NIU Art Museum Vol. 27, Issue 1, Summer/Fall, 2023

Become a Friend of the NIU Art Museum!

New Members
Michael and Elizabeth Denius
Matthew and Shelby Edelmann
Paul and Elizabeth Eisen

Renewals
Robert Banke
Joyce Barker
Elizabeth Bass
Michael and Elaine Bennett
Peggy Burke
Mary Burns
Richard and Thecla Cooler
Herb Deutsch
Joanne Dillman
Larry Ehrike
Edward and Donna Flanagan
Patricia Galvan
Richard F. Grott
James Hovis and Cathy Nefstead
Barbara Hulseberg
Teresa Iversen
Steven A. Johnson
Anne C. Kaplan
Kathleen and Richard Katz
Ronald G. Klein
Mary E. Lincoln
Sheila McHugh
David and Marcie McMahon
Liz Mehren and Joe Shapera
Gretchen Moore
Dianne and James Moss
Maria Ocasio and Ev Solty
Linda Oster
Sherry Lee Patterson
Patricia Perkins
Linda Peterson
Bryan Perry
Diane Rodgers
Maureen and Morley Russell
Dan and Virginia Seymour
Ivan and Judith Shils
Rosemarie Slavenas
Teri Smialek
Sally Stevens
Lynne Waldeland
Christine Worley and Peter Hood
Jerrold and Carol Zar


The above image is on display in Jo’s office helping to give her inspiration for the “Dialogue” exhibit.

Director’s Notes:

Visiting a gallery is generally a passive experience – contemplative, yes, but it can also be challenging. I invite you to approach your gallery visits a different way. Since the gallery is free, consider visiting a show repeatedly for multiple viewings with more intensive and extensive looking and listening. Then visit again with another person for sharing each of your experiences, talking about the shows and developing a deeper awareness.

Our fall exhibitions deal with two topics I thought we all needed a bit more of: dialogue and mourning. Too much doubt in our shared humanity; too little understanding of another’s experience. “Dialogue” asks that we look and listen before we judge. Take the time to view and hear what is being presented or being said before we react or respond. “The Remaining, Mourn...” gives us a chance to work toward healing. Too much needing to move forward and onward and not getting time to contemplate, meditate, freeze a moment in time and embrace a memory. Mourning is very personal. Mourning takes time.

I am very pleased to have NIU alumna Millicent Kennedy (MFA, Fine Art Studio: Printmaking, 2018) one of our former graduate assistants and current extra-help preparators guest co-curate “The Remaining, Mourn…” with another artist, Michael Chambers. Millicent and Michael have recreated and expanded upon a theme they had explored before in “For the Living, To the Dead” at Parlour and Ramp Gallery, a former funeral parlor in Chicago.

Our winter shows, in conjunction with the Center for Burma Studies and a compilation from private collections, a national call for entries, and by invitation deal with food, as will the show “Good Food” at The Pick Museum of Anthropology this academic year and an upcoming show at the DeKalb County History Center and local history museums.

This coming spring, we are excited to host a show developed from an artist residency that had to go virtual during Covid. “Making Our History – Artists Render Lincoln’s Legacies” was produced by faculty at the University of Illinois at Springfield. UIS art studio professor Bryton Bjorngaard and Lincoln scholar Graham A. Peck worked with 20 Illinois artists given access to the Lincoln archives. We were first introduced to this show by participating artist Judith Joseph who has been in several of our group shows. Judith, being familiar with our gallery spaces, knew we could serve as a terrific venue for this show.

Jo Burke

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Subscribe to the museum’s email announcements to stay informed between newsletters.

To sign-up, visit niu.edu/artmuseum/about/contact-us.shtml

Confirm your subscription by clicking the link in the confirmation email.
2. Exhibitions

Fall 2023 Exhibitions: Things that Seem Needed...

Aug. 29 through Oct. 14, 2023

Public opening reception: 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday, September 7. Informal gallery talk at 5:45 p.m.

Public closing reception: 1 to 2:30 p.m. Sunday, October 15; presentation to follow in Altgeld 125.

Dialogue
Curated by Jo Burke
South Gallery

The concept of dialogue allows for issue awareness and resolution through listening. Its goal is understanding. The artists whose work is displayed in this exhibition have worked on lens-based projects that have grown and developed organically over the years.

This exhibition will feature selections from “Lines of Authority” by Alan Cohen, “Black Box” by Michael Coppage and “The Folded Map Project” by Tonika Lewis Johnson.

These artists have taken on big complex tasks and concepts and attempted to deal with them simply. It is the hope that their art projects can reach beyond a single look or conversation into an ongoing dialogue from which empathy, understanding and enlightenment can grow. The concerns of these artists are the concerns of a people, a city, a nation, the world.

The Remaining, Mourn...
Curated by Michael Chambers and Millicent Kennedy
North and Rotunda Galleries

“The Remaining, Mourn…” is a group exhibition addressing the experience of grieving as seen through the lens of nine artists’ practices. Through tactile artworks, they address both individual and collective loss. Holding materials as one would onto someone lost, these artists use various techniques to freeze a moment, allowing themselves time to process what remains as well as what is gone. Their materials, and the memories and emotions they evoke, become the “language” the artists use to create their own rituals to navigate grief/mourning and work toward healing.

The artists featured in this exhibition include Selva Aparicio, Michael Chambers, April Dauscha, Salvador Jiménez-Flores, Millicent Kennedy, Allen Moore, Monika Ploplyte, Nirmal Raja and Anne Wilson.

Cumulatively, their works and the stories they tell remind us that we—from family to community to civilization—are united by our vulnerability.

Upcoming exhibits:

“Food for the Soul: Belief and Healing in Burma/Myanmar in the Age of COVID”

“What is for Supper? What is a Meal?”

Nov. 14 to Dec. 16, 2023 and Jan. 16 to Feb. 17, 2024. We will be closed during university holiday.

“Making Our History—Artists Render Lincoln’s Legacies”

Mar. 26 to May 12, 2024.
Museum News

Our staff has been working to improve the online presence of our Permanent Collection. Check it out at niuartmuseum.catalogaccess.com.

Collection Spotlight: Sean Starwars

The nom-de-plume Sean Starwars fits the strong pop-culture leanings of this southern artist who created the print on page 8 while visiting NIU ten years ago. Professor Michael Barnes invited Sean here because of his slightly unhinged approach to the traditional printmaking medium of woodcut and his reputation as an “Outlaw Printmaker” along with characters such as Bill Fick and Tom Huck (both of whom have also visited NIU and contributed prints to our collection), and Mike Houston and Martin Mazzorra of Cannonball Press (their exhibition “Root Hog or Die” was held at the NIU Art Museum in 2010).

In addition to making woodcuts for over twenty-five years, Sean has been an Adjunct Professor, a janitor and a used car salesman. Sean currently works full-time as a printmaker and exhibits in solo and group exhibitions nationally and has contributed to numerous print exchange portfolio collaborations, including one at NIU, in 2003. The “NIU Print Blitz 2003” portfolio includes his woodcut “Gator Bite” (featured below).

As stated by the artist, “I choose the format of the large-scale color woodcut because it best suits my energy-charged, caffeine-induced, aggressive approach to image making. Charles Bukowski, Ms. Pacman, Phillip Guston and Neil Blender are among my influences. Somewhere along the way, I realized that I could accomplish my goals as an artist without enslaving myself to the meticulous obsessions of “traditional” printmaking. I don’t slow down to make perfect drawings or to finesse my color registration. I hammer out the carvings and blast out the prints, and move on to the next print, the next day. My primary concern is to create a strong visual infused with a sense of satirical humor, in other words I like to tell funny stories using funny pictures.” Continued on page 8...

Your participation requested!

We are looking to borrow your treasured old lunch box or cookie jars for display in the Art Museum’s Hall Case Gallery during the upcoming food show. Cabinets are only 10” deep. Contact us by October 20.

We are also seeking magazines with pictures that we may cut up during the SoulCollage® Workshop slated for September 10. Drop off by September 2.

Thursday, September 7
Opening Reception, 5 to 7 p.m.
Join us for the opening reception of “Dialogue” and “The Remaining, Mourn...” in the Art Museum Galleries. Informal curator and artist talk for “The Remaining, Mourn...” begins at 5:45 p.m. Refreshments provided.

Sunday, September 10
SoulCollage® Workshop* for Survivors and Mourners, 1 to 4 p.m.
SoulCollage® is an expressive arts practice founded by psychotherapist Seena B. Frost. The intention of the workshop is to offer an inclusive visual tool that can be used for exploring, healing and empowering personal and collective evolution. This workshop will be conducted by Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell who has facilitated workshops all over the country. Participants will create collaged cards for their personal use by gluing together found images. Each collage should mirror the relationships, values, interests and intentions of the individual creating them.

Altgeld Hall, 125
*This workshop is ages 17 and up. Limited to sixteen participants. Free, but register by September 8.

Thursday, September 28
The Landscape of Loss—Navigating Gently and with Resilience, 6 to 7 p.m.
Program with Jen Conley, Bereavement Coordinator with Northern Illinois Hospice—one for Q&A at the end.

Altgeld Hall, 125

Sunday, Oct. 15
Closing Reception, 1 to 2:30 p.m.
Join us for the closing reception of “Dialogue” and “The Remaining, Mourn...” in the Art Museum Galleries. Refreshments provided.

“Dialogue” Artists Presentation Program to follow in Altgeld 125.

All events are free unless otherwise noted. Preregistration for virtual and in-person events may be required. Please phone 815-753-1936 or visit online for Zoom virtual live streaming details: niu.edu/artmuseum/events.
Thank You!
Thanks to those who made our spring exhibitions and programs not only possible but successful despite some challenges we faced. We are pleased to note that Peter Olson is doing much better after his heart surgery. Thank you for your healing thoughts and prayers.

Program Participants for Poetry Night: Rick and Bonnie Amesquita, John Bradley, Joe Gastiger, Becky Parflitt and Rich Rice.

Lenders of artwork from their private collection for “Local Visions II”: Michael Barnes, Michael Bennett, Aleksandra “Ola” Giza, Doug and Julie Jeppesen, Michael Noland, Ari Norris, Peter Olson, Rich Rice and Christo Watson.


Funding Partners: The Illinois Arts Council Agency, The NIU Arts and Culture Fee, WNIU/WNIJ and Shaw Media.

Thanks as well to staff and crew! Yesenia Arroyo, Sophie Bergagna, Rory Bis-Markel, Jo Burke, Shelby Edelmann, John Hosta, Danielle Lee, Peter Olson, Ryan Sarau-Young, Abbey Skelton and April Startzel.

Photos from Local Visions II:

Photos from Americans in Burma: The Art of Collecting:
Sustaining Members

Friends
Macus Alonso
Robert Banke
Joyce Barker
Elizabeth Bass
Joe and Cindy Baumgart
Donna Benson
Pat L. Brown
Gary Burchett
Mary Burns
Gary and Dee Coover
AnnaMarie Coveny
Stacey Deegan
Herb Deutsch
Jan Devore
Joanne Dillman
Larry Ehke
Patricia and Steven Favire
Claudia Frost
Brian and Linda Fulton
David and Linda Groat
Daniel Grych
James Hovis and Cathy Nefstead
Jitka Hurych
Teresa Iverson
Charles Larry and Emmylou Studier
Donna M. Leonard
Mary E. Lincoln
Karen Matz and John Skowronski
Sheila McHugh
David and Marcie McMahon
Liz Mehren and Joe Shapera
Jan Modloff
Maria Ocasio and Ev Soltys
Juliann K. Olsen
Linda Oster
David Parker
Sherry Lee Patterson
Linda Peterson
Caroline Quinlan
Rich Rice and John Calimee
Diane Rodgers
Michael and Robin Rothamer
Bill and Kathi Scarpaci
Ivan and Judith Shils
Rosemarie Slavenas
Beverly Ann Smith
Jerry and Ging Smith
Philip and Johanna Vandrey
Sophia Varacados and Jen Conley
Jerrold and Carol Zar

Sponsors
Renie Adams
Fred Barnhart
Rudolf and Ingeborg Bisanz
Molly Burke
Peggy Burke
Susan Carter and Robert Sabin
Michael and Elizabeth Denius
Matthew and Shelby Edelmann
Paul and Elizabeth Eisen
Edward and Donna Flanagan
Donna Gable and Ken Rodd
Patricia Galvan
Stephen and Deborah Haliczer
Barbara Hulseberg
Steven A. Johnson
Ronald G. Klein
Sandra and Howard Little
Jerry and Miriam Meyer
Gretchen Moore
Dianne and James Moss
Nicholas Noe
Peter Olson
Patricia Perkins
Diane Rodgers
Morley and Maureen Russell
Linda Schwarz
Dan and Virginia Seymour
Terri Smialek
Marian Swenson
Ruth Anne Tobias
Patricia S. Vary
Lynne Waldeland
Christine Worley and Peter Hood

Benefactors
Gerald and Cheryl Brauer
Jo Burke
Lee S. Holt
Jerry and Annette Johns
Anne C. Kaplan
Paul and Katherine Kassel
Kathleen and Richard Katz
Elizabeth Plotnick
Catherine Raymond and Alan Potkin

The support the museum receives through your financial gifts and your enthusiasm for the museum allows us to produce award-winning exhibitions and programs for the university, DeKalb and beyond.

Thank you for your generosity and support.

Membership Renewals
Membership renewal notices are not mailed. Please check if your membership card is expiring soon and renew today!

Change of Address
Notify the Museum if you have moved to ensure that you continue to receive issues of the Museum Notes newsletter.
JOIN

All gifts sustain and grow opportunities for enrichment and engagement that are free and open to all. Take satisfaction knowing your vital commitment supports our exhibitions, programs and the preservation of our permanent collection.

Membership Levels

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Benefits

- Choice of one “Friend” premium.
- Priority registration and discounted activity fees.
- Printed mailing of exhibition announcements.
- Special members-only previews, receptions, bus trips and special events.
- 20% discount on NIU Art Museum catalogues.
- Subscription to “Museum Notes” newsletter.
- Recognition in “Museum Notes.”
- Name engraved on membership plaque.
- Private personal tour (options available).

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Premiers

- Friend
  - Choice of: Travel mug, ceramic mug or T-shirt*. (*Additional $5 for student/senior levels.)

- Benefactor
  - Choice of one Benefactor Collector Print
    - Susanne Doremus, “Sea Fall”
    - Jay Ryan, “The Squadron on Patrol”

- Patron
  - Choice of one Patron Collector Print
    - Renie Adams, “Point of View”
    - Michael Barnes, “Sideshow”
    - David Driesbach, “Opening Night”
    - Carl Hayano, “Sushi Trinitron”
    - Ben Mahmoud, “Night Garden”

- Sponsor
  - Choice of one Sponsor Collector Print
    - Sidney Chafetz, “Public Servant”
    - William Daley, “Untitled”
    - David Driesbach, “The Pied Piper”
    - Larry Gregory, “Conkles Hollow, Ohio”
    - John Pitman Weber, “Distant Soweto”

*Subject to print availability.

Membership

YES! I want to □ Join □ Renew at the indicated level below: Students and Seniors please enclose copy of current I.D.

- □ Benefactor $500
- □ Patron $250
- □ Sponsor $100
- □ Friend select one
  - □ Individual $25
  - □ Dual $45 (2 members one household)
  - □ Senior $15
  - □ Dual Senior $25
  - □ Student $10

I would like to help with an additional donation of $ ____________.

Premiums - make checks payable to NIU.

- □ Premium Selection ____________________________
- □ Print Series Selection ____________________________

Charitable Donation - make checks payable to NIU Foundation.

- □ Please keep my premium. Use my entire gift for exhibitions, programming and collection care by making a charitable donation through the NIU Foundation.

Name __________________________________________________________________
Address ________________________________________________________________
City ___________________________ State _______ ZIP _____________
Phone ___________________________ Mobile _____________________________
Email __________________________________________________________________

Payment

□ Check enclosed $ ____________.

Please charge: Visa Mastercard Discover Amer Exp Expiration ________________
Account number __________________________________________________________
Name on card ____________________________________________________________
Signature __________________________________________________________________

I am interested in volunteering for:

- Baking/Receptions
- Housing artists/scholars overnight
- Gallery Attendant/Information Desk
- Researching Get-On-The-Bus Trips
- Serving on an Advisory Panels: (Area of Interest: Events Fundraiser Education/Outreach Exhibitions Collections)

If you are already a current member, please share this form with a friend. Thank you.
Sean’s woodblock prints convey a good-natured yet aggressive approach to image making, capturing his energy in the carving and use of striking color. His work can be seen in museums and private homes, and on book covers, album covers, magazines, television programs, films and commercials. Sean earned an MFA in Printmaking from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, and his BFA from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. He lives in Laurel, Mississippi with his wife and five children. Oh, and for what it’s worth, he drinks more Mountain Dew than anyone who has ever lived.