

Artist creates hundreds of urns for N.Y. endangered species

BY VICTORIA BRESNAHAN

Two hundred and eighty-eight urns at the Clay Art Center in Port Chester are making the unseen seen.

The golden eagle, the spotted turtle and the New England cottontail rabbit all have a place on the New York Department

of Environmental Conservation list of animals that are endangered, threatened or of special concern.

In the newest Clay Art Center exhibit, they and 285 other endangered animals are being remembered and highlighted through urns created by utilitarian potter Julia Galloway, a ceramics professor at the University of Montana, Missoula.

The Clay Art Center opens its fourth exhibit in year-long 'Animal Instinct' focus

essentially about informing the public, she said.

Seeing the exhibition in person is impactful, she said. The urns are laid out in an unconventional manner; they are stacked on floating shelves and small wall shelves, so not only are they at eye level but also above a spectator's head.

"You are standing in the middle of that and as you are turning around in the gallery it's just one after the other," Farrell-Fagan said. "There's no gaps."

Every year, the Clay Art Center has a different focus for its exhibits; this year it was Animal Instinct. The exhibits highlighted the animal kingdom and Galloway's show was the fourth to do so. This is her first installment of a large project that she hopes to showcase across the nation.

Prior to Galloway's show, the center featured animal sculptural work by California artist Crystal Morey. Last year, the center's theme, 4 Degrees of Separation, focused on social connection.

Galloway, a resident of Missoula, Mont., researched four lists for the exhibit: the New York Natural Heritage Program, New York Department of Environmental Conservation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the International Union for Conservation of Nature registers.

She said she is always surprised by how many dragonflies and mussels appear on the lists.

"The trumpeter swan—that surprised me," she said. "There's something about it that seems, maybe its reputation, as such a noble bird. There's something about the thought of that being endangered that is really a horrifying thought."

Clients buy the urns for all sorts of reasons—as a reminder, for museum collections, as mantle pieces and even as their own personal urns.

"[There] was a couple and they wanted to buy species that were compatible," said Galloway. "So, that's kind of amazing, right?"

Galloway began her long-term relationship with pots in high school. She said when she started, she was "a little bit good at it." Because her high school had a pottery studio, she was able to make pots during lunch or sneak in during a cancelled class.

"The pottery shop was just really quiet," she said, "and it was like kind of calm and it was in this really big, old beautiful building. So, I took great solace there."

She went on to study pottery in college and later in graduate school.

When Galloway was still an up and coming artist, the Clay Art Center featured her in her first solo show in 1998. She said she wanted to return to New York—which she is not a native of—and exhibit the Endangered Species Project, her third solo show at the center, due to the kindness they have shown her from the beginning.

"They were so good to me early on and I just wanted to share this project with them," Galloway said.

A portion of the proceeds from the urn sales will go to the Westchester Land Trust organization, which supports wildlife throughout the county. Galloway also donates to land trusts in the areas where her clay is mined. According to Farrell-Fagan, the smallest urns cost \$180 and the largest go for \$375. The show at 40 Beech St. will continue until Nov. 11.



In a downstairs room at the Carver Center, 144 winter coats lie on tables for Port Chester families to pick up for their children.

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Much-needed winter coats provided to local children

Carver Center teams up with Dalio Philanthropies to keep youth warm

BY VICTORIA BRESNAHAN

Over 100 coats were provided to elementary and middle school-aged boys and girls this week to help keep them safe and warm this winter.

"Our attitude here is that our clients deserve the best," said CEO of the Carver Center Anne Bradner. "If you go to school and everybody's got a new coat, you want a new coat, too, and not wearing a last year's ill-fitting hand-me-down or whatever. It's a real point of self-esteem."

Carver Center volunteers and staff met with families during the organization's coat drive distribution on the lower level of the 400 Westchester Ave. building from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and again from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 15.

The registration to receive one of the 144 puffy winter coats given to the Carver Center from Dalio Philanthropies, a foundation that works to create better public education systems, was open to any needy family in the community.

According to the center's Development Coordinator Karissa Payero, who typically manages the organization's community drives, registration was held online this year. She said families who attended their back to school drive in August provided their emails if they were interested in receiving event notifications. They were then directed to the event's page to sign up.

"Last year we were given 400 [coats] for this particular event, [but] we will also have another drive where we will distribute 300," Payero said.

The coats were laid out on tables and were available in sizes ranging from children's size 4 to extra-large. In a separate room, families could also choose from over 200 Halloween costumes—donated by Community Costumes in New Canaan, Conn.—for their child to dress up in at the end of the month.

Bradner said some registrants were clients of the center's food pantry and youth program. To allow everyone access to a coat, families selected how many they needed, whether it was for a boy or girl and the necessary sizes during the sign-up period.

Many of the families the center helps are recent immigrants to the U.S. and work hard to make ends meet, the CEO said.



Highview Avenue, Rye Brook, resident Lina Garcia holds up the jackets her children will be given for the winter season after picking them up at a Carver Center coat drive distribution on Tuesday, Oct. 15. Over 140 coats were provided to the 400 Westchester Ave. community center on behalf of Dalio Philanthropies.

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"Our families often have to make really hard decisions: clothing or food or rent?" said Bradner.

Providing a child with a new, brand name winter coat can empower them and boost their confidence, Payero said. For many families, she said it releases them from financial struggle as it is one less expensive item to purchase.

"They are usually tremendously grateful for the opportunity," Payero said. "Not many organizations distribute new coats."

According to a Carver Center press release, Dalio Philanthropies has provided 2,100 coats to Port Chester residents since 2015. Payero said Carver Center has had a long relationship with the foundation.

"Having warm winter coats is a basic necessity," stated Co-Founder and Director of Dalio Philanthropies Barbara Dalio in the press release. "We are thrilled to partner with the Carver Center to ensure students are warm this winter."

The Carver Center will hold another coat drive and Thanksgiving dinner next month in collaboration with Children's HopeChest, which works toward moving communities and their residents out of poverty.



Utilitarian potter Julia Galloway discusses her exhibit Endangered Species Project: New York during the show's opening at the Clay Art Center on Saturday, Sept. 28. The display features 288 urns of New York animals that are endangered, of special concern, extinct, extirpated or threatened.

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Some are endangered, of special concern, have been delisted or threatened. Others are extinct, and some have been extirpated—meaning they have left their usual breeding area in New York.

"Her whole focus is making the unseen seen," said Clay Art Center Gallery Exhibitions Manager Regina Farrell-Fagan during a phone interview. "Like, how can she bring attention to something as an artist, as a potter. So, all of these species are impacted in different ways. I mean, essentially they are impacted by environment, but they are impacted in different ways and her focus is her role as pretty much like a messenger."

Their bodies are painted onto the human-sized urns, a traditional means of encasement for cremation ashes.

"Urn is just a fabulous metaphor," Galloway said during a phone interview. "The other thing about it is they are displayed empty, which is to give us some hope."

All the species live or have lived within five hours of the Clay Art Center, according to Galloway.

Shock, disbelief common reactions to show

When some hear the term endangered species, Galloway said they may think of the animals through a filter.

"I would try to let that go a little bit and let the show wash over you because the number is overwhelming," she said. "So, if you could just sort of walk through first without finding like your favorite bird or something, and just let it kind of wash over you, and then kind of get down and dirty with it."

Farrell-Fagan said when clients visit the show, many are shocked because they were unaware that certain species are endangered. The point of the show is es-