

***Holding Ground*, an exhibition of artists' books on view at
National Museum of Women in the Arts
October 21, 2023–October 20, 2024**

Nine new artists' books inaugurate museum's new Learning Commons



Suzanne Coley, *In Bloom*, 2023; Artist's book with letterpress printing, cloth, thread, and plastic; 13 x 10 x 6 in.; National Museum of Women in the Arts; Photo by Suzanne Coley

WASHINGTON—When it reopens on October 21, 2023, after a transformative renovation, the National Museum of Women in the Arts ([NMWA](#)) will host an exhibition of new artists' books inspired by the museum's mission of championing women artists. Its exhibition space, just outside of NMWA's Betty Boyd Dettre Library and Research Center (LRC), is part of the new fourth-floor Learning Commons, which includes the LRC, exhibition galleries and the museum's new studio for education and public programs. *Holding Ground: Artists' Books for the National Museum of Women in the Arts* is on view through October 20, 2024.

Nine artists—Alisa Banks, Adjoa Jackson Burrowes, Julie N. Chen, Suzanne Coley, IBé Crawley, Colette Fu, Kerry McAleer-Keeler, María Verónica San Martín and Maricarmen Solis—reflect on places where women find inspiration. Some of the works remind viewers that creativity is expressed and uplifted in unexpected spaces, from small interiors such as rural kitchens to vast outdoor geographies such as Chile's Atacama Desert. Other works directly relate to the museum as a special place for art by women; Maricarmen Solis's work, *1250 New York Ave. NW* (2023), re-creates NMWA's iconic building and collection. The exhibition also reflects the diversity of the book art format, showcasing works in a range of traditional book-making mediums such as stitched handmade paper, letterpress and screen printing, as well as more unexpected art materials including clay, handkerchiefs, sandbags, wood, human hair, beads, shells, glass and felt.

The book arts have always been at the heart of the museum's library collection. Re-envisioned through the renovation to include reinvigorated research spaces and more direct connections to galleries, the LRC is even better positioned to share the library's holdings and highlight the rich creative traditions of the book arts.

All of the featured artists' books will become part of the LRC's renowned collection. The spotlight exhibition is guest curated by Lynora Williams, former director of NMWA's Betty Boyd Dettre Library and Research Center.

Holding Ground: Artists' Books for the National Museum of Women in the Arts is organized by the National Museum of Women in the Arts. The exhibition is made possible by a generous bequest from Marjorie B. Rachlin.

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