

FROM MANHATTAN TO LOSTINE:

Artist finds inspiration everywhere



By Paul Wahl
Wallowa County Chieftain

Gianluca Giarrizzo lives with a foot in each of two different worlds.

Nine months of the year, he lives in a Manhattan high rise and walks 25 minutes to his job as an art instructor. Summers, he lives above Lostine Tavern and walks down a flight of stairs to work.

Giarrizzo is a sculptor, painter and drawer who has studied abroad and discovered Wallowa County several years back. He connected with Peter Ferré, owner of the tavern, who was looking for an on-call bartender and offered a loft studio.

“I’m inspired by the quiet landscape in Wallowa County and the generosity of the people,” said Giarrizzo, 26. “Here everything else goes away and work gets the focus.”

While Lostine is more pastoral, Manhattan has the benefit of great restaurants and museums. He lives a few blocks from The Metropolitan Museum of Art on Fifth Avenue, and a bit further up the road is the Guggenheim Museum of Modern Art and Neu Galerie of New York.

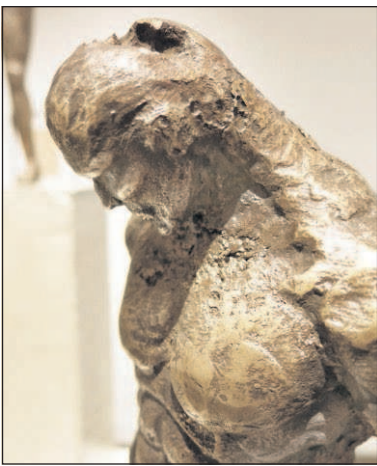
Giarrizzo said he is at home in both settings.

He teaches art to students in grades 4-8 at the private East Harlem School. The institution recruits children from families with low income, which works toward excellence and not numbers, according to its website.

The school caps enrollment at 150 and keeps class sizes small.

Born and raised in Powell, Wyo., Giarrizzo said the diversity of the school is an eyeopener.

“Teaching art in East Harlem has made me question race, motivations, gender, interests and society’s preconceived notion in ways I’ve never had to,” he said. “To observe a child learn to draw, learn to see, constantly



Contributed photo
Gianluca Giarrizzo’s “Male Nude 1,” completed in 2014, is a carved wax cast bronze figure with concrete base.

reminds me of the power of art — to see things for what they are, expose beauty, offer perspectives on life and give power to the human experience.”

Shortly after his arrival in Los-

tine three years ago, Giarrizzo connected with representatives of Josephy Center.

Executive director Cheryl Coughlan said Giarrizzo submitted a portfolio and she was floored.

“I saw his website and said oh my God, this guy is so incredible, and he’s only 26 years old,” Coughlan said.

The Josephy screening committee approved, and details were discussed.

The artworks are unique.

“That’s what I really like about the art scene here,” Coughlan said. “I like doing shows that aren’t what all the other galleries have.”

Giarrizzo hopes to return next summer, but is also planning to begin work on his graduate degree. If he has time, Josephy Center would like to retain him as an artist in residence.

“He taught the kids a class when the exhibit opened,” Coughlan said. “He had the kids draw a classical view of the human hand, one of the hardest things to draw. It was great.”

IF YOU GO | Gianluca Giarrizzo’s sculptures, paintings and drawings will be on exhibit at Josephy Center, 403 Main St, Joseph, through Aug. 2. Josephy Center gallery is open to the public Monday through Saturday, noon to 4 p.m. There is no admission fee, but donations are welcome.

Zumwalt Prairie development rights sold

The owners of a 12,000-acre ranch on northeastern Oregon’s prime bunch grass prairie signed an agreement this spring relinquishing specific development rights into perpetuity while retaining the ability to raise livestock.

The Probert family, with Dan and Suzy Probert as managers of Lightning Creek Ranch, gave up their rights to wind, mineral and housing development as well as tilled agriculture across their entire Zumwalt Prairie ranch in exchange for \$2.6 million, making it the largest conservation easement completed by

The Nature Conservancy in Oregon.

Dan Probert, whose family moved to Wallowa County in 1967, said he was running his Malheur County ranch when, at the urging of friends, he looked into buying Zumwalt Prairie ranch land. The price was high, so Probert said he started conversations with Nature Conservancy staff about entering into a conservation easement.

“We couldn’t have swung the land purchase without it,” Probert said.

The Nature Conservancy has long had a vested inter-

est in the prairie. In the 2000s it bought 33,000 acres, now known at the Zumwalt Prairie Preserve — a multi-use land leased for cattle grazing, hunting and hiking as well as research. When the 38,000-acre Buckhorn Ranch on the prairie came up for sale, the organization looked into buying it, too.

“They were interested in the prairie because it’s so well taken care of,” Probert said.

Eventually the Buckhorn Ranch was sold off in several large chunks and the Proberts bought approximately one-third in 2014. Knowing

LIBRARY

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a short amount of time,” Witterite posted. “Then there is a lot of people in this county to get that information out to and educate our fellow citizens on how the library impacts their lives and why they need to care about keeping it.”

Volunteers have already begun stepping up for committees, which may include research and report writing, legal considerations and boundaries, spearheading the actual petition to get the idea onto the ballot, budget, fundraising and promotion and publicity.

“If you are interested in helping, please join our group for updates,” she said. “Even if you have limited time, but just think you want to be involved on any level, please get me your info. I promise not to hold you over the fire when we look for help, but you never know what talents you have that could make all the difference to us.”

The board is also receiving assistance from the State Library of Oregon Library Support and Development Services, including State Librarian MaryKay Dahlgreen. Wilburn said Wallowa County Librarian Susan Polumsky was instrumental in cementing the relationship.

The most recent library district formed in Oregon was in Josephine County on May

LIBRARY UPDATE

The Wallowa County Library at 207 N.W. Logan in Enterprise is open 8 hours a week instead of the previous 37.5 hours. The hours are Tuesday 8-11 a.m. and 1-3 p.m. and Wednesdays 8-11:00 a.m. Branch libraries in Imnaha and Troy have cut hours from eight per week to four. “Deliver-Me-A-Book!” will have one delivery a month for the Enterprise and Joseph areas. There will be a storytime 10 a.m. Tuesday mornings at the county library. The changes will remain in place until the next public hearing on the closure of the library, set for 10 a.m. Sept. 13 at the courthouse.

16, exactly 10 years from the time commissioners axed the library from its budget. The measure was approved after several tries with 53 percent of the vote in the county, which includes Grants Pass.

The tax rate for properties in the district there will be 39 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value, or \$78 annually on a property assessed at \$200,000.

Libraries in Josephine County had been operated by a nonprofit using donations, grants and volunteers to keep the four branches open.

SUIT

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In Roberts’ opinion, the environmental groups that filed the lawsuit seem to care less about the community than their own opinions. She said if they wanted no one to live in or go up the canyon, they should just say so.

“I don’t believe they are true conservationists, nor do I believe they’re environmentalists or collaborators — they’re obstructionists,” she said. Roberts believes the county will gain the intervenor status it seeks.

“This is in Wallowa County. If we don’t have status, then no one does,” she said.

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