Arkansas Women to Watch Exhibition 2013

Sponsored by: The Arkansas Committee of the National Museum of Women in the Arts
The Arkansas Committee of the National Museum of Women in the Arts: Mission

The Arkansas Committee of the National Museum of Women in the Arts is a non-profit volunteer organization established as an affiliate of the National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA), located in Washington, D.C. The Museum brings recognition to the achievements of women artists of all periods and nationalities by exhibiting, preserving, acquiring, and researching art by women and by teaching the public about their accomplishments. The Arkansas Committee of the NMWA supports the efforts of the Museum and promotes Arkansas women artists.

Welcome from the Arkansas Committee President: Sherée Niece

Dear Friends and Supporters,

On behalf of the Arkansas State Committee of the National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA), we would like to welcome you to the Arkansas Women to Watch 2013 Exhibition. This exhibit presents five talented Arkansas artists each celebrating her unique vision within the exclusive medium of fiber. We are grateful to Caroline Brown, curator of the Arkansas submissions for the NMWA High Fiber: Women to Watch 2012 Exhibition in Washington, D.C., and Shannon Dillard Mitchell, coordinator for the Washington and Arkansas Exhibitions. We hope you enjoy this showcase of Arkansas talent.

We appreciate your support and interest in the National Museum of Women in the Arts and the Arkansas State Committee. Please visit us at http://acnmwa.org or ‘Like’ us on Facebook to learn more.

Sherée A. Niece
2012 President
Arkansas State Committee of NMWA

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ARKANSAS WOMEN TO WATCH EXHIBITION 2013

FEATURING WORK BY:

BARBARA CADE - HOT SPRINGS

JENNIFER LIBBY FAY - KANSAS CITY, MO (ROGERS)

LOUISE HALSEY - LITTLE ROCK

JANE HARTFIELD - FORT SMITH

DEBORAH KUSTER - CONWAY
CURATORIAL NOTES
BY CAROLINE S. BROWN

It is truly an honor to be chosen as curator for the Arkansas Committee of the National Museum of Women in the Arts High Fiber: Women to Watch 2012 exhibition. My fellow Arkansans have drawn from the area’s rich heritage of traditional fiber-based craftsmanship to produce truly unique and exceptional works of art.

During my master’s degree program, I became very interested in the art of the self-taught and by the way of this, traditional crafts all together. I find it wonderfully fascinating to look at a work of art and see how the artist manages to integrate traditional media and techniques in the modern and contemporary world. Early in my selection process for High Fiber: Women to Watch, my first thought was “I can only pick five?” There are so many women working in Arkansas today who are such exemplary fiber artists.

Many of the self-taught artists that I studied drew their inspiration from traditional hand crafts that were often handed down through generations. It just seemed a natural progression for them. I soon discovered that the artists I was drawn to for this project were artists using traditional fiber techniques in a completely modern way. In this group of five we have two quilters who use the method of quilting that goes well beyond the traditional. There is an artist who uses felt as if it were oil painted on canvas. One artist uses the tradition of dyeing fabric to create an homage to nature, and another creates woven tapestries as small commentaries on life.

All of these artists have taken a traditional craft out of its traditional role. They have deviated from the intended purpose of these simple fibers—of sheltering, of clothing—and they have created works that function as beautiful visuals, non-verbal beings that tell a story through imagery, color, and light.

I hope you enjoy the work of these artists as much as I have.
Barbara Cade earned a M.A. from the University of Washington and a B.A. from the University of Illinois. Her work has been included in numerous solo and group exhibitions throughout the nation. Selected solo exhibitions include: *The Search for Serenity*, Jasper Arts Center, Jasper, IN (2010); *Felt Landscapes*, Springfield Art Museum, Springfield, MO (2009); *Arkansas Fallen* - a tapestry that honors the Arkansas soldiers who have died in Iraq, names added as necessary - touring Arkansas (2007 - present); *The Search for Serenity*, the Arts and Science Center, Pine Bluff, AR (2005); and *Alter Egos*, Fort Smith Arts Center, Fort Smith, AR (1994). Notable group exhibitions include: *American Craft Fair*, Armory, New York, NY (1990); *Craft Forms 2010*, Wayne Art Center in Wayne, PA; *Reality Check*, Otin Craft Museum, Columbus, OH (2001); *Bellevue Sculpture Exhibition*, Bellvue, WA (2000); *Art in the Garden*, Contemporary Crafts Gallery in Portland, OR (1994); *MOAK*, Springfield Art Museum, Springfield, MO (2008); *Annual Delta Art Exhibition*, Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock, AR (1995/1990/1982/1978); *Path of the Weaver*, Brooks Art Museum, Memphis, TN (1978); and *Northwest Craftsmen's Biennial*, Seattle, WA (1974). Along with many installations, collections include: Lyon College, Batesville, AR; Historic Arkansas Museum, Little Rock, AR; Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma, WA; The Kraft Center, Paramus, NJ; Weyerhaeuser Company, Tacoma, WA; Edwards Risk Management, Marble Falls, TX; Banner Estrella Hospital, Phoenix, AZ; Mid-America Science Museum, Hot Springs, AR; and many others. In 2004, Cade was awarded the annual scholarship from the Arkansas Committee of the NMWA to help fund a trip to Finland to study felt making.

*This artwork brings together my interest in the Chinese tangram puzzle, crazy quilts, fabrics, geometry, abstract art and felting. The original Chinese tangram puzzle consists of seven geometric pieces. The first test is to arrange the seven pieces into a square. Then the pieces are arranged to form an object of some sort. School children use the pieces for spatial relationship exercises. By fixing the form of the art, I can concentrate on translating my feelings and impressions of places, events, and people into colors and fabrics made of handmade felt. I design very quickly. Then I have the fun of translating those thoughts into “fabrics” which makes for very spontaneous work.*

- Barbara Cade

Exhibited works:

"Confetti" by Barbara Cade, 2007
22" x 22" - Wool

"Field of Daisies" by Barbara Cade, 2008
22"x22" - Wool

"Patterns" by Barbara Cade, 2008
28"x29"x3" - Wool, acrylic and found objects

"Salsa" by Barbara Cade, 2002
44"x45"x4" - Handmade felt and paper
Jennifer Libby Fay worked as a graphic and product design entrepreneur on the West Coast, applying her aesthetic sensibility to create effective visual communications and useful objects for the home. An accomplished handweaver and fiber artist, Fay now focuses primarily on textile surface design and multiple dyeing techniques, embellishment and fabric manipulation. Fay’s work has been shown in select exhibitions in California, Washington State and Arkansas. Fay’s recent solo exhibitions include: Rubicon, Arts Center of the Ozarks in Springdale, AR (2012); Don’t Forget to Breathe, Tulsa Artist’s Coalition in Tulsa, OK (2011); Through a Narrow Place, Fayetteville Underground, Fayetteville, AR (2011); and Boundaries: the Places Where We Meet, Northwest Arkansas Community College (2010). Her work has also been featured in numerous group exhibitions and was recently selected for inclusion in the 17th Annual Artists of Northwest Arkansas Exhibition at the Art Center of the Ozarks (2011).

My work is about transformation, imagination and symbol. Beyond the obvious and immediate meaning of a composition, I am interested in exploring the relationship between art, nature and spirituality. Despite the complexity of my subject matter, my goal is to find peace in a confusing and precarious world; to project a calm, contemplative atmosphere in my work. I enjoy exploring the deeper meaning—the source. I hope to engage your eyes, inspire your passion and take you on a visual expedition into new territory.

- Jennifer Libby Fay

Exhibited works:
"A Breath Away" by Jennifer Libby Fay, 2011
12” x 12” - Textile painting

"Leaf Dance" by Jennifer Libby Fay, 2011
22”x22” - Textile painting

"See Me" by Jennifer Libby Fay, 2011
10”x10” - Textile painting

"There is a Way" by Jennifer Libby Fay, 2011
16.5”x16.5” - Textile painting
Louise Halsey earned a BA in Philosophy from Sarah Lawrence College in 1971, after which she studied weaving at Arrowmont School of Crafts, Penland School, and the University of Georgia—working with Glen Kaufman. It was with Glen Kaufman that Halsey undertook her initial research into ancient Peruvian cultures and wove her first standing figure or doll. She later continued her research using the support provided by an Artist Fellowship Grant from the Arkansas Arts Council. In 2007, she completed a MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts from Goddard College and expanded her art practice to include writing, stand-up comedy and collaborative installations.


With my love of color and design, I have persisted over several decades in finding challenges working primarily on the floor loom. I use tapestry techniques, brocade or plain weave. In my wall tapestries I have introduced a narrative element with a focus on home. My house series suggests the many meanings embedded in the fairly simple image of a house. The style of house depicted is similar to those in Charleston, South Carolina, where I grew up surrounded by the art of my two hard working, productive parents, both visual artists. Among my many influences are the textiles of ancient Peru, works by contemporary painter Sean Scully, and the poems of Neruda and Kabir.

- Louise Halsey

Exhibited works:
"Crackhouse" by Louise Halsey, 2006 25 1/2" x 17 1/2" - Wool weft on linen warp
"Dream Facade" by Louise Halsey, 2005 23 1/2"x15 1/2" - Wool weft on linen warp
"House/Moon" by Louise Halsey, 2005 28"x15 1/2" - Wool weft on linen warp
"Supersize My House" by Louise Halsey, 2011 27 1/2"x17 1/4" - Wool weft on linen warp, wood, found objects
JANE HARTFIELD

Jane Hartfield's fiber creations have been included in a variety of exhibitions, quilt shows, and art festivals. Her work has been featured at the Fort Smith Art Center (2004, 2006), River Valley Art Center (2007), Crawford County Center for Art and Education (2004), Subiaco Abbey Arts Festival (2003), Artists of Northwest Arkansas Regional Art Exhibition (2002), the Houston International Quilt Show (2002), Sparks Auxiliary Quilt Show (2002), and many other public and private venues.

I create colorful works in fabric and assorted fibers that make me feel happy. I don't try to provoke debate or convey profound thoughts. I dye some fabrics, yarn, and batting and paint others. I cut them up and piece them together to create new patterns. I layer them to change the texture and dimension. I quilt the layers and sometimes cut away the layers. I add beads, charms and found objects. This process continues until the piece is finished. I alone can decide it is finished.

As a constant observer of nature's and man's interpretation of color relationships, I push on to the next piece and the next. I hope that other people will feel a degree of the joy I feel when they see my work.

- Jane Hartfield

Exhibited works:

"Bulletproof" by Jane Hartfield, 2009
48" x 40" - Commercial batiks, hand-dyed fabrics, paint, and yarn

"Fred Meets Jane" by Jane Hartfield, 2008
29"x29" - Fabric (hand-dyed and commercial), and paint

"Oil Slick" by Jane Hartfield, 2010
27"x27" - Fabric (hand-dyed and commercial), yarn, and thread painting

"Tree Bark" by Jane Hartfield, 2011
30"x26" - Fabric
Deborah Kuster has been involved in art education for over thirty years and currently serves as a Professor of Art at the University of Central Arkansas, where she helps prepare students pursuing careers in art education. She earned a Ph.D. in Art Education from the University of North Texas. While pursuing her graduate studies, Kuster took a class in weaving and was so entranced that she went on to purchase her own loom. Kuster’s experiments with color and pattern combinations have led her to piece her hand-woven elements into art quilts which facilitate even greater complexity than the loom alone allows.

*I believe my attraction to weaving is not only my love of working with the color and textural qualities of fibers, but also the rhythmic movements of the process itself. Intertwining individual threads or yarns into a beautiful, unified work speaks metaphorically of life. My art quilts share my affinity to rhythm in their alternating patterns of hand-woven textures and colors. Many of my current works are inspired from quotes from my grandchildren. As young children combine their thought processes with their new verbal vocabulary, the outcome is often unexpected and sometimes quite profound. I also enjoy creating visual imagery for interesting or amazing factoids about our natural world, often becoming visual puns. My art quilts hold many personal memories as I recall the process of weaving the materials and contexts of the inspiration itself.*

- Deborah Kuster

Exhibited works:

"A Miró Dream Come True" by Deborah Kuster, 2007
30" x 39" - Acrylic paint on canvas, hand-woven cotton and alpaca fibers, machine pieced and quilted, reverse appliqué, and embroidery

"Deal With It" by Deborah Kuster, 2011
19"x39" - Handwoven fibers, machine pieced and quilted, miscellaneous materials, hand-stitched and interwoven

"Living Off the Land" by Deborah Kuster, 2007
30"x22" - Handwoven fibers, machine pieced and quilted, found objects, and embroidery

"Save My Spot" by Deborah Kuster, 2011
22"x22" - Handwoven fibers, photo transfer on fabric, machine pieced and quilted, and ribbon
Arkansas Women to Watch 2013 Exhibition Schedule

November 2, 2012 – January 6, 2013
High Fiber: Women to Watch 2012 Exhibition at the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C. (includes four works by Arkansas artist Louise Halsey)

Arkansas Committee of the NMWA Women to Watch 2013 - 2014 Exhibition Touring Schedule

February 1 - April 13, 2013
Arts & Science Center for Southeast Arkansas - Pine Bluff
701 Main Street, Pine Bluff, AR 71601 • 870-536-3375

May 2 - July 7, 2013
Fort Smith Regional Arts Museum - Ft. Smith
1601 Rogers Ave., Fort Smith, AR 72901 • 479-784-2787

July 18 - August 17, 2013
Walton Arts Center - Fayetteville
495 W. Dickson St., Fayetteville, AR 72701 • 479-443-5600

September 4 - October 22, 2013
The Stephens Gallery, University of the Ozarks - Clarksville
415 N. College Ave., Clarksville, AR 72830 • 479-979-1349

November 5 - 29, 2013
Fine Arts Center Gallery, Arkansas State University - Jonesboro
114 S. Caraway Rd., Jonesboro, AR 72467 • 870-972-3050

December 13, 2013 - February 2014
The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies - Little Rock
401 President Clinton Ave., Little Rock, AR 72201 • 501-320-5791
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