

Call for Artist Submissions

Call Summary

This proposal process will select one artist or team of artists to create one mural at least 22 x 29 feet in size that will be designed alongside the Matewan community, and as a result of community conversations held in Spring and Summer of 2022.

Background

The West Virginia Mine Wars Museum preserves and shares stories, artifacts, and historic sites that educate the public about coal miners' and their families' struggles for workers' rights, civil rights, and economic justice in the early 20th century. As a people's history museum, we lift up the legacy of the multi-racial, multi-lingual effort to unionize the coalfields, and foster connections between the Mine Wars era and the injustices that still confront working people in Appalachia, the nation, and around the world. The museum also educates youth, builds community partnerships, and promotes regional economic development.

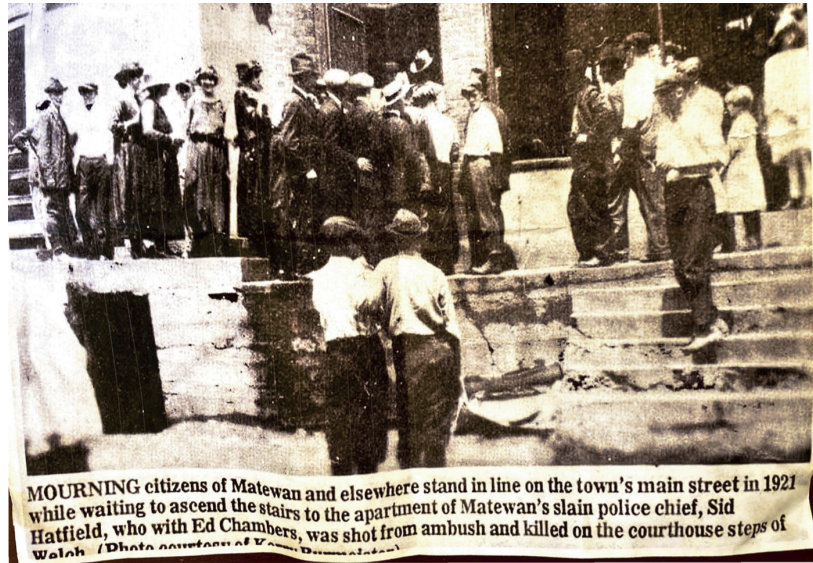
In partnership with Coalfield Development, United Mine Workers Local 1400 (UMWA), and the community of Matewan, the West Virginia Mine Wars Museum is looking for a visual artist to design and create a community-based mural inside the stairwell of the Nenni Building. This public art installation should represent the history of this area and communicate the pride of the place that is felt by many residents today.

Over the years, the Nenni Buildings have played a unique role in the community and in our nation's labor history. The West Virginia Mine Wars is a critical chapter in American Labor History — and also one of the most obscure. The Mine Wars were a decades-long struggle for justice and labor rights in the southern coalfields of West Virginia, where miners withstood deadly working conditions below ground, and above ground faced brutal circumstances that curtailed them from basic constitutional rights and unionization.

As the backdrop of the 1920s Mine Wars, the Nenni buildings served a variety of purposes: from a miners' union headquarters, to the town jewelry store, to the home of Matewan Chief of Police Sid Hatfield, whose apartment was located on the second floor. Hatfield, a beloved champion for his community, stood up for his residents' rights to unionize during the Mine Wars, which ultimately cost him his life. August 2021 marked the 100th anniversary of Hatfield's wake, which was hosted in his upstairs apartment.

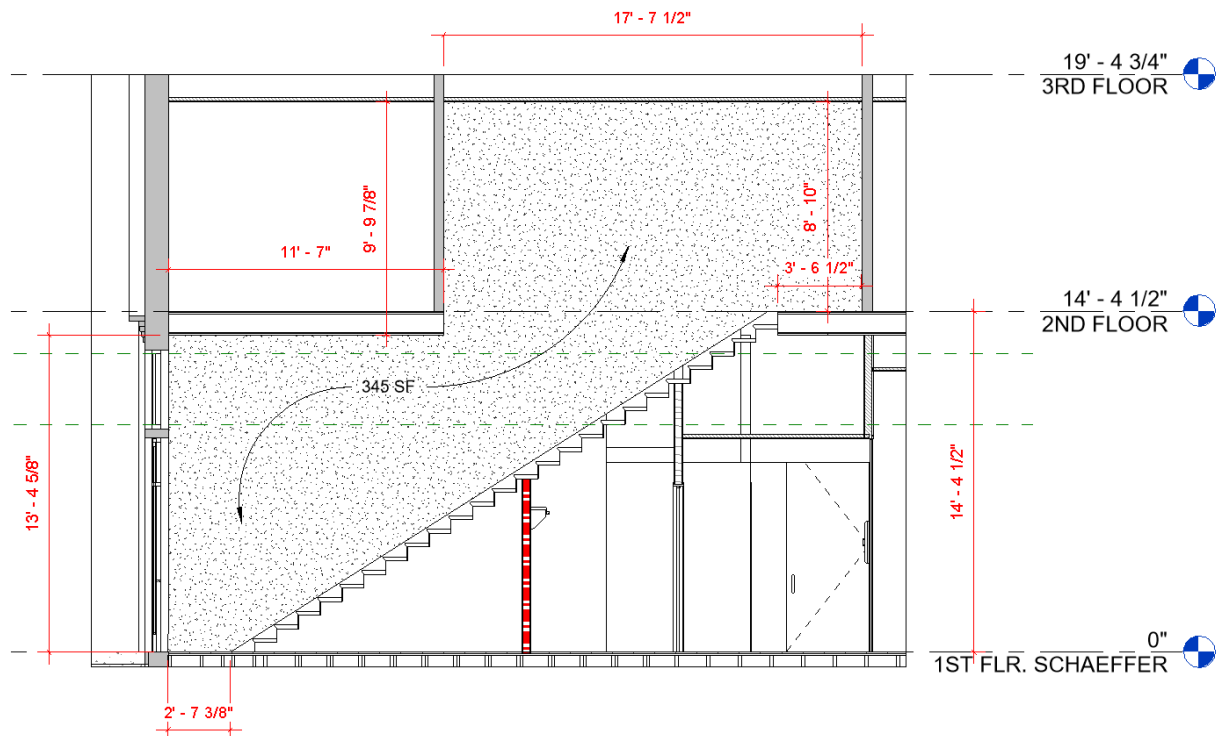
Project Location

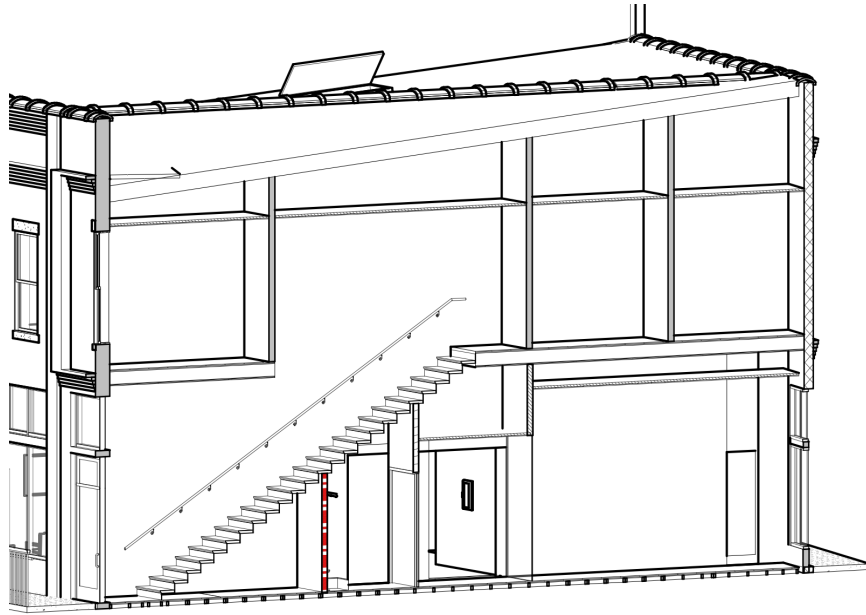
The Public Art Installation will be located at the stairwell of the Nenni Building, covering approximately 2 floors of wall space within one stairwell. This building is located on Mate Street in the heart of the Matewan Historic District, in Mingo County, WV.



The mural must cover approximately 345 square feet. The building is owned by Coalfield Development and will eventually be home to a multi-mixed space, including an on-the-job training facility, an interpretive center for Sid Hatfield's apartment, and more.

The Wall Area is approximately 22 x 29 in a parallelogram running up a staircase. The mural area must be large but does not have to cover the full length of the building. Sketches depicting the mural space are provided below.





Project Scope

This is a collaborative community mural which will take place in two phases.

Phase One is the Design Phase, and will involve a series of virtual and in person meetings between the selected artist, Organization Stakeholders (Coalfield Development and WV Mine

Wars Museum) and Community Stakeholders (various members of the Matewan community), arriving at a design based on the Project Goals (below).

Phase Two will be the actual execution of the mural, under a to-be-determined timeline ending on or before Winter 2023. This phase will involve a transparent budgeting process with the selected artist and Organizational Stakeholders, including the WV Mine Wars Museum and Coalfield Development, who will then activate fundraising initiatives to meet a budget for Phase Two materials, supplies, and artist payment. Phase Two is envisioned as incorporating community members, such as a local school or community volunteers, to work alongside the artist in the actual process of mural execution.

Project Goals

1. Highlight pride of place and Appalachian cultural values and cultural symbols through a hands-on process based on community input.
2. Represent historic events, businesses, and buildings that tell the story of Historic Matewan based on community input, including unionization & immigration in the coalfields.
3. Inspire a new generation of entrepreneurs in Matewan to fill vacant storefronts and thrive in the town.

Budget

During **Phase One**, the selected artist will receive a budget of \$7,000, inclusive of travel to site and community meetings as requested. The selected artist will receive 30% of funds upon selection and entering into a contract; 30%, paid at the start of the project and the remaining sum will be paid upon completion of **Phase One** scope. All payments will be approved by the West Virginia Mine Wars Museum.

Funding for **Phase Two** will be determined alongside the artist, who will help to create the budget for implementation and supplies, and the Organization Stakeholders will implement a fundraising strategy.

Timeline

Applications will be accepted until **February 15, 2022**. A jury consisting of staff from the West Virginia Mine Wars Museum, Coalfield Development, and others will consider proposals and notify selected artists by **March 1, 2022**.

For **Phase One**, the selection committee will meet with the selected artist to discuss revisions, contracts and the overall breadth of the project. The project planning will begin **March 1, 2022**, and will involve a schedule of community meetings (including travel to Matewan) and design

feedback to arrive at a community-participatory design for the mural.
Final design will be completed no later than **October 31, 2022**.

Phase Two will involve the execution of the mural, under a to-be-determined timeline ending on or before **Winter 2023**. Phase Two is envisioned as incorporating community members, such as a local school, to work alongside the artist in the actual process of mural execution.

Proposals: How to Apply

Artists must submit the following information via email:

- A cover sheet including contact information and a short statement describing their connection to the Appalachian region
- A brief written description of the artist's creative practice(s), one or two paragraphs
- Relevant qualifications concerning past experience with public art projects
- 3-5 examples of previously completed works, preferably community-based projects at similar scale. **Images must be 72 dpi and no larger 2mb per image.** Provide an image guide, including title of each work, media, dimensions, and date of creation. *Bundle image files and guide into one folder and provide a Dropbox, Google Drive, or similar download link.*
- 1-2 letters of recommendation
- Link to portfolio website and social media (if relevant to artistic practice)
- Other important information: proof of Insurance for personal injury for phase 2 of the project

If you think you might be a good fit for this project, but don't fit all the listed qualifications, please reach out with any questions that we could answer.

We are actively seeking to recruit diverse candidates to this position that enable the Museum to accurately represent the diversity of West Virginia communities. We are seeking candidates that demonstrate diversity of perspective, experience, and culture. We strongly encourage applications from Black, Indigenous and People of Color applicants as well as any applicants who are historically underrepresented in roles like this.

Contact

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