

Fall 2025

Women in the Arts

NATIONAL
MUSEUM
OF WOMEN
IN THE ARTS





DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,

As we prepare and hope for a splendid fall season at NMWA, I want to recognize the evolving challenges we are facing in the museum world.

It has never been clearer that arts and culture are important, and NMWA's voice and mission matter more than ever. So, we are laser-focused on our work, which brings us joy, provides perspective, and fulfills our mission of recognizing the achievements of women artists of the past and present.

In late September, I look forward to welcoming you to the groundbreaking exhibition *Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750*, which features art by more than forty women from a dynamic historical era. Through their fascinating and sumptuous work, the exhibition tells the stories of many who were neglected by art history for generations, their legacies only recovered in recent decades as researchers began to redress biases of the past.

Reclaiming history is an ever-present theme as well in the work of contemporary artist Tawny Chatmon, whose NMWA exhibition opens in October. Her layered, photography-based works honor the lives and traditions of Black Americans, and we are proud to partner with her on the first museum exhibition of her art in Washington, D.C.

Reclamation, restoration, and resilience define so much of our work. In the summer magazine, you learned about how the museum's grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for *Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750* was rescinded without warning. It's important for you to know that, in the face of stiff resistance, our staff doggedly pursued recompense for the funds we had already spent. Through their efforts, NMWA was able to recover part of the grant, though less than a quarter of the original award. Then—thanks to you, our members and donors—you stepped up to close the gap. Your generosity ensured that all the works destined for the exhibition will be on view at NMWA.

Reaching this landmark moment with your help is a deep source of inspiration and pride.

WITH WARMEST GRATITUDE,

Susan Fisher Sterling

Susan Fisher Sterling
The Alice West Director

CHAMPION WOMEN THROUGH THE ARTS

MUSEUM INFORMATION
1250 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005

WEBSITE
<https://nmwa.org>
BROAD STROKES BLOG
<https://nmwa.org/blog>

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HOURS
Tuesday–Sunday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.;
Closed on Mondays and select
holidays; Library open Tuesday–
Friday and first Sundays,
12–4 p.m.

ADMISSION
NMWA Members free, Adults \$16,
D.C. residents \$13, Visitors 65 and
older \$13, Visitors 21 and younger
free, Visitors with disabilities plus
one free

Free Community Days are the first
Sundays and second Wednesdays
of every month.

WOMEN IN THE ARTS
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DIRECTOR
Susan Fisher Sterling
EDITOR
Elizabeth Lynch
ASSISTANT EDITOR
Alicia Gregory
DESIGN
Studio A, Alexandria, VA

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information, call 202-266-2814
or email elynch@nmwa.org.

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On the cover: Maria Schalcken,
Self-Portrait in Her Studio, ca.
1680; Oil on panel, 17 7/8 x 13 3/4 in.;
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Gift
of Rose-Marie and Eijk van Otterloo,
in support of The Center for
Netherlandish Art, inv. 2019.2094;
Photo © 2025 Museum of Fine Arts,
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Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750

Women played a vital role in the artistic life of the Low Countries in the seventeenth century—this groundbreaking exhibition shares their work and stories that have long gone untold.

VIRGINIA TREANOR

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Tawny Chatmon: Sanctuaries of Truth, Dissolution of Lies

Through her layered, photography-based art, Chatmon addresses racist myths and elevates cultural truths, celebrating Black families and traditions.

HANNAH SHAMBROOM

“Women painters and printmakers catered to the art market . . . innovating and adapting along the way.”

WOMEN ARTISTS FROM ANTWERP TO AMSTERDAM, P. 8



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Marina Tabassum's 2025 Serpentine Pavilion installation, *A Capsule in Time*

Be Here Now

At Serpentine Gallery South in London's Kensington Gardens, the 2025 Serpentine Pavilion, *A Capsule in Time* by Marina Tabassum (b. 1968), marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the commission. The Bangladeshi architect and educator and her firm, Marina Tabassum Architects (MTA), built this year's pavilion as a capsule-like structure around a semi-mature ginkgo tree, a climate-resilient species that will be replanted into the park following the pavilion's closure. Inspired by parkland traditions and arched garden canopies, the pavilion comprises four wooden forms with a translucent façade that diffuses and dapples light inside.

In an era of increasing censorship, Tabassum's goal is for the pavilion to function as a versatile space where visitors connect with each other through conversation and knowledge sharing. Tabassum and MTA compiled a selection of books that celebrate the



PHOTO BY ALICIA GREGORY FOR MNWA

Alma Thomas Way at 15th and Church Streets, Washington, D.C.

richness of Bangladesh and Bengali culture, literature, poetry, and ecology, all stored on shelves built into the structure. The pavilion will remain open through October 26.

This Way to (Art) History

On May 21, the Washington, D.C., street where Alma Woodsey Thomas (1891–1978) lived and worked for nearly seventy years was renamed "Alma Thomas Way." D.C. council member Christina Henderson, who introduced the renaming bill, said, "When we do these . . . projects, it's in honor of individuals, but it's also an effort to elevate and introduce local heroes to folks for the next generation."

Winning Women

Atlanta's High Museum of Art awarded **Alison Saar** (b. 1956) the 2025 David C. Driskell Prize for her contributions to the field of African American art. Saar will receive an unrestricted \$50,000 cash award. "At a time when many of the civil rights milestones achieved by previous generations—by our mothers and grandmothers—are being threatened or dismantled, the Driskell Prize empowers Black artists and art historians to push back," Saar said in a statement.

Multidisciplinary artist **Kapwani Kiwanga** (b. 1978) won the 2025 Joan Miró prize from Barcelona's Fundació Joan Miró. The French and Canadian artist is known for her practice that investigates themes of colonialism, gender, power, and the African diaspora. In addition to receiving a \$56,000 award, she will present a solo exhibition at the foundation.

A Walk Through History

At Bryn Mawr College, in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, the commissioned installation *Don't Forget to Remember (Me)* by Nekisha Durrett (b. 1976) was unveiled in April. It caps a five-year collaboration with the school community and Monument Lab to explore and address exclusionary histories on campus. The work, a plaza paved with paths in the shape of a square knot, is sited in the campus's Old Library Cloisters. Amid thousands of pavers, Durrett included nearly 250 engraved with the names of former Black staff members



PHOTO BY JIM ROESE, COURTESY OF BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

who were integral to the college's operations, particularly during an era when Black students were denied admission, and whose contributions have been historically unrecognized.

In Memoriam: Dara Birnbaum

Influential video and installation artist Dara Birnbaum, whose work critiqued and subverted the messages of mainstream media, died May 2, at age seventy-eight. Born in Queens, New York, in 1946, Birnbaum earned an architecture degree from Carnegie Mellon University before turning to art; she received a BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and studied video at the New School for Social Research, New York. In the mid-1970s, she began making innovative video work that critically addressed popular culture.

Birnbaum participated in NMWA's 2014 exhibition *Total Art: Contemporary Video*. The presentation featured her work in the museum's collection, *Technology/Transformation*:

Wonder Woman (1978–79), which is regarded as a foundational work of feminist video art. During her career, she received prestigious honors including a Guggenheim Fellowship, a United States Artists Fellowship,

and the Maya Deren Award from the American Film Institute. In 2022, the Hessel Museum at Bard College organized *Dara Birnbaum: Reaction*, the artist's first U.S. retrospective.

By the Numbers

A duo of reports released in spring 2025 surveyed women in the arts and warn of entrenched gender inequity. "Hardwiring Change," by Artnet News and the Association of Women in the Arts, focused on women in the arts industry, finding widespread concerns about pay inequity and representation in leadership, among other issues.

"Artists Speak: The Anonymous Was A Woman Survey" was released by the Anonymous Was A Woman foundation and written by journalists Charlotte Burns and Julia Halperin with SMU Data Arts. Its findings include women artists' desire for more institutional support and persistent fear of censorship: half of respondents said that they cannot speak freely without fear of career consequences.

Top left: The unveiling and dedication of Nekisha Durrett's *Don't Forget to Remember (Me)* monument at Bryn Mawr College, April 2025



Dara Birnbaum at her solo exhibition at Osservatorio Fondazione Prada in Milan, 2023

PHOTO BY FRANCESCA D'AMICO, COURTESY OF MARIAN GOODMAN GALLERY

Culture Watch

// EXHIBITIONS

CALIFORNIA

Shahzia Sikander:
Collective Behavior

Cantor Arts Center,
Stanford University **RM**

September 17, 2025–
January 25, 2026

<https://museum.stanford.edu>

A career-spanning presentation of Sikander's multidisciplinary work showcases her contemporary feminist approach to reframing South Asian visual histories and narratives.

FLORIDA

Ancestral Edge:
Abstraction and Symbolism
in the Works of Nine Native
American Women Artists

The Ringling Museum of Art,
Sarasota

September 13, 2025–
April 12, 2026

<https://ringling.org>

Two- and three-dimensional works on view use abstraction as a tool for Indigenous expression, highlighting tribal cultures, ancestral knowledge, and the lives of the artists.



CALIFORNIA // Shahzia Sikander, *Elusive Realities*, 1989–2000; Vegetable color, dry pigment, watercolor, tea, and collage on wasli paper; On view at the Cantor Arts Center



NEW YORK // Fede Galizia, *Still Life with Apples, Pears, Cucumbers, Figs, and a Melon*, ca. 1625–30; Oil on panel, 13 7/8 x 23 3/4 in.; On view at The Hyde Collection



TEXAS // Installation view of Betsabeé Romero: *Al reverso de la pista / On the Other Side of the Track*; On view at the Blanton Museum of Art

IOWA

Jiha Moon: One An Other
Stanley Museum of Art,
University of Iowa, Iowa City

Through July 2026
<https://stanleymuseum.uiowa.edu>

Abstract ceramic masks float in a bright mural of neon colors and imagery from tattoo designs, as Moon cheekily recontextualizes cultural symbols to upend viewers' assumptions.

MAINE

Front Lines: Women Etchers
at the Fore, 1880 to Today

Bowdoin College Museum
of Art, Brunswick

Through April 26, 2026
<https://bowdoin.edu>

Presenting works by artists including Emma Amos, Hung Liu, Alison Saar, and Käthe Kollwitz, *Front Lines* traces

the genre's evolution and explores themes of gender, race, and class.

NEW YORK

A Feast of Fruit and
Flowers: Women Still
Life Painters of the
Seventeenth Century
and Beyond

The Hyde Collection, Glens Falls

RM □

October 25, 2025–March 8, 2026
<https://hydecollection.org>

Featured artists including Fede Galizia, Clara Peeters, Maria Sibylla Merian, and Rachel Ruysch played an integral role in the development of the still life in seventeenth-century Europe.



UNITED KINGDOM // Emily Kam Ngwarray, *Ntang Dreaming*, 1989; On view at Tate Modern

PENNSYLVANIA

The Living Temple:
The World of Moki Cherry
Fabric Workshop and Museum,
Philadelphia **RM**
September 25, 2025–
April 12, 2026
<https://fabricworkshopandmuseum.org>

This retrospective shares vibrant tapestries, paintings, posters, costumes, sculptures, and more by the Swedish artist, whose work blurred boundaries between art and everyday life.

TEXAS

Betsabée Romero:
Al reverso de la pista / On
the Other Side of the Track
Blanton Museum of Art,
University of Texas, Austin **RM**
Through January 4, 2026
<https://blantonmuseum.org>

Romero blends traditional artistic methods with industrial fabrication. In this installation, racing tires are incised with Indigenous motifs and lined with hand-embroidered shawls.

WASHINGTON

Tariqa Waters: Venus
is Missing
Seattle Art Museum
Through January 4, 2026
<https://seattleartmuseum.org>

This immersive environment takes visitors on a science fiction-inspired journey with light components, a soundscape, sculpture, and a pink rocket ship.

International

DENMARK

Bouchra Khalili
Louisiana Museum of Art,
Humlebaek
Through November 30, 2025
<https://louisiana.dk>

Anchored by two multimedia installations created fifteen years apart, this exhibition highlights personal accounts about migration in the Mediterranean region and the lives of North African migrant workers in France.

UNITED KINGDOM

Emily Kam Ngwarray
Tate Modern, London
Through January 11, 2026
<https://tate.org.uk>

In recognition of Ngwarray as one of Australia's most renowned artists, the first major presentation of her work in Europe features textiles, paintings, film, and audio.

RM North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) or Reciprocal Organization of Associated Museums (ROAM) benefits for NMWA members at the Explorer level and above

▣ See works from NMWA's collection

// BOOKS



Anonymous Was A Woman

In 1996, photographer Susan Unterberg established the annual Anonymous Was A Woman (AWAW) grant, which provided ten women artists over the age of forty with unrestricted gifts of \$25,000 each. ***Anonymous Was A Woman: The First 25 Years*** (Hirmer, 2025), published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same name at New York University's Grey Art Museum (April 1–July 19, 2025), celebrates the award's impact, profiling all 251 women who received it between 1996 and 2020. Flipping through the tome's nearly 400 pages and wide-ranging essays, you are bound to land on an artist also represented in NMWA's collection: Howardena Pindell, Petah Coyne, Polly Apfelbaum, Harmony Hammond, and Mickalene Thomas, among others, are all past recipients. The award's name refers to a line in Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, which argues that to make art, a woman must have money and space for herself. Gaby Collins-Fernández, an artist and the award's director, writes, "AWAW seeks to make room for the latter through contributing to the former; that is, by giving women money and recognition and letting them define themselves on their own terms."

// Alicia Gregory



Toni at Random

As a novelist, Toni Morrison crafted inventive, highly lauded books that became bestsellers and fixtures on required reading lists. Less well-known is her work as an editor at Random House in the 1970s and early '80s, where she cultivated authors with common goals—writers of fiction and nonfiction who shared Black voices and stories for a Black audience, often in formally inventive ways. Dana A. Williams explores that history in ***Toni at Random: The Iconic Writer's Legendary Editorship*** (HarperCollins, 2025). Williams's text is peppered with quotes from Morrison's correspondence with her writers, and her voice shines through, full of humor and authority. "Now that our author-editor relationship has been baptized and duly anointed with our first spat, we can get on with our business," she wrote to Chinweizu, author of *The West and the Rest of Us* (1975). Many professional partnerships, such as her relationships with Angela Davis and Toni Cade Bambara, blossomed into firm friendships. While Morrison eventually stepped back to focus on her own writing, this book illuminates a singular, impressive figure and the breadth of her achievements in Black literature.

// Elizabeth Lynch

Educators' Corner

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Resource Roundup: Do You Know Our ABC?

When NMWA educators say "ABC," they are usually referring to the museum's signature Art, Books, and Creativity (ABC) curriculum. First piloted in classrooms during the 2004–05 school year, ABC is a free arts integration resource that fosters students' visual literacy, critical thinking, and writing skills. Developed with a generous multi-year U.S. Department of Education grant, it uses the museum's unique collection of artists' books to highlight the natural connections between visual arts and language arts. Over fourteen lessons, students learn about artistic genres and write related texts; observe and discuss works in NMWA's collection; learn to create books in a range of formats; and ultimately produce their own finished artist's book.

Twenty years on, the curriculum continues to provide inspiration for much of NMWA's work with students and teachers, including our ABC Teacher Institute and virtual Educator Summer Camp, held annually in July. We credit ABC's longevity in part to its flexible content: lessons can function as stand-alone units or as a year-long project. They can also be adapted for students of different ages and abilities. Additionally, our updates to the curriculum have responded to the growth and increased diversity of NMWA's collection, the changing needs of students and teachers, new scholarship about women artists, and ever-evolving technology. Indeed, from ABC's inception, we intended to reach both local and national school audiences through digital platforms. This access is vital as NMWA helps ensure that proven arts learning methods—and artworks by women—appear in classrooms around the country.

The newest iteration of the ABC curriculum evolved as we began to re-envision the "Resources" section of the museum's website. With the help of NMWA's digital engagement team and website developers, museum educators evaluated and reimaged this section's accessibility, searchability, and functionality, starting with ABC. In their original form, each ABC lesson existed only as a PDF for teachers to download. That option remains, and the documents now meet accessibility guidelines for screen readers and assistive devices. But most of the content now lives on the website, making each lesson more digestible and searchable. Lessons are demarcated visually by color and content blocks that highlight sections such as "Vocabulary" and "A Closer Look," which introduce featured artworks and artists. This section also provides additional content, including digital art galleries.

Over the coming year, all of NMWA's educator resources, including exhibition guides and pre- and post-visit lessons for school groups, will undergo similar updates and revisions. With this added content, educators will be able to search and filter resources by grade level, subject area, and lesson series, helping them to identify activities that can be mixed-and-matched to best support learning for their students.

Check it out at <https://nmwa.org/learn/for-educators/curriculum-resources>, share with educators in your life, and revisit to see new resources.

The renewed "Resources" section of NMWA's website features easy-to-search lesson plans for educators

"The ABC Curriculum is an excellent way to understand how our students critically think, process, and share information."

ABC Teacher Institute attendee

Curriculum & Resources

Our free curriculum, exhibition resource guides, and See for Yourself cards support arts learning in the classroom and highlight the artistic contributions of women past and present.

Lessons

All Grade Levels All Subject Areas Art, Books, and Creativity

13 Results

Introduction to Art, Books, and Creativity

Lesson 1

Two 45-minute periods. Students are introduced to the ABC curriculum and artists' books. During this lesson, students will make journals, either to use throughout the year or to save for end-of-the-year reflections, and folders in which to keep the artwork they create in class.

Grades 3 to 5 Grades 6 to 8 Grades 9 to 12

English/Language Arts Visual Art

Art, Books, and Creativity

Exploring Media and Materials

Lesson 2

Two 45-minute periods. Students will use different drawing tools to create lines, patterns, shapes, and textures; experiment showing value and form; and explore how different media and tools can help them express ideas and feelings. Students will make an art exploration sheet to keep in their folders.

Grades 3 to 5 Grades 6 to 8 Grades 9 to 12

English/Language Arts Visual Art

Art, Books, and Creativity

Narrative Art

Lesson 3

Two or three 45-minute periods. Students will explore narrative art to see how stories are expressed visually and to learn how artists provide clues (setting, symbols, etc.) that help us understand the stories. Students will discover that people tell stories about themselves and their cultures through the visual arts. They will create their own narrative art in an accordion book form.

Grades 3 to 5 Grades 6 to 8 Grades 9 to 12

English/Language Arts Visual Art

Art, Books, and Creativity

Portraits

Lesson 4

Two or three 45-minute periods. Students will explore portraits and learn how artists provide clues about the subject. By observing the subject's clothing and facial expressions, the objects around them, and the space they occupy, we can infer much about their identity, personality, and role in society. Students will create self-portraits using a folded, one-sheet book form.

Grades 3 to 5 Grades 6 to 8 Grades 9 to 12

English/Language Arts Visual Art

Art, Books, and Creativity

Dedicated Donor

// BILL ROBBINS AND THE LEO ROSNER FOUNDATION



NMWA STAFF

"WE UNDERSTAND that if a child goes to a museum even once, it can change their entire life. That rings true for all of us," says Bill Robbins, who, with the Leo Rosner Foundation, has supported NMWA's programming since 1999. "We want to help children experience programs at the museum, or to be inspired by the museum's resources in their schools."

The Leo Rosner Foundation was founded in 1947 by Leo and Anna Rosner, Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. As Robbins describes, Leo Rosner was able to start investing in real estate in New York City during the Great Depression. After years of work, he started the foundation—with Robbins's father, Philip Robbins, as attorney—to give back to the community and support charitable causes.

"Bill Robbins and the Leo Rosner Foundation board have been stalwart supporters of NMWA. Their sustained funding has enabled us to build an arts education program that is second to none and in service to all. We are so grateful."

NMWA Director
Susan Fisher Sterling

Over the decades, the philanthropic tradition has been handed down to successive generations of both families. Bill Robbins took on the role of the foundation's director and attorney when his father passed away, and, in turn, members of the Rosner family have formed the other four seats on the board. Currently, the foundation's board comprises Robbins as well as June Rosner (daughter of Leo and Anna), her daughter Marcy Wachtel, and Amy Caplow Chan and Stacy Caplow, two daughters of the late Mildred Caplow (daughter of Leo and Anna).

Throughout its history, the Leo Rosner Foundation has supported a wide variety of nonprofit organizations and causes, including Jewish community groups, medical research, and education. The foundation ensures that all donations are made through unanimous decisions of the board and fund specific, defined projects.

In the 1990s, NMWA caught the attention of sisters Mildred Caplow and June Rosner, who suggested that the foundation make a donation. Their involvement grew steadily from there. Bill Robbins visited for a meeting with NMWA Founder Wilhelmina Cole Holladay and discovered—by great coincidence—that he was related to NMWA's now-retired deputy director, Ilene Gutman, who had married one of his cousins. The foundation was continually impressed by NMWA's responsible stewardship of their funds.

At NMWA, gifts from the Leo Rosner Foundation have been directed primarily toward the

Education Department. NMWA's educators have ambitious plans each year, such as school tours, partnerships, and outreach: The Rosner Foundation's gifts have supported buses that bring class field trips to the museum, art materials for classrooms, and specialized training for docents and staff, among other recent uses. "We are very gratified by programs connecting the museum's art and resources with students in need," says Robbins.

Another direct use of the Rosner Foundation's gifts has been professional development for educators, particularly in supporting the Art, Books, and Creativity (ABC) Teacher Institute and the Educator Summer Camp. These landmark programs help NMWA to reach more educators and share the museum's resources and curriculum widely. NMWA's educators describe the Rosner Foundation's support as invaluable in its consistency, helping the museum to grow its audience for meaningful arts learning.

A special donation from the Rosner Foundation to NMWA in honor of its 2023 reopening after renovation supported the new *Collection Highlights* catalogue. This vital gift allowed NMWA to create a contemporary publication featuring new photography and essays by nearly fifty contributors—including artists, leading scholars, poets, and others. Their voices illuminate the works on view and help to share the museum's art with an ever-wider public.



M.T. Van Thulen. F. A^{no} 1661.



Maria Theresia van Thielen, *Still Life with Parrot* (detail), 1661; Oil on canvas, 21 x 27 in., Milwaukee Art Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John Schroeder in memory of their parents, inv. M1967.41; Image courtesy of the Milwaukee Art Museum

SEPTEMBER 26, 2025 –
JANUARY 11, 2026

Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam 1600–1750

Virginia Treanor

Women played a vital role in shaping the visual culture of the Low Countries—present-day Belgium and the Netherlands—during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. *Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750* is the first-ever survey exhibition of women artists from this region and time period. Including more than forty artists, with many works on view in the United States for the first time, it demonstrates that women were an active and consequential part of one of the most robust and dynamic artistic economies of the era.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, D.C.

All in the Details

The current popular understanding of Dutch and Flemish visual culture of the period has been shaped primarily by blockbuster monographic exhibitions of male painters. As a result, many people are familiar with male artists of this era such as Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) and Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669), but few have heard of even the most prominent women artists who worked during this time. While museums

have organized a limited number of important monographic exhibitions on Dutch and Flemish women painters, most notably Judith Leyster (1609–1660), Clara Peeters (ca. 1587–after 1636), and Michaelina Wautier (1614–1689), their names are still relatively unknown to the public.¹

This trend reflects a longstanding bias in art historical literature against not only women, but also certain mediums: painting sat atop an artistic hierarchy conceived during the

Opposite: Judith Leyster, *Self-Portrait*, ca. 1630; Oil on canvas, 29 7/8 x 25 1/2 in.; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, inv. 1949.6.1

Renaissance, and other creative endeavors were neglected. Within this limited scope, it is impossible to gain an accurate picture of the past. The works presented in *Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750*, therefore, include not only painting, sculpture, and printmaking, but also paper cutting, calligraphy, and textile arts such as lace and embroidery. These wide-ranging art forms help to bring women's achievements into clearer focus.

Within thematic sections—"Presence," "Choices," "Networks," and "Legacy"—this exhibition juxtaposes works in multiple mediums by different makers across material, geography, and social status. It demonstrates that women did not work in obscurity or isolation but were integral to the production, sale, and consumption of luxury goods. Women artists of this period were many, with unique, multifaceted lives; these individuals come into full view when considered in context with one another and the world in which they lived.

Presence

The first section provides evidence, both textual and visual, for the public acclaim and recognition that many women artists of this era received during their lifetimes. Portraits and self-portraits of artists speak to how these women were viewed by their peers and themselves. Judith Leyster (1609–1660) and Maria Schalcken (ca. 1645/50–ca. 1700) both depicted themselves at work in front of their easels, their hands holding paintbrushes and palettes. Neither is dressed in clothing appropriate for the messy work of painting; rather, they present themselves as well-dressed women with wealth and social standing. This type of self-presentation hews to a tradition begun in the Italian Renaissance, as artists sought to distance themselves from the overtones of manual labor that was associated with painting in earlier eras. Maria van Oosterwijck (1630–1693) was a highly admired and successful still-life artist whose likeness was captured in a portrait by Wallerant Vaillant (1623–1677). Like Leyster and Schalcken, she is clearly identified as a painter.



Left: Maria Schalcken, *Self-Portrait in Her Studio*, ca. 1680; Oil on panel, 17 3/4 x 13 3/4 in.; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Gift of Rose-Marie and Eijk van Otterloo, in support of The Center for Netherlandish Art, inv. 2019.2094

Above: Wallerant Vaillant, *Portrait of Maria van Oosterwijck*, 1671; Oil on canvas, 37 3/4 x 30 3/4 in.; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. SK-A-1292



PHOTO © PAT VERBRUGGEN, COLLECTION MAAGDENHUIS, CITY OF ANTWERP

Johannes de Maré, *Portrait of Franciscus van Hildernissen and His Wife Catherina de Coninck and Orphans in the Maiden's House*, 1676; Oil on canvas, 100 x 90 in.; Maagdenhuis, Antwerp, inv. A178

Other women were written about in published and widely read sources. For instance, Arnold Houbraken's *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (*The Great Theatre of Dutch Painters and Paintresses*) (first edition, 1715) records the names of women working in a variety of artistic fields. This multivolume tome was also illustrated with artists' portraits, including those of Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678), Johanna Koerten (1650–1715), and Maria Sibylla Merian (1647–1717).

Choices

The options available to women artists in this period depended largely on their social class, which is examined in this section. For women of the Low Countries, opportunities for artistic advancement and independence varied greatly, largely based on family connections and socioeconomic status. While

painters tended to come from the middle and upper classes, lower-class women comprised the majority of lacemakers and embroiderers. A seventeenth-century painting from the Maagdenhuis (Maiden's House), a home for impoverished or orphaned girls in Antwerp, depicts the benefactor and his wife in the foreground, while behind them are scores of girls busy embroidering and making lace. Lace was a highly expensive commodity, and Flanders was known for producing some of the best.

Another painting by Quiringh van Brekelenkam (after 1622–after 1669) shows a smaller operation: an older woman teaching three girls how to make lace. Upper-class women had access to a wider array of training opportunities—for instance, Louise Hollandine, Princess of the Palatinate (1622–1709), who studied painting with one of the most renowned teachers of

By reclaiming the lives and legacies of women artists, we can begin to recover the broader significance of women to the cultural landscape of this period.

the day, Gerard van Honthorst (1592–1656). For some women of means, a life devoted to religion, with a status such as lay “spiritual daughters” in Flanders, enabled them to practice their art without the demands that marriage and motherhood might have brought. Catarina Ykens II (1659–after 1689), one such spiritual daughter, was a member of the painters’ guild in Antwerp and was able to continue creating and selling her work as an unmarried woman.

Networks

Women were crucial to the artistic economy of the Low Countries, and their labor was a significant factor in the unprecedented expansion of trade and the thriving market for art and luxury goods in this era. Women painters and printmakers, for example, catered to the art market just as their male counterparts did, innovating and adapting along the way. Magdalena van de Passe (1600–1638) was born into and trained with a family of printmakers. Although she sometime reproduced designs by her father and brothers, she also developed her own recognizable engraving style and

Below: Unidentified artist, Lace border with cauliflower or peony design, Antwerp, ca. mid-17th century; Linen, 3 ¼ x 42 in.; On loan from Laurie Waters

specialization of subject matter.² Unlike her relatives, Van de Passe specialized in landscapes, reproducing works by the famous painters of the day. The rapidly expanding colonization of the Americas also affected the work of women: There was greater demand for lace, specifically for export to the to the Spanish colonies, where the upper classes were eager to replicate the luxuries of home.

Legacy

This section explores the legacies of women artists and examines the processes by which they have been marginalized in art historical narratives over the last three hundred years. It demonstrates the impact of gender on an object’s value by providing examples of the relative values of items made by women during their own time, as well as in today’s art market and cultural institutions. For example, textiles in this era were frequently more expensive than paintings, yet the reverse is true in today’s art market. Johanna Koerten worked in textiles as well as paper cuttings, which brought her fame and also commanded very high prices. The writer Houbraken tells us that Koerten made a work of “woven silk in a rustic manner” for the Holy Roman Empress, for which she was paid more than four thousand guilders. This amount was more than double the price that Rembrandt likely received for his painting *The Night Watch* (1642), around 1,600 guilders.³

The “Legacy” section also recognizes recent scholarship that has bolstered interest in historical women artists within the art market and museums. The first-ever major exhibition devoted to Rachel Ruysch (1664–1750) opened in

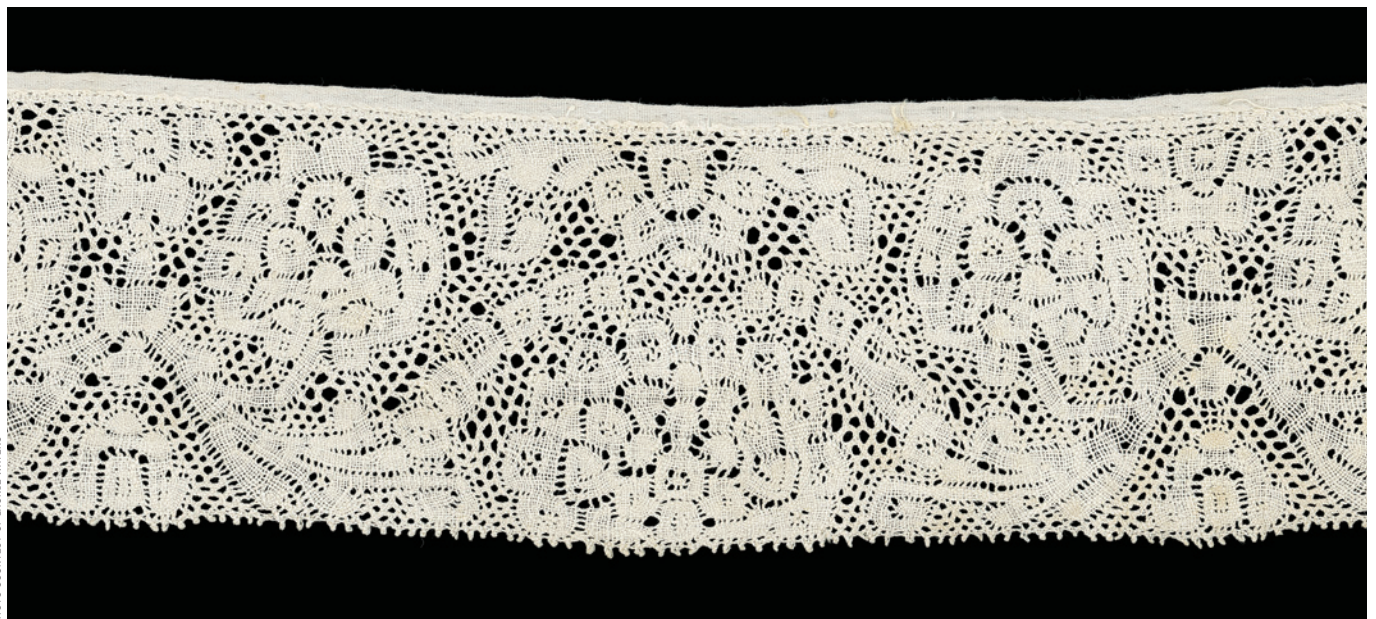




PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Magdalena van de Passe, *Rocky Landscape* (after Paul Bril), ca. 1620–30; Engraving on paper, 9 x 10 5/8 in.; The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: The Print Collection, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, Samuel Putnam Avery Collection, inv. MEZAT 112861 Grolier 357

2024 at the Alte Pinakothek, Munich, with additional venues in 2025 including the Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. This is notable because Ruysch never suffered the fate of misattribution or erasure that many women artists did; she was under-recognized only because of gender bias. Similarly, the work of Judith Leyster, whose identity was rediscovered more than a century ago, is only now enjoying success at auction, as evidenced by the Currier Museum of Art's 2022 acquisition of *Boy Holding Grapes and a Hat* (ca. 1629).

Unforgettable

The reincorporation of women artists into the art-historical discourse has the power to transform our understanding of Dutch and Flemish art and culture. This work lies in clarifying the social and monetary value of the objects women made, as well as uncovering the systemic biases that have led to

their erasure from cultural memory. By reclaiming the lives and legacies of women artists, we can begin to recover the broader significance of women to the cultural landscape of this period and ultimately gain a deeper appreciation of the richness of the visual culture of the Low Countries. The inclusion of women and their contributions can only strengthen our understanding of Dutch and Flemish art and culture, ensuring that their presence remains unforgettable from this point forward.

//Virginia Treanor is senior curator at the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

Johanna Koerten, *Roman Freedom*,
1697; Paper cutting, 12 ¼ x 10 in.; Westfries
Museum Collection, Hoorn, inv. 20307



Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750 is organized in partnership with the Museum of Fine Arts in Ghent, Belgium.

The exhibition is made possible by Denise Littlefield Sobel, with leadership gifts provided by Morgan Stanley and Tara Rudman.

Additional funding is provided by Martha Lyn Dippell and Daniel L. Korengold, Lugano, Kay Woodward Olson, Patti and George White, Laurel and John Rafter, and an anonymous donor. Further support comes from Marcia Myers Carlucci, Dutch Culture USA program by the Consulate General of the Netherlands in New York, Jacalyn D. Erickson, Lucas Kaempfer Foundation, Inc., Jacqueline Badger Mars, Geri Skirkanich, Tavolozza Foundation, VisitFlanders, the National Endowment for the Humanities, The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, Angela M. Lo Ré, Anne L. von Rosenberg, Ilene S. and Jeffrey S. Gutman, Samuel H. Kress Foundation, Society of Daughters of Holland Dames, Charlotte and Michael Buxton, Anne N. Edwards, the Netherland-America Foundation, Frances Luessenhop Usher, and Marichu Valencia.

Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this exhibition do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Morgan Stanley LUGANO



Notes:

1. *Judith Leyster: A Dutch Master and Her World*, Worcester Art Museum, Massachusetts, and Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem (1993); *Judith Leyster: "Leading Star,"* National Museum of Women in the Arts (1993); *Judith Leyster: The First Woman to Become a Master Painter*, Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem, and National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (2009); *The Art of Clara Peeters*, Rockoxhuis Museum, Antwerp, and Museo del Prado, Madrid (2016); and *Michaelina: Baroque's Leading Lady*, Museum aan de Stroom, Antwerp (2018). Additionally, the exhibition *Rachel Ruysch: Nature into Art* opened at the Alte Pinakothek in Munich in 2024.
2. Ilja M. Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564–1670)* in *A Century of Print Production* (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision, 2001), 283.
3. Seymour Slive, *Rembrandt and His Critics 1630–1730* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1953), 7.



Judith Leyster, *Boy Holding Grapes and a Hat*, ca. 1629; Oil on panel, 10 ¾ x 8 ½ in.;
Currier Museum of Art, Manchester, New Hampshire, Henry Melville Fuller Fund,
inv. 2022.29

Calendar

16

// EXHIBITIONS

Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750

September 26, 2025–
January 11, 2026

Tawny Chatmon: Sanctuaries of Truth, Dissolution of Lies

October 15, 2025–March 8, 2026

Guerrilla Girls: Making Trouble

Through September 28, 2025

A Radical Alteration: Women's Studio Workshop as a Sustainable Model for Art Making

Through September 28, 2025

Niki de Saint Phalle In Print

Through November 30, 2025

Ruth Orkin: Women on the Move

December 12, 2025–
March 29, 2026

Online exhibitions:

Revisit favorite NMWA exhibitions
and more at [https://nmwa.org/
whats-on/exhibitions/online](https://nmwa.org/whats-on/exhibitions/online).

// KEY

- F** Free
- M** Free for members
- +** Free for members and one guest
- A** Free with admission
- R** Reservations required
at <https://nmwa.org>
- O** No reservations required
- E** Exhibition-related program
- V** Virtual/online program
(Please note that the time
zone for all online programs is
Eastern Time)

Automated speech-to-text transcription is enabled during most virtual programs. To request additional access services, please check the online calendar for contact information or email accessibility@nmwa.org. Two weeks' notice is appreciated but not required.

Daily / Weekly / Monthly

For museum admission, advance online reservations are suggested.

Free Community Day

FIRST SUNDAYS & SECOND WEDNESDAYS 10 A.M.–5 P.M. // **FMR**

The first Sunday and second Wednesday of each month, NMWA offers free general admission. Enjoy current exhibitions and the collection galleries. Advance registration is recommended, with limited walk-up availability.

Open Studio

FIRST SUNDAYS & SECOND WEDNESDAYS 10 A.M.–4 P.M. // **FMO**

During Free Community Days, visit the museum's new studio for drop-in art-making activities. All ages welcome; children twelve and younger require adult supervision.

Collection Highlights Tour

DAILY 2–2:45 P.M., SUNDAYS 11–11:45 A.M. // **MAO**

During these interactive, docent- or staff-led talks, look closely and discuss artworks from NMWA's collection. Join as often as you like—content varies.

Gallery Talk

MOST WEDNESDAYS 12–12:30 P.M. // **FMOE**

Conversational, thematic staff-led talks highlight several works on view. Join as often as you like—content varies.

NMWA Nights

SELECT WEDNESDAYS 5:30–8 P.M. // **R**

On the third Wednesday of most months, join a creative and engaging after-hours experience! Peruse the galleries, grab a cocktail, make art, and enjoy a performance or talk.

Art Chat

SELECT FRIDAYS 5–5:45 P.M. // **FMREV**

On select Fridays, jump-start your weekend with art! Join NMWA educators online for informal 45-minute chats about selected works from NMWA's collection and exhibitions.



Catarina Ykens I, *Still Life with Flowers and Insects*, ca. 1660; Oil on canvas, 53 ½ x 67 ¾ in.;
On view in *Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750*

September

9/17 Gallery Talk: *Niki de Saint Phalle In Print*

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **F M O E**

9/17 NMWA Nights

WED 5:30–8 P.M. // **R**

NMWA's late-hours series returns with cocktails, art-making, and more. \$25 general/\$22 students, seniors, D.C. residents/\$20 members. Free for members at the Explorer level and above. All members can purchase tickets, even if the event is sold out.

9/24 Gallery Talk: *Guerrilla Girls*

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **F M O E**

9/25 Member Preview Day: *Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750*

THU 10 A.M.–4 P.M. // **M + R E**

Join us for a special preview of *Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750*, featuring works by more than forty women artists who shaped the visual culture of the region that is now the Netherlands and Belgium. Tours throughout the day.

9/26 Art Chat

FRI 5–5:45 P.M. // **F M R V**

9/27 Pilates Flexibility Fusion

SAT 9–10 A.M. // **R**

Work out among great works of art. Join instructor Kathryn Kelly for a dynamic mat-based class that blends core strengthening with focused, active flexibility. Designed for participants at all levels. Bring a mat, yoga strap, and towel. \$20 general/\$17 students, seniors, D.C. residents/\$15 members.

October

10/1 Gallery Talk: *Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750*

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **F M O E**

10/5 Free Community Day

SUN 10 A.M.–5 P.M. // **F M R**

10/5 Open Studio

SUN 10 A.M.–4 P.M. // **F M O**

10/5 Collection Highlights Tour

SUN 11–11:45 A.M. // **M A O**

10/8 Free Community Day

WED 10 A.M.–5 P.M. // **F M R**

10/8 Open Studio

WED 10 A.M.–4 P.M. // **F M O**



PHOTO BY MARLAH MIRANDA

NMWA Nights attendees enjoying an event; join us for after-hours fun on September 17, October 15, and November 19

10/8 Gallery Talk: *Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750*

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **F M O E**

10/11 Firsthand Experience: Paper-Cutting

SAT 11 A.M.–3 P.M. // **R E**

Explore the art of paper-cutting with artist Janelle Washington. She'll introduce techniques and guide participants in creating their own designs. Art supplies provided; no experience necessary. \$25 general/\$22 students, seniors, D.C. residents/\$20 members.

10/15 Gallery Talk: *Niki de Saint Phalle In Print*

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **F M O E**

10/15 Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) Look Club

WED 3–4 P.M. // **R V**

Join NMWA educators for their residency with VTS Look Club Online. Using the VTS method of thoughtful, open-ended questions, educators facilitate discussions based on images from NMWA's collection. Register at <https://vtshome.org>. Pay what you can.

10/15 NMWA Nights

WED 5:30–8 P.M. // **R**

Enjoy NMWA's late-hours series with cocktails, art-making, and more. \$25 general/\$22 students, seniors, D.C. residents/\$20 members. Free for members at the Explorer level and above. All members can purchase tickets, even if the event is sold out.

10/16 Educator Workshop: Art21 x NMWA

THU 7–8 P.M. // **F R V**

Calling all educators! Learn about contemporary artists, artworks, and processes through Art21's documentary films and NMWA's collection.



PHOTO BY ROSE CALLAHAN

Try your hand at lacemaking with artist Elena Kanagy-Loux on November 8

// KEY

F Free	O No reservations required
M Free for members	E Exhibition-related program
+ Free for members and one guest	V Virtual/online program (Please note that the time zone for all online programs is Eastern Time)
A Free with admission	
R Reservations required at https://nmwa.org	

10/18 Tour: Celebrating Scary Season

SAT 12–12:45 P.M. // **AR**

On this engaging, interactive tour, consider what's frightening, magical, unsettling, or supernatural with NMWA's art and artists.

10/22 Gallery Talk: *Tawny Chatmon*

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **FMOE**

10/24 Art Chat

FRI 5–5:45 P.M. // **FMRV**

10/29 Gallery Talk: *Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750*

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **FMOE**

November

11/2 Free Community Day

SUN 10 A.M.–5 P.M. // **FMR**

11/2 Open Studio

SUN 10 A.M.–4 P.M. // **FMO**

11/2 Collection Highlights Tour

SUN 11–11:45 A.M. // **MAO**

11/4 Fresh Talk: Agency in the Fashion Economy

TUE 6–8 P.M. // **R**

Join us as designer Tracy Reese and journalist Whitney Bauck discuss how women are starting sustainable businesses, advocating for labor rights, and redefining ethical fashion. Moderated by Rebecca Ballard, ethical fashion advocate. Followed by a salon-style cocktail hour. \$25 general/\$22 students, seniors, D.C. residents/\$20 members.

11/5 Gallery Talk: Collection Highlights

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **FMO**

11/8 Firsthand Experience: Lacemaking

SAT 11 A.M.–3 P.M. // **RE**

Try your hand at lacemaking with artist Elena Kanagy-Loux, who will introduce bobbin techniques and guide participants in creating their own bookmarks. Supplies provided; no experience necessary. \$25 general/\$22 students, seniors, D.C. residents/\$20 members.

11/12 Free Community Day

WED 10 A.M.–5 P.M. // **FMR**

11/12 Open Studio

WED 10 A.M.–4 P.M. // **FMO**

11/12 Gallery Talk: *Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750*

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **FMOE**

11/12 Curator's Perspective: *Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750*

WED 6–7 P.M. // **MREV**

In this members-only online presentation, NMWA Senior Curator Virginia Treanor shares behind-the-scenes insights into *Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750*.

11/15 Tour: NMWA en Español

SAT 12–12:45 P.M. // **MAR**

Explore the museum's collection during this engaging, interactive Spanish-language tour. Featuring six to eight works on view celebrating artists with connections to Latin America and Spain.

11/19 Gallery Talk: *Tawny Chatmon*

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **FMOE**

11/19 NMWA Nights

WED 5:30–8 P.M. // **R**

Enjoy NMWA's late-hours series with cocktails, art-making, and more. \$25 general/\$22 students, seniors, D.C. residents/\$20 members. Free for members at the Explorer level and above. All members can purchase tickets, even if the event is sold out.

11/26 Gallery Talk: Collection Highlights

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **F M O**

December

12/3 Gallery Talk: Tawny Chatmon

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **F M O E**

12/3 Fresh Talk: Hannah Williams and Tori Dunlap

WED 6–8 P.M. // **R**

Join us for a candid and empowering conversation about money and equity with Hannah Williams, creator of Salary Transparent Street, and Tori Dunlap, founder of Her First \$100K, as they unpack wage inequities that affect women, with a focus on the arts. Followed by a salon-style cocktail hour. \$25 general/\$22 students, seniors, D.C. residents/\$20 members.

12/7 Free Community Day

SUN 10 A.M.–5 P.M. // **F M R**

12/7 Makers' Market

SUN 10 A.M.–4 P.M. // **F M O**

Join us for a special holiday market featuring goods from women and gender-expansive vendors, makers, and artists. Shop handmade jewelry, art, ceramics, and vintage finds in NMWA's Great Hall.

12/7 Open Studio

SUN 10 A.M.–4 P.M. // **F M O**

12/7 Collection Highlights Tour

SUN 11–11:45 A.M. // **M A O**

12/8 In Focus: The Shop

MON 4–5 P.M. // **M R**

Join us for a members-only look at the Museum Shop. Hear from NMWA Director of Retail Operations Adriana Regalado as she shares behind-the-scenes insights into creating a fun, welcoming shop stocked with goods made by women and women-owned brands. Exclusive for members at the Enthusiast level and above.

12/8 Members' Shopping Day

MON 5–7 P.M. // **M R**

Join us in the Museum Shop for an exclusive members-only event. Enjoy a warm beverage and sweet treat while discovering great gifts and NMWA-exclusive items. The member discount doubles during this event: members receive 20% off in-store purchases.



PHOTO BY MARLAH MIRANDA

Makers' Market returns for the holiday season—join us during Free Community Day on December 7

12/10 Free Community Day

WED 10 A.M.–5 P.M. // **F M R**

12/10 Open Studio

WED 10 A.M.–4 P.M. // **F M O**

12/10 Gallery Talk: Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600–1750

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **F M O E**

12/17 Gallery Talk: Tawny Chatmon

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **F M O E**

12/20 Tour: Celebrating Cozy Season

SAT 12–12:45 P.M. // **A R**

From autumnal vistas to wintry wonderlands, explore frigid settings, cool colors, seasonal fashion, and moments of comfort in NMWA's galleries.

12/31 Gallery Talk: Collection Highlights

WED 12–12:30 P.M. // **F M O**

// Education programming is made possible by the A. James & Alice B. Clark Foundation, with further support provided by Sarah Kennedy, the Leo Rosner Foundation, the Hayes Foundation, the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, and Elinor Coleman and David Sparkman. Additional funding is provided by the Harriet E. McNamee Youth Education Fund and William and Christine Leahy.

The Women, Arts, and Social Change public programs initiative is made possible through leadership gifts from Denise Littlefield Sobel and the Davis/Dauray Family Fund, with additional support provided by Anne N. Edwards, the Revada Foundation of the Logan Family, and the Susan and Jim Swartz Public Programs Fund.



We Are the Ones We've Been Waiting For (detail), from the series "Iconography," 2024–25; Paper, denim, and acrylic on archival pigment print, 59 x 44 in.; Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Myrtis

TAWNY CHATMON

SANCTUARIES OF TRUTH
DISSOLUTION OF LIES

October 15, 2025–March 8, 2026

Hannah Shambroom

Maryland-based artist Tawny Chatmon (b. 1979, Tokyo) creates evocative, layered portraits that celebrate Black culture and challenge bias. The NMWA exhibition *Tawny Chatmon: Sanctuaries of Truth, Dissolution of Lies* features examples of the artist's well-known gold-embellished works, in which she enshrines her subjects in gilded backgrounds, clothing, and accessories. It also debuts two new bodies of work: "The Reconciliation" and "The Restoration." These series incorporate new materials, such as thread and beads, building on the themes of Chatmon's previous work while confronting harmful stereotypes.

Chatmon began using her art to probe ideas of family, ancestry, heritage, and heirlooms—themes that are central to her work today.

Unstitching the Past, Becoming the Future, from the series “The Restoration,” 2023–25; Glass beads and embroidery on archival pigment print, 52 x 44 in.; Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Myrtis



© TAWNY CHATMON; IMAGE COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND GALERIE MYRTIS

Golden

Chatmon’s photographic practice began with a commercial portrait business focusing on children and families. A series of significant life events led her to expand and shift her work in a more artistic direction. First, she became a mother, an experience that profoundly altered her worldview. Next, she lost her father to prostate cancer, deepening her perspective on mortality and prompting her to think about her own legacy. She began using her art to probe ideas of family, ancestry, heritage, and heirlooms—themes that are central to her work today.

Chatmon finds inspiration in a wide variety of sources, including early Byzantine mosaics, opulent gilded portraits by Gustav Klimt (1862–1918), and seventeenth-century Dutch painting. Works from her series “Remnants” (2021–23), “The Redemption” (2018–19), and “Iconography” (2023–present) include gold-hued acrylic paint as well as 24-karat gold leaf. For Chatmon, the material symbolizes importance, value, and preciousness. *Peace and Joy Are the Birthrights of All Beings* (2021–22) depicts a young Black girl surrounded by lavish gold patterns. The background features spirals and birds, two recurring symbols in Chatmon’s work that indicate a connection to the heavens.

Through her photography, Chatmon centers her Black subjects, conveying their magnificence and beauty. Her own children often appear as sitters. *We Are the Ones We’ve Been Waiting For* (2024–25) features Chatmon’s son as the subject. He wears a hoodie, rendered in mosaic-inspired collaged paper

and denim. The garment, which has been stereotyped and vilified when worn by Black boys and men, acts as a symbol of visibility and vulnerability in Chatmon’s tender portrait.

In Chatmon’s art, process holds equal importance to subject and material. Each layered work starts with a portrait session with her sitter. She then digitally alters the resulting image, often elongating the subject’s limbs, amplifying their hair, and emphasizing their eyes. Next, she painstakingly collages, stitches, and adorns her prints with additional materials, embellishing her subjects’ clothing, accessories, and surroundings. These three-dimensional elements are some of the most visually striking aspects of her work, dignifying and elevating her subjects.

Reclaiming History

Chatmon’s portraits stand as antidotes to harmful misconceptions often perpetuated in politics and media about Black style, culinary traditions, and history. Her new series “The Reconciliation” (2024–present) examines foods of the African diaspora, honoring the meals that have nourished Black families for centuries. Her subjects hold foods such as watermelon and black-eyed peas, which have rich historical contexts and personal associations but have also been linked to racist stereotypes. In *That Which is Planted, Shall Become the Harvest* (2025), a woman—Chatmon’s mother—gazes at a billowing head of collard greens, a food at the center of many of Chatmon’s family meals. Enclosed in a golden floral appliqué frame, she appears regal and serene.

In addition to mining personal memories, Chatmon researches the history of each food she features in “The Reconciliation.” Another work from the series, *What’s more American than Vanilla icecream* (2024–25), depicts a seated woman wearing a red gown embroidered with white stars and holding a vanilla ice cream cone. Chatmon learned that James Hemings, a chef enslaved by Thomas Jefferson, introduced ice cream and french fries to the United States, though his role in popularizing these foods remains largely unrecognized. This series “exposes a recurring pattern in America, where Black Americans have been instrumental in creating cultural staples while also being denied access to them,” Chatmon says.¹

“The Restoration” (2024–present) was born out of a desire to remove antique racist dolls and figurines from circulation. Many of the works feature children holding these objects, which the artist has lovingly repainted and reclothed. In *Unstitching the Past, Becoming the Future* (2023–25), a young girl holds one of these altered dolls in her lap. Chatmon replaced the doll’s racialized features with a delicately painted face and garment sewn by the artist’s mother. This re-dressing restores dignity to the object, mirroring the noble expression of the sitter.

In Chatmon’s hands, symbols that have been used to disparage Black Americans now signify resilience and resistance.

Honoring Legacy

Tawny Chatmon: Sanctuaries of Truth, Dissolution of Lies evokes both ancestry and descendants. The artist considers narratives that shift over time and how the stories children hear can shape who they become. Chatmon uses her camera to recenter our focus on people and histories that have been overlooked and misjudged. Her work contributes to a larger, vital narrative about value, truth, and legacy.

// Hannah Shambroom is assistant curator at the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

Tawny Chatmon: Sanctuaries of Truth, Dissolution of Lies is organized by the National Museum of Women in the Arts. The exhibition is made possible by the Revada Foundation of the Logan Family. Additional support is provided by Jamie Gorelick and Richard Waldhorn and the Sue J. Henry and Carter G. Phillips Exhibition Fund.

Funding for the exhibition catalogue is generously provided by The Deborah Buck Foundation.

Note:

1. From author’s correspondence with the artist, April 2025.



What's more American than Vanilla icecream, from the series “The Reconciliation,” 2024–25; Embroidery on archival pigment print, 52 x 60 in.; Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Myrtis

5 Fast Facts About Maggie Foscett

The museum's *Broad Strokes* blog features news about NMWA's exhibitions and programming. A popular series is "Five Fast Facts," in which interns and staff members, usually museum educators, highlight facts about artists and their works in NMWA's collection, such as Maggie Foscett, who was among the first U.S. artists to use the cliché verre technique in photography.

Impress your friends with five fast facts about Maggie Foscett (1919–2014) and her innovative images of the natural world.

1. Stunning Colors

With an interest in light and color, Maggie Foscett initially chose stained glass as her favored creative medium. She first picked up a camera at age fifty-seven, in a community college black-and-white photography class. Once she discovered the vibrant hues possible with Cibachrome printing, she never looked back.

2. Serendipitous Spider

Foscett discovered the cliché verre technique by happy accident one day when turning on the photo enlarger in her darkroom. A spider had snuck inside, and the translucent outline of the arachnid appeared on the photographic paper underneath. Foscett became a pioneer of this camera-less photography technique throughout her career.

3. In the Field

Born and raised in São Paulo, Brazil, Foscett grew up with a fascination for nature's beauty as well as its unsettling aspects. During most of her career, Foscett split her time between Camden, Maine, and



Maggie Foscett, *Do I Know My Own Shadow*, 1996; Cliché-verre, 20 x 16 in.; NMWA, Museum purchase: Members' Acquisition Fund

Sanibel Island, Florida, where she witnessed a wide array of flora and fauna in their habitats.

4. Inside Out

Foscett's magnified images reveal details of plant and animal life that are invisible to the naked eye. She began incorporating X-rays of injured birds and other animals from a Florida wildlife preserve, along

with those of her own body, into her work. She said, "I love bones because they tell a story—in a way they're almost eternal."¹

5. New Life

Working into her nineties, Foscett changed her practice in the last decade of her life. Her cliché verre prints had to be made entirely in the dark, which became too physically taxing. She spent her later years raising zebra longwing butterflies in her

screened porch, documenting their metamorphosis with a digital camera.

// Micah Koppl is education assistant at the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

Note:

1. Carolanne Bonanno, "Artist Spotlight: Interview with Maggie Foscett," *Broad Strokes*, September 18, 2009, <https://nmwa.org/blog/artist-spotlight/artist-spotlight-interview-with-maggie-foscett>.

Committee News

Fellowship, Art, and Advocacy at Recent Events

NMWA's network of outreach committees—groups of supporters around the U.S. and in other countries who raise awareness for the museum and support women and nonbinary artists in their communities—carried out a wide array of programming over the spring and summer:

- **San Francisco Advocacy** organized an exhibition featuring twelve artists from Northern California who have participated in NMWA's *Women to Watch* series since the group's incorporation in 2016. The show was accompanied by a custom-designed publication, an opening celebration, and a closing reception with NMWA Director Susan Fisher Sterling and Senior Development Officer Jill Stern.

- The **New Mexico Committee** drew more than five hundred people to the opening weekend of its inaugural artist registry exhibition, *The New City of Ladies*, which showcased thirty-three artists across the state through a partnership with Turner Carroll Gallery, Santa Fe.

- The **New York Committee** launched a spring membership initiative with two welcome events: a reception at the Manhattan home of past chair Marian Cohen and a gallery hop to Lévy Gorvy Dayan and White Cube, concluded by a special conversation with Alexander Berggruen and artist Madeline Peckenpaugh at Alexander Berggruen Gallery.

- The **UK Friends** welcomed Director Susan Fisher Sterling to a tea hosted by trustee

Beth Colocci while she was in London to speak at the "Kings College conference "Taking Place: Women Artists in Public Spaces," organized by theCOLAB, an independent women-led collaborative focusing on art engagement outside of traditional galleries.

- Museum staff enjoyed visits from chairs of the **Japan and Ireland Committees**, as well as members of the **Texas State Committee**, which resumed its tradition of holding its spring business meeting at NMWA.

- The **Washington State Friends and Oregon Alliance** graciously hosted NMWA staff for visits to local museums, galleries, and a reception at the Portland home of committee member Kerri Hoffman.

Curious about the committees?

Learn more at <https://nmwa.org/support/committees> or email committees@nmwa.org.

Clockwise from top left: Members of San Francisco Advocacy for NMWA gather with past *Women to Watch* artists and NMWA Director Susan Fisher Sterling at the closing reception for *Reunited* at the California College for the Arts

Gallery visitors spill onto Canyon Road during the opening of *The New City of Ladies*, the New Mexico Committee's inaugural artist registry exhibition, held at Turner Carroll Gallery

Members of the New York Committee gather for a special interview with Alexander Berggruen and artist Madeline Peckenpaugh at Alexander Berggruen Gallery during the group's gallery hop

Members of the Texas State Committee of NMWA stand in the museum's Texas Committee Rotunda during the group's annual visit



PHOTO COURTESY OF CALIFORNIA COLLEGE FOR THE ARTS

PHOTO BY PARIS VALLADARES

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Museum Events

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Community Day and Makers' Market

1-2. Attendees enjoy a special Makers' Market organized by NMWA and SAMASAMA on a Free Community Day

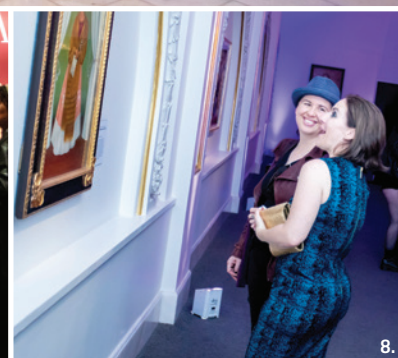
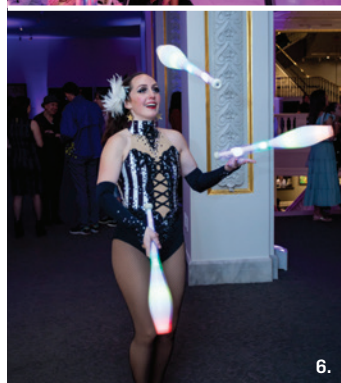
3. Les the DJ sets the tone for a vibrant day



NMWA Nights Bash in May

4-6. Pop-up performances by Cirque deLuxe at the NMWA Nights Bash bring the uncanny to life through acrobatics and movement

7-8. Revelers enjoy *Uncanny* exhibition tours with NMWA Associate Curator Orin Zahra and explore the museum's collection after hours



PHOTOS BY MARIAH MIRANDA

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Artist Talk: Zanele Muholi with Mecca Jamilah Sullivan

9. In celebration of World Pride, artist and visual activist Zanele Muholi appears in conversation with scholar Mecca Jamilah Sullivan

10. Muholi, Sullivan, and Tara Aura

11. After the talk, Muholi poses with an attendee for a selfie



Artist in Conversation: Alison Saar

12–13. Artist Alison Saar speaks with Director of the NMWA Library and Research Center Elizabeth Ajunwa about a new edition of Octavia Butler's *Kindred* (1979) that she created as a contemporary artist's book

14. Saar meets attendees during a reception after the talk

15. Steven Scott, Dan Logan, NMWA Director Susan Fisher Sterling, Fred Levin, and Jeff Levin

16. George and Patti White enjoy a display of Saar's work



The Bigger Cake Exchange: Cake is Art

17–18. During NMWA's summer cake exchange, attendees marvel and sample the offerings



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PHOTOS BY DC MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTIONS

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Supporting Roles

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We thank supporters of the Space to Soar capital campaign, whose generosity enabled the museum's major building renovation. Although we can only list donations of \$20,000 and above due to space limitations, we extend sincere gratitude to all donors.

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* Deceased

Lists as of July 31, 2025

Museum Shop

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Dahlia Baseball Cap

This classic cap features an all-over floral design and adjustable strap. One size. 100% cotton. Hand wash cold, line dry. \$38/Member \$34.20



Unforgettable: Women Artists from Antwerp to Amsterdam, 1600-1750 Exhibition Catalogue

This catalogue spotlights overlooked contributions of women artists in the Low Countries. Essays by art historians and curators lend new insights into groundbreaking artists and their world. Hardcover, 304 pages. \$60/Member \$54

Still Life Journal

An image of a floral still life found at a flea market in France adorns this large softcover journal. 7 1/2 x 9 1/2 in., 208 lined pages. \$22/Member \$19.80



Embroidered Compact Mirror

This vintage-inspired compact mirror features elegant edges and delicate hand-embroidered flowers on linen. \$25/Member \$22.50



Peony Candle

Made from natural soy wax and scented with essential oils, this candle is hand-poured in the shape of a peony flower. 1 1/2 x 2 3/4 x 2 3/4 in. \$15/Member \$13.50



Lightweight Wool Scarf

Featuring a pagoda and mountain motif accented with flowers, this lightweight scarf is ideal for transitioning between seasons. 27 1/2 x 71 in. \$95/Member \$85.50

Tawny Chatmon: Sanctuaries of Truth, Dissolution of Lies Exhibition Catalogue

This fully illustrated catalogue features Chatmon's powerful works alongside an essay by Psyche Williams-Forsen and an interview with the artist. Softcover, 92 pages. \$27.95/Member \$25.16



Autumn Keepsake Necklace

Accessorize with this statement necklace featuring a paperclip chain and autumnal charms. 18-in. chain. \$120/Member \$108

// COMING SOON

Ruth Orkin

Women on the Move

December 12, 2025–March 29, 2026

From the Second World War through the 1970s, renowned photojournalist Ruth Orkin (1921–1985) portrayed women breaking free from rigid gender roles. This spotlight presentation of twenty-three vintage photographs from NMWA's collection

tells the story of artists, military servicewomen, mothers, couples, teachers, and travelers forging new paths in the changed world around them. The daughter of a film star, Orkin took glamour shots of Hollywood celebrities and also brought



her camera into classrooms, homes, parks, and urban neighborhoods to capture a rich perspective on women's lives in the mid-twentieth century.

Ruth Orkin, *Ava Gardner*, 1952; Vintage gelatin silver print, 7 x 7 ¼ in.; NMWA, Gift from the collection of Charles S. and Elynne B. Zucker