

Tahawus Center celebrates a decade of art



Jul 14, 2020 Tim Rowland, The Sun

AU SABLE FORKS | Local events and exhibits come and go, most often considered individually in their own little worlds. But when considered in total, these pieces paint an expansive mural of Adirondack culture that is eye-opening in its breadth and inspiring in the imprint that one small area can have upon the world.

This year, because of the coronavirus, the Tahawus Cultural Center in Au Sable Forks has been temporarily unable to open its doors to the public, so Rebecca Kelly and Craig Brashear have created a 10-year online retrospective of art, history and culture that have been featured through the years since its first Main Street Windows Gallery presentation in 2011.

“The First Ten Years Retrospective gives our community a means of looking back — a happy reminder of gatherings in celebration of creative achievement,” Kelly said. “Each of our artists, in their very different ways, demonstrate a range of content, focus, interest, and fun. Tahawus is honored to have been able to share these works with our community.”

Over the past decade, Tahawus has featured internationally acclaimed artists such as rabble-rouser Rockwell Kent and Disney designer Arto Monaco; focused on workaday mill employees and railroads; examined the artistry of the Mohawks; and shown a light on a myriad of talented local artists, poets, photographers and historians.

Each was impressive in its own right, but together they represent an artistic portfolio, much of it generated within a stone’s throw of the Ausable River, that would be the envy of any community.

It was the Tahawus Cultural Center that knitted it all together, by saving a century-old building and initially repurposing the storefront as an art gallery. The Tahawus Cultural Center then began to bring programming and creative curb appeal to a former Masonic lodge building which had lain dormant for decades.

According to its mission statement, “As a gathering place for learning and a catalyst of community growth, Tahawus Center engages people with a range of expressions in the arts and humanities including activities in art, dance, film, music, STEM education, symposia, and community events. Tahawus serves as a vital space where children and adults connect with each other around familiar and unfamiliar topics.”

It opened in 2011, and opened the main 2nd floor Windows Gallery in 2013. The Cloudsplitter Dance Studio on the 3rd floor was also functional by 2013, Kelly said, offering swing dance workshops, kids co-motion and beginning dance. Major improvements to the studio continued through 2018, thanks to supportive grants, which Kelly said enabled it to become one of the best and most beautiful dance studios in the Adirondacks, equipped with the specialized dance flooring, portable ballet barres, a wall of mirrors, and the HVAC systems.

Kelly said dance lessons are currently functioning through Zoom, and options for opening with proper precautions are being explored.

The Windows Gallery online retrospective will be available through July 31, and on request after that it can be found at <https://tahawuscenter.wixsite.com/retrospective-2020>

<https://suncommunitynews.com/news/81843/tahawus-center-celebrates-a-decade-of-art/>



Kyle Gero — Ausable Valley Art Tour 2015



Here Come the Trains by Louis Scavo and Carl Kokes

A Trip Down Memory Lane

By Aja Landolfi

WHEN A NEW BUSINESS opens its doors, owners can only hope that they will remain open for years to come. In 2009, the Appleby Foundation, Inc. acquired and fixed a run-down building, which is what locals know today as the Tahawus Center.

Today, the upper two floors of the center house the Windows Gallery, where wide-ranging exhibits done by both local and visiting artists are displayed, and the Cloudsplitter Dance Studio, where dance lessons, senior adult movement and jujutsu classes are held.

Being open for the last decade, the Windows Gallery has had 26 exhibits on display since its doors first opened. Now, as a result of not being able to open their doors due to the coronavirus, the gallery has decided to use this time to host an online exhibit called the *Tahawus Windows Gallery Virtual Retrospective*.

"This [gallery] is to help people remember by visiting a sequence of slideshows, videos and parts of the individual collections of photographs of the almost two dozen exhibits we've had since our doors opened," says AFI Board of Directors Chair Rebecca Kelly. "We want to remind people that the arts are very much a part of our lives."

When arriving at the exhibit website, viewers will have the choice to click on different tabs to view the exhibits

that were on display during each year.

The first exhibit the Tahawus Center held was by Mark Hobson, who lives around the corner on Palmer Street; it was called *The Forks, There's No Place Like Home* — an exhibit featuring photographs that showed his unique point of view of the town through his art.

Shortly after this exhibit, *Imaging Makebelieve* designed by Anne Mackinnon, Karen Davidson and Peter Seyward was displayed. This exhibit honored the work of Arto Monaco, a local artist, toymaker, park designer and cartoonist.

"Everything [Mackinnon] brought [to the gallery], including the little castle, were items that were saved from the flood because the flood destroyed so much of what was left behind in the workshops and storage areas," Kelly says. "So, that exhibit was very important to us."

Another featured artist was Todd Bissonette, who is a photographer of dance, athletics, weddings and people. His exhibit *Captured Moments* was displayed in 2011, and it featured the works of Rebecca Kelly Ballet, which is also located in the center.

In 2012, the Tahawus Center displayed their most significant exhibit, *Mohawk of the Adirondacks*, curated by Margaret Horn. This exhibit featured the works of six different Mohawk artists who brought in paintings, beadwork, pottery, sculptures and traditional artifacts.



Mohawk of the Adirondacks — Listen to the Words of the Council curated by Margaret Horn



the ballet slippers by Heidi Gero

"This was one of our most popular exhibits of all time," Kelly says. "It attracted a great deal of attention and lots of visitors, as well as PBS."

The Tahawus Center doesn't just exhibit and showcase local artists work. The Windows Gallery also opens its doors and takes pride in all of the different visiting artists they have had over the years. In 2016, *Adirondack Plein Air* was on display. This exhibit was done by a group of artists from downstate New York, including Enid Braun with Doris Adler, Daphne Eviatar, Alette Goldmark, Ann Richards and Lucy Todd, who all came to the Adirondack

region and painted the local landscape.

"We take a lot of advantage of the beauty of our neighborhood," Kelly says. "We're used to it; we love it, but they see it with very fresh eyes from the lowlands. It was nice to see their exhibit, which was in the lower gallery on main street."

Everglades in the Adirondacks, done in 2015, was a popular suitcase exhibit the gallery had shown. This exhibit featured 28 works by 28 different artists and was curated by Donna Marzer and Irene Christensen. *Everglades in the Adirondacks* traveled to the likes of Norway and Florida

and taking a trip down memory lane can be a fun way to see how this business has grown. For the Tahawus Center Windows Gallery, this virtual retrospective is the perfect way for people to experience where the center has been, all of the great exhibits they've had and where they will go once their doors are reopened to the public.

The Tahawus Windows Gallery Virtual Retrospective will be on display through its website from June 26 to July 31. To view the show or for more information, visit tahawuscenter.wixsite.com/retrospective-2020.

before finding its temporary home in the Tahawus Center.

"It really reminded us of our Plein Air exhibit and how sense of place can really be so strongly inspiring," Kelly recalls.

The two most recent exhibits, shown in 2019, were *Inhabited Spaces* and *Rome Undammed*. *Inhabited Spaces* featured the works of Dan Hausner, who works on farms near Au Sable Forks, and his friend, Brian French, who lives in the Troy area. *Rome Undammed* featured the works of a landscape photographer and historian Stephen Longmire, who documented the controversial deconstruction of the Rome Dam on Ausable River. This exhibit included recent photographs by Longmire of the dam being removed, as well as historical photos and other artifacts showing the mills in their prime.

A lot can happen in a decade, and taking a trip down memory lane can be a fun way to see how this business has grown. For the Tahawus Center Windows Gallery, this virtual retrospective is the perfect way for people to experience where the center has been, all of the great exhibits they've had and where they will go once their doors are reopened to the public.



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ADIRONDACK ALMANACK

Adirondack Explorer's Online News Journal



TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2020

Au Sable Forks' Tahawus Center marks 10 year anniversary

by Editorial Staff



Described as “an exciting new gem of a space” by the Lake Placid Visitors Bureau when it opened its Main Street Windows Gallerys, the Tahawus Center created a gallery for dynamic artists’ displays. The over 100-year old historic Tahawus building is situated on Rt 9N Main St, near the scenic Ausable River, in Au Sable Forks, Town of Jay, NY. By initially repurposing the storefront as an art gallery, Tahawus Cultural Center began to bring programming and creative curb appeal to a former Masonic lodge building which had lain dormant for decades.

The Windows Gallery presented its inaugural solo exhibit in January 2011 by local photographer Mark Hobson. Exhibits followed with works by Arto Monaco (pictured here), Rockwell Kent, photographer Todd Bissonette, a show of Detroit / Au Sable Forks artists curated by William Dilworth,

“Mohawk of the Adirondacks,” curated by Margaret Horn, and “Here Come the Trains,” engineered by Lou Scavo and Carl Kokes.

In 2013 the large second floor gallery opened with an exhibit of works by photographer Jeri Wright (Wilmington). Additional exhibits included “Japanese Scrolls “Everglades in the Adirondacks,” and more. All continued to spotlight works by local, historical, and visiting artists. Tahawus Center serves Au Sable Forks and the surrounding region with space where the art world and the village community engage with innovative projects.



The “[First TEN YEARS Retrospective](#)” opens online [June 26](#) and gives the community a means of looking back – a happy reminder of gatherings in celebration of creative achievement. The exhibit will remain live and accessible until July 31, and thereafter by request.

Normally the gallery would host its annual Open House event on June 26. But for the time being, the doors will temporarily remain closed until they get the green light to reopen as a part of Phase 4 (Arts, Education and Recreation) of New York Forward, NY State’s reopening plan.

For more information and to see the exhibition, go to www.tahawuscenter.org.