During speaking engagements, I am often asked how to help the arts in our community. As we work to emerge from the pandemic, this question is all the more relevant and pressing. I usually answer with an elevator speech of sorts that involves attending programs, volunteering, serving on a board, and of course, making a monetary donation to your favorite organization. Of late, I have modified my response to go beyond that stock answer. In this moment, arts organizations are in dire straits and in addition to our ordinary needs, we need something more. We need commitment. If you want to support the arts in our community, you can do the following:

#1: Be patient

Arts organizations are working hard to restart while facing significant hurdles related to finances, staffing, and more. It may take time to get back to regular programming even as the pandemic lifts. Many arts organizations can’t simply turn on and off like a light switch. You may be looking forward to the next concert season but booking talent may be a challenge for local venues as the availability of performers is in flux. You may want to attend your favorite annual fundraising event, but it may take a year for an organization to plan the event, a year they don’t have due to the prior shutdown.

You may be looking forward to taking an art class or attending an exhibition tour, but your local museum or gallery may be short on instructors and tour guides, as many may have moved on to other opportunities. You can help arts organizations by being patient and sticking with us. We’ll be back and better than ever as soon as possible, but we need your support now as we navigate these uncertain times.

#2: Be an extraordinary audience member

The arts offer something so valuable and rare in contemporary life: the opportunity to connect with ourselves, each other, and the world around us on a deeper level. The arts are not made for passive consumption but for active engagement. One of the great joys of participating as an audience member is the opportunity to learn from and sometimes to be challenged by arts experiences. Being an ordinary audience member only requires showing up; being an extraordinary audience member takes more work. If you plan on going to the theatre to see a musical, first study up on the playwright or composer. If you’re going to enjoy a symphonic performance or an opera, listen to other performances
by other orchestras or companies to hone your ear. If you’re going to an exhibition, learn about the artist and maybe even try your hand at the medium they use.

Before you buy a ticket or mark your calendar, research the history of the art form you’ll be experiencing to have a better understanding of its context and significance. The point isn’t to become a composer, artist, or historian, but to become more informed, engaged, and prepared to appreciate your experiences on a more profound level. If you’re not sure where to start digging in, your local library is a great source, or better yet reach out to the arts organization you’re interested in attending.

#3: Become an advocate

In your journey to becoming an extraordinary audience member, you might find that you begin to care more deeply about the arts than ever before. The more you learn, the more involved and invested you become. You’ll find that the arts are not just “nice to have,” but provide transformational experiences and are a foundational aspect of building community. The arts reveal who we are and create and sustain the culture of a place. With new-found appreciation, you might invite friends and family to join in, sharing your enthusiasm, as well as your experience and knowledge. You might be more willing to write a letter or make a phone call when funding cuts are on the table, or talk to local leaders in support of your favorite arts organizations. You might become more than an audience member or participant; you might become an arts advocate and we need as many of those as we can get!

As arts organizations come back and begin to recover, remember the things that sustained you during these difficult times. Was it a favorite show you binge-watched, a favorite song you listened to over and over, or a favorite book that provided you an escape? As is so often the case, it is the moments of beauty and hope that bring us through the darkest days.

#4: Make a Year-End Gift

Any financial support you can offer your favorite arts organization(s) will ensure they’re here to entertain, educate, and engage you, your family, your friends and neighbors when you need it most. With your involvement, engagement, and investment, the arts and your local arts organizations can give so much more. I look forward to seeing you at our Springfield Art Museum very soon!
ENCHROMA GLASSES ARE HERE!

The Museum is pleased to partner with EnChroma on an innovative collaboration to expand the museum experience for visitors with color vision deficiencies, more commonly known as “color blindness.”

Visitors with color vision deficiencies can borrow EnChroma glasses from the Museum’s front desk to see our collection and special exhibitions in more vibrant color. The Springfield Art Museum is the third museum - along with the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art and the Albrecht-Kemper Museum of Art - in Missouri to offer this assistive technology.

Color blindness is not a singular condition. It encompasses a range of conditions, from mild to severe, that can cause each person to see color differently. EnChroma glasses are designed to improve color vision of people with forms of anomalous trichromacy, which are estimated to comprise four out of five cases of color blindness. EnChroma glasses are not intended to assist the vision of people with Tritan-type deficiency. You can take EnChroma’s online color vision test at www.enchroma.com before testing the lenses, to see if EnChroma glasses can help you.

Our EnChroma glasses are generously sponsored by Springfield Family Vision.


This work was the generous gift of Robert and Lillian Montalto Bohlen.
MISSION Founded in 1928, the Springfield Art Museum invites you to connect with the world, your community, and yourself through active engagement with art objects.
September 2021 marked the 700th anniversary of the death of Dante Alighieri. To mark this occasion, the Museum is currently showing *The Inferno of Dante: Etchings by Michael Mazur*. This exhibit, pulled from the Museum’s permanent collection, presents Mazur’s full portfolio of 41 etchings illustrating *The Inferno*, the first and most familiar of three sections of *The Divine Comedy*, written by Dante in the 14th century.

*The Divine Comedy* recounts a journey that defines the human condition, exploring sin, weakness, despair, sadness, and loss. Told in the first person, it follows Dante and his guide, the Roman poet Virgil, as they travel through Hell, Purgatory, and eventually Paradise. Countless artists have been inspired by *The Divine Comedy*, including Gustave Doré, William Blake, and Auguste Rodin.

“Illustration, like translation, is risky business… At worst, illustrations can sidetrack the reader by introducing ideas or images that change the meaning of the text, skew its tone, diminish its impact. At its best, though, illustration is a reinvention.” - Michael Mazur

Painter and printmaker Michael Mazur had a lifelong fascination with the poem. In the early 1990s, Mazur and longtime friend poet Robert Pinsky (U.S. Poet Laureate 1997-2000) collaborated on the production of a new illustrated translation of...
The Inferno. This initial project was later expanded into a portfolio of etchings. This exhibit pairs each of Mazur’s monotypes with the relevant excerpted portions of Dante’s poem in Italian with English translations by Pinsky.

Traditionally, illustrations of the poem have included the figures of Dante and Virgil. Notably, Mazur chose “absolutely not to put Dante and Virgil in these images. I wanted to show the things they saw, not to show them seeing – so that there would be no distance between you and the image.” In these works, the audience takes the place of Dante and Virgil as they travel through The Inferno. Viewers become Dante and Virgil’s eyes and see what they see as the story unfolds.

See The Inferno of Dante: Etchings by Michael Mazur through February 20, 2022 in our Weisel and Kelly Galleries. Financial assistance for this project has been provided by the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency.

Public Programs:
TBA, please visit sgfmuseum.org/256/The-Inferno-of-Dante-Etchings-by-Michael.


Beginning November 20, the Museum is pleased to present Linda Lopez: Long Lost, a major solo exhibition featuring immersive spaces, mosaics, and sculptures. Linda Nguyen Lopez (b. 1981, Visalia, CA) is a first-generation American artist of Vietnamese and Mexican descent. Her unexpected porcelain sculptures investigate language and identity as imaginatively embedded in the mundane objects around us. Both playful and introspective, Lopez’s “dust furries” and “mops” accumulate rocks and lint and direct our attention to the potential life of the everyday objects that live quietly alongside us.

Lopez received a BFA in ceramics and BA in art education from California State University of Chico (2006). She received a MFA in ceramics from the University of Colorado at Boulder (2010). Lopez has exhibited her work in New Zealand and throughout the United States including the Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville; Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach; Vertigo Art Space, Denver; The Clay Studio, Philadelphia; and the Museum of Art and Design, New York. Lopez lives and works in Fayetteville, Arkansas, and is represented by the Mindy Solomon Gallery in Miami and the David B. Smith Gallery in Denver.

Conceptualized over the course of the multiple pandemics happening concurrently in the United States over the last year and a half, this exhibition will present new work influenced by a variety of themes and ideas that have surged to the surface as Lopez has navigated quarantine, remote work, shifts in childcare, and the horrific uptick in racially motivated violence.

See Linda Lopez: Long Lost through March 20, 2022 in our Eldredge, Spratlen, and Armstrong Galleries. Financial assistance for this project has been provided by the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS:
TBA, please visit sgfmuseum.org/260/Linda-Lopez.

In late September, six new works rotated onto view in Creating An American Identity, the semi-permanent exhibition of our permanent collection. Works by Peter Aliknak, Janet Ballweg, Beverly Hopkins, Lillian E. Martin, Roger Shimomura, and Renée Stout joined the ongoing narrative of 18th Century American art to today, installed in the Musgrave Wing of the Museum.

The Museum has been collecting works of art for over 90 years and we have 10,000 items in our collection. As such, only a small fraction of our collection is on view at one time. In addition to hosting special exhibitions pulled from our collection, our curatorial staff rotates works in Creating an American Identity quarterly to help ensure that the public gets to enjoy more of what we have acquired over the years. Rotating works of art on and off display not only helps preserve the art, particularly works on paper, it also helps keep our collection fresh and relevant to our patrons. There’s always something new to see at YOUR Art Museum!

As part of our continuing practice, fresh rotations feature new exhibit labels with larger font text and portraits of the artists. Additionally, as new works rotate into the galleries, their digital records are added to our online collection. We now have over 1,400 entries available for perusal and research on our website. Missing a favorite piece that has gone off view? Visit sgfmuseum.org/129/browse-thecollection.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS:
TBA, please visit sgfmuseum.org/168/Creating-an-American-Identity.
RECENT ACQUISITIONS: RUINS AND SYMPHONY

The Museum is pleased to announce the acquisition of two works by Kenneth Shuck. Shuck was the second director of the Springfield Art Museum from 1951-1977. He was also co-founder of the Watercolor USA exhibition, along with Museum Educator Robert Johnson. Shuck painted in both oil and watercolor. Both Ruins and Symphony are watercolors that are reflective of typical trends of the 1950s and 1960s, as evidenced by the earthy color palette and loose brushstrokes.

The importance of adding these two works to our permanent collection lies in their historical and institutional significance. The Museum’s strong watermedia collection is arguably the result of Shuck’s leadership of the Watercolor USA exhibition initiative, which received thousands of entries in its infancy.

Both works were created in 1961, one year prior to the founding of Watercolor USA, providing a unique visual link between Shuck’s own artistic practice and his role as the chief administrator of the Museum at that time.

Shuck is also remembered for helping to secure the Museum’s first proprietary building in Phelps Grove Park in 1958. Both of these paintings were the generous gift of Jerry-Mac Johnston. Prior to this donation, the Museum had one work by Shuck in our permanent collection, a 1950 abstract oil painting on canvas.


The Museum is also pleased to announce the acquisition of two works by regional women artists that were most recently on view as a part of the 2020 4x4: Midwest Invitational Exhibition, held from February 27, 2021 – June 27, 2021 due to inevitable delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first is a mixed media collage titled *Cruisin’ Together* by Missouri artist Glyneisha Johnson. Through the language of collage, Johnson recreates domestic Black interior spaces that celebrate the inherent matrilineal nature of Blackness. *Cruisin’ Together* connects to other important works in the Museum’s permanent collection through the use of collage and paint layering, including work by Romare Bearden and Carrie Moyer. This acquisition supports the Museum’s goal of acquiring works by artists who originate or work in the Midwest. Additionally, this work further diversifies the voices represented in the Museum’s collection.

The second is a sculpture titled *Visionary Sightseeing Binocular* by Kansas Artist Rebecca Hackemann. Now permanently installed on the Museum’s grounds, this work includes archival photographs and artistic renderings of the Museum site at different points throughout its history and possible future. By turning the crank, viewers can rotate the 3-D images, presenting a unique opportunity to consider the passage of time, change, place, and the environment around us – both built and natural. *Visionary Sightseeing Binocular* is the first acquisition of intentionally participatory sculpture installed on the Museum’s grounds. This acquisition also marks the first permanently installed work on the grounds by a woman artist.


Recent works installed in Creating an American Identity include a small landscape by local Springfield artist Lillian E. Martin. Martin was active in the Ozark Artists Guild and exhibited her work throughout the Midwest, including at the Springfield Art Museum in 1930 and at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln (1930).

She often took classes from guest instructors at the Springfield Art Museum in its early years and was primarily a plein aire painter, meaning that she painted outdoors with her subject – the landscape – in full view. She also taught drawing, watercolor, and oil painting at M’Curdy’s Art Store in the early 1930s. Additionally, she sold hand-painted greeting cards from the store.

This painting depicts the Bodine Ice Machine plant, a local Springfield company which manufactured ice makers and refrigeration units in all sizes from residential to commercial. The company was in operation throughout the 1920s and 30s and were considered pioneers in the development of “iceless iceboxes,” forerunners of today’s home refrigerators.

The plant, and therefore this scene, was located at 319 N. Boonville Ave. The building depicted in the painting was destroyed in a fire in May 1927 after which the company relocated to the east side of town. The site on Boonville is a parking lot today, just north of the square and south of Missouri State University’s Brick City campus.

In July 2021, my family made the move from New Orleans to Springfield so I could start a new role as the Museum Educator at the Springfield Art Museum. As we drove out of the Mississippi River delta and headed towards the Ozarks, the terrain became increasingly unfamiliar. Flat ground and wide-rooted live oak trees turned to rolling hills and towering pines, junipers, and cedars. I was awed by the beauty of this new place but felt anxious about the disconnect between our old and new cities – it felt like New Orleans and Springfield were worlds apart.

On my first visit to the Museum, my worries began to dissipate. As I stepped into Creating an American Identity, the Museum’s permanent collection exhibition, I spotted a sculpture by New Orleanian Ida Kohlmeyer! Kohlmeyer’s Stacked 93-5 has both the lazy curves of the Mississippi River and the wide summits of Ozarks peaks, the saturated pinks of the surprise lilies ubiquitous in Springfield, and the soft green-brown shades of the magnolia leaves that thrive in both the Ozarks and southern Louisiana. The more of these moments I noticed, the more I began to realize that there are multitudes of connections between my two cities.

Finding connections, especially between seemingly disparate places, people, and ideas, is what I love most about working as a museum educator. I feel grateful for the opportunity to help others make connections of their own, whether it’s discovering a new favorite artist, practicing a different way to think about abstract art, or learning a watercolor technique.

Working with my amazing colleagues and our fantastic docents, I aim to expand opportunities for everyone to learn about, enjoy, and create art in my new hometown. As I sit in my office and look at the tropical banana tree in the Museum’s courtyard, I’m reminded of New Orleans but grateful to be in Springfield.

Finding connections, especially between seemingly disparate places, people, and ideas, is what I love most about working as a museum educator.
Fall is upon us and the weather is beginning to change. What better way to spend a cold day than visiting the Museum with your family or a small group of friends. If you have family coming to visit from out of town for the holidays, you should plan to include a visit to the Museum to share our regional treasure with them.

The Museum curator and her staff have been busy planning exciting new and varied exhibitions to soothe our souls, expand our outlook on life, and challenge our perceptions. We may not appreciate every piece of art on display but it certainly will make you think. And is this not what art is supposed to do?

Since 1949, SMMA has been sponsoring each 5th grade student in the Springfield public school system by bringing the students and their teachers to the Museum for a one-day visit. They are introduced to the museum environment and the presentation of varied pieces of art.

It is amazing that when speaking about SMMA and the Museum, how many adults today will speak up about their fond memory of their trip to the Museum! It made an impact that has stayed with them through the years. When you think about it, today’s students could easily be the great-grandchildren of those original 5th graders!

I am pleased to report that SMMA has met a goal they set for themselves many years ago. A fund was set up with the Community Foundation of the Ozarks that will guarantee the continuation of the 5th grade Museum Field Trip Program in perpetuity. It has been a long road that no SMMA member ever gave up on. The goal was met in the last year, the funds are now in place, and a huge sense of accomplishment is felt by all. SMMA is now looking down the road to determine a new focus for our support.

All of our members are being asked to participate in this exciting task. No matter what new program is developed, it will have one purpose and that is supporting the continued educational efforts of the Springfield Art Museum.

SMMA Announcements 4th Quarter 2021
Board of Trustees Meetings: October 27, 2021; November 17, 2021; No December meeting

Photo pre-pandemic by Aaron J Scott
Well, folks, here we are with the COVID-19 pandemic continuing with the Delta variant. Just as we thought we could get back to “normal” socializing, it hit the area, and as I write this article in August 2021, it seems to be getting worse. Hopefully by the time you read this article, the spike in cases will have gotten under control. So, because of this, we will not be scheduling Art Talks, Taco Tuesdays, and Museum events continue to be put on hold.

Have you gone by the Museum lately? The parking lot is currently limited, the naturalization of Fassnight Creek is in progress, roads are closed for utility work, and more. It is an exciting time in the life of our Museum as we work to expand our education wing, reappoint public areas, move sculptures, become a more integrated part of the Ozark Greenways trail system, add native gardens, raise funds for the expansion, and more - all in time to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Museum’s inception in 2028.

We sure hope that you were able to visit the Watercolor USA exhibit. I dabble in watercolor very much as a beginner. I am in awe at the artists’ talents using watercolor! Rose O’Neill and Kewpie Comics is on view now. Hopefully you will see this exhibit which closes October 31.

Another thing you might like to do is visit the Rose O’Neill Museum and gardens at Bonniebrook, located in Walnut Shade just outside of Branson. A good friend of mine heads up the gardener crew down there, where you can see cultivars and native plants like those we might have around our Museum in the future.

FOSAM’s website will continue until December of this year. Check it out at www.fosam.org. The FOSAM Board has decided to discontinue the website after this because it doesn’t get much viewing. Instead, we will have a link on the Museum’s website.

FOSAM members should have gotten a copy of the minutes for the July 27 annual membership meeting by now. It was sent via email or post if you don’t have email. We are changing direction a bit in this organization. “The times, they are a’ changing,” as Bob Dylan’s song says, and so must we.

I thought I would include this art acquisition FOSAM made possible, purchased from Watercolor USA in 1991. The artist is Susan Frew, and it is a good one to study shape, form, and color.

Greetings, fellow Museum fans! I’m honored to have joined the Springfield Art Museum staff and thrilled to have this opportunity to introduce myself to you. I’ve been with the Museum for just under four months and I’ve been heartily welcomed by the inherent warmth and friendliness of the folks of southwest Missouri. The area isn’t completely foreign to me as I’ve had family in the area that I’ve visited regularly over the better part of 30 years. I’ve watched this area grow as a major metropolitan destination while retaining its love for its surrounding beautiful, natural environment.

What inspired me to pursue this brand new position was the Museum’s bold vision for its next 100 years of service to our community: to expand its stewardship of our community’s treasures in an awe-inspiring space that welcomes all and seamlessly connects our love for art with our appetite for nature and green spaces.

Since 1946, the Museum has been generously supported by the City as an important asset to a growing urban area. However, to expand Museum education programs, welcome more people in the galleries, and meet the community gathering goals of the Master Plan, your Museum needs you – to contribute, volunteer, or advocate.

My passion and purpose are to meaningfully connect you with your passion for the Museum and how your support can help. Is your heart drawn to arts education? We eagerly anticipate hosting field trips again and re-opening our Family Art Lab when it is safe, so parents and children can create and bond together.

Are you fascinated by art conservation? With over 10,000 pieces in the Museum’s permanent collection, there’s always need for preservation. Do you want to help build a better Springfield? The Museum’s Master Plan will create a multi-faceted arts and cultural tourism destination that complements our outdoor and sports tourism. Do you want the Museum to engage generations of children and adults to come? Creating a legacy through an estate gift will help ensure the Museum serves our community for its second century.

I’m here to serve you – the Museum’s loyal champions. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly anytime you’d like to talk about your passion for the Museum, take a tour, or explore areas where you can help. You can reach me directly at kate.francis@springfieldmo.gov or (417) 874-2865. In the meantime, I wish you continued good health and look forward to meeting you in the galleries or on the grounds soon!
During this tumultuous year, YOUR Art Museum remained a place for refuge, creative outlet, reflection, and escape. As the Museum continues its mission to present and preserve our community’s finest treasures, we look forward to the fresh new exhibitions opening this fall.

And now we’re hard at work planning new art education opportunities, school tours, and studio classes for people of all ages!

Please consider including the Museum in your year-end giving plans. Your generosity will help provide supplies and materials for our studios and Family Art Lab in the New Year.

A return envelope is included in this newsletter or you can make your year-end gift on-line at sgfmuseum.org/31/Support.

To make a gift of stock or to talk about other ways to support the Museum, please call Kate Francis, Museum Affairs Officer for Development and Fundraising at (417) 874-2865 or kate.francis@springfieldmo.gov.