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For immediate release

## **Jamestown artists debut Wood Wide Web art show at Pearl City Clay House**

Pearl City Clay House at 220 East 2nd St in Jamestown announces a new duo exhibition, 'Wood Wide Web' featuring Miles Hilton's fiber installation and Wendy Bale's ceramic and paper artworks. A public reception and artists' talk will be held Jan.12, from 5 to 7PM.

The underground network that connects trees—the wood wide web— is the motivating force behind these gallery installations. The artists weave together their different mediums to bring viewers into the sub-terrestrial realm and beyond.

Miles Hilton, a Jamestown-based fiber artist, is contributing 'Through the Roots', an immersive fiber-sculptural installation that invites viewers into the underground world of soil networks—the interconnected roots, mycelia, animal tunnels, and mineral veins that support plant and animal life. "I'm interested in triggering a somatic experience" Hilton says, "in inviting people to share a perspective that humans, as above-ground animals, don't always prioritize".

They do this by suspending roots and root crowns from a large wooden frame, creating a sort of room, inset into the gallery space, that viewers can enter. Colorful handspun yarn and multicolored glass and plastic beads decorate and connect the roots, intertwining the grown and the human-made. "The color and sparkle is my way of evoking the sense of underground life," Hilton explains, "if you think 'underground' your first thought might be of wet, suffocating, darkness. But to the creatures that live there, that's not how it appears. It's just as alive as Times Square might be for us".

Through the Roots, like much of Hilton's work, is a conversation with plants and an attempt to convey something of their personhood, and their relationship with humans, to the viewer.

Artist Wendy Bale works primarily in clay and paper sculpture. Her ceramic 'Mushroom Menagerie' features over 100 realistically detailed fungi. "I've continued to add more and more mushrooms to this collection over the past year," noted Bale "mostly native species I've found in our local forests." Recent additions include a colorful fairy ring of wood blewits and a larger-than-life bio-luminescent mushroom paper sculpture.

A highlight of Bale's interpretation of the theme includes a series of framed mushroom spore prints. "Prints made from actual mushroom spores are used to help scientifically identify species, but when I made my first one I looked at it immediately as art," she explains. "I'm delighted to be able to present this exhibition with Miles...we both find this subject fascinating...and look forward to sharing it with the community."

"Wood Wide Web" will be on display Jan. 12-Feb. 24 and is open during regular gallery hours. For more information visit [pearlcityclayhouse.org/gallery-events](http://pearlcityclayhouse.org/gallery-events) and the artists' websites: [theferalneedle.com](http://theferalneedle.com) and [wendybaleart1st.com](http://wendybaleart1st.com)

**PHOTO CAPTION 1:** Fiber artist Miles Hilton with an element from their 'Through the Roots' installation.  
**PHOTO CAPTION 2:** Jamestown artist Wendy Bale preparing her ceramic Mushroom Menagerie. Wood Wide Web opens at Pearl City Clay House on Jan. 12.

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