program, which puts volunteers (known as members) in a wide variety of community nonprofit organizations.

AmeriCorps Members must be 17 years old or older and be U.S. Citizens, U.S. Nationals, or lawful permanent resident aliens. For their service, members typically receive a modest living allowance, skills-based and professional development training, forbearance for federally backed student loans, the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award to use on further educational expenses or to pay back qualified student loans, and a competitive edge for jobs across a network of over 600 employers.



AmeriCorps





Why Missouri Humanities?

In the fall of 2023, Missouri Humanities was awarded an AmeriCorps Missouri Planning Grant in alignment with the Missouri Community Service Commission's funding priority to "support historic preservation and/or increased understanding of Missouri arts and culture." This award provides MH the funds to research and plan an AmeriCorps program to place AmeriCorps members in rural museums, historical societies, and archives around the state. To understand how the program can best serve Missouri's rural historical institutions, our organization will be conducting needs assessments with these institutions across the state. Additionally, we have been studying other humanities-focused AmeriCorps programs around the nation to help understand the most effective ways of structuring and administering such a program in Missouri. Finally, we are working with partners around the state to develop a pipeline of potential members to feed into the program. The data gathered from these research efforts will inform a plan for the Missouri Humanities AmeriCorps program, with that plan being used to apply for a Missouri Service Commission Operations Grant to fund the program's implementation.

What Would This Mean for Missouri's Rural Cultural Institutions?

Simply put, the implementation of the Missouri Humanities' AmeriCorps program would be a game-changer for smaller, rural institutions statewide, as well as the communities they serve. AmeriCorps Members will add capacity to the organizations they serve and allow those organizations to conduct activities they otherwise would not have the resources to accomplish. Examples of the work that could be done by these members include document digitization, collection curation, volunteer training, exhibit creation, and more. Missouri Humanities' AmeriCorps program would also be a major professional development opportunity for those looking to join the cultural and historical professional field, creating valuable work experiences and opportunities that will help launch members' careers, giving the next generation of Humanities leaders the skills and experiences to succeed.

The implementation of the Missouri Humanities' AmeriCorps program would be a game-changer for smaller, rural institutions statewide, as well as the communities they serve.

How Can I Engage With this Program?

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a Missouri Humanities AmeriCorps member or represents a rural museum, historical society, or archive interested in participating in the program, be sure to check out our website and follow our social media account for updates on the program's development. For further information about the program, contact Chris Kempke at chris@mohumanities.org.



EXPAND YOUR Horizons

ASHLEY BEARD-FOSNOW
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MISSOURI HUMANITIES

“One of the most tragic things I know about human nature is that all of us tend to put off living. We are all dreaming of some magical rose garden over the horizon instead of enjoying the roses that are blooming outside our windows today.” — DALE CARNEGIE

Missourians do not have to wait for a once-in-a-lifetime trip or some epic quest to broaden their horizons. There is so much to learn about history, heritage, and culture right here in Missouri. Missouri Humanities, Missouri Division of Tourism, and Missouri Arts Council teamed up in 2023 to promote this idea by encouraging Missourians to expand their “Horizons.” The partners selected nine organizations to participate in the pilot year of this cultural heritage tourism program to encourage Missourians to experience culture, art, and the humanities at festivals hosted around the state.

Stephen Foutes, director of the Missouri Division of Tourism said, “While these events are the stars of the show, there’s much to explore in the host communities. Visitors will find great local dining, art and history museums, beautiful outdoor spaces, and perhaps a renewed appreciation for all Missouri has to offer.”

Through the Horizons initiative, Missouri Humanities and our partners expanded arts and humanities experiences offered at popular Missouri festivals. Missouri Humanities funded a grant to support

quality humanities activities while the Missouri Division of Tourism arranged professionally targeted advertising for participating festivals. In return, the festivals provided free and open-to-the-public cultural activities to enrichment-seeking Missourians.

A total of 152,466 people attended Horizons festivals in the pilot year. Eight additional Horizons events successfully took place in 2023. The [Pony Express Museum](#) in St. Joseph hosted the “Family Fun Fest” in February 2023. 2,450 people attended the festival, which was a 106% increase over



“While these events are the stars of the show, there’s much to explore in the host communities. Visitors will find great local dining, art and history museums, beautiful outdoor spaces, and perhaps a renewed appreciation for all Missouri has to offer.”

— STEPHEN FOUTES,
DIRECTOR OF THE MISSOURI
DIVISION OF TOURISM



previous years. Cindy Daffron, executive director of the **Pony Express Museum**, said, “The county commissioners were so excited and thrilled to hear of our adventure and how well it went!”

The **Dogtown Irish Festival** took place on St. Patrick’s Day and offered Missourians an opportunity to learn about Irish-American traditions; attendance to this festival increased by 14% to 44,300. The annual **Dogwood Azalea Festival** in Charleston attracted 36,000 attendees in 2023, a 20% increase over previous years. The Guadalupe Center’s **Cinco De Mayo festival** in Kansas City, **Twain on Main** in Hannibal, and the **Scott Joplin Festival** in Sedalia also saw a significant increase in attendance.

The **For the People Pow Wow** was held in Jefferson City in May 2023. This 13-year-old event typically attracts 500 people. The 2023 audience was packed shoulder to shoulder with 2,500 people in attendance — a 400% increase! Greg Olson, the Project Director, wrote:

Our main activity is presenting a quality Native American cultural experience for both Natives and non-Natives ... This event is family-friendly ... This is how Native children learn about their own traditions and culture. Conversely, non-Native children are



exposed to Indigenous culture by watching people their age participate in the powwow.

The free admission and the wonderful publicity that the Horizons team put together for us brought many first-time powwow visitors to the event. One of our powwow vendors, who is Ojibway, posted the following comment on Facebook:

“The attendance at this powwow was incredible, it’s always great to meet up with old friends, but this year it was especially fun to talk to SO many folks who had never even attended a powwow. They advertised this so well. Very big thanks go to the committee, they knocked this out of the park! I’ll be there in 2024, definitely.”

The final 2023 Horizons event, the **Old Time Music Ozark Heritage Festival**, was held in June in West Plains. This festival grew across the downtown area and increased participation from 6,000 to 8,000, a 33% increase.

Missouri Humanities, Missouri Division of Tourism, and Missouri Arts Council are proud to announce the 2024 Horizons initiative featuring five festivals:

French Heritage Festival
Ste. Genevieve, June 7-8, 2024

Sliced Bread Day
Chillicothe, June 28-29, 2024

Joplin Arts Fest
Joplin, September 20-21, 2024

Bethel Fall Market
Historic Bethel German Colony,
September 27-29, 2024

Olde Tyme Apple Festival
Versailles, October 5-6, 2024

Getting out of our comfort zones to experience a new environment at a cultural festival, make a day trip to explore a new corner of the state, or engage in the arts and humanities at a local event will enrich our lives in immeasurable ways. Exposing ourselves to new cultures will help us navigate complexity and understand the human experience from a different perspective. “Expanding our Horizons” at Missouri festivals will not only help us learn something new as individuals, but it will also help us strengthen our communities. This year you might learn new information about French or German heritages. Attending Sliced Bread Day might trigger a new, innovative idea that will revolutionize daily life. Your best day of the year might be the one in which you interact with Missouri poets and artists in Joplin or a day spent soaking in Bluegrass and Gospel music at the Olde Tyme Apple Festival in Versailles. Each event has something special that you do not want to miss.

The good news for Missourians is that you don’t have to dream of magical rose gardens over the horizon, because Horizons is already at your door! Take a step to experience something new and broaden your horizons at Missouri festivals this year!

To learn more about Horizons festivals or to view previous event videos, scan the QR code or visit our YouTube channel @missourihumanities.



Save the Date

To celebrate the Humanities in our state
and Missouri Marvels.

Missouri Humanities

ANNUAL MOMENTUM GALA

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2024

James S. McDonnell Planetarium

5100 Clayton Ave., St. Louis, MO 63310

6:00 reception • Dinner & Drinks • Silent Auction

Musical Entertainment by Janet Evra

Business Attire/ Semi-Formal

MISSOURI CENTER FOR THE BOOK
ANNOUNCES BOOK SELECTIONS FOR

“Great Reads from Great Places”

LISA CARRICO
PROGRAM DIRECTOR,
MISSOURI HUMANITIES

As the Missouri Affiliate for The Library of Congress Center for the Book, it is our honor to announce that *Mexikid: A Graphic Memoir* by Pedro Martín and *Bindle Punk Bruja: A Novel* by Desideria Mesa will represent the state for the national 2024 Great Reads from Great Places initiative.

With input from numerous literary organizations and individuals serving

on the Missouri Center for the Book Planning Team, a book written for young audiences and a book written for adult readers were chosen to represent Missouri at the 2024 National Book Festival. Each affiliate's selections are added to an annual Great Reads from Places list of books representing the literary heritage of all 50 states and U.S. territories. The lists are available online and each affiliate will showcase their chosen books during the Library of Congress's National Book Festival's “Roadmap to Reading” activity.

Every year since 2002, thousands of families and individuals visit

OUR 2024 “GREAT READS FROM GREAT PLACES” PICKS:

For Young Readers:
Mexikid: A Graphic Novel by Pedro Martín



Pedro Martín is an author and illustrator living in Kansas City, Missouri. As a Mexican American, he grew up hearing stories about his abuelito—his legendary crime-fighting grandfather who was once a part of the Mexican Revolution!

His poignant and hilarious graphic memoir recounts his family's adventure-filled road trip to Mexico to bring their grandfather back to the US to live with them. *Mexikid* is a Newbery Honor Award Winner and winner of the Pura Belpre Author and Illustrator Award and is crafted from childhood stories he collected for years on note cards that he stored in a Batman lunchbox for safekeeping.

Pedro Martín is the son of an immigrant sharecropper and spent his childhood in the strawberry fields of the Monterey Bay Area, California. He grew up with a talent for art and music, leading him to earn a degree in graphic design at

San Jose State University. He moved to Kansas City when he was recruited by Hallmark Greetings where he worked his way to a Master Artist. He helped pioneer the animation and properties department by developing animated shorts and full-on animated specials for CBS and The Hallmark Channel. He was nominated twice for the Annie Awards for production design. He eventually retired from Hallmark and pursued his dream of writing a graphic memoir that would honor his hilarious and generous family and all that they struggled to achieve.

affiliate booths to collect stamps to fill their "Roadmap to Reading" passport maps while learning about books from all over the country. The 2024 National Book Festival will take place on Saturday, August 24, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C. Missouri Humanities looks forward to showcasing Missouri's *Mexikid*, *Bindle Punk Bruja*, and their respective authors to a national audience!

This year, the Missouri Center for the Book's selections highlight books written by Kansas City-based authors who weave their Mexican roots and heritage into their stories. It is a unique opportunity to showcase Kansas City's growing Latino population while providing perspectives that celebrate the history, stories, and cultural contributions of the region.

Our 2024 "Great Reads from Great Places" books will be featured at the second annual Heartland Book Festival in Kansas City!



HEARTLAND
BOOK
FEST
find your story

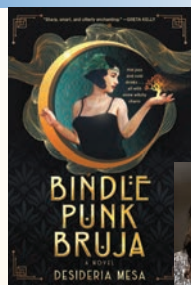
JOIN US ON
OCTOBER 12, 2024

at the Kansas City Public
Library's Central Library
to celebrate the
stories that connect us.



To learn more about the Center for the Book and our Great Reads, please visit mohumanities.org/center-for-the-book, or scan the available QR code.

For Adult Readers: *Bindle Punk Bruja* Desideria Mesa



Desideria Mesa was born and raised in Kansas City, Missouri, and her debut novel is an action-packed historical fantasy set in the luminous Roaring Twenties that plunges deep into the underbelly of Prohibition-era Kansas City.

Bindle Punk Bruja was noted among the best fall releases in 2022 by several publications, including *The Washington Post*, *Buzzfeed*, *Tor Books*, *Writer's Digest*, *Library Journal*, *Audible*, and *Publisher's Weekly*. Sticking to her roots, Mesa's novel incorporates Latinx culture and magic. The story follows Luna Alvarado, a white-passing daughter of a Mexican mother and white father, who adopts the identity "Rose Lane" to fit into society as a bootlegger. Considering Kansas City's thriving bootlegging scene under the leadership of crooked city councilmen, Tom Pendergast, *Bindle Punk Bruja* takes place in the perfect setting to

showcase a bustling jazz scene along with real historical accounts, such as Kansas City's Mexican Boxcar Community, newly adopted redlining practices, the rise of women's rights, and the struggle of diverse communities.

Bindle Punk Bruja incorporates Mesa's family's Latinx culture and experience into the story. While researching her family lore, she discovered the existence of Kansas City's Mexican Boxcar Community and her family's connection to it, along with Rose/Luna's heritage as the descendant of a long line of witches called "brujas"—inspired by an ancient Mexican folktale.

Grants Awarded

November 2023 through February 2024

GRANT DESCRIPTION	ORGANIZATION	COUNTY
Missouri State University – Ozarks Public Broadcasting	Kehila Kedosha: Jewish Heritage in the Missouri Ozarks	Greene
Brookfield Community Betterment, Inc.	Tillman House Museum – Open simultaneously with "Crossroads: Change in Rural America"	Linn
General Omar Bradley Memorial, Library, And Museum, Inc.	"Discover Bradley" Website Project	Randolph
City of Hermann	Hermann Maifest Celebration	Gasconade
My Hometown Carrollton	"Back to Our Roots" Banner Display	Carroll
Lee's Summit Historical Society Museum	Exhibit Case for Local Pioneer's Clothing	Lee's Summit
Missouri Coalition for the Environment	Wild and Scenic Film Festival	St. Louis
Kirkwood Historical Society	Dedicated Display Materials for 2024 Black Heritage Celebration (and All Future Exhibits)	Kirkwood
Missouri Professional Communicators – NFPW	Meet Us in St. Louis: Gateway to Success – NFPW Conference	St. Louis
International Educational Resources for Rural Missouri	The Real Power of Low Power FM: The Long View	Howard
The Missouri Council of the Social Studies	Teaching Teachers for National History Day	Ste. Genevieve
Cass County Historical Society	Pioneer Kids Day Camps	Cass
Ozark Vitality	Cultivating Community in Formerly Segregated Spaces in Springfield, MO	Ripley
Mid-Missouri Traditional Dancers	Connecting with our Past Through Dance	Boone
The Stars and Stripes National Museum Library	Stars & Stripes Historical Byway: Bloomfield's Civil War Cultural Tour Project	Stoddard
Steelville Area Historical Society	Discovering sites and understanding experiences along the Trail of Tears in Steelville, Missouri.	Crawford
Scenic Regional Library	Missouri Book Festival 2024	Franklin
Missouri Coalition for the Environment	Greenwood Cemetery Film	St. Louis

Jim's Journey: The Huck Finn Freedom Center – Families and Communities Together (F.A.C.T.)	Northeast Missouri African American Heritage Driving Trail	Hannibal
Weston Development Company	Weston Wassailing	Platte
Ignite Theatre Company	Meet Me in St. Louis	St. Louis
Presser Hall Restoration Society dba Presser Arts Center	Show MO Voices to Screen: a Missouri Screenwriting Workshop	Audrian
LOVetheLOU	Vision - Community Screening Series	St. Louis
Ozark Riverways Foundation	Rendezvous on the Ridge-Upper Current River Community Celebration	Shannon
Inside Out Media, Inc.	Searching for Lloyd Gaines	Boone
Missouri State University – Research Administration	Helping to Bring the Humanities to the Public Square	Greene
Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation	A Vision of the Wild, the Story of Conservation in Missouri	Jefferson City
Union Station Kansas City, Inc.	Disney100: The Exhibition	Jackson
St. Louis Association of Community Organization	Sharing Stories about MLK: Oral Histories of St. Louis's Dr. Martin Luther King	St. Louis
Springfield Greene County Park Board – Outdoor Initiatives	History in our Parks	Greene
Tennessee Williams Festival St. Louis	9th Annual Tennessee Williams Festival St. Louis Scholar's Conference	St. Louis
Turn the Page KC	Kansas City Theater and Art Book Club	Jackson
Ready Readers	Storytime Program: Expanding Access to New Books for Children	St. Louis
december: A Literary Legacy Since 1958	STL LitFest	St. Louis
University of Central Missouri – Children's Literature Festival	FY25 Children's Literature Festival	Johnson
Missouri Main Street Connection	2024 Missouri's Premier Downtown Revitalization Conference	Taney
United Way of Greater Kansas City, Inc.	Paseo Stairs Engagement and Media Project	Jackson

Missouri Roots

THE STORY OF

WALT DISNEY

RON GREEN

The Walt Disney Company is celebrating 100 Years of Disney throughout 2024. On October 16, 1923, Walt Disney and his brother Roy founded the company that changed the face of entertainment around the world. The Walt Disney Company is observing this milestone with a full year of special events, programs, and product launches. On May 24, *Disney 100: The Exhibition* will open at Kansas City's Union Station featuring over 250 artifacts, props, and costumes. The renowned film critic, Leonard Maltin, stated that Disney was "...the most successful and influential producer in the history of movie making." People from every corner of the world will pay homage this year to the Walt Disney Company for how it has brought joy to their lives.

The Laugh-O-Gram Studio at 1127 East 31st Street in Kansas City, Missouri. Photo courtesy of the Baron Missakian Collection, UMKC University Libraries.





Photo courtesy of the Baron Missakian Collection, UMKC University Libraries.

But did you know that the roots of this world-famous company lie right here in Missouri? Walt's sense of wonder and imagination was fostered during his boyhood years in Marceline, Missouri, while his success as an animation entrepreneur and innovator started in Kansas City, Missouri. The story of Walt's entry into the cartoon business is told in the short documentary film "The Cradle of Hollywood Animation" recently produced by Thank You Walt Disney, Inc., a non-profit organization that is renovating Walt's Laugh-O-Gram Studio at 1127 East 31st Street in Kansas City, Missouri.

The effort to produce the documentary was supported through a Missouri Humanities matching grant. The film tells how Walt Disney got his start as a commercial artist at various Kansas City firms and how that grew to a desire to start an animation company. Walt had been working at the Kansas City Slide Company where he illustrated glass slides used

for advertisements shown in movie theatres and learned the fundamentals of stop-motion animation. From there, Walt's imagination and ambition led to his desire to start his own cartoon company. He placed an advertisement in the Kansas City Star saying, "Animators wanted for moving picture cartooning; experienced or inexperienced..." This was ludicrous because in 1922, there was no animation underway west of New York and New Jersey, and motion pictures themselves were a relatively new technology. Still, Walt found local people with artistic talent. He hired trolley drivers, meter readers, bakers, and recent high school graduates to work at his new company: Laugh-O-Gram Studio.

Meanwhile, Walt checked out two books from the Kansas City Public Library to learn how to animate: *Animated*



Laugh-O-Gram still image, colorized by Deb Pieti.

Cartoons by E.G. Lutz and *Animals in Motion* by Eadweard Muybridge. From this rudimentary background, Walt and his staff started creating Laugh-O-grams — short cartoons based on popular fairy tales but with a roaring '20s flair. Walt's sales manager, Leslie Mace, had secured a contract with Pictorial Clubs, Inc. of Tennessee to distribute the finished cartoons, but the deal was destined to fail. Pictorial paid \$100 up front for six Laugh-O-grams and promised to pay the remaining \$11,000 of the contract upon delivery of the Laugh-O-grams fifteen months later. The deal left Walt's company with no funds to pay salaries and other costs while the Laugh-O-grams were being produced. In July of 1923, Pictorial Clubs went bankrupt, leaving Laugh-O-Gram unpaid for their work. Deep in debt and without a means to pay salaries, Walt started losing staff members and started looking for additional revenue sources for his business. He started offering families professional children filming services. He created a "Song-O-Reel" for sing-alongs at the nearby Isis Theatre. And he created *Tommy Tucker's Tooth*, a public service film for schools about dental hygiene that featured a combination of live-action film and animation.

Ultimately, however, the Pictorial Clubs deal ruined any realistic opportunity for Walt's struggling Laugh-O-Gram Studio to succeed.

What is quite remarkable is that, even though Walt's time at Laugh-O-Gram lasted only from May 1922 to July of 1923, the impact of his work there was immense. The Laugh-O-Gram experience set in motion two significant factors for the growth of American animation:

- Laugh-O-Gram established a success formula of values for Walt that led to his ultimate dominance in the world of entertainment: innovation, persistence, and optimism.
- Laugh-O-Gram established a trained crew of animators that would ultimately become the founders of the early Hollywood cartoon studios.

ABOUT THANK YOU WALT DISNEY COMPANY

Thank You Walt Disney is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that has saved and is restoring Walt Disney's first commercial studio, the Laugh-O-Gram Films Studio, in Kansas City. They are committed to preserving Walt Disney's Kansas City legacy by telling the story of Walt's entrepreneurial efforts in Kansas City and by providing a place for art and animation study, while encouraging confidence and entrepreneurial individualism.

Innovation at Laugh-O-Gram

Walt Disney embraced the new entertainment technologies of his day, moving pictures and animation, and explored ways to move those technologies forward. For example, Walt experimented with using transparent celluloid sheets for animation layers. Though the use of cels in animation was patented in 1914, Walt worked with Rudy Ising to replace cutout paper background designs with painted cels. They then placed character animations on separate cels in front of those backgrounds. This layering approach streamlined the process and created a smoother-looking outcome. This practice was the forerunner of Disney's famous multiplane camera invented in 1933 by Ub Iwerks, Walt's lifelong animation colleague.

Ub Iwerks had worked with Walt at the Pesmen-Rubin Commercial Art Studio and at A.V. Cauger's Kansas City Slide Company before teaming

up with Walt to start the Iwerks-Disney Commercial Artist Studio. This venture and the Kaycee Studios follow-up were short-lived and were soon superseded by Walt's formation of the Laugh-O-Gram Film Studio in May of 1922. While in Kansas City, Ub Iwerks improved upon existing animation filming technology by using a motor to regulate the cranking of film in the movie camera. According to Iwerks' son, Don, Iwerks' solution not only sped up the photographic process, but resulted in more consistent exposures, eliminating wasted film due to uneven exposures done by hand cranking the camera. Iwerks also contributed to Walt's most innovative application of film and animation: blending live-action film with animation. While still at Laugh-O-Gram, Walt and his team created the first of the Alice Comedies: *Alice's Wonderland*. This cartoon placed a live-action character, Alice, into a cartoon world. Earlier, in the *Out of the Inkwell* series, the Fleischer Brothers had placed a cartoon character into a live-action world, but Walt flipped the process and used cel animation technology to improve the outcome.

At Laugh-O-Gram Walt also created what he called a "Song-O-Reel." He worked with Carl Stalling, the music director and organist at the nearby Isis Theater to produce an entertainment format for audience sing-alongs. Walt produced live-action and animated motion pictures that showed the lyrics to be sung on screen while Stalling performed the music for the song, *Martha: Just a Plain Old-Fashioned Name*. This collaboration proved critical to Walt's later success when he worked with Carl Stalling to figure out how to synchronize sound on Walt's first cartoon with audio: the highly successful *Steamboat Willie*.

Laugh-O-Gram: The Cradle of Hollywood Animation

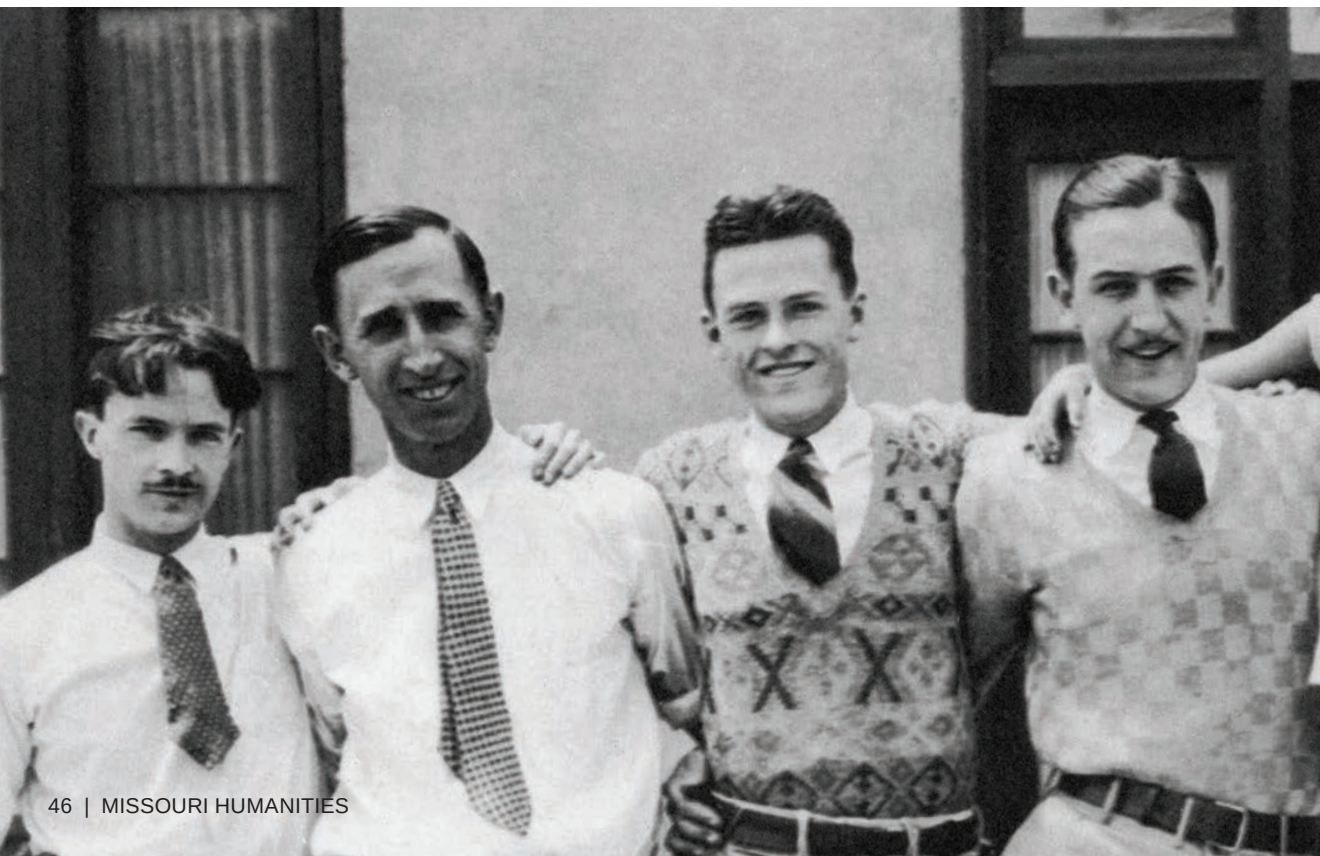
Walt Disney and the people he hired at Laugh-O-Gram made a significant impact on the growth of American animation, even though their time in the building was short.

Laugh-O-Gram went bankrupt in 1923, just one year after the company's big start. Walt then left Kansas City to join his brother, Roy Disney, in California. Shortly after arriving on the west coast, Walt struck a deal with Margaret Winkler, a prominent film producer and distributor, to distribute the *Alice Comedies* series he had pitched to her before leaving KC. Walt called on his Kansas City colleagues to join him in producing the new series. Most of Walt's Laugh-O-Gram crew joined him in Hollywood and continued to grow their animation skills. In doing so, they drew the attention of the major movie studios who wanted to

establish their own cartoon studios. These studios were able to lure away many of Walt's animators who had felt that they were underpaid. As a result, the Laugh-O-Gram Studio-trained animators established new cartoon programs at other movie studios, and consequently became the pioneers of Hollywood animation. Here's how these Kansas City creatives impacted the Hollywood animation industry:

Hugh Harman and Rudy Ising

After leaving Laugh-O-Gram, Hugh Harman and Rudy Ising worked together briefly in Kansas City on projects for their short-lived Arabian Nights Cartoons venture. Eventually, they joined Walt's cartoon studio in Hollywood before they departed to start their own Harman-Ising partnership, working with animation programs for various studios. Later, at Warner Brothers, they created three two very successful series: *Looney Tunes* and *Merrie Melodies*. They also helped start MGM Cartoon Studios, where they



created the *Happy Harmonies* series. At MGM they helped William Hanna and Joe Barbera hone their skills in animation and storytelling. In 1938 they produced the Merbabies cartoon for Walt Disney Studio's *Silly Symphonies* series.

Ub Iwerks

Ub Iwerks was among the first to join Walt's new studio in California. In 1928, he refined Walt's ideas into the appealing character that assured his success: Mickey Mouse. Iwerks animated Walt's first Mickey Mouse cartoon, *Plane Crazy*, and several others that followed. Iwerks was lured away in 1930 by the opportunity to start his own company, the Iwerks Studio. There he created two notable new characters, Flip the Frog and Willie Whopper. He hired two animators who became major contributors to Hollywood animation: Fred Kopietz and Chuck Jones. Later he rejoined Disney Studio and made major contributions to their animation productions.

Ub was a technological genius and made many improvements to animation operations and technology. One of his greatest contributions at Disney was the development of the multiplane camera, which separated backgrounds into several layers, creating an inviting three-dimensional effect.

Max Maxwell

Carman "Max" Maxwell shared many roles at Laugh-O-Gram, including those of artist and animator. In California he worked with several animation studios, including that of Hugh Harman and Rudy Ising. He performed the voicework for their new "Bosko" character, whose name came from the nickname Harman and Ising had given Max somewhere along the way.

Disney Studios got its start with animators and producers Walt Disney and Ub Iwerks, his brother Roy Disney in finance, and his team of cartoonists/animators, Ham Hamilton, Hugh Harman, and Rudi Ising. Young actress Margie Gay paid them a visit in 1924.



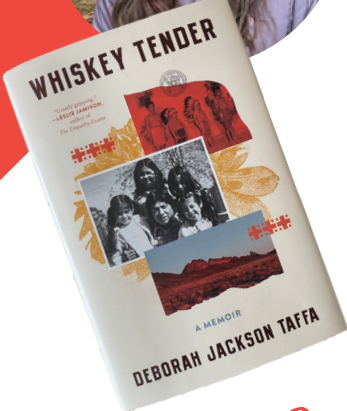
Missouri Humanities Board Chair Receives Prestigious Award



On March 14, 2024, Missourians arrived at the Missouri State Capitol to celebrate the achievements of Missouri women who have impacted and influenced Missouri through their leadership, service, and advocacy efforts. Here, Missouri Humanities Board Chair Trish Erffeld was presented with the Lieutenant Governor's Women of Achievement Award. Trish was born and raised in Perryville and serves as the Director of the Perry County Heritage Tourism. She passionately leads numerous projects promoting Perryville's history, natural landmarks, heritage, and culture.

Congratulations Trish!

Former Missouri Humanities Board Member Celebrates Literary Excellence



National Endowment of the Arts Fellow Deborah Taffa debuted *Whiskey Tender* (HarperCollins) in February 2024. It has received high praise from *The New Yorker*, *The NY Times*, *Esquire*, *Oprah Daily*, and other outlets. A former Missouri Humanities Board member, Deborah made an impact on Native American Heritage programming in Missouri. She is a citizen of the Quechan Nation and Laguna Pueblo and is the MFA CW Director at the Institute of American Indian Arts.

Congratulations Deborah!

Join Missouri Humanities

Help us enrich lives and strengthen communities by taking the humanities all across Missouri.

Missouri Humanities depends on the support of individuals, foundations, and our partners to connect Missourians to the people, places, and ideas that shape society.

Through our in-person and digital programming, our efforts reach over 300,000 Missourians each year, offering hundreds of educational opportunities for little or no charge. Your membership will move our work forward and help us reach even more Missourians in the coming years.

Membership opportunities begin at the student level and increase incrementally. Memberships at the partner level and above are available for individuals as well as organizations. Benefits are subject to change as the needs of Missouri Humanities, our partners, and Missourians change. Please see our website for up-to-date benefit information.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

SUPPORTER
\$25

FRIEND
\$50

CONTRIBUTOR
\$100

PARTNER
\$250

PATRON
\$500

BENEFACTOR
\$1,000

SALUS POPULI SOCIETY
Our Salus Populi Society recognizes planned gift and estate donors as well as those making gifts of \$5,000 or more.

View your Missouri Humanities membership options at mohumanities.org/become-a-member, or scan the available QR Code.





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Meet the Team!

Our staff is passionate about engaging and connecting with the people of the Show Me State to create a more thoughtful, informed, and civil society. We look forward to meeting our readers at events and programs across the state of Missouri!

(Left to right) Clarice Britton, Greg Wolk, Caitlin Yager, Michael Saldivar, Ashley Beard-Fosnow, Christina Highsmith, Lisa Carrico, Chris Kempke, Chrissy Sommer, Claire Bruntrager, Ashley Vogel.

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Let's Stay in Touch

To keep up to date with humanities activities in Missouri, send us a message at mail@mohumanities.org to be added to our Friends of the Humanities contact list.