

GRADUATE HUMANITIES

A multidisciplinary program bringing together students and faculty from a variety of backgrounds to collaboratively explore the interdisciplinary intersections of the arts, historical, cultural and literary studies within an open, exploratory, and experimental graduate-level educational environment.

Continuing from our Spring 2023 issue...

An Interview with Tina Humphries by Hayley Humphries

Where: Tina Humphries' home,
Sod, West Virginia
Date: November 2, 2022
Interviewer: Hayley Humphries
Transcription & Write-up:
Hayley Humphries
[Lightly edited for publication.]

< *Tina Humphries was raised in Lincoln County, West Virginia, where she still lives today. In her free time, she is an artist who draws, paints, crochets, and creates stained glass art.*



Hayley Humphries: When did you first start creating art?

Tina Humphries: Probably when I was about four or five. I was staying with grandmother, Mam-Mam Tine, and she was annoyed with me. So she sent me outside to sit with my Great-Uncle Garner on the swing. He was drawing and I asked if I could try it. He taught me how to draw a rose. That's the first time I can remember making anything.

What type of art do you create today?

I like to draw, and paint, and work with stained glass. I've started developing an interest in photography in the past couple years.

Remember, in the last issue, the interviews collected by our graduate students with a local former actor, a makeup artist, and a culinary maestro?

In this issue, we are serving up two more oral histories with a stained glass artist and an all-woman "classy country" band.

And, on our back page, we're passing along good news about two key folks in the Graduate Humanities program, Dr. Eric Lassiter and Dr. Elizabeth Campbell.

The wealth of topics explored in our seminars and shared in our bi-annual newsletter is what you can count on receiving in our program.

I'm wondering ... Why should we have all the fun? We'd love to have you join us. - Trish



Fall

2023 SCHEDULE

Upcoming Seminars



Marshall University
Graduate College South Charleston
Graduate Humanities Program
Dr. Luke Eric Lassiter, Director
Trish Hatfield '08, Editor, Graduate Humanities
304-746-1923 | marshall.edu/humn

Would you say that growing up in West Virginia influenced your artwork?

I don't know, I mean, I think it might. It might influence my subject matter but if you're an artist, you're an artist. It doesn't matter where you grow up.

You say you primarily work with stained glass, correct?

Yes, right now, yes. I go through stages of what I like to make. For a couple of years, I liked to do Native American designs, and then I was on a blue-orange contrast complimentary color kick. And for a while, I liked working with red, black, and white. I had a couple of years where I made stained glass that looked like quilt pieces. My Aunt Noke gave me her pattern book of quilt pieces and I was making glass that looked like the maple leaves she would make with fabric pieces. So, whatever catches my interest at the time is what I work with.

At what point did you realize that it was a passion and something that you truly enjoyed more than anything else?

Pretty much when I got in trouble in second grade for drawing in all the textbooks, and I, uh, I really didn't care, I drew in them anyway.

(Laughter)

Whenever I was in class I would draw on my notebook or in textbooks or whenever we had recesses, I would draw. We had finger-painting because I remember in second grade, we ran out of one color. So [the teacher and I] ended up mixing all the fingerprint colors on my page. It made this really cool gold color. The other kids got really pissed off at that because they didn't have



the same color and I had that color because I had all the left over's.

It was fun, the texture was fun, the painting was fun and the fact that everyone was pissed off was kind of fun, too.

So, can you tell me in what ways you express yourself through your artwork?

Hmm...not so much with stained glass, but some of my drawings and my paintings are, you know, quasi-political, feminist movement stuff. It's a little bit harder to bring that forward with glass because it's colder. With paint, you can. Paint seems more personal to me than stained glass.

When it comes to stained glass, where do you get inspiration to create?

(Tongue clicks)

I either use set patterns or start with doodling. Sometimes I'll see an Art Nouveau piece and start

putting my own touches and my own flares on it. Or I'll see an animal and figure out how I'm going to draw it and then transfer that to glass. It's different.

Drawing is easy. Making patterns is hard. When you draw a pattern for stained glass you have to figure out where the breaks are going to be, and where the lead is going to be, and where you're going to solder it, and if it's

“I love the sound of glass being scored with a glass cutter. I love that sound. Um, and then you have to tap it to break the glass free of the glass where it's been cut.

“And there's another sound and a tone that the glass makes when that line is complete. It's just this pure tone.”

actually workable and how much of a pain in the ass it's going to be to cut.

Can you explain to me what it's like working with stained glass in West Virginia? Would you say that it influences a community? Would you say that you've sold a decent amount? If it's just a hobby?

What I do with stained glass probably does not influence a community. With me it's mostly a hobby. I have sold some pieces, but I don't do commission work

because I don't want to have a timeline on what I'm creating and when I'm creating. And I don't do well with schedules like that. There's a few stained glass artists that make some really nice things that go into the visitor centers and in various businesses. But like I said, I don't want the timeline. I don't want someone telling me that I absolutely, positively, have to do it this way. I make what I want and then I can sell it if I want or I can give it away.

Can you tell me in detail how you make stained glass artwork?

I wanted to do it since I was in high school. But I was under the impression that you made the form and then you poured melted glass into it. I just couldn't imagine having the space or the time, and I knew I would make a mess.

And, then I was in college working at a restaurant when I met Akio. He was from Japan and working with stained glass. He told me he could teach me.

With glass you get an idea of what you want to make. You can either use a store-bought pattern or you draw your own pattern and then you figure out what colors you want. You go to the stained glass store or Payton City where they sell a lot of scraps. There's one in Kanawaha City that's the only one I go to. It was Martina's at one time but I don't remember the name it is now. You can either special order the glass or buy it on site.

Sometimes I buy glass just because I think it's pretty and I think, 'I can work with this on a later project.' That's usually what I end up doing.

You mark your glass to cut it as close to the shape as you can get it. And then you grind out the



sharp edges. You have to wrap it in copper foil, which is my least favorite part. I hate it. I like the way it looks after it gets done but I hate wrapping.

Why don't you like wrapping?

It's time-consuming.

(Laughter)

It's just so time-consuming and I don't like it. I love cutting the glass because I like the way it feels when you're using your cutter across the glass. I like that. but the wrapping...it's so meticulous having to get the copper foil around the glass correctly.

Soldering is pretty much my favorite part. You put your flux down on your copper. You can get lead-free flux but it doesn't go as smoothly. You solder your pieces together and then...you can either do the foil around the edges, or you can buy the lead kind. If you have bigger pieces that you want

to do, use the kind that is lead and is already pre-shaped and pre-balled. It's got little ridges where you put your glass in. If you're doing that, then you don't have to use the foil and wrap it. But it is also a lot heavier, and it has to be stretched and it's kind of expensive. Then you clean it, put it up, and let the light come through it so it sparkles. It's extremely time-consuming. And

“Artists are not competitive like in sports but they ... are a little bit jealous of other people’s talent.

“And then they look again and say, ‘How did they do it that way?’ You know subconsciously if you can incorporate other people’s styles and innovations into your own stuff.

when you work with lead over the course of a career you can build up a toxicity.

Do you feel like...stained glass, working with stained glass is an outlet for your emotions in any way?

Not really, no. Drawing and painting would be an outlet for my emotions. Stained glass is something I do because it's pretty, and it gets me out of the house.

So, you do this purely for enjoyment?

Yes!

Not so much for an audience?

No, I don't care if I have an audience or not.

When you do have an audience, what are your feelings when people see and appreciate or dislike your artwork?

I'm kind of arrogant so I don't care either way. I mean if somebody likes my art, I probably give it to them. If they don't like my art, then it's just not to their taste. I mean, there are artists that I look at their art and don't particularly like it, but I can appreciate their talent and what they were trying to say with it. But I may not actually like the piece. Same with some music and stuff, I don't like it, but I can appreciate the talent.

Do you feel that other artists are able to appreciate each other's artwork similarly and respect it that way?

Yeah, for the most part. Artists are not competitive like in sports but they look at stuff and are a little bit jealous of other people's talent. And then they look again and say, 'How did they do it that way?' You know subconsciously if you can incorporate other people's styles and innovations into your own stuff. I think artists not only appreciate other's artwork, but they are also learning from it at the same time.

Has stained glass helped you to meet other artists within your community or within the state of West Virginia?

Yes, several other stained glass artists and several painters—you know, that's their medium. I run into them and talk to them and ask them where they got started. For some, I've adapted their work into stained glass and given it to them as a present.

So, for my last question, would you recommend stained glass to other artists as a way to preserve the art form? Or would you rather it just be kept within certain groups?

I would recommend it to anybody wanting to learn it. I don't think art should be kept within any certain group.

Any kind of artwork is universal. There's some stuff now where people are talking about cultural appropriation of some art styles and themes, and I can understand that. But as far as the art, the medium itself, it's universal.

You will get cut and you will bleed and if you're afraid of being cut then you shouldn't work with it. Lead is toxic but no more toxic than paints used to be. After a while, you don't bleed as much because you figure out how to handle glass without getting cut, but you're still gonna get cut.

I know how I said that the last question was going to be the last one, but you said that you will get cut, you will bleed, it is toxic, you work with toxic lead. Despite the risks you still continue to do this. Can you tell me why?

Because it's fun!

(Laughter)

It's fun to watch it grow. I love the sound of glass being scored with a glass cutter. I love that sound. Um, and then you have to tap it to break the glass free of the glass where it's been cut. And there's another sound and a tone that the glass makes when that line is complete. It's just this pure tone.

Alrighty. Well, thank you for this interview, I really appreciate it. >

Hayley Humphries is in her fourth semester in the graduate history program at Marshall University. She joined us in the Graduate Humanities program for this seminar on "Oral History and Ethnography."



ART involves creation.

Creation never occurs in a vacuum, it must involve choices of techniques, as well as content, that are all culturally influenced and learned. The creator is never totally isolated, nor does he or she merely repeat what is known.

Gerald L. Pocius. "Art," *Eight Words for the Study of Expressive Culture*, p. 56.

An interview with MA'AM's Mary Ashton and Amy McIntire by Anna Osborne

Where: Olive Garden, Beckley, West Virginia

Date: November 1, 2022

Transcription & Write-up: Anna Osborne

[Lightly edited for publication.]

This interview by graduate student Anna Osborne with musicians Mary Ashton and Amy McIntire is longer than we usually publish. We always do light editing because of space considerations. We leave in as descriptions of the locale, surrounding noises, hand gestures of the interviewees, etc., when noted in the interviewer's. We do this to help the reader imagine the physical setting of the interview.

This interview is different because of the on-going comical exchanges between the interviewees as they answer the interviewer's questions. (Anna assures us that Amy and Mary are as entertaining in dinner conversation as they are on stage, playing off one another with artful timing and wit.) We left as many of their exchanges in as possible for your enjoyment.

< I'm Anna Osborne. I have the true pleasure of sitting here with the classy country band known as MA'AM. Would you please introduce yourselves individually? And I'll just let the recorder sit here on the table between us.

Mary Ashton: My name is Mary.

Amy McIntire: I'm Amy.

MA: Together we're MA'AM.

AM: MA'AM!

Both: Classy country. (Hearty Laughter)

Alright, Ladies. In between your bites of unlimited pasta, would you share with me the story of how MA'AM started?

AM: Well, it started with a party at my house.

MA: And then we were booked for the Winter Music Festival in Lewisburg.

AM: We played on one another's sets, and determined that it was much more fun to play together than it was to do a solo set.



Photo by Marlyn McClendon

MA: We had both been in duos before, or bands before, but I think that we were both happy in our solo world, you know? Because I think we had both kind of reached that place around the same time.

AM: That's right.

MA: And then when we met it was like 'Oh, this is too good to pass up.'

And how long ago was that?

MA: Five years ago.

Could you give a rough timeline spanning those five years? Were there eras for the band?

AM: Well a lot of it has been like figuring out self-promotion. Okay we're here but what do we need to get here (gesturing to two places). And so I'd say there was the initial era of like, 'Okay what can we do together?' And then, 'Who are we?'

MA: Who are we?

AM: Or why are we getting out there?...There was the first album, right?

MS: Yes, I think it is defined in PR moments, actually. So we did our promo video? That was before we even got a website.

AM: Right...

(We paused when the waitress stopped by to check our parmesan cheese levels. The restaurant is bustling. I vaguely remember that my professor cautioned against conducting interviews in loud, public venues...)

MA: So we also had this idea that we were going to interview people.

AM: And it never even happened. Like not even once. This was way back.

MA: It was way back. But I'm all about bringing it back. But we just don't have time for that. Right now.

(Laughter)

MA: I think that we enjoy learning. I think we both enjoy learning. And that was one of the things that I realized about Amy that I really loved. If you work with her for a really long time...there's not an endpoint to her projects and I don't mean it in a bad way.

(Laughter)

AM: No, it's true though.

MA: And you're constantly learning, and I love learning—anyway, I went off on a tangent.

AM: Well thank you, though. I feel the same way about you. I feel like you're always willing to learn something. Or make something.

MA: But I feel like that we're going to get back into (the interviews) one day and I actually just think we should interview my mom first.

AM: That's a good idea.

MA: And we should interview your mom.

AM: Okay.

MA: And then we should do a compare and contrast. A Venn diagram.

(Laughter)

Will [your moms] sing with you?

MA: Oohhh yeahh.

AM: My mom will not.

MA: Oh no. Your mom won't. Your mom won't. But she would make something. She would make like a beautiful, fabulous meal.

AM: Yeah.

It would be creative.

AM: It would be.

Do you feel like there is a mission for your band now? Do you feel like there's a central purpose?

MA: I do when I think about it—especially being in this state right now. An all-woman band is just not something that you see. Around here. When we play a show and there's a little girl looking up at us, or even a little boy, or just young eyes, I know that there is a

purpose and we are doing something really, especially in this place, because it's harder here.

AM: I think that this also answers another of your questions which is "What are some things that only you see from the stage?" Because this is absolutely true that only Mary sees anything from the stage.

(Laughter)

AM: I see nothing! I'm completely in my own world. Mary looks out and she sees that person and their relationship to that person, and the little kid, which is what makes her so good as the person who talks. And me, I'm thinking about the songs, what are we doing next? My brain is not branching out. In fact, I'll mess up when I look at people, it messes me up.

MA: But it's great because she's in it. And I can go, "Okay, Audience!" and then I can pull back and be like, "Okay, let's do this song," I know, [Amy] is there, like, in it.

And do you compare notes after the show and it's always like that funny contrast?

AM: Yeah.

MA: Oh, yeah.

AM: Did you see that?

MA: Did you see that? Did you notice the...

AM: No!

MA: Amy's really good at...when we take a break and we come to talk to people, she remembers their names, she knows what they were interested in about us...

(We pause. Sounds of silverware clinking and chatter are all around us.)

Could you talk a little about the instruments you play, and why you play them?

MA: I started off playing the mandolin, and then when I was fifteen I learned the guitar. And I've just recently picked up the electric. I learned from my grandfather. He played mountain music, and so I learned from that culture how to play. How to sing. How to perform.

AM: You should also talk about the setting.

MA: The foot tambourine?

AM: Well, that too—

(Laughter)

AM: The only foot tambourine player in—

MA: Tambourinist!

Tambourinista!

(Laughter)

MA: So every year my grandparents hosted what's called, what was called a pickin' party in their yard. They had a farm. And people that they had met in Florida, ... came and played music for two weeks. I lived in a single-wide trailer in this yard. So my grandfather was here and they were here (gesturing with hands) and they came and they just set up camp, they played music all day, all night.

Wow. How old were you?

MA: I was twelve. That's when I learned the mandolin. I learned from Francine.

Was Francine the friend?

(The waitress comes by and we order another round of pasta.)

MA: Yeah, she was one of their friends. And she had a lot of CDs of her mandolin playing. I didn't realize how great all these musicians were. I mean, anybody can make a CD but these people...I got to meet some really fabulous musicians at a very young age and I didn't even know it.

When did you realize this?

MA: I was gone away from here for a long time and I was like, 'You know what? This sucks. Nobody's playing music the way that I know how to play music.' [When I was younger] I would go to places and I'd be like "Okay, let's all sit around in a circle, and it's your turn to play a song and then it's your turn to play a song and then it's your turn." We'd just play music...for hours and hours and hours. But people didn't do that [in other places], and so I missed it.

AM: I went to a pickin' party at Mary's Aunt's house recently, so the tradition continues. We played one song because I wanted them to hear Mary. And they were all like, "Whoa."

AM: I was so impressed with everybody who was sitting in that circle playing.

MA: Isn't it cool?

AM: It's remarkable. Yeah. It was really cool.

AM: Like especially the older women. One had a fiddle and one had a guitar, right? Who were they?

MA: Um, Linda Petry and Becky—I don't know her last name. My Aunt has a band called the West By Goddesses, and they're in it. And it's four older women and a young guy.

AM: Who's the young guy?

MA: Jeremy.

AM: Jeremy's in the West By Goddesses?!

MA: Yeah. He plays amazingly.

AM: That's cool.

Did you play the tambourine? With your foot?

MA: I didn't. I need a new foot tambourine. It's sad.

AM: Is it because you don't know where it is?

MA: No, it's because the elastic is worn on it.

AM: Oh, okay, cause I think it might be—

MA: It's at your house?

AM: —in that suitcase. Yeah. I forgot it. Yeah.

(Laughter)

MA: Your career came to a crashing halt because...

(Laughter)

AM: It came to a jingling halt.

(Laughter)



Photo by Mary Ashton

MA: Well my husband, he was like, "You know, you don't have to play the tambourine in *every* song."

(Laughter)

MA: I was like, uh...maybe I do.

Amy, would you talk about the instruments that you play and why you play them?

AM: Yes! I play the pedal steel guitar. And I play the five-string banjo, and I play it more Scruggs style than claw hammer style though I don't really do either one.

(Laughter)

AM: I started playing the banjo because I was working at the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center in Texas as an intern and there was a guy there named John Irwin. He was older, retired, a volunteer. Sometimes I worked with him, and he played at the Austin Banjo Club. And one day he was like, "Amy, why don't you join the Austin Banjo Club? You play a little guitar." And I said, "Well John, I don't have a banjo. If one falls down from



Album cover designed by Susanna Robinson

the sky, I might join the club." And he comes the next week with a banjo, and he says "This is my buddy's wife's banjo. She doesn't play it anymore. You can borrow it." And so I joined the Austin Banjo Club.

(Laughter)

So one fell from the sky—

AM: Yes. I could not play at all at that point. I was terrible. And I sat with like twenty-three old men on Thursday nights—

MA: And pretended to get better—

AM: And pretended to play the banjo. And then I ended up buying that banjo. So that's how I got the banjo.

MA: And that's the banjo you have now?

AM: Nope. Nope. I eventually had the banjo that I had made for me. Which, Anna, I think you were with me when I bought it.

Right, at Clifftop.

AM: Yeah, at Clifftop. Yep.

I remember you sitting there consulting about your specifications.

AM: Yeah...the man who made it has since died, so I feel really happy that I have one of his last banjos. Pedal steel. Also when I was in Texas I saw a pedal steel player at a dance, like a Texas dance joint, and was immediately like, I want to play that! And then I was walking by Don Drummer's house in Lewisburg, and he came out on the porch and he was like, "Hey Amy. I want to show you something."

MA: People just know that she needs to learn how to play these instruments.

They just see it in you!

AM: And I was totally wide-eyed. He named his price and I left like, "No way—I'm not getting paid that much." And I woke up the next morning and I was like "I'm buying it."

And it was that clear.

AM: It was that clear.

Could you say what drew you to it, that when you heard it you were immediately magnetized?

AM: I've always liked the sound of it and I think that I like the sound of it because it kind of mimics the human voice. There aren't too many other instruments that can do that so easily. Like the trombone can, and, I guess the fiddle can.

The saw—

AM: The saw can, exactly.

(Laughter)

In a pinch.

AM: If you can get a sound out of it. Yeah, so I think that's it.

MA: Um, Amy also plays the flute.

I didn't know you played the flute! It's like the under-wraps instrument!

MA: Yeah, and she plays it on our album, *Fire Pink*, on a song I wrote called "Super Freaky Woman." She plays a badass flute solo on it.

Yes! Would you state for the record, quickly, your albums?

MA: Yes, so we have an EP [short CD/album] named *Dames Rocket* and we have an LP named *Fire Pink*.

(The waitress comes by again and asks if we need more water. Mary takes a sip and says that she doesn't drink water.)

I'm curious if you all consider yourselves to be Appalachian musicians. Why or why not?

(Long pause)

And I want to throw in another question, because these are connected. I'm curious how your relationship to Appalachia impacts your music. So I think those are kind of like variations of the same question.

MA: I think that we are Appalachian musicians for multiple reasons.

AM: Yeah, I guess. I sort of go back and forth. I think that my—

MA: Yeah sometimes I feel like I am, sometimes I feel like I'm not.

AM: —I feel like I'm connected to Appalachia through my family's heritage but not immediately because my parents moved away. I grew up in cities, so, in some ways I feel like not exactly an imposter, but I just don't really feel totally authentic.

MA: I feel the same way.

AM: But I feel really connected to plants and animals—well, really plants of Appalachia, so in that way I feel very connected to the landscape.

AM (to Mary): Why do you not feel like an Appalachian musician?

MA: You know how I was talking about my family playing music?

AM: Yeah.

MA: Well, I feel like a lot of people know traditional songs and I didn't spend a lot of my time learning traditional Appalachian music. And so I do feel like I'm not able to go to [Clifftop] or you know, somewhere and be like "Okay, well let's play—you know...."

AM: Ole Slew Foot

(Laughter)

MA: Exactly.

(Pause)

MA: But I was raised around it. And so I know from learning, now that I teach children music, I know that it influenced me. And it does influence me. So how can I say that I'm not?

AM: Yeah.

MA: So it's a little bit of both.

AM: Yeah.

Is there hesitation to outwardly identify yourselves, like to give yourselves a label? Are you concerned about how other people might interpret you labeling yourselves as Appalachian?

MA: I think so, a little bit. I don't know. It's a mixed bag.

AM: Yeah, if someone called us traditional Appalachian musicians, I'd be like, 'No, that's not right.' But then Appalachian feels a little broader, so that feels sort of okay. I think if we were playing outside of Appalachia then I think we could definitely get away with being Appalachian musicians.

(Laughter)

AM: It just depends on the audience.

Has that happened yet?

AM: Not really.

MA: I don't know if we've played enough places to really be able to. We've played predominantly in West Virginia.

MA (**Looking at Amy**): Wouldn't you say?

AM: Yeah

MA: So, that's Appalachia. I think about it often, though. I do think about that question. Like how do people perceive us, and how do we come across to people? I think that they like that we have a little bit of Appalachian in us, but they're also maybe pleasantly surprised when we branch out.

Do you have a song that sort of typifies Appalachia, like do you have an Appalachian song?

MA: Would you say—like our song "Maggie"? (**Looking at Amy again.**)

AM: Yeah. I'd say that it has a more traditional sound.

(Pause)

AM: I'm just not sure. I'm so confused about what being an Appalachian is that I just don't even know.

MA: Yeah, I don't know either.

MA: I think Appalachian musician, I think traditional... songs.

AM: Yeah, like more traditional actually—sounding music. What makes it traditional? I'm not quite sure.

That's so interesting. When you think of someone who is currently making music, and maybe even plays—you know, original new

music, and is distinctly Appalachian, how do you imagine that sounds? What would that be like?

MA: Hmmmm.

AM: Do you think that's like a Gillian Welch/David Rawlings kind of sound? I'm trying to think of who does that? I would say that there's a lot of nostalgia in music



Photo by Brehana Scott

that people are making that sounds traditional but it's current music. Either that or there's this element of the natural landscape, and farming, that often feels romanticized to me. So like, those are the two aspects, either, 'Life is hard, we're really poor.' Or 'Oh, the farming life is amazing.'

(Laughter)

AM: I don't understand why people are romanticizing farming. I think it's really hard work. It's on behalf of my grandmother. I'm just going to say it out loud.

MA: It's really hard.

AM: She spent her young life farming, and never forgot that it was very hard.

Right, right!

AM: Oh this is something I was thinking of today while I was folding the laundry...when I was reading "What is your experience of being female musicians in this field?" I was thinking to myself, 'Well actually I feel like an Appalachian female musician.' There are more of them than in some other genres and actually the male/female ratio actually feels more balanced to me than other genres of music traditionally. But right now, I would say with (a lot of modern Appalachian music) it just feels very masculine...like very boy energy to me. It feels different now...than I historically

think about it being. In Mary's family...let's talk about Mary's family...in Mary's family, the girls all played instruments. Her aunts all played instruments and her dad did not.

MA: I think that my grandmother forced her daughters to be in the (school) band. There was a very good band instructor at the time, and so they learned from somebody that was really, really good. And my grandfather learned from somebody who was really good. And he learned music theory very quickly, and so they were in this music zone together.

What are your respective roles in your band? If you have them.

MA: Well, I feel like we're co-managers of the band right now.

AM: Yeah, I think Mary's kind of more of the person that is going to be talking to the audience, directly, with the most coherent train of thought.

MA: Sometimes

(Laughter)

MA: Sometimes Amy cuts me off. She's like, 'Yerrrr done! We are *not* going to that story.'

(Laughter)

AM: Mary does the website, exclusively.

MA: Mmhm. And Facebook. And we share the social media.

AM: We do the Instas.

MA: Instagram.

(Waitress brings to-go boxes. It really is unlimited pasta!)

MA: We have to divide and conquer. There's so much. My husband asked me about MA'AM. He said, "Well what do you think at this point you need to do?" I said, "I think we need a manager. I think we need somebody that is looking out for our future potential."

AM: Yeah, it would be nice to have somebody who knows what our realistic options are for the next few years...Cause I think right now it feels like we're comfortable playing in this tri-county area, but it's a lot harder to get a gig outside of it. And it's really time-consuming....

MA: So figuring all that out. I'd like somebody to kinda kick our ass a little bit.

I know I'm interviewing you all, but I just want to speak up for a moment and acknowledge that you also have full-time jobs and families. You

basically (each) have like two full-time jobs. You have music careers. So I think it's remarkable that you've been able to sustain this as long as you have.

MA: Well thank you.

AM: Yeah. Thanks. I think it's cause we like each other. It makes a big difference to enjoy the other person vs. just having a business relationship.

MA: And it's exciting every time I get ready to write a new song I'm always thinking of Amy and like how exciting this is going to be to sing this with her.

AM: That's really the best part is to put together a new song—to be working on a new song and kind of tweaking it and figuring out where it's going to go. For me, that's the absolute best part. I like performing, but there's nothing like that feeling of 'Oh my gosh, we just wrote something that's amazing.' Even if it's just amazing for the next five minutes. Like, it's amazing.

You created it! It didn't exist.

AM: Yeah, and now it's here! Yeah!

MA: And so many people have been so kind to us, and welcoming toward us.

Is there anything you wish I would have asked you, anything that you would like to state for the record?

MA: Well for the record—

(Laughter)

MA (to Amy): I still owe you a hundred bucks.

(Laughter)

MA: Since we're on the record...I can't give it to you today though.

AM: It's okay.

MA: I'm sorry.

AM: It's alright.

(Laughter)

MA: I wanted to. But—it's not gonna happen.

AM: It's not happenin'. Thanks for the memories??

MA: That's on the record. So if I don't pay, we can come back to this.

(Laughter)

I think this is a good place to stop, most everyone else has cleared out the place! Thank you so much, you all. This was super very fun.

MA: Okay! You're welcome.

AM: It was fun for me. Thanks! >

Anna Osborne resides at the corners of Greenbrier, Monroe, and Summers Counties, in Alderson, West Virginia. A fourth generation teacher and former early childhood educator, she currently teaches English Language Learners K-8. She enrolled in the Appalachian Studies Graduate Certificate program in 2021, and has gone on to pursue a Masters in Humanities at Marshall. For a class last year, when tasked with interviewing Appalachian artists, she immediately thought of friends Amy McIntyre and Mary Ashton, the musical duo MA'AM.



While good art

requires skills...art at its best connects words, sounds, movement or color to emotions crystallized within us. It allows us to glimpse something within human reach, to fulfill the unuttered promise of experience, to find poetry in our loneliness.

Diana Jean Schemo, 1995. "Between the Art and the Artist Lies the Shadow." *New York Times* January 1, sec. 4.



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Project Title
 "WE ARE APPALACHIA!
 An Anthology about Appalachian Authenticity"

< Dr. Luke Eric Lassiter (pictured right), professor of humanities and anthropology and director of the graduate humanities program at Marshall University, has been named the 28th Distinguished John Deaver Drinko Academy Fellow.



The award is one of the university's highest recognitions for faculty and includes a stipend, re-assigned time from teaching, and other financial and clerical support for two academic years to undertake research, special projects, or other scholarly pursuits.

The announcement of Lassiter's appointment was made by the academy's executive director, Dr. Montserrat Miller, during the academy's annual dinner.

"It is truly an honor to welcome Dr. Luke Eric Lassiter to the ranks of Marshall University's Distinguished Drinko Fellows," Miller said. "In addition to being an exceptional faculty member, with incredible mastery of experiential learning and community engagement, Dr. Lassiter is a prolific scholar with a national and international consulting profile." > Excerpts from [Marshall University News April 18, 2023](#).



< Dr. Lassiter and his wife and colleague, Dr. Elizabeth Campbell (pictured left), associate professor at the Reich College of Education at Appalachian State University, received honorary doctorates from Malmö University in Sweden this fall.

Dr. Robert Bookwalter, dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Marshall, said, "Dr. Lassiter and Dr. Campbell have been doing innovative work in collaborative ethnography for many years." He added, "This award reflects the international impact of their work. Our students are fortunate to work with world-class scholars in the Marshall Graduate Humanities program." > Excerpts from [Marshall University News, September 13, 2023](#).