
WCADC FEBRUARY 2023 NEWSLETTER

A LETTER FROM WCADC'S NEW PRESIDENT:

BARBARA JOANN COMBS

Let me introduce myself, my name is Barbara Joann Combs. I am an artist, art educator, community arts collaborator born in Los Angeles, California. I've worked within the discipline of visual arts since childhood. After receiving a B.A. with distinction in visual arts from Fayetteville State University, I wrote and taught curriculum for art fundamentals courses at Seventy-First High School, North Carolina for seven years. My desire to learn more about community arts brought me to Maryland and I earned a MA and MFA in Community Arts from Maryland Institute College of Art.

Working within five Baltimore communities facilitating four quilt projects and two summer youth programs creating murals was pure joy! A community mural was created in collaboration with the Johnson Square neighborhood at Ambrose Kennedy Park and pool. Prince George's County has been my home for eight years. During the pandemic a virtual community workshop was developed with Greenbelt Recreation Arts for African American History Month and this relationship continues with in-person workshops.

Recent group exhibits include Shifting Paradigms, Prince George's Community College Gallery; Hope & Healing, Montpelier Art Center; and Hand Made, Black Rock Gallery. WCADC exhibits include What Is Ours, Sandy Spring Museum; Songs That Make Us Move, The Friendship Gallery, and Occupy the Moment: Embracing Our History, Enhancing Our Impact, Bridgeport Art Center, Chicago, IL. Within the Greenbelt community at the City Council Chambers, Greenbelt News Review, and New Deal Cafe. Past exhibits include Lowe House, Montpelier Arts Center, Serendipity Labs, Gallery Miriam, and Pyramid Atlantic.

Currently, I teach art for Prince George's County Public Schools at Gaywood Elementary, to students in PreK through 5th grade. I partner with University of Maryland and Towson University to mentor art education majors seeking to become art teachers. Gaywood's



principal gives me free reign to paint murals on the walls and doors of the school and I enlist students and teachers to help. In addition, high schools partner with me to facilitate mural painting within Gaywood to fulfill students' Service Learning hours.

My focus this year as President of WCADC will be to rally our members to strengthen our existing committees: Community Outreach, Programs, Exhibitions, Communications, and Membership. We can make this chapter stronger when we work together. Will you work with me?



In this Month's Issue

- Celebrating Black History Month
- *Love and Art*
- What are WCADC Members Up To?
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- Important Announcements



CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Black Artists that Inspire Us

- Simone Leigh
- Evangeline J. Montgomer
- Margo Humphrey
- Amber Robles Gordon
- Elizabeth Catlett
- Harmonia Rosales
- Clara Ledesma
- Mequitta Ahuja
- Augusta Savage
- Renee Stout
- Betye Saar
- Tawny Chatmon
- Tyler Clark
- Allison Saar
- Faith Ringgold
- Alma Thomas
- Delita Martin
- Mickalene Thomas
- Jordan Casteel
- Kara Walker
- Shirley Woodson
- Bisa Butler
- Tamar Natalie Madden
- Kimberly Camp
- Marilyn Hayes
- Sandra Davis
- Mary Lee Bendolph
- Deborah Roberts
- Eva Preston



LOVE AND ART

How have you incorporated love or used it to fuel your work?

"Love in my work is love of self. My work centers on issues of identity. I am Arab, and this is a time in history where being Arab holds with it meanings of loss, displacement, stereotype, prejudice, and violence. What drives my work is a love of my people, a love for the pride and the values that I hold inside myself and that I would "love" for the world to understand better."

- Ghia Haddad

"My spouse of almost 41 years loves me unconditionally and supports my art practice in every way possible; logistics, photography, critique etc."

- Sandra Davis

"Fiber requires a bit of love to finesse. My husband and I celebrate 19 years together and he helps me with delivering, carrying, moving in and out of studios, and framing." - Bonnie MacAllister

"The need to love one another is a constant theme in my work. One of my most popular note card images is a Valentine's Day card featuring a collage of a heart, entitled Best Friends Forever. It was created to celebrate those friendships that sustain us through good times and bad."

- Cynthia Farrell Johnson

"My Father's love of jazz and the fondest memories that I have of passing by the living room seeing my Father and best friend talking and laughing with jazz in the background; the times my Father and Mother were affectionately dancing to jazz; and my Mother singing along with the female jazz greats are what influenced my love of jazz and my Jazz Series artworks." - Barbara Joann Combs



WHAT ARE WCADC MEMBERS UP TO?



Artist: Sarah Schneiderman

Description: portrait of Ana Irma Lassén – the first Black, openly lesbian in the Puerto Rican senate

Materials: Non-recyclable trash and repurposed materials sewn onto a campaign lawn sign



Artist: Ghia Haddad

Description: The piece is titled FLOWERS FOR HER HAIR, which asks the question “What if we had flowers instead of hair?”



Artist: Tronja

Description: "If these Masks could talk" is a collection of vibrant figurative paintings inspired by African masks and sculptures.



WHAT ARE WCADC MEMBERS UP TO?



Artist: Barbara Joann Combs

Description: Currently exhibiting in Shifting Paradigms, Prince George's Community College Gallery



Artist: Beth Cartland

Description: "The Color of the Year" according to pantone is Magenta.



Artist: Lisa Murphy

Description: Portrait of Artist Hung Liu



EVENTS



Prudence Bonds

Homage: The Common Bond at Friendship Gallery - 1/30 - 3/5

WCADC Our Voices Carry Weight at Bohrer Park 2/3 - 4/23

Carbonado: Asserting the Emerging at Sebrot-Forbes Cultural Arts Center 2/4 - 2/25

Love Hurts at Girls Who Paint Gallery 2/9 - 3/12

Bonnie MacAllister

Fiber art piece entitled, "Our Lady of Solder and Wire" in "Love's Great Adventure" at the historic Plastic Club, Philadelphia, PA

Cynthia Farrell Johnson

Multiple pieces in an exhibition at the Members' Gallery of the Fredericksburg Center for the Creative Arts in Fredericksburg, VA.

Other Exhibits and Shows

Stanford in Washington Art Gallery: "Women at War", an exhibit of work by contemporary Ukrainian women artists

"Interwoven", curated by Heloisa Escudero at the Betty Mae Kramer Gallery



From the Studio of Ghia Haddad

Women in history have found themselves at the losing end of a misogynistic narrative. Women of color more so, as they have had the misfortune to be seen through the patriarchal lens of history as well as an orientalist one; where their story, and with it, their lasting representation was fabricated to satisfy economic and political ends. My focus when I produce art is a world reimagined, free from the shackles of perceived exoticism, mystification, violence and eroticism usually reserved for Western representations of Eastern women within what Edward Said calls "the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient."

I feel that it is a crucial time to concentrate our endeavors, as women of color, to help decolonize our own image of ourselves with the deliberate usage of mediums that would be considered "primitive" or "exotic."

While fiber arts have existed forever, they were dismissed from the sphere of high art for being too feminine and banned by The Royal Academy. This resulted in the omission of women's expression from the history of Western art. Art from the global South, on the other hand, was relegated to an academically inferior platform particularly for its use of "crafty" materials such as textiles.

Through experiments with fabric, strings, and yarn, let us aim to merge East and West, old and new, feminine and masculine, to challenge the traditional Western understanding of high art and ask questions about the role of women of color within that understanding.

From Ghia's series entitled **FLOWERS FOR HER HAIR**, which asks the question "*What if we had flowers instead of hair?*"

See more of Ghia's work here:
<https://www.ghiahaddad.com/>



Announcements

- **ShoutMouse Press is Hiring Illustrators!** The new series features bilingual picture books that will be written by immigrant young people from LAYC. Illustrators who are bilingual and/or of immigrant experience preferred. Follow this link to learn more:
<https://www.shoutmousepress.org/careers>
- **Studio Space To Share.** Upstairs Art Studios in downtown Bethesda is looking for new artists. Great collegiality with existing painters. This is an unusual opportunity. Please contact Jane Rostov at jrostov@verizon.net, or Holly Stone at hollystonepoet1@gmail.com if you have any questions, or would like to see our studio.

IMPORTANT!

