



Making masks

Pulled plants turn into paper masks at workshop

By Stacy Moore
Hi-Desert Star

JOSHUA TREE — Karyl Newman lay on the table in the art studio, perfectly still, as her friend Leila Flanagan plunged strips of linen into a bucket, wrung them out, then draped them over Newman's face.

The women were taking part in a paper-casting workshop organized by Mil-Tree for its "Plant to Paper" art project. For part two of the project, Cathy Allen showed participants how to make plaster masks of their faces. Nearby, other participants filled molds with papery pastes made from non-native plants they pulled in part one of the project.

"It's going great," James Golubi said as he pressed an ochre pulp into a mold of his hand.

An Army veteran who served with the 111st Infantry, Golubi found Mil-Tree through the Joshua Tree Music Festival and is trying to connect more veterans with the organization, which tries to bring together veterans, military members and civilians to help each other through communication and art.

While Golubi worked on his hand flower, Flanagan cautiously pulled the dried mask from her friend Newman's face. Next to them, Allen was draping plaster over Becky Renish, of Joshua Tree, as Regina Kirillov, also of Joshua Tree, watched.

Kirillov is a photographer who took the workshop to explore other media. She was captivated by the difference in making art with her hands, rather than her eyes.



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James Golubi fills a mold with paper pulp made from non-native plants he pulled from Mojave Desert Land Trust property.



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Leila Flanagan, from Redlands, makes a plaster and linen casting of her friend Karyl Newman, of Yucca Valley, as instructor Cathy Allen works on a mask of Becky Renish in the background.



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Renee Renata uses pink pulp for her hand mold.

"Paper is very tactile. You are in the middle of the art," she said. "You touch it and the art comes out of your hands. It's amazing!"

"The Plant to Paper Project" continues

with more workshops on casting, writing and silk-screening. It will finish with an art exhibit and spoken-word presentation May 27 at the 29 Palms Art Gallery. The public

is invited to attend, and military members and veterans are especially encouraged.

For information, email miltreecommunity@gmail.com.

Art and writing workshops

Upcoming events in "Joining Forces: Plant to Paper" will include the following. All events are free. Veterans, active-duty military members, families and the community are welcome to join. For information or to sign up, email Cheryl Montelle at miltreecommunity@gmail.com or log on to mil-tree.org.

WRITING WORKSHOPS: March 26, April 9, April 23 and May 7. With a poetry and prose instructor, participants will create, share and get supportive feedback. No writing experience is necessary.

CASTING WORKSHOP: April 2. Participants will use plaster and gauze to create molds, then cast forms from paper pulp to use in self-portrait compositions.

SILK-SCREENING WORKSHOPS: April 30 and May 14. Participants will design, create and screen print their original artwork and writings. No experience is needed.

The art workshops will take place at Copper Mountain College and the writing workshops will be hosted by Paula's Dome.

The project will culminate with an exhibition May 27 at the 29 Palms Art Gallery, 74055 Cottonwood Drive. The event will include an art show and a spoken-word presentation.



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Danielle Giudici Wallis makes a container from paper pulp during a casting workshop Saturday, March 19. Giudici Wallis is executive director of The Arts Connection, a partner in the "Plant to Paper Project."