FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE MONTGOMERY MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS
PRESENTS THE 44TH MONTGOMERY ART GUILD
MUSEUM EXHIBITION

On view May 22 through August 1, this biennial exhibition showcases pieces made by an array of artists from the River Region beyond. This year saw an 18% increase in artist entries and a 25% increase in works submitted, proving that, despite the hardships faced by many during this unprecedented year, the arts continue to thrive. Support for this exhibition was provided by sponsors AlaCOMP, Elizabeth Crump, and Laura and Barrie Harmon, with additional support from co-sponsors Dan Harris, Montgomery County Commission; Ann Hubbert; Lucy and Hans Luquire; Renasant Bank; and Paula and Nelson Smith.

Montgomery, AL, May 21, 2021 – Celebrating the longstanding partnership between the Museum and the Montgomery Art Guild (MAG), the MMFA is pleased to present the 44th Montgomery Art Guild Museum Exhibition, which will open on May 22 and remain on view until August 1, 2021. Additionally, visitors will be able to browse the exhibition virtually; a 3-D scan of the installation is available at mmfa.org.

Featured in the Museum’s galleries, the biennial exhibition contains an exciting variety of media, subjects, and themes by some of the most talented contemporary artists of the River Region and beyond. This year saw an 18% increase in artist entries and a 25% increase in works submitted, proving that, despite the hardships faced by many during this unprecedented year, the arts continue to thrive. Support for this exhibition was provided by sponsors AlaCOMP, Elizabeth Crump, and Laura and Barrie Harmon, with additional support from co-sponsors Dan Harris, Montgomery County Commission; Ann Hubbert; Lucy and Hans Luquire; Renasant Bank; and Paula and Nelson Smith.

The juror for the 44th exhibition is Dr. Wendy Castenell, Assistant Professor of African American Art in the Department of Art and Art History at The University of Alabama and author of the forthcoming book, Creole Identity in the Art of the American South: Louisiana from the Colonial Era to Reconstruction. Castenell selected 74 paintings, sculptures, textiles, and works on paper—from 443 entries submitted by 133 artists—noting, “I was especially impressed with the ways that many of these artists responded to issues that have been affecting the country over the past year, particularly related
to the COVID-19 pandemic and the racial tensions gripping the country...Ultimately, this underscores the power that art possesses in expressing larger social issues.”

Participating artists are eligible to win one of 20 awards presented by the MMFA and MAG. The winners will be revealed during a virtual program on Facebook Live on Friday, May 21, beginning at 5:30 PM. On Saturday, May 22 at 10 AM, Castenell will discuss her selections for the exhibition at a virtual Juror’s Critique.

“Walking through the exhibition, I’m struck by Wendy’s selections—the potency of the individual works and their power as a collective of contemporary pieces. Though the jurying process is “blind,” she did a remarkable job of assembling a body of work that gets to the heart of so much of what’s happening—all that’s on the artists’ minds—here in the twenty-first century American South,” said MMFA Director Angie Dodson.

The Montgomery Art Guild President Warren Simons continued, “The Montgomery Art Guild appreciates the unique opportunity of working with the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts to present this show. Guild members aim to create quality artwork in keeping with the beautiful exhibition space at the Museum.”

**FEATURED ARTIST EXHIBITION**

Presented in conjunction with the juried exhibition is *Public Faces and Private Spaces*, an exhibition of the works by MAG’s featured artist, Marguerite Edwards. A native of Montgomery, Edwards is a portrait painter celebrated for her commissioned portraits. She has painted the likenesses of eighteen Alabama Supreme Court Justices, seven Appellate Court Judges, several United States Senators, and other dignitaries. Alongside portraiture, Edwards creates stunning still lifes and landscapes in oil paint, pastel, charcoal, and pencil. All of her works of art start with a focus on highlighting patterns of light and shadows, combining these elements to create stunning images that bring her subjects to life. Generous support for this exhibition was provided by co-sponsors Dan Harris, Montgomery County Commission; Camille Elebash-Hill and W. Inge Hill, Jr.; and River Bank and Trust.

**AWARD WINNERS**

**Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts Awards**

**Director’s Award, $2,500**
Donated by the J.K. Lowder Family Foundation
Ryan Akers, *PENTACOST*, 2020, mixed media on canvas
Foy Gilmore Goodwyn Memorial Award, $1,000
Donated by the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts
Leanna Leithauser-Lesley, *Ne Me Quitte Pas*, 2020, mixed media

Montgomery Art Guild Awards
DiLaura Award, $1,000
Donated by Chuck and Joan DiLaura

Edward Robbins Memorial Award, $1,000
Donated by Chrys Robbins in memory of her husband, a past president of the Montgomery Art Guild

Halvorson Award, $1,000
Donated by Dr. Melanie Halvorson
Mary Ann Casey, *Mothers and Children I*, 2019, acrylic on canvas

Jimmie Lee Sabel Award, $1,000
Donated by Keith Sabel in memory of his father, Jimmie Sabel
Richard Mills, *Covid Escape Portico*, 2021, watercolor on illustration board

Alabama Steel Supply 3-D Artist Award, $500
Donated by Alabama Steel Supply
Meredith Knight, *A Brief History of Inequality in America*, 2019, ceramic, Lucite, metal, and acrylic ink

Montgomery Art Guild Award, $500
Donated by the Montgomery Art Guild
Phoebe Burns, *Grin and Bear It*, 2021, pastel and acrylic on paper

Montgomery Art Guild Award, $500
Donated by the Montgomery Art Guild

Nancy Mims Hartsfield Award, $500
Donated by Janice Prescott and Warren Simons in honor of Montgomery artist Nancy Mims Hartsfield
Elana Hagler, *Her Skin, Her Rules*, 2019, pastel and charcoal on paper

Oil Artist Award, $500
Donated anonymously
Jamie Harris, *Aunt Jemima and Kin*, 2021, oil on Masonite

Winfred Hawkins, *The Walls Have Feelings*, 2021, acrylic and spray paint on wood panel, Lent by the artist
Rouse-Gates Student Award, $500
Donated by Martha Rouse Gates in memory of Emma Lou Rouse
Kelsey Meadows, *Beneath the Fabric*, 2020, stoneware, epoxy, latex paint, and steel cables

Southern Art and Makers Collective Award, $500
Donated by the Southern Art and Makers Collective shop
Chie Hitchner, *Spring Garden Pathway*, 2020, handwoven, naturally-dyed silk

Stonehenge Gallery Award, $500
Donated by Rusty Gregory
Kole Nichols, *A Road with No End in Sight*, 2021, mixed media

Watercolor Artist Award, $500
Donated anonymously
Margie McInarnay, *Marina in the Morning*, 2021, watercolor and ink on academy board

Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald Award, $500
Donated by the Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald Museum
Carol Pugsley Jones, *Wide Open Spaces I and II*, 2020, oil and cold wax on canvas

BOOM! River Region’s 50+ Lifestyle Magazine Award, $250
Donated by Jim Watson at BOOM! Magazine
Winfred Hawkins, *The Walls Have Feelings*, 2021, acrylic and spray paint on wood panel

Crump and Gober Award, $250
Donated by Elizabeth Crump and Patricia Gober
Enid Probst, *Thread of Life*, 2019, marble, glass, minerals, and slate

Hodges Logistics Award, $250
Donated by Hodges Logistics
Christopher Greenman, *Zendo*, 2021, Shino glazed and stained stoneware

Nelson, Kelly, and Brod Award, $250
Donated by Svetlana Nelson, Laurel Kelly, and Walt Brod
Vincent Buwalda, *Truth*, 2021, welded steel, motors, and electronics
RELATED PROGRAMS
While we are glad to welcome visitors back to the Museum, we also maintain our commitment to supporting and keeping connected with those who are not yet ready to return to the Museum or those who've come to value their online access to the Museum. With that in mind, we have designed the following programs to accompany the 44th Montgomery Art Guild Museum Exhibition and Marguerite Edwards: Public Faces and Private Spaces.

**Opening Reception and Award Ceremony**
Friday, May 21, 2021; 5:30 PM
Facebook Live (facebook.com/montgomerymfa)
Free

**Juror’s Critique**
Saturday, May 22, 2021; 10 AM
Zoom; Register to attend at mmfa.org
Free

Join juror Dr. Wendy Castenell as she discusses her selections for the exhibition and answers the artist’s questions.

**Art After Five**
Thursday, June 3; 5:30 PM
Facebook Live
Free

Join two artists (TBD) featured in the exhibition as they talk about what it means to be a young professional in the arts.

**Story Time in the Galleries: What Do You Do with an Idea?**
Thursday, June 10; 10 AM
YouTube
Free

Surrounded by the works of the 44th MAG Museum Exhibition, young artists will be inspired to create something magical while listening to Kobi Yamada’s beautifully illustrated story “What Do You Do with an Idea?”

**Local Artists Live**
Saturday, July 10 and 24; 10 AM
Facebook Live
Free

Artists featured in the 44th exhibition will broadcast live on the Museum’s Instagram—opening their studio spaces to share artwork, reflect on inspirations, and offer a live Q&A with the audience!
**Artist Demonstrations**  
Saturday, June 19 and July 17; 10 AM  
Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts  
Free

Artists Winfred Hawkins (June 19) and Sunny Paulk (July 17) will lead an outdoor sketching studio. Students and other artists are encouraged to bring their sketchbooks and pencils to sketch alongside the artist, engage in creative discussions, ask questions, and receive feedback. Beginners welcome.

**Creative Conversations: Art Guilds and Collectives**  
Wednesday, July 21; 5:30 PM  
Facebook Live  
Free

Join MMFA Curator Jennifer Jankauskas for a conversation about the importance of art guilds and artist collectives. This discussion will feature Warren Simons, President of the Montgomery Art Guild; Steve Duke, President of the Prattauga Art Guild; and Kalonji Gilchrist, Founder of 21 Dreams Arts and Culture.

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**FOR YOUR SAFETY | COVID-19**

We remain committed to serving our members and visitors in a safe and responsible manner, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To this end: we request that all Museum visitors over the age of five **wear a mask or face covering** during their visit. **Social distancing is encouraged** and indicated by signage throughout the Garden and the Galleries. Following CDC and ADPH guidelines, we have increased the frequency that we **clean and disinfect high-touch areas**. Additionally, hand sanitizer is readily available for visitors. Please stay at home if you are feeling ill or have been exposed to COVID-19 in the fourteen (14) days prior to your visit.

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**MMFA BACKGROUND**

The Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts was founded in 1930 by a group of local artists as a place for both exhibiting art and space for art education. The original intentions of our founders—to exhibit and teach—continue to inspire and inform every action and activity here at the Museum which, since 1988, has shared the 277-acre Blount Cultural Park with our partners across the lake at the celebrated Alabama Shakespeare Festival.

Today’s MMFA visitors stroll through art-studded grounds and permanent collection galleries. They see compelling changing exhibitions and learn about art by playing in our interactive gallery, Artworks, making art in its bustling studios, or by participating in other engaging events and programs. And, as of late September 2018, MMFA visitors can now relax and recharge in the serenity of our stunning new three-acre sculpture garden.
While the Museum’s collection is still home to the art of many of the regional artists who first established it, over time it has become known for its strength in American art and Old Master Prints. Recent, important acquisitions of art made by African American and Asian artists and works inspired by images and themes related to the experiences of these groups represent the breadth and depth of the lives and concerns of those who now call Montgomery and the River Region home. Through the exhibition of this work as well as the programs and events that help connect our communities with it, the MMFA is recognized as a leading arts and cultural resource here in the state and Southeastern region.

The MMFA is a department of the City of Montgomery and is supported by funds from the City of Montgomery, with additional funds from the Montgomery County Commission and the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts Association. Programs are made possible, in part, by grants from the Alabama State Council on the Arts.

GENERAL INFORMATION

WHAT: 44th Montgomery Art Guild Museum Exhibition
Marguerite Edwards: Public Faces and Private Spaces

WHEN: Both exhibitions: May 22 through August 1, 2021

WHERE: Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts
Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park
One Museum Drive
Montgomery, AL 36117

INFORMATION: mmfa.org
334.625.4333
@MontgomeryMFA

HOURS:
Galleries, Mondays, Closed
Sculpture Garden, Tuesdays–Saturdays, 10 AM–5 PM
Terrace, and Store: Sundays, Noon to 5 PM
Last entry at 4:45 PM

ADMISSION: Free! With ample, free parking.

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MEDIA CONTACT
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