Emilie Gill – Ogden Foundation Scholar

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A recent WKU graduate is combining her love of animals and art as she marches toward a career as a published illustrator.

Emilie Gill of Allensville already has one book under her belt as Amy Bingham explains in this week’s View from the Hill.

We want you to learn about the world! That was WKU’s message to Emilie Gill when she was trying to decide where to go to college. She took that message to heart and it’s helped shape her career.

 “I did teach myself, I just copies magazines and read art books that I found in the store.”

Emilie Gill has always loved to draw, including this masterpiece she created back when she was a toddler.

 “My next memory is trying to draw the birds out of my grandmothers birds and blooms magazines.”

Now the recent college graduate has illustrated her own 52-page picture book.

 “I think the market is changing and adults want some pictures in their novels as well.”

The book is part of Emilie’s thesis researching the history of illustrated books and development of the picture book market nationally and internationally.

Her journey through WKU’s art department included a six month study abroad experience in New Zealand.

 “That was the first time I was studying exactly what I wanted with professors who worked for the movie company Weta who made the Chronicles of Narnia which inspired me to go to New Zealand in the first place.”

Emilie’s obsession with that movie is what prompted her parents to take her to New Zealand when she was fourteen. When plans to attend Harlaxton fell through, she knew just the place to study abroad.

 “It would have been a wonderful time at Harlaxton, I know it would have been the right path if I had made it there I remember with New Zealand going I almost didn’t do this, that would have been a disaster.”

 “To have those professors tell me that I had the ability, that I had the stuff, that was amazing.”

Gill’s time on the hill also included study abroad trips to Austria and Ireland --making good on the invitation WKU offered in the beginning.

 “With WKU they said you can do whatever you want whenever you want, we’ll work with you. We just want you to see the world.”

Gill, who has a double major in art history/visual studies with a minor in geography, was recently recognized as the Ogden Foundation Scholar. She plans to start graduate school sometime in 2019. With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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