

ARTS & CULTURE

CG gets 'mugged'

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For many longtime residents of Cottage Grove, the historical significance of downtown and the beauty of the many murals that dot the walls is just an everyday fact of life. For Jacob Monroe, a ceramist out of Eugene, it's inspiration for his art.

"I heard Cottage Grove had a preserved historic district and I knew I needed to check it out," Monroe said.

Three of his pieces featuring our little town have been put on display and showcased all the way across the country in a gallery in Humboldt, Tennessee. Not just any gallery either, the Companion Gallery, a contemporary ceramics art gallery which features work from all over the US.

"I've always had a ton of respect for them and always wanted to see my artwork in their gallery, and so this experience has been pretty incredible for me," Monroe said.

All three of Monroe's Cottage Grove mugs sold on the opening day.

Monroe has been making ceramics as a full-time job for nearly three years, and regularly sells at the Saturday Market in Eugene. He only started recently, as he's only been in Eugene for about a year.

"I've been meeting a ton of really amazing people, and I'm just really enjoying the culture around here," he said.

Talking to people at the market, in fact a "long conversation with a couple from Cottage Grove," is how he discovered the mine of inspiration that our town had in store.

As a musician originally, he always had a focus towards the art, and towards the challenging. When he was 17, he found ceramics and decided to put his energy into it. Getting started professionally was all about luck, and a chance he had to apprentice under someone who knew all about the science of ceramics.

"I had all these questions about glaze chemis-

try, and I was really, like I had found this art that wasn't just making something, there was all this science behind it," he said. "It was really difficult, and I think I was just attracted to difficult things."

From there, he says, one opportunity led to another opportunity and now he's lucky enough to make art full time.

He loves creating with clay and glaze because the materials he use can be a bit volatile, as he says, so it's especially nice when they come out of the kiln and are still in one piece.

"When it works out, it's really rewarding," said Monroe. "Like when I open the kiln, and, I'm making my own porcelain and using really unstable clays, [so] when things turn out at the end it's a pretty awesome feeling."

The best part of the profession though, he said, is the moment one of his pieces finds a home.

"Knowing that they're gonna live a life after when I have agency" and the fact that each one is a unique, one-of-a-kind memory



PHOTO COURTESY OF JACOB MONROE

All three of Monroe's Cottage Grove mugs sold on the first day of their display in the Companion Gallery in Humboldt, Tennessee. This mug features the historic Coca Cola mural on Main St. and 7th. The other two featured the Cottage Grove Hotel and the I.O.O.F. Hall.

of sorts is something that keeps him creating.

For now, Cottage Grove

is immortalized in three ceramic "memories" of Monroe's, and in the fu-

ture he hopes to keep making art as often as he can.

Free rides offered between Eugene and Roseburg

Umpqua Public Transportation District (UPTD) has started a new bus route called the Lane-Douglas Connector (LDC).

This new service offers safe, reliable, accessible

transportation to veterans and the general public in rural communities for better access to healthcare services and shopping opportunities.

Lane-Douglas Connec-

tor operates from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays with scheduled stops at the Veterans Affairs Hospital in Roseburg, Ray's Food in Drain, Walmart and PeaceHealth

Medical Center in Cottage Grove, and the Veterans Affairs Clinic in Eugene (LTD bus stop nearby).

The stop in Drain serves as a connection point for passengers of the North

Douglas Betterment shuttle.

The route is operated by South Lane Wheels as a pilot project funded by the Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation grant.

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