



NEWS FROM THE RABBIT HOLE

Wednesday | March 30, 2022

Raising

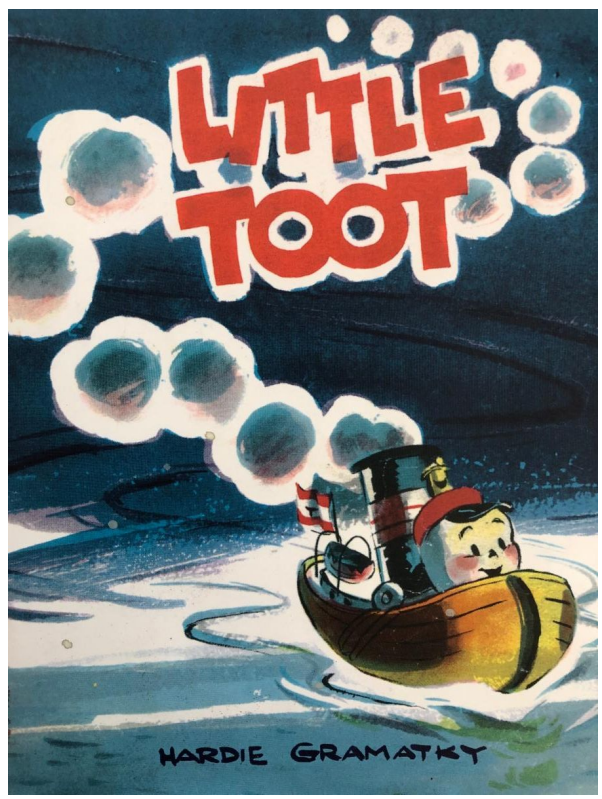
The Rabbit hOle's fundraising efforts are springing forward! Over the past few weeks we've received several significant gifts that come at a crucial moment in our timeline. Our momentum is accelerating thanks to the generosity of these recent donors: Annette & Larry Hanks, the M.R. & Evelyn Hudson Foundation, the City of North Kansas City (Harrah's), Capitol Federal, the Constance Cooper Foundation, the Brownstone Family Foundation, Lindsey Patterson Smith and Matt Smith, and the R and C Charitable Foundation. A heartfelt thanks to these fine folks, and to all of our supporters, old and new. Onward!

[DONATE](#)

If you or someone you know is interested in making a transformational gift to The Rabbit hOle, either personally or through a family foundation, please reach out to Peter Cowdin at bitterman@rabbitholekc.org.

Making

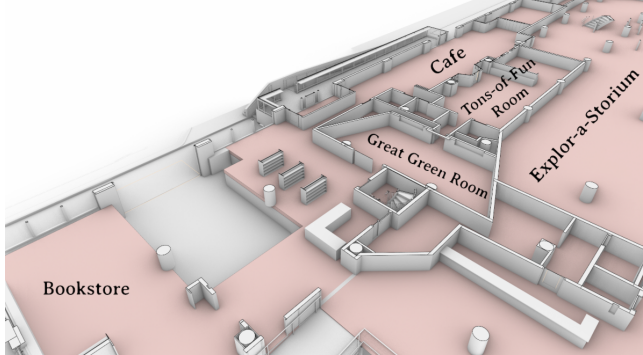
Little Toot, written and illustrated by Hardie Gramatky, paints the portrait of a young tugboat coming up in a hardworking tugboat community. With his smaller stature and modest smokestack, Toot regularly shirks his tugboat duties in favor of a more creative life cutting figure eights in the harbor and river's calm waters. One day, following a public shaming, he decides it's time to pursue more industrious activities. While his initial attempts to be helpful are disregarded by his peers, he soon becomes an unlikely hero through his persistence and spunk. Gramatky's experience as an animator and painter are evident in the dynamic style of his illustrations and the washy watercolor techniques that reflect the story's setting. The Rabbit hOle's team is hard at work creating an interactive exhibit of the smallest tugboat. Soon you will be able to help Toot bounce from crest to crest. Check out the future fun below!



[Visit our website](#) to see more exhibits in progress

Building

While it's been thrilling to see exhibits coming to life - in ways even more beautiful than we ever imagined - the final phase of building renovations promises yet another soul-stirring step forward as the first round of walls go up in the coming weeks, giving shape to some of the public spaces and program areas that will welcome visitors in 2023. The admission area, the bookstore, the Great Green Room and the Tons-of-Fun Room will soon come into view to begin revealing the larger geography of The Rabbit hOle.



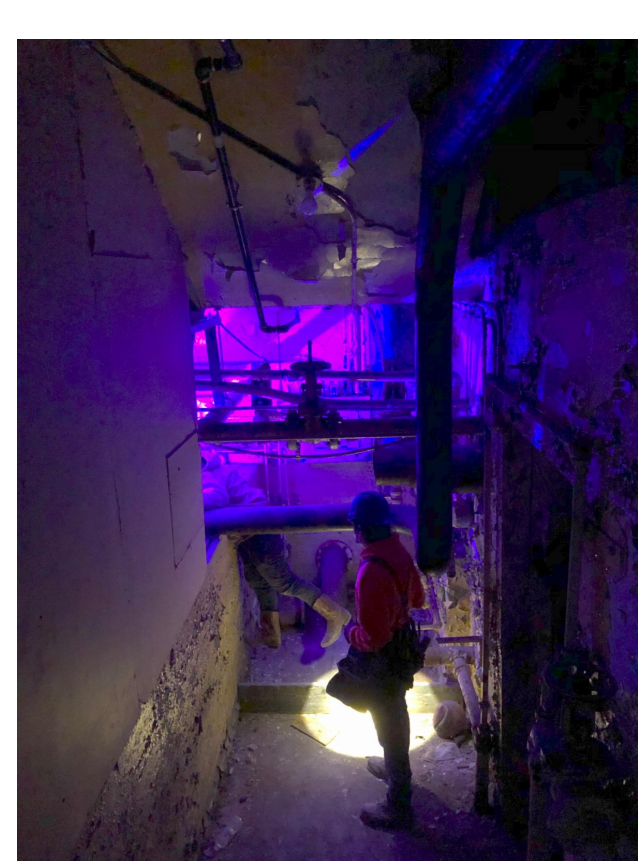
Our upcoming scope of work includes exterior walls for the Great Green Room, Tons-of-Fun Room, bookstore, and admissions area

Getting to this point has been a study in patience and persistence, and not just because of the challenges brought forth by the pandemic. In fact, just before the virus arrived in early 2020, our construction crews (led by JE Dunn Construction) ran into unexpected discoveries inside and below the building that stopped work indefinitely and would have extended our timeline significantly regardless of Covid. We're still working through these discoveries, actively excavating, cataloguing and trying to make sense of them, but we've made enough progress to feel comfortable re-engaging our construction partners at this time.



Construction has yielded a multitude of discoveries and surprising developments

These discoveries are sensitive and need to be handled with the utmost discretion as there are additional parties involved, so we will be sharing them with you as we can. Suffice it to say that their incorporation into the project will be nothing short of transformational. We wish we could say more, but documentation must take precedence for the moment. We will make a formal announcement in April or May.



Excavation is ongoing

We are hiring!

The Rabbit hOle is looking for experienced artist fabricators. [Visit our website](#) to learn more and to apply.



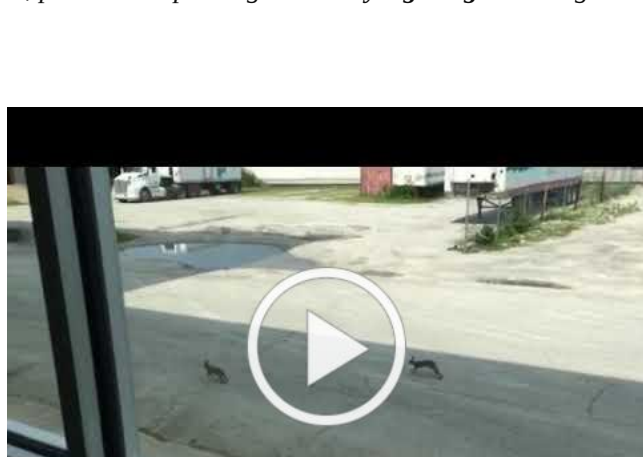
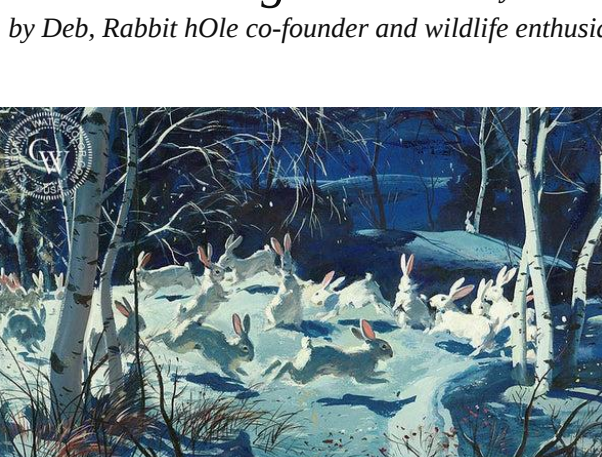
This Week, Next Year...in the Writing Lab

"This Week, Next Year" is a regular segment to introduce future [programming areas](#) within The Rabbit hOle. These experiences will be an integral part of The Rabbit hOle from day one. Read on to discover what lies ahead in the realm of The Rabbit hOle...

Picture this...you arrive at The Rabbit hOle with your classroom group on a sunny morning, check in at the front desk, and head upstairs via the spiral staircase. Your students, already excited by the Friday outing, scurry up the spiral steps with glee hedging on carelessness. As you rotate onto the landing after that last dizzying stair step, you see the Writing Lab straight ahead. Stepping through the treehouse doors, you immediately feel an internal shift. You can sense the stories that came before you; imagined characters and adventures swirling around in the air. Or maybe it's just a great HVAC system. Your group settles in at the work table, their energy swelling as they take in their magical treehouse surroundings. A Rabbit hOle facilitator greets your group, introduces the project - a cut and paste zine project based on Christian Robinson's illustrative style - and invites everyone to spread throughout the room to create their works. You look around at your students, some sprawled on the floor, some in chairs, some nestled in nooks, one dangling their legs through the second level railing, and smile at their earnest enthusiasm. Turning to your own zine, enjoy what is sure to be a fleeting moment of peace in your day, a moment spent united with your students in a creative pursuit.



Book Pairing - Hardie Gramatky's watercolors, paired with parking lot bunny sightings. Pairing by Deb, Rabbit hOle co-founder and wildlife enthusiast



One of the best parts of research is making a surprising discovery.

Before and during our exhibit design process we learn as much as we can about the work we will be spending the next few months with, including the book itself, its author, and its illustrator. We read and share other books they created and research their broader creative lives. When we began work on *Little Toot*, I was familiar with Hardie Gramatky's time as head animator at Walt Disney Studios and learned that by 1929, he had become a proficient watercolorist and was recognized as one of the true innovators in the development of California Style watercolor painting. Andrew Wyeth named him as one of America's 20 greatest watercolorists alongside Edward Hopper and Georgia O'Keefe. He was amazingly prolific and was known to produce an average of five small watercolors per day for many years.

His watercolors were of beautiful landscapes, often featuring people, with names like "Beach at Compo Sunset", or "Old Mill Pond". "Linda in Front Yard" shows his daughter as a young person. I love his use of color and treatment of light, making each unique and beautiful.

Then I came upon a painting called "Moon Magic". A serendipitous connection to The Rabbit hOle and our own frolicking bunnies. Enjoy the discovery!

-Deb

Rabbit hOle tip: explore a huge digital collection of Gramatky's paintings [here](#). While you're at it, learn about the California Style of painting.

Curiosities

need to cap your smokestack?

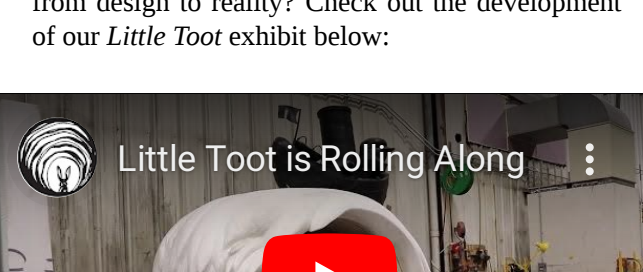


Pick up a Rabbit hOle beanie to warm your seafaring noggin. Or your car-driving noggin...whatever floats your boat.

[SHOP NOW](#)

Watch This!

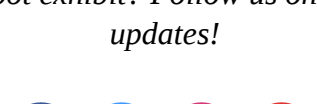
Harboring curiosity about how exhibits develop from design to reality? Check out the development of our *Little Toot* exhibit below:



Social Circle



Can't get enough of our *Little Toot* exhibit? Follow us on social media for ongoing exhibit updates!



Curious to see what else is up our sleeves? Visit our website to read more about our mission, exhibits, and other exciting progress



THE RABBIT HOLE

THE WORLD'S FIRST EXPLOR-A-STORIUM

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