

Wild Rice Retreat For the Love of Art

The regional arts community is sizeable and somewhat scattered, although made smaller by the interconnections of social media, public gatherings, and private venues. No matter where the artists live, they are familiar with each other's art forms and collectively respect and support each other's creative process.

This small world often comes into play in Bayfield County, Wisconsin where there are numerous professional artists with studios, galleries, opportunities for exhibits, art workshops, and retreats. Our paths often cross in celebration of each other's creative adventures *For the Love of Art*.

Artists are thriving in this natural landscape supported by the phenomenal backing of the kindhearted community, patrons and visitors. This support fosters the artists' talents with the gift of time to develop their artistry while enriching the Northwest Wisconsin culture. As my patron Herbert J. (Tim) Louis, MD expressed: *Art takes time*. It takes time to study, master, create, and teach.

An exciting new regional arts venue is the Wild Rice Retreat (WRR) for the fine arts which celebrated a successful launching in 2018. Heidi Zimmer, the visionary and founder, has a deep appreciation for the shores of Lake Superior and the fine arts, nurturing individual creativity and human development. The retreat's programming is based on the development of the three pillars of Mind, Body and Spirit.

To learn more about the WRR philosophy and mission, I spoke with the Director, Jennifer Albrecht. It was wonderful connecting with Jennifer, who as the Director, has the same passion and dedication for the arts as her parents, Lois and Don Albrecht. Her father was an exceptional photographer and writer. I had the pleasure of participating with him in a Cultural Exchange with the *Union of Artists and Writers of Cuba*. As Director of WRR, Jennifer will build on the three pillars with expressive healing workshops and retreats that focus on *Nourishment, Movement, and Expression*. These foundations of self-care restore balance.

As Jennifer was elaborating on the mission of WRR and their current workshops, she stated that Lissa Flemming was teaching a jewelry making class that day. This was another *small world* artist connection as Lissa and I exhibited together in 2017 at the La Point Center Art Gallery in Madeline Island, WI.

According to Jennifer, *Lissa hosted the first official event of Wild Rice Retreat's Pilot Season in May 2018 to a sold-out class of eager jewelry makers. The class learned to bezel set their own stones, creating beautiful necklaces they all wore home. Since hosting the first event, Heidi Zimmer and Jennifer Albrecht embraced the opportunity for Lissa to turn the former WRR private dining room into a dedicated jewelry studio space. Jennifer elaborated, The goal of the space is to provide a working studio for classes, workshops, and open jewelry labs for both locals and visitors to create and have access to tools that may otherwise not be accessible. Lissa has thoughtfully and carefully prepared the studio, taking both safety and creativity into account.*



Lissa Flemming silversmithing

In addition to creating a space for jewelry making within the retreat center, Lissa has also served as a valuable resource in connecting the WRR programming staff with internationally-recognized silversmiths to teach multi-day retreats. The artistry and teachings of California artist Richard Salley, and Award winning goldsmith, international instructor David Michael Sturlin of Arizona, are currently on the schedule for 2019 – 2020.

Let's celebrate Lissa's leap of faith into the life of a studio artist! In 2014 she won "Best of Show" at the Bayfield Festival of Arts. In spring of 2016, she opened *Silverwaves Jewelry*, an art gallery and working studio in Bayfield. Originally a biologist, turned silversmith, and an 18 year resident of Baja, Mexico, Lissa moved to Bayfield, and has made it her home for 20 years. Her travels have given her a unique perspective fueling the organic jewelry designs which masterfully incorporate the unbound beauty of Lake Superior and the natural world. Lissa reminisced, *I finally figured out where I should be: Hand forging jewelry next to the Lake I respect and love. It took a while, but every adventure, sorrow, joy, moonrise, cup of tea, workshop, etc. has brought me to where I am and is reflected in my jewelry designs. I am inspired by Lake Superior and its waves and ripples; the trees moving in the breeze and the pebbles along the shore.*



Jewelry by Lissa Flemming

Lissa's passion is setting native stones from around Lake Superior with organic sterling frames; imbedding Lake Superior agates, mohawkites, thomsonites, greenstones, basalts and other semi-precious stones from around the world.

According to Jennifer, *The Wild Rice Retreat is honored to be working with Ms. Flemming and other respected jewelry artists to bring additional education about jewelry making to the area.* Experienced (local and visiting) instructors are encouraged to inquire about the WRR programming at www.wildriceretreat.com or call 715.779.0178 to help create the most vibrant, creative, and beautiful destination retreat center in the upper Midwest.

To view Lissa Flemming's unique Silverwaves Gallery and Studio, please visit www.silverwaves.net, or email, info@silverwaves.net

Please visit the following websites for art events, education and much more!

See My Art, Inc. www.seemyart.us

Cable Hayward Arts Council: www.cablehaywardarts.org/

Cable Natural History Museum: <http://cablemuseum.org/>

Chequamegon Bay Arts Council: www.cbayarts.org/

La Pointe Center for the Arts: <https://lapointecenter.org/>

Wild Rice Retreat: www.wildriceretreat.com