



Jeanie Caldwell Dougherty – *Music and Fine Arts*

Born in 1844, Jeanie Caldwell left Wheeling at the age of 15 when her father was appointed as the U.S. consul in the Hawaiian Islands by President Abraham Lincoln. There she met her future husband and was married at 19. Thomas Templeton Dougherty's early death left her a widow at the age of 30. Thus began her life of independence, travel, and painting. A widow with means, she lived a very unusual life for a woman at that time. She never remarried and spent the remainder of her life traveling, studying art, and eventually writing. After studying painting in San Francisco and Paris in the 1870s, she spent decades traveling, visiting everywhere from England and Italy to China and the Philippines. Her travels were documented in hundreds of works of art.

She desired to be more than a "Sunday Painter" and was classically trained in the areas of realism, pen and ink drawing, portraiture, and nudes. Her desire was to be a well-rounded artist. An interest in politics led her to become a citizen of the world, acknowledging what was happening around her. Equality was essential to her: she surrounded herself with people who valued her as an equal.

Upon her arrival in Paris, she approached the Academie Julian, the only academy to admit women and international artists. She submitted works to the Paris Salon, the largest exhibition in France. An accomplished portraitist, she focused on people and everyday life. Her subjects varied from an organ grinder, a gondolier, and a Vatican guard illustrating her belief that "people are the best way to capture the culture and setting of a place."

Dougherty's diary entries from 1886-91, shared by Margaret Dakin, Jeanie's great-niece, provide details of her world travels and the art she encountered along the way: learning and loving Turner, Sargent, and Whistler while questioning Monet and advocating the value of experiencing art firsthand. One diary entry details her Westminster Abbey painting, now in the collection of Bethany College. During

the execution of that painting, she met an elderly artist who wouldn't share where other painters stored their paint, a police detective who noted her absence one day, and many tourists who visited the building as she painted.

In 1903, Jeanie taught in the Philippines and traveled from there to India, Japan, and China. She was fluent in Italian, French, and German and equally felt at home in any foreign setting. In 1906 she visited Wheeling for the final time and then returned to Europe to settle in Florence, Italy. It was there she died in 1930. Two hundred paintings had been sent home to her family for safe keeping.

In the mid-1940s, Wheeling photographer and Hall of Fame inductee, George Kossuth, purchased the Caldwell family home in North Wheeling. He discovered some of Dougherty's paintings in the attic and spent four years restoring 45 of the 200 discovered paintings.

In 1957, Kossuth presented 13 restored paintings to Bethany College. Oglebay Institute's Mansion Museum additionally was a recipient of two of her paintings. In 1995, Kossuth's daughter, Mary Kossuth Shumate, donated 25 pencil sketches, a palm book containing 42 pages of field notes and sketches, and 37 paintings and drawings to Bethany College.

In 2021, Bob and Amy Mead of Wheeling donated 31 of her paintings to the Mansion Museum. Bob Mead is related to Dougherty through her niece — the daughter of her brother, Alfred Caldwell, married into the Mead family.

Dougherty's art from these local collections culminated in an exhibition of her work in the fall of 2023 at Oglebay Institute's Mansion Museum. "Jeanie's World" illustrated a body of work revealing the artist, traveler, and historian that Jeanie Caldwell Dougherty was and the legacy she left for the enrichment of others.