

ELIZABETH TRITTHART

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Artistic Career Overview

I have always counted myself as an artist and a musician long after I had earned my engineering degree because my love of Art came first. I have been proficient in most fiber arts since my early years thanks to having a parent and four designing women of my grandmother's generation as early life examples of what magic could be accomplished with a needle (crochet and knitting), scissors and a sewing machine. My secret passion was to start my day with Art, courtesy of a kind Art teacher who opened the studio early for me each day to come in and work from the time I was in fifth grade.

After a serious car accident and a move to Montana for long term recovery, I took up the art of weaving in 1991. I have been attending classes, reading and performing my own experiments in my studio for more than 30 years. I have learned that I am a damask weaver as complex twill structures are in my bones as much as the desire to create a beautiful scene. I completed my master certification in Jacquard weaving in Lisio in Florence, Italy. In my studio, I have both a large drawloom and a computer hobby loom.

While volunteering in the IBRC as a resident artist during the weekdays, I have concentrated my personal studio time increasing my teaching, drawing, painting, weaving and printmaking skills. I have developed curriculums and project kits for multiple classes over multiple years. Most notable was the winter of 2024/2025 in which I volunteered with the Butte Rescue Mission to lead art classes for the drop-in center on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Typically, I was working with 10 – 20 people who were in various stages of homelessness and recovery. Many of my students lacked basic life and studio skills, but responded to one on one instruction, and peer to peer support. This program rapidly improved the movement of clients into a recovery program and reduced disciplinary interventions required.

Qualifications

Resident Artist since 2022 in the Imagine Butte Resource Center (IBRC) in Butte, Montana developing and implementing programs, workshops and art outreach opportunities, supporting the day to day operations of the studio and common spaces in the Phoenix Block Building, providing studio tours, information and at times crisis management for people in need of shelter or safety.

Experienced in leading studio art sessions for young adults, children, capable of adapting art materials and tools to accommodate special needs and support for those in addiction and in recovery.

Expert in Computer Aided Drafting using, Weavepoint, Fiberworks, PointCarre, Weavemaker

Expert in Adobe Creative Cloud and Microsoft Office products

Avid researcher of weaving history, able to search via the Internet or the card catalogue

Skilled in relief, collagraphy, intaglio, monoprint and pochoir printmaking

Accomplishments

2024

Selected as solo Artist in May for the Mainstope Gallery in Butte – a presentation of weavings made of from my research of the history of weaving as it moved from Europe to the United States in the late 1600's

Presented research findings to my peers from the research project above to the Historic Weaving Conference at the Thousand Islands Arts Center in New York in October

Prior Accomplishments:

Completed an independent international study of Art History in Florence, Italy in 2006. During this time I studied fabrics that were in famous paintings to determine if they were current fabrics of the time or things that were made up as the artist painted the portrait. I used my free time to investigate as many museums and historic buildings as I could to locate samples for my research. My findings, most of the fabrics in these paintings where of current manufacture. As a weaver I also sought to locate examples of the drafts that would have been used to create these fabrics.

Current Projects:

Leading the planning and development of a fundraising event titled “Hats Off to Butte” as a collaborative effort between Imagine Butte Resource Center, The Mining Museum, Butte Public Archives, Historic Weaving and Rediscoveries Vintage Clothing, the event celebrates the cultural importance of millinery work in the founding of the City of Butte, and the creativity of the artistic community that exists today. The event has been is an opportunity to research Butte's history and unique culture, develop and present educational experiences for millinery skill re-introduction to the community so that local artist have tools and knowledge to create new hats to reproductions of old ones to be used in the presentation of both the past and the present as a fashion show and a gallery exhibit during the month of November. This project has included successful grant writing for marketing, and the development of sponsorships.

Development of the Art Café business model for the IBRC. The Art Café has been designed to encourage casual artists to move from specific projects (such as a Sip and Paint sunset) and workshops into a less formal studio exploration by developing kits of materials that can be used multiple ways to complete open ended projects facilitated by prompts and professional artistic support to ensure success. The ultimate goal is to raise up more artists from the community, and to encourage people to make use of the studio as a creative outlet for emotional wellbeing and connection to the community at large.

Education and Training

Bachelor of Science: Electronics Engineering Technology Minor in Industrial Engineering
1979

The College of New Jersey

GPA: 3.0

Electronics Engineering Technology

Bachelor of Fine Arts - Studio Arts

2006

Montana State University

GPA: 3.92

Certification in Jacquard Weaving and Computer Aided Design,

Foundazione Arte della Seta Lisio

Florence, Italy

2006