

GREATER KANSAS CITY AREA COMMITTEE NATIONAL MUSEUM of WOMEN in the ARTS NEWSLETTER SPRING 2022

Volume 19, No. 1

Jeanne Levy, Editor

GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings to our members as we return from two years of reduced activity due to the pandemic, Thank you to all of you who have renewed your memberships. We appreciate your interest in NMWA. We also hope that you enjoy a circle of friends who share your interest in the arts, This is a big year for us as we prepare for our fifth Women to Watch event, sponsored by the National Museum of Women in the Arts, the Greater Kansas City Area Committee of NMWA, and our partner, the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art. More about this below. We also have a full year of Outings and events for you. And, in this newsletter we are announcing our newly elected Board for 2022. My thanks go to the Board for its faithful and continued efforts to further the work of so many great women in the arts.

Chris LeBeau, Chair

WOMEN TO WATCH 2024 FINALISTS CHOSEN

The committee, chaired by Arlene Finney, has been actively working to make sure the next Women to Watch will be just as successful, interesting and informative as all the past versions have been. The five artists have been selected by Erin Dziedzic, Director of Curatorial Affairs at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art. Examples of each artist's work have been sent to the National Museum Women to Watch committee. The five artists are:

Mona Cliff <https://www.monaclif.com/>

Bianca Fields <http://steveturner.la/artists/bianca-fields#1>

Bev Gegen <https://bevgegenstudio.com/>

Melanie Johnson <https://melanielynnjohnson.com/home.html>

Sun Young Park

Please visit their websites to see examples of their work.

On June 23, 2022, there will be a private reception for the artists and members at Kemper Museum which will host a special exhibition of the works that have been submitted to Women To Watch 2024. Among the guests will be a representative of The National Museum of Women in the Arts. The WTW Exhibition will be on display at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art from June 24, 2022 - October 16, 2022.

DUES ARE DUE

Although there were very few opportunities to meet during the past two years, dues help pay the expenses associated with participation in the WOMEN TO WATCH exhibition at the National Museum of Women in the Arts. Those expenses total about \$15,000.00. The 2024 Exhibition will coincide with the reopening of the Museum after its major renovation. If you haven't already done so, please keep your membership active, and support this effort to help women artists by sending your dues to The Greater Kansas City Area Committee of NMWA, P.O. Box 22495, Kansas City, MO 64113.

FUND RAISING

Sponsoring the Women to Watch Exhibition is the major focus of the Greater Kansas City Area Committee. In order to be more efficient and effective, the Board would like to form a committee to focus on fund raising. Members who have a special interest or talent in fundraising may contact Chris LeBeau (lebeauc@umkc.edu)

MEMBER BERNADETTE TORRES WINS AIRPORT COMMISSION

Announced on October 21, 2021, Bernadette Torres is one of 19 locally and nationally recognized artists who have been selected to provide art work for the new Kansas City Air Terminal. Titled *Beautiful Dreams of the Places You Will Go*, her art will eventually occupy a space 4' x 20'. Her proposal read in part

“This will be a wonderful colorful wall piece. . . Custom designed vinyl adhesive wall digital print of my ceramic handmade flowers and my ceramic painted clay tile. . (t)he three big floral clusters will have a 3D effect with a transparency of the digital images below the flowers on plexiglass. . . . I will cut out some flowers and highlight other(s) with a digital etching of the flowers on the plexiglass. The sun and natural lighting will add shadows of colored flowers.”



Understandably excited by the opportunity, Torres has been awarded a sabbatical by the Metropolitan Community College to work on the project. In the photo below she

demonstrates just how large her piece, which she estimates will take at least a year to complete, will be.



Bernadette was one of the finalists in Women to Watch 2018. Debbie Barrett-Jones, another finalist in Women to Watch 2018 was also awarded a commission for art in the new airport. More information on her submission will be included in a later issue of the *Newsletter*.

GOOD NEWS: ART OUTINGS RETURN

As life returns to a new “normal”, the Committee for Art Outings has planned a busy schedule of interesting and informative events. Members who attended the most recent event at the renovated Kansas City Museum were treated to a very special and extensive tour of the museum and of the former mansion it calls home. In the next few months the following events are planned:

April 20, 3:00 p.m.

Rightfully Sewn. This organization provides seamstress training for women so they can join the specialized workforce working to reestablish KC as an epicenter of garment manufacturing. The mission is to propel KC fashion designers to market and to meet the demand for high quality, American-produced garments. Jennifer Lapka, Executive Director, will lead the tour. The Crossroads District, 1800 Wyandotte Street, Suite 100.

May (date to be announced)

KC Artists’ Coalition. 3200 Gillham Road. Talk and tour led by Executive Director, Marissa Starke. Exhibition of Dan Jian, a visual artist using mixed media. Jian received her BFA from Temple University and her MFA from Ohio State University. She has exhibited nationally and in China and Italy. This event will be followed by a tour of a private collection.

June 23

Women to Watch Reception and Exhibition at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art. Details to be announced.

July (date to be announced)

Robert Quackenbush Studio. Artist Patti Streeper will discuss her portraits of women who were first to hold positions usually held by men.

August (tentative)

Private studio and collection of Erin Dziedzic, Kemper Museum Director of Curatorial Affairs.

September (date to be announced)

Day trip to Lexington, Missouri.

October (date to be announced)

Annual Luncheon

November (date to be announced)

Artist Members spotlight event.

2022 BOARD ANNOUNCED

Chair - Chris LeBeau

Vice Chair - Jan Leonard

Treasurer - Peg Billick

Immediate Past Chair - Arlene Finney

Chair Emerita - Jeannette Nichols

Art Outings and Reservations - Jan Leonard,
Debbie Welch, and Lynn O'Sullivan

Consultants - Jean Rau and Darlene McCluskey

Membership - Nekie Kramer

WTW 2024 - Arlene Finney

Newsletter - Jeanne Levy

Historian - Linda Sybrant

Special Events - Arlene Finney
and Shirley Goetz

Travel - Eileen Duggan

Members at Large - Helen Fisher
and Eileen Duggan

Web Editor - Chris LeBeau

THIS MONTH'S BOOK REVIEW

Broad Strokes: 15 Women Who Made Art and Made History (in that order) by Bridget Quinn.

Quinn who studied art history with the goal of being a painter, switched to being a writer about art mid-way through her graduate studies. The 15 women she writes about in this collection are, for the most part, not well-known. One reason for that is the refusal of male critics and artists to credit women artists with genius, especially when their skills surpassed those of contemporary male artists. But perhaps an equally important reason is the often small number of works these women produced, coupled with their often equally short lives. In addition, women artists who lived a long time often also had several children to care for, and unreliable husbands.

Among the women profiled is Judith Leyster, one of whose paintings was credited to Franz Hals and considered a masterpiece, until a conservator discovered and identified her signature, at which point the painting was regarded as an inferior one. The sculptor, Edmonia Lewis, spent her life in Italy because, in addition to being a woman, she was the daughter of slaves. Her masterpiece, *the Death of Cleopatra*, was rediscovered after years of gathering dust in a broom closet. The maintenance man who found it recognized it from a description he'd read. Nor was being married to a well-known, well-respected artist any help to Ana Mendieta. She died at age 36, either by jumping or by being pushed by her husband, Carl Andre', from the window of their 36th floor apartment. Before her death she had gained notice for the ephemeral "*Silueta Muerta*" she made in parks or pastures, thus pioneering much of the early earthworks by Smithson, for example, or performance pieces by other artists.

Each of the 15 women is briefly profiled, using the framework of feminism. The seminal work of each is "read" using sexuality, introspection, originality, and creativity as measures. These are insightful and thoughtful and offer the reader a different frame for looking at art.

ART FAIRS ARE COMING

Support the local and regional women artists who bring their art to local art fairs. For many of them, art fairs provide the best way for the public to see and purchase what they have created, and they provide the public the opportunity to purchase art from artists who may, in the future, become nationally recognized. Locally, the three most prominent fairs are the Brookside Art Fair, usually held the first weekend in May, the Prairie Village Art Fair, usually the first weekend in June, the Westport Art Fair, usually over the Labor Day weekend, and the Plaza Art Fair, usually the third weekend in September. For a weekend getaway, check out other regional art fairs in Wichita, Omaha, St. Louis, Tulsa or Little Rock. All will include women artists who are creating beautiful art.

