



# Caldwell Arts Council's 39th Annual Sculpture Celebration

Saturday, September 6, 2025 • 9am-4pm  
Broyhill Walking Park • Lenoir, NC

**Sculptor registration is open through September 4th.**  
**Visit [www.caldwellarts.com](http://www.caldwellarts.com) for complete details and the prospectus.**



(left) "Here Where the Soil Was Bare" 2024 Best of Show by Julie Slattery of Asheville, NC

## Rain or shine Free admission and shuttle service

Over 125 indoor and outdoor works, many available for purchase

Food trucks & live music by Rastacoustic



The Sculpture Celebration is a program of the Caldwell Arts Council and is funded in part by generous sponsors and the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

Caldwell Arts Council • Lenoir, NC • 828-754-2486 • [www.caldwellarts.com](http://www.caldwellarts.com)



## Blowing Rock Art & History Museum

continued from Page 20

nerist, painting, suggesting an engagement with historical representations of the feminine form.

This exhibition highlights a recent gift to BRAHM, forming the foundation of a growing collection of Higgins' work. The included pieces demonstrate her sustained engagement with surface, figuration, and narrative, offering insight into an artist whose practice was shaped by both technical experimentation and a fascination with mythic and historical imagery.

Also on view in the Fort Gallery is the *Daingerfield & the Tonalist Instinct* exhibition, which will explore the development of Tonalism - a distinctly American response to early modernist impulses in painting - and its connection to Elliott Daingerfield (1859-1932). Featuring works by Daingerfield and other key figures, the exhibition examines how tonalist principles were applied to the landscapes



MaryLou Higgins, "Remembering", 1993, Gesso on canvas, BRAHM Permanent Collection 2024.007.015, Photographed by Joshua White

of the American South and became a significant influence on Daingerfield's artistic evolution.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call BRAHM at 828/295-9099 or visit ([www.blowing-rockmuseum.org](http://www.blowing-rockmuseum.org)).

When she learned about photography, she realized the symbiotic relationship of the two media, and pursued them both. With a bachelor's degree in journalism from Virginia Tech and a master's in photography from the Savannah College of Art and Design, Sarah had the skills to pursue her dream of telling stories in words and pictures. Sarah says, "I have always considered myself on the documentary side, constantly capturing the world around me no matter what I might be up to at that time."

Like a lot of people who live in western North Carolina, Sarah is drawn to nature and being active outside. She has invested her love of nature in publications about the trails of the area. "I wrote the history and took photos of every shelter on the Appalachian Trail, and I wrote our local hiking guide, *The Ridges of Madison County*," Sarah says. "My current work in progress is *The 100 Classic Hikes of North Carolina*, for Mountaineers Books." Sarah is trail maintainer and sawyer with the Carolina Mountain Club and maintains a section of the Appalachian Trail north of Hot Springs. She and her husband have owned Root Bottom Farm in Marshall since 2011.



The mobile darkroom Sarah Jones Decker set up in the back of her Subaru. Photo credit: courtesy of Sarah Jones Decker.

"I took a summer tintype class solely because I was interested in documenting our next Mermaid Parade in Marshall that way," Sarah says. "After 30 years in the medium, a new challenge was exciting. Wet plate photography is a notoriously delicate and finicky medium. I never thought that less than five months later, I would build a makeshift darkroom in the back of my Subaru and shoot my beloved town after it was devastated by Helene. I had only practiced in my home darkroom twice before the storm."

As she volunteered and helped her neighbors, she was reminded of a truth she already knew: community is much more than buildings; it's the people you encounter in your daily life. "This project has connected me to so many new friends and given me the chance to spend more time with people I love," she says. "After weeks of volunteering, it was an awesome experience to create art together. It's a lot to ask someone who has lost so much to give you an hour of their time. I will cherish every single image and the magic we made together. It's been my honor." Each of Sarah's images is unique,

[continued on Page 25](#)

## NC Arts Council Offers Portraits in Resilience - Sarah Jones Decker

*Editor's Note:* This article was written by Andie Freeman, from the May 2025 *NC Art Matters*. In an effort to participate in the North Carolina Arts Council's strategic planning goal #3: Promote the Arts through Partnerships and Marketing, we are including this article.

### Portraits in resilience: Sarah Jones Decker

The North Carolina Arts Council has been working with artists and arts organizations to find ways to recover and build their creative enterprises back stronger after the devastation caused by Hurricane Helene in the fall of 2024. Our series Portraits in Resilience has been highlighting artists from the region to discover how they are re-



Sarah Jones Decker. Photo credit: Lauren Rutton, courtesy of Sarah Jones Decker.

sponding. This month, we showcase Sarah Jones Decker of Marshall, a writer and photographer who has been documenting her community in the aftermath of the storm.

As a child, Sarah felt drawn to write. continued above on next column to the right



South Main St. in Marshall, NC, post Hurricane Helene, and a tintype of the scene. Photo credit: courtesy of Sarah Jones Decker.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, Sarah knew that her calling as a documentarian meant that she needed to capture the devastation of the landscape and the resilience of the residents as they cooperated to save their neighbors. Through the specialized technique of tintype photography, she set to work taking photos of the historic changes taking place.