An impressionistic painting of a forest path. The path is rendered with thick, textured brushstrokes in shades of blue, purple, and yellow, leading into a dense forest of tall, dark trees. The overall style is expressive and vibrant.

Leesburg

FEBRUARY 2020

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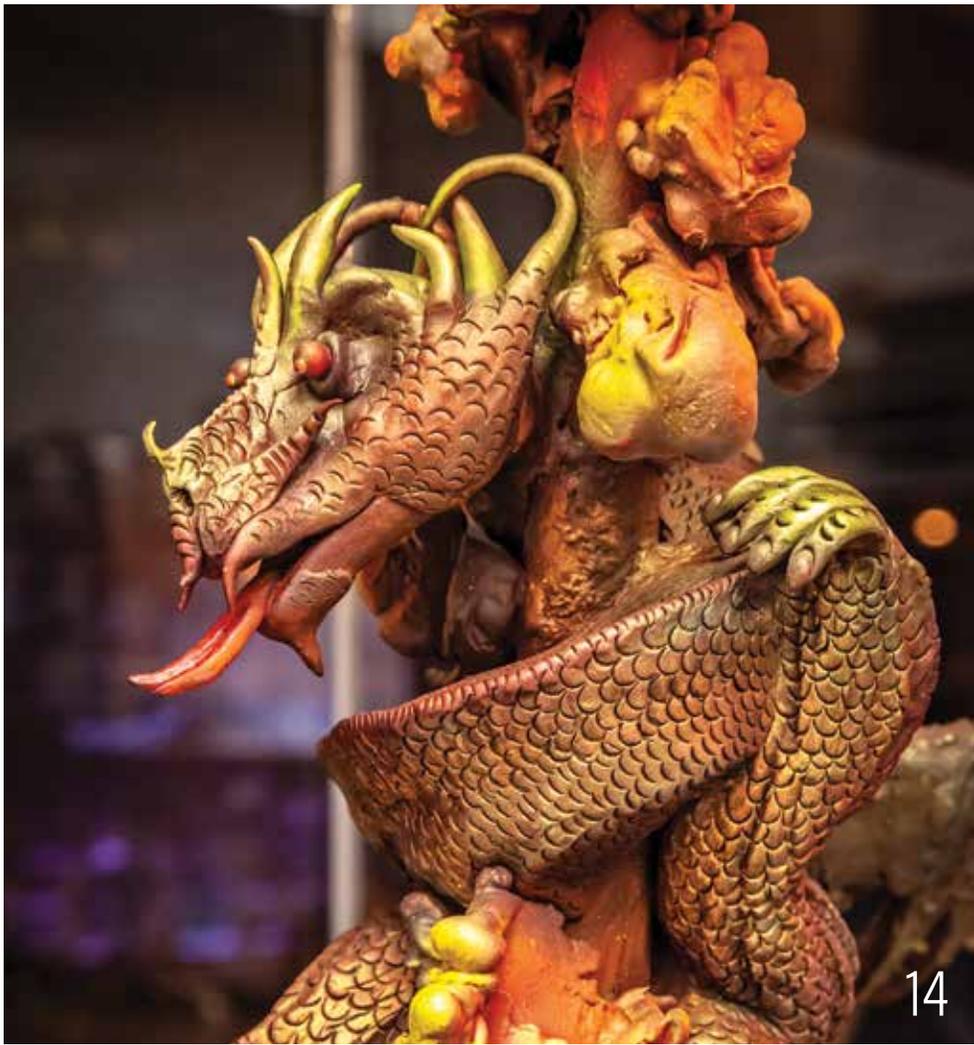
Art & Makers

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OATLANDS' GREENHOUSE

STUDIO GROWS NEW

ARTISTS AND IDEAS

CALEB SCHUTZ AND WALT BARTMAN
OPEN WIDE THE DOORS OF THE 200+-
YEAR OLD PLANTATION TO ARTISTS,
CHEFS AND EDUCATORS

ARTICLE MELINDA GIPSON
PHOTOGRAPHY ADAM KING, NEIL STEINBERG

"GREAT IDEAS COME FROM PUTTING PEOPLE TOGETHER," SAYS WALTER BARTMAN ([HTTP://WALTERBARTMAN.COM](http://WALTERBARTMAN.COM)) FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR OF THE GREENHOUSE STUDIO AT OATLANDS. Greenhouse, named for its recently renovated digs, is only the latest in a long line of studios he has founded from the Yellow Barn Studio at Glen Echo Park to Goldfinch Studio at his home in Middletown, Maryland, to Summer Duck Studio at Tilghman Island on the Eastern Shore. Wherever he finds himself, he paints and teaches artists to both see and express what they see.

When he looks at Oatlands, Walter envisions a "Chautauqua" – an adult education and social movement. Imagine a collective learning environment where a number of accomplished artists can hold their own classes, and those students can go on to show their work and teach and so on.

"The Greenhouse lends itself to a number of things," Walter explains. He's teaching figure, interior and still-life classes. Another class by Christine Lashley explores how to take a small painting and enlarge it. Lori Goll, a well-known pastel artist, has been joined by Kim Richards and Marcia Klioze, to teach classes starting in mid-January. (A full schedule is available at <http://www.goldfinchstudio.org/>.) Four nine-week classes and four workshops for up to 300 students will rotate every quarter.

In Walter's view, "I guarantee this will be a forum where people will be able to grow creatively and intellectually." Professionals who have "followed the rules" for most of their careers find that when they retire they need to think more creatively. "That's what I'm trying to teach people here."

Caleb Schutz, who became the CEO of Oatlands Historic House and Gardens a little over a year ago, shares Walter's ability to imagine how the Greenhouse and other like-minded educational, cultural and even culinary cohorts can use Oatlands as a venue. What Caleb most appreciates about Walter and seeks in other partners is his ability to turn his painting and instruction into a successful business. Having experienced both for-profit and non-profit worlds, Caleb believes melding the two is key to the success of institutions like Oatlands in today's world, where generational philanthropy (a.k.a. "old money") is largely a thing of the past. **CONTINUED >**



Walter Bartman in the Greenhouse Studio



At Carriage House Art Shows Artists and Patrons Mingle and Share Ideas



Oatlands' Carriage House Offers an Open Door to Collaborators



Inside the Carriage House is Room for



Walter Trains the Next Generation of Artists to Think Creatively



The Greenhouse Studio Hosts Art Classes of Every Medium

When he served as international ambassador for IBM's substantial foundation, the company was the most generous benefactor of non-profits in the nation. When he later established MCI's foundation, he annually gave away around \$20 million. Corporations should still invest in the kind of community they want their employees to enjoy, but they don't always know how, so it now falls to non-profits to help to educate them, Caleb said. "Loudoun County is burdened by the fact that everyone wants to live here, but if the growth isn't checked and managed -- if it doesn't build the civic centers and the playhouses -- you won't have the social life and culture people need. If you lose that as you're growing, you can't get it back."

From his perspective as a fundraiser, he says giving has become more of a "business transaction," where non-profits need to simultaneously prove their worth as change agents and reward givers in ways they personally or professionally value. In response, Caleb has adopted a collaborative approach towards encouraging diverse artistic, educational and philanthropic organizations to *experience* Oatlands, hopefully in ways that help them appreciate it as a cultural and historical treasure.

Bluntly, sustaining the property involves much more than making the 400-acre grounds available for point-to-point equestrian and cross-country races, or even the hands-on historical educational curriculum Oatlands has provided for thousands of students in the Loudoun County School system. Buildings are expensive, and Oatlands has more than 20, including the 200+-year-old manor home, Greenhouse and Carriage House, often used as both art gallery and venue for community parties and fundraisers. All are housed on property that has seen some of the most significant cultural and political changes in the history of the country.

With this backdrop, Oatlands can be a platform for discussing social and economic change in ways that could positively impact race relations in today's society, says Caleb. He'd like to see Oatlands' Garden Dependency restored to how it looked when slaves lived there. "Such a restoration could provide a focus for us to discuss the race issues that still divide us today."

Realistically, he estimates it should take \$2.5 million annually to restore, preserve and run the estate as a living classroom and venue for community events. That's far less than the \$50 million it takes to maintain Mount Vernon, but more than three times the current annual budget. The main house needs a new roof, as it is currently a complex patchwork spanning four porches currently stitched together by decades of parsimony. Even mowing is pricey.

Yet, in the face of the hardships overcome by Oatlands' previous owners, who built the Corcoran Art Gallery and established the National Trust for Historic Preservation, perpetuating Oatlands' legacy seems doable.

Walter likes Caleb's odds for success. "He's respecting what I can do, so we work well together. We'll make it happen. It will take time. We'll figure this out too."