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“Rooted in the Earth” an art exhibit and concurrent panel discussion opens February 26th at Spalding University



LOUISVILLE, Ky. (February 3, 2012) – Textiles and fiber art by Pat DaRif, Joanne Weis and Valerie White will be exhibited at Spalding University’s Huff Gallery from February 26 – April 8, 2012. The artists’ reception will be Sunday, February 26, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. A panel discussion called “Quilts as Cultural Metaphors” will take place on Monday, February 27 from 12:30-2:00 p.m.

Pat DaRif, Joanne Weis, and Valerie White are studio artists who work predominantly in the art quilt medium. They have exhibited collectively and individually on a local, regional and national level. Their work is unique in style and technique but blends beautifully into this exhibition with continuity and variety. DaRif’s work portrays essential elements of nature – water, forest and grasslands. Weis narrows her subject matter by depicting “earth” as she experiences it at her home and neighborhood in the Floyd’s Fork Watershed. White’s admiration and deep respect for the strength of the Sun, and the beauty and mystery of root systems has led her to explore the relationships of spirituality and social connections to the Church.

In “Rooted in the Earth,” each artist articulates her approach in a distinctive manner while mutually DaRif, Weis and White share a deep reverence for the earth, view sustainability as a social justice issue and feel a sense of responsibility for communicating this value. About this exhibit the artists state: “We live in the Ohio Valley with its rich and stunning environment but we also live on a planet that is threatened. We share the task of assuring that our grandchildren’s generation inherits a world with clean water, breathable air and nourishing food. Now is the time that conversations must be happening about reversing the trends and protecting our fragile world.”

Concurrently on exhibit in the Kentucky School of Art Gallery located in
Theillard Hall

Gwendolyn Kelly: “Meditation on Houses and Other Everyday Objects”



Gwendolyn Kelly is a curious MultiPurposeWoman who thinks too much. She wonders about the objects people throw away and the things they leave behind as they move through life. She questions her own everyday decisions to put potentially useful items in the trash. She picks up litter and too often finds things on the street and keeps them for possible later use. The works in this show are meditations on everyday objects. They were prompted by Gwen’s growing concern about the number of abandoned properties in Louisville. The pieces include ... *Shelter*, a mixed-media collage incorporating a window from the now demolished house that use to be next door to Gwen’s home. *Abandon*, a beaded curtain inspired by Tibetan Prayer Flags and representing 16 forgotten houses on West Kentucky St. *The Postcard Prompt Project*, a crowdsourcing experiment to remind owners about their abandoned property. *Property Protection Amulets*, fiber collages available for barter More info: www.kentuckyschoolofart.org.

Panel Discussion: “Quilts as Cultural Metaphors”



In conjunction with “Rooted in the Earth,” a panel discussion called “Quilts as Cultural Metaphors” will take place on Monday, **February 27th from 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.** in the Library Lecture Lounge located next to the Huff Gallery. This event will include a preview of Episode Seven, “Empowering Women One Quilt at a Time,” of Shelly Zegart’s new nine-part documentary, “Why Quilts Matter: History, Art and Politics” followed by a roundtable discussion.

Guest speakers:

Shelly Zegart, distinguished quilt expert, collector and co-founder of the Alliance for American Quilts, one of the founders of the Quilt Index and a founding director of the The Kentucky Quilt Project, Inc. She is the Executive Producer and Host of the nine-part documentary series “Why Quilts Matter: History, Art & Politics.” Additional info.: www.whyquiltsmatter.org

Linda Beattie, author and professor of Communication at Spalding University is currently working on her forthcoming book about Kentucky quilts and quilt makers for the University Press of Kentucky. Beattie, who has published hundreds of feature articles and book reviews in local and national magazines and newspapers, is the author of four previous books: *Conversations with Kentucky Writers*, *Conversations with Kentucky Writers II*, *Savory Memories*, and *Sisters in Pain: Battered Women Fight Back* (with M.A. Shaughnessy). She is a member of the board of directors of the Kentucky Quilt Project, Inc.

Patricia Dillon, is a professor of History at Spalding University. Her research interest focuses on the connections between race, gender, and religion during the Civil War and Reconstruction era. Dr. Dillon teaches courses on Civil War and Reconstruction, African-American History, Gender History, World History, and U.S. History Since 1945.

Pat DaRif is a fiber artist whose work has been exhibited in many local and national venues. For many years she has been active in fiber art organizations in the community, working to promote understanding of and appreciation for the medium. Pat worked for almost forty years in the field of social services, the last twenty-eight as an Administrative Law Judge for the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration. Since retiring in 2009, Pat has been thrilled to be able to create art on a full-time basis.

Joanne Weis is a mixed media textile artist whose work can be found in numerous private collections around the country. After retiring from a full career as a social worker, she graduated with a Masters Degree from the Hite Art Institute at the University of Louisville. In addition to creating fiber art and exhibiting around the country, she juries and curates shows, teaches and, as past president of the Louisville Area Fiber and Textile Artists, promotes appreciation of fiber and textile art within the community.

Valerie C. White, an award winning fiber artist, has been creating quilts for almost twenty years. A retired art educator from the District of Columbia Public Schools, she continues to share her passion for textiles, teaching and presenting lectures nationally. Widely exhibited in the United States and internationally, her work appears in several publications and she can be seen in the new documentary *Why Quilts Matter: History, Art And Politics*. Valerie is active in several local art organizations and serves as a member of the Board of Governors for the Speed Museum. She earned a BFA from Howard University in Washington, DC and an MA in Guidance and Counseling from Virginia Polytechnic University, in Blacksburg, Virginia.

The Huff Gallery is located in the Library Building, Spalding University, 853 Library Lane (between York and Breckinridge Streets, and Third and Fourth Streets). The gallery is open Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 7 p.m.

For further information, contact Joyce Ogden or go to www.spalding.edu/visitor/huff-gallery

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