FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 19, 2018

National Museum of Women in the Arts Exhibits Artists’ Books in
Bound to Amaze: Inside a Book-Collecting Career | July 20–Nov. 25, 2018

WASHINGTON—The National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA) presents Bound to Amaze: Inside a Book-Collecting Career, on view July 20–Nov. 25, 2018. Curator Emerita Krystyna Wasserman assembled NMWA’s collection of more than 1,000 artists’ books over a 30-year period. This focus exhibition celebrates her vision and features 20 notable artists’ books from the museum’s expansive collection.

"This presentation offers a glimpse into Krystyna Wasserman’s curatorial process, focusing on the friendships she has built with artists through the years based on their shared passion for the book art genre," said Chief Curator Kathryn Wat. “Through her expert work, NMWA has become a world-renowned repository for this dynamic and highly expressive art form.”

Although Wasserman procured exquisite texts made through the time-honored processes of printing and binding, Bound to Amaze centers on her discovery of books that incorporate inventive techniques such as piercing, pleating, curling and tying. A number of featured works are dramatically sculptural in form, made from materials including linen, wood and semi-precious stone. Accordion book structures, such as Dido and Aeneas (1989) by Claire Van Vliet (b. 1933), unfold to reveal all of their drama simultaneously. Green Salad (2001) by Katherine Glover (b. 1947) comprises a wooden salad bowl filled with green leaves of paper and a poem about the artist’s son nestled inside the leaves.

“I have always been very concerned with the visual appeal of the books because I wanted to exhibit them, and so I looked for originality and diversity of structures and materials," said Wasserman. “I have tried to find works that convey an artist’s idea through a book’s structure.”
With subjects ranging from Shakespeare’s Desdemona to the pleasures of eating, the books also reveal Wasserman’s love of drama and whimsy. “Book artists often embrace several muses simultaneously, and their books demonstrate these relationships,” said Wasserman. *Desdemona in Her Own Words* (2014) by Emily Martin (b. 1953) is a creative collaboration with William Shakespeare. Martin excerpted all of the words spoken by Desdemona in the play *Othello* and substituted them with the lines she believes Desdemona should have said. Elisabetta Gut’s *L’Uccello di fuoco (Da Stravinsky) (The Firebird (From Stravinsky))* (1985) is her visual response to Igor Stravinsky’s music for the ballet *The Firebird*. Her wordless collage—a colorful dance of flying paper cut-outs—evokes the atmosphere of the Russian folk tale that inspired the ballet.

Recently retired from the museum, Wasserman first served as director of NMWA’s library and then as curator of book arts. *Bound to Amaze* includes many visitor favorites along with new acquisitions being exhibited for the first time.

*Bound to Amaze: Inside a Book-Collecting Career*, presented in the Teresa Lozano Long Gallery of the National Museum of Women in the Arts, is organized by the museum and made possible by Mrs. Marjorie B. Rachlin. Additional support is provided by Julie and Jon Garcia.

**National Museum of Women in the Arts**
The National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA) is the world’s only major museum solely dedicated to celebrating the creative contributions of women. The museum champions women through the arts by collecting, exhibiting, researching and creating programs that advocate for equity and shine a light on excellence. NMWA highlights remarkable women artists of the past while also promoting the best women artists working today. The museum’s collection includes over 5,000 works by more than 1,000 women artists from the 16th century to the present, including Mary Cassatt, Frida Kahlo, Alma Thomas, Lee Krasner, Louise Bourgeois, Chakaia Booker and Nan Goldin.

NMWA is located at 1250 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C., in a landmark building near the White House. It is open Monday–Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m., and Sunday, noon–5 p.m. For information, call 202-783-5000 or visit [nmwa.org](http://nmwa.org). Admission is $10 for adults, $8 for visitors 65 and over and students, and free for NMWA members and youths 18 and under. Free Community Days take place on the first Sunday of each month. For more information about NMWA, visit [nmwa.org](http://nmwa.org), [Broad Strokes Blog](http://blog.nmwa.org), [Facebook](http://facebook.com), [Twitter](http://twitter.com) or [Instagram](http://instagram.com).

**Media Contacts:**
Stacy Meteer, 202-783-7377
smeteer@nmwa.org
Amy Mannarino, 202-783-7373
amannarino@nmwa.org

# # #

**Image credit lines:**

Katherine A. Glover, *Green Salad*, 2001; Vellum, acrylic on Tyvek, semi-precious beads, and ribbon tie, 17 ½ x 14 x 9 ½ in.; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Museum purchase: Library and Research Center Acquisition Fund; © Katherine A. Glover