

MMFA

Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE MONTGOMERY MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS PRESENTS BIENNIAL EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTING ARTISTS FROM ACROSS THE STATE

On view June 30 through September 24, 2023, *Alabama A to Z* features works inspired by the characteristics of our home state by contemporary artists who call it home.



Amy Feger, *Glitch: Looking Down-Loading Yosemite, Ode to Bierstadt*, 2019-2022, oil and acrylic on panel, 53 x 96 inches (three panels 53 x 32 inches)

Montgomery, AL, July 5, 2023 – Celebrating the longstanding partnership between the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA) and the Montgomery Art Guild (MAG), the Museum is pleased to present *Alabama A to Z*, the 45th Biennial Montgomery Art Guild Museum Exhibition, and Featured Artist Exhibition, *Who Will Keep the Memories: Debra Eubanks Riffe* on view through September 24, 2023.

Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts
One Museum Drive, Montgomery, AL 36117
334.625.4333 | @MontgomeryMFA | mmfa.org



Aney Carver, *Head Above Water*, 2022, pyrography with watercolor on maple panel, 24 x 10 inches

For the first time, the works featured in the Museum's galleries are connected by a theme reflected in the title of the exhibition, *Alabama A to Z*. Additionally, for the first time, the call for entries was expanded beyond the River Region to welcome contemporary artists from across the state. The works selected explore the people, history, culture, geography, and environment of Alabama—celebrating our state and what it means to be Alabamian.

Alabama A to Z was juried by Dana-Marie Lemmer, Executive Director and Curator at the Wiregrass Museum of Art in Dothan, Alabama. Lemmer thoughtfully embraced the daunting task of surveying 434 works of art by 144 artists. Considering the technical skill and artistic vision of each work, Lemmer ultimately selected 74 objects by 51 artists. She noted, "From paintings and sculpture to photography and mixed media, the range of artistic expression was a testament to the rich creative and cultural legacy that exists in Alabama and the many talented artists who live and work here."

Participating artists are eligible to win one of 13 awards—ranging from \$500 to \$3,000—presented by the MMFA and MAG. The winners were revealed during the opening reception on Friday, June 30 and are listed below.

"As I walk through the exhibition, I am excited to view the vast creative efforts by artists in our state. Dana-Marie's selections highlight a cross section of works of art in a range of media by artists at different phases in their careers. Taken together, they demonstrate the current strength of artistic creativity found in Alabama," said MMFA Curator Jennifer Jankauskas, Ph.D.

The Montgomery Art Guild President Georgia Banks-Martin continued, "The Montgomery Art Guild is proud to continue the tradition of presenting this exhibition with the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts. Through the hard work of many volunteers, we feel the works represented in this year's exhibition provide a powerful glance into the life of those who call Alabama home."

FEATURED ARTIST EXHIBITION

Presented in conjunction with the juried exhibition is *Who Will Keep The Memories: Debra Eubanks Riffe*. This mid-career retrospective of Birmingham-based artist Debra Riffe features stunning hand-pulled relief prints of woodcuts, linoleum block prints, and needlepoint canvases that all reflect her love of southern culture. Riffe's richly detailed narrative imagery recalls stories told by her relatives and draws on her own firsthand experiences.

Debra Eubanks Riffe (American, born 1972), *tug 'o war*, 2006, linoleum block relief print on paper



Her portrayals of African Americans in various everyday moments illuminate themes of music, social injustice, civil rights, illiteracy, and food inequality through a personal lens. All together, these images inspired by memories form a powerful narrative of the South, past and present.

AWARD WINNERS

Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts Awards

Director's Award, \$2,500

Donated by the J.K. Lowder Family Foundation

Amy Feger, *Glitch: Looking Down-Loading Yosemite, Ode to Bierstadt*, 2019-2022, oil and acrylic on panel, 53 x 96 inches (three panels 53 x 32 inches)

Montgomery Art Guild Awards

Thornton Clark Award, \$3,000

Donated by friends in memory of Thornton Clark, artist and a past president of MAG

Lauren Woods, *Offering (the Prince)*, 2022, oil on linen, framed with molding mounted to wall, 39 x 84 inches

DiLaura Award, \$1,000

Donated by Chuck and Joan DiLaura

Aney Carver, *Head Above Water*, 2022, pyrography with watercolor on maple panel, 24 x 10 inches

Edward L. Robbins Memorial Award, \$1,000

Donated by Chrys Robbins in memory of her husband, a past president of MAG

Tony Veronese, *Latchkey #4*, 2021, charcoal on paper, 11 x 26 inches

Susan Hood Watercolor Award, \$750

Donated by friends in memory of Susan Hood, artist, art teacher, and art critic

Yoon Chea, *pleroma semidecandrum*, 2022, watercolor pencil on paper, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches

Artist Award, \$500

Donated anonymously

Korey Rowswell, *Turkey Creek*, 2021, cotton embroidery floss and wool thread on linen, 10 x 15 inches

BOOM! River Region's 50+ Lifestyle Magazine Award, \$500

Donated by Jim Watson at BOOM! Magazine and MAG

Leigh Ann Edmonds, *Rodeo*, 2021, digital inkjet print on paper, 11 x 14 inches



Lauren Woods, *Offering (the Prince)*, 2022, oil on linen, framed with molding mounted to wall, 39 x 84 inches



Yoona Chea, *pleroma semidecandrum*, 2022, watercolor pencil on paper, 11 ¾ x 16 ½ inches

Gamma Xi Phi and Montgomery Art Guild Award, \$500

Donated by the Gamma Xi Phi fraternity and MAG

Larry Silver, *Southern Hospitality*, 2023, oil on canvas, 36 x 48 inches

Oil Artist Award, \$500

Donated anonymously

Bruce Poole, *SELF PORTRAIT*, 2022, oil on canvas, 30 x 24 inches

Richard Mills Award, \$500

Donated by Janice Prescott and Warren Simons in honor of Montgomery artist Richard Mills

Will Jacks, *Iterations of a Willow Branch*, 2021, gelatin silver print on paper, 80 x 96 x 1 inches

Rouse Gates Student Award, \$500

Donated by Martha Rouse Gates in memory of Emma Lou Rouse

Mikayla Hammock, *Alabama Red-Bellied Cooter Turtle*, 2022, ink on paper, 24 x 18 inches

Stonehenge Gallery Award, \$500

Donated by Rusty Gregory

Duane Paxson, *Kudzuveaceous*, 2022, steel and wood, 88 x 26 x 18 inches

Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald Award, \$500

Donated by the Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald Museum

Cam Guarino, *Organic Orchestra*, 2021, oil on canvas, 30 x 24 inches

RELATED PROGRAMS

Opening Reception

Friday, June 30; 5:30–7 PM

Free | Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts

This event celebrated our summer exhibitions: *Alabama A to Z*, the 45th Biennial Montgomery Art Guild Museum Exhibition, and Featured Artist Exhibition, *Who Will Keep the Memories: Debra Eubanks Riffe*. The evening of festivities began with a presentation of the artist awards and was followed by a reception.

Juror's Talk with Dana-Marie Lemmer

Saturday, July 1, 2023; 11 AM

Free | Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts

Dana-Marie Lemmer, juror for the *Alabama A to Z* exhibition and Executive Director and Curator at the Wiregrass Museum of Art, led a gallery talk highlighting award winners and selected works. This informal discussion offered participants insights into the jurying process and selected works on view.

Artist in Action and Gallery Talk with Debra Eubanks Riffe

Saturday, July 22, 2023

Gallery Talk 10:30–11 AM | Printmaking Workshop 11 AM–3 PM

Free | Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts

Debra Eubanks Riffe, 45th Montgomery Art Guild Featured Artist will lead a gallery talk through the *Who Will Keep the Memories* exhibition. Afterwards, she will lead a workshop on the relief printmaking process using linoleum blocks.

SUPPORT + ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Support for *Alabama A to Z* and *Who Will Keep the Memories: Debra Eubanks Riffe*, 45th Montgomery Art Guild Featured Artist provided by Dan Harris, Montgomery County Commission. We also thank the generous sponsors of artist awards.

Annual support for exhibitions is made possible by the following sponsors and grantors. Lead sponsors and grantors Alabama State Council on the Arts, Alabama Power Foundation, The Ford Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Barrie H. Harmon III, Lamar, Medical Properties Trust, Inc., MGMWERX, Poarch Band of Creek Indians, Regions Bank, and Rheem Manufacturing, with additional support from sponsors Dr. and Mrs. Mark H. LeQuire, PowerSouth, The S. Adam Schloss Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Ken Williams, and Laurie J. Weil, D.V.M. and Dr. Tommy Wool, and co-sponsors AmeriFirst Bank, Balch & Bingham, LLP, Barganier Davis Williams Architects Associated, AIA, Captrust, Nick Drollette Photography, Ms. Camille Elebash-Hill, Mrs. Ann Hubbert, Jernigan & Jernigan, LLC., Morgan Stanley Wealth Management, Mr. and Mrs. L. Daniel Morris, Jr., Harmon Dennis Bradshaw, Inc., Dr. and Mrs. Alfred J. Newman, Jr., River Bank & Trust, Russell Construction of Alabama, Inc., Sabel Steel Services, Inc., Ms. Micki Beth Stiller, Thompson Insurance, Inc., Valley Bank, and Warren Averett, LLC.

Annual support for programs is made possible by the following sponsors and grantors. Lead sponsors and grantors Alabama State Council on the Arts, Alabama Power Foundation, Ms. Caroline J. Crook, Copeland Franco Screws & Gill, The Daniel Foundation of Alabama, The Ford Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Barrie H. Harmon III, Lamar, Medical Properties Trust, Inc., MGMWERX, Poarch Band of Creek Indians, and Regions Bank with additional support from sponsors Mr. John A. Caddell, Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama, LLC, Drs. Gerri and Stuart Hendon, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Runkle, and Cathy Caddell and Charlie Warnke, and co-sponsors Dr. and Mrs. Robert A. Avery, Dr. and Mrs. Sanders M. Benkwith, Goodwyn Mills and Cawood, Inc., and Hodges Warehouse + Logistics

Leadership for *Alabama A to Z* and the accompanying featured artist exhibition was provided in part by the following Montgomery Art Guild Museum Exhibition Committee: Dockery Austin, Georgia Banks-Martin, Andrea Buckmann, Bob Corley, Lisa Lennox, Sunny Paulk, and Warren Simons.

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:	<i>Alabama A to Z</i> <i>Who Will Keep the Memories: Debra Eubanks Riffe</i>
WHEN:	June 30 through September 24, 2023
WHERE:	Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts One Museum Drive Montgomery, AL 36117
INFORMATION:	mmfa.org 334.625.4333 @MontgomeryMFA
HOURS:	Galleries, ArtWorks, Sculpture Garden, Terrace, and Shop Mondays, Closed Tuesdays–Sunday, 10 AM–5 PM Last entry at 4:45 PM
ADMISSION:	Free! With ample, free parking.

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MEDIA CONTACT

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