



VISUAL ARTS CENTER OF RICHMOND

Awards Presented at Collectors Night

Thanks to beautiful weather, great planning and the support of a full house of members and friends, our March 19 Collectors Night raised more than \$75,000 for the Visual Arts Center.

A highlight of the event is always the annual presentation of the Distinguished Service Award recognizing an outstanding individual and celebrating the heart and spirit that have built and sustained VisArts for 47 years.



The recipient of this year's award epitomizes that heart and spirit, said CEO Jo Kennedy, in presenting the award. "He is a man of many talents, from his right-brained culinary skills to his left-brained financial expertise, from baking fresh pastries for Tuesday morning Art & Coffee to serving as our treasurer for six years through a capital campaign, historic tax credits and six annual fund drives." The 2010 Distinguished Service Award recipient, Hans Karras, has always given with a generous heart and creative spirit.

This year the Board created a new award -- the Visionary Award -- to recognize a truly outstanding individual who has, through her leadership and passion, led the Visual Arts Center to a new level of excellence.

Again, Jo Kennedy presented the award. "Serving as chair of the Capital Campaign Dream Team, she inspired all of us by her clear vision of what we could become and by her passion and persistence to move forward toward that vision. As a board member, she has served as a wellspring of hope and belief in our future, always seeing the bright side of everything and always celebrating our every accomplishment. It is with great honor and joy that I present the Visual Arts Center's Visionary Award to True Luck."



Creativity at Work Can Inspire Your Workforce

By inspiring your business model with the creative process, established and emerging business leaders can leverage the power of divergent thinking to reframe problems and generate new and unexpected solutions. Creativity at Work is a unique experiential program that encourages individuals to explore the creative process and apply it to workplace challenges. Working artists, professional facilitators, and workshop participants will come together in three intensive one-day sessions over the course of three months. Demonstrations, discussions, and hands-on creative workshops will help you reconnect with your own innate creativity and show you how to use that connection to bring innovation and imagination to the business environment.

Registration

Visit our website to register: visarts.org
Tuition is \$3000 per person, limited number of spaces available
Session I - Igniting the Creative Spirit (Sept. 16)
Session II - Seeing with a Unique Vision (Oct. 14)
Session III - Intersection of Collaboration and Innovation (Nov. 11)

Call 804.353.0094 with any questions. We look forward to seeing you in the fall!

Letter from Jo



It's hard to believe that I came to the Visual Arts Center (then the Hand Workshop) almost a decade ago. What a wonderful journey those ten years have been and what

an amazing gift that journey has given me. How many times in a lifetime do we get to do something we're passionate about, and at the same time, make a difference in the community we love and live in?

From the beginning we rallied around a pressing need -- purchasing and then renovating our building. We imagined, we dreamed, and we made it happen. But as important as the building was, we were actually doing something even more important than transforming a building. We were creating a home. We were building our family and community. We were connecting with the larger regional community. And we were reconnecting with the very passion and energy that had created and sustained the organization through the years. We found our center in more ways than one.

Nothing has been more important in these efforts than the community of family and friends that we've built along the way. So many people who care deeply about the Visual Arts Center have stepped up to make a difference in so many ways. I am grateful to a wonderful and talented staff who have made my job a joy and to the brightest and best Board and Advisory Council an organization has ever had and to so many great friends I've met along the way of this amazing journey. Thanks to all of you for a gift I will treasure forever.

With anticipation of a very bright future for the Visual Arts Center,

Visiting Artists Offer Talks and Workshops

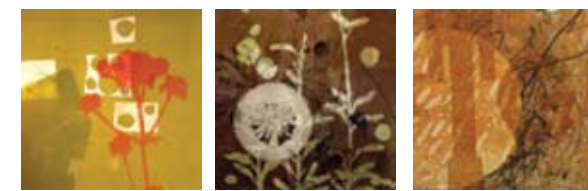
A grant from The Windgate Charitable Foundation makes it possible for VisArts to host two visiting artists this spring.



Chicago's Paul Andrew Wandless works with surface decoration on clay using various transfer techniques. He will be with us Friday evening, April 30, for a slide lecture / show + tell. On Saturday, May 1, he offers a hands-on

workshop and demonstration. He will help us explore pattern, narrative, and the use of motifs on clay. Paul will be teaching at Arrowmont and The Penland School of Craft this summer. Check out his work at www.studio3artcompany.com. Friday's presentation is free and open to the public, while Saturday's requires pre-registration and a small fee.

Gretchen Schermerhorn is a printmaker and hand papermaker whose work often combines the two media. She is currently the Director of the Papermill and Artistic Collaborations at Pyramid Atlantic Art Center in Silver Spring, Maryland. Gretchen joins us June 4-6 with a free Friday presentation of her work as well as Saturday and Sunday workshops. "Our goal with Gretchen is to excite our printers, painters, and writers to work together making an edition image combining painterly gestures and text," explains Aimee Joyaux, Director of Educational Programming. See more of Gretchen's work at gretchenschmerhorn.com.



New Exhibition Explores Memory

Opening Friday, April 9, Loren Schwerd's *Mourning Portrait* is a series of memorials to the communities of New Orleans that were devastated by the flooding that followed Hurricane Katrina. Assistant Professor of Sculpture at Louisiana State University School of Art in Baton Rouge, Schwerd began by working from her photographs of vacant houses and businesses in the Ninth Ward neighborhood. She wove hair into portraits of these homes using human hair extensions she found outside the St. Claude Beauty Supply. "By documenting private homes, I venerate the city's losses, both individual and collective," says the artist.

The sculptures refer to historic methods of memorialization, including portraiture and the Victorian tradition of hairwork, in which strands of hair from a deceased loved one were woven or plaited into brooches, earrings and bracelets, as well as framed wreaths and horseshoes for hanging in the home. The artist explains that she favors "found materials that contribute their function, cultural value, and a trace of their mysterious personal history to my design."

Mourning Portrait is a continuation of the multi-media artist's practice of site-related installations and her investigation of mnemonic elements in found objects -- in this case, hair. Director of Exhibition Programming Katherine Huntoon explains, "The associative possibilities present in the use of hair are not only personal and widely varied but also shared within a society. Through her constructions representing homes and neighborhoods, Schwerd connects our associations with hair to the social and familial symbols of home and place."



Unmoored, Near Dorgenois Street, 2007.
Human hair, steel wire; 18" x 12" x 8"

Photograph at right is Schwerd's source material for the artwork.



"Schwerd employs traditional methods of connection, such as tying, weaving and stitching, which act as metaphor to our associative connections to the portraits," Huntoon continues. These methods also remind the viewer of the time, memory and obsession involved in such meticulous labor.

Loren Schwerd will attend the opening reception and then present an artist's talk and demonstration at 1 PM on Saturday, April 10. In other related programming, Sonya Clark, Chair of the Department of Craft/Material Studies at VCU, presents "A Hairy Subject," discussing the use of hair as a medium in historical and contemporary artworks on Saturday, April 24, at 1 PM. Suzanne Savery, Director of Collections & Interpretation at the Valentine Richmond History Center, presents "Hair, Art & Remembrance in the 19th Century," using images and objects from the Valentine's extensive collection on Saturday, May 8 from 1 PM.

Loren Schwerd received her BFA in Studio Art from Tulane University in 1993, and her MFA in Sculpture from Syracuse University in 1999. She was an instructor and visiting Assistant Professor at the College of Charleston from 1999 to 2005 and currently lives in New Orleans. *Mourning Portrait* was previously exhibited at the Sumpter County Art Gallery, Sumpter, S.C.; Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, La.; and, most recently, at The Center for Craft, Creativity and Design, Inter-institutional Center of the University of North Carolina, UNC-A Kellogg Center, Hendersonville, N.C.

The exhibition continues in the True F. Luck Gallery through June 6, 2010. Support for the exhibition is provided by Altria Group, Inc. Loren Schwerd's *Mourning Portrait* is presented in conjunction with *Minds Wide Open: Virginia Celebrates Women in the Arts*, the first statewide celebration of its kind. Between March and June of 2010, thousands of special events will occur to honor contributions by women to arts and culture.

VisArts Launches Endowment Campaign to Honor Jo Kennedy

The Visual Arts Center of Richmond is embarking on an endowment campaign in honor of Jo Bowman Kennedy and her 10 years of outstanding leadership. The Jo Bowman Kennedy Endowment Fund will be an unrestricted, permanent endowment fund to be used to further the mission of the Visual Arts Center of Richmond.

Endowment Funds protect the future of everything the Visual Arts Center has accomplished over the years. The endowment funds are held in perpetuity and invested, and only the interest is used to help maintain or improve our level of service. An endowment provides security, encourages long term planning and demonstrates our commitment to exist well into the future. In short, an endowment fund will ensure the investment the community has made in the Visual Arts Center.

In deciding to undertake this campaign, the Board of Directors thought a named endowment was a fitting tribute to honor Jo's accomplishments over the past 10 years. Under Jo's guidance, the Visual Arts Center

- Underwent a major transformation
- Crafted a new mission and name
- Strengthened and greatly expanded the depth and breadth of those who lead the organization and deliver the programs
- Strengthened our financial assets

"Without a doubt, the Visual Arts Center would not nearly be the success story that it is without the competence, passion and leadership of Jo Kennedy. I am not an arts-oriented person, but supported the Visual Arts Center purely because of her rare talent."

- Beverley W. "Booty" Armstrong

VisArts is pleased that the same leadership team that spearheaded the Challenge 2007 capital campaign has agreed to lead the campaign for the Jo Bowman Kennedy Endowment campaign: True F. Luck, Honorary Chair; Bill Ginther, Co-Chair; Marsha Ginther, Co-Chair; Nancy Belleman, Co-Chair; Scott Belleman, Co-Chair; Maurice Beane, Jane Brooke and Abby Moore.

To make a gift to this endowment campaign, please contact Susan Early, Vice President for Development & Special Events, by calling 353-4457 or send your donation to: Jo Bowman Kennedy Endowment Fund, Visual Arts Center of Richmond, 1812 West Main Street, Richmond, VA 23220.

YWCA Recognizes True Luck

Each year, Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) honors 10 women from the Richmond area with the Outstanding Women Awards. This award is presented to women who exemplify excellence in all facets of life, and strive to enhance their community through their extraordinary leadership, achievement, and dedication in their careers.

One woman is chosen for each of the 10 categories ranging from art to health/science to religion. We are proud to announce that the 2010 recipient of the Outstanding Women Awards- Art category is VACR board member True Farr Luck. "These women have never left their vision to chance," said Laura Lee Chandler, board president of the YWCA. "They're visionaries and pioneers . . . and inspire others to act."

Join us to honor True Luck at the 30th Anniversary awards luncheon, Friday, April 23, 2010 at the Greater Richmond Convention Center.

Reclaim a Treasure at "Used-Art" Sale

Get ready to enhance your home or office when you reclaim a treasure at the 2010 Art Exchange on May 13 from 5:00 to 10:00 PM. This innovative event featuring pre-owned works of fine art and craft was conceived to raise funds for our 2007 renovation campaign. In its third version this year, the unusual sale will benefit our educational and exhibition programs.

After a team of professional jurors sets prices for the variety of hand-made, one-of-a-kind items, they will be presented for purchase at the Art Exchange reception 5-10 PM on Thursday, May 13. Admission is free and the event features a cash bar. We'll have dozens of items of all shapes and sizes, including ceramics, glass, jewelry, prints, paintings, sculpture and wearable art. Preview auction items online beginning in April at visarts.org.

And if you have any unique pieces you're willing to part with, VisArts welcomes donations for Art Exchange through April 23. Please contact Karen Miller, Special Events Coordinator, at 353-0094 ext. 227 or kmiller@visarts.org.

"We are grateful to Richmond's generous collectors who have parted with some of their fine art for a very worthy organization," noted Anne Grier, a VACR board member and past chair of the event. "This is a remarkable opportunity for art lovers to enhance their collections with fine works available at reduced prices while supporting the important programs of the Visual Arts Center of Richmond," she said.



VMFA Awards Grant to VisArts Instructor Kendra Wadsworth

Since 1940, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts has awarded Fellowships worth \$4.2 million to 1,104 of Virginia's most outstanding professional and student artists in order to pursue education and advance careers. This year, \$202,000 was divided between 35 artists. Only 14 artists across the state received the \$8,000 professional award, including one of our instructors, Kendra Wadsworth.



A VCU Painting and Printmaking graduate, Kendra received her MFA in Painting from the University of Pennsylvania. Currently, she teaches at the Visual Arts Center of Richmond and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, and conducts workshops throughout the state through the VMFA Paul Mellon Statewide Partnership Program. Wadsworth is also a certified Yoga instructor and painting contractor.

Congratulations, Kendra!

Pottery For Everyone Lives Up To Its Name

Every Sunday afternoon at VisArts, the wheels in Studio Clay 2 are spinning. Young and not-so-young artists bustle about the studio trimming and embellishing their work. Pottery for Everyone is a class where kids work alongside adults, and both learn the fundamentals of clay and glazing techniques. Often, family members sign up to take the class together, and this spring, two students had a special reason and a special opportunity to sign up.

Andrea Makryianis & NayNay Carrington are Big & Little Sisters in the Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring program in Richmond. Their three-year friendship has developed by making time to do things together each week. We caught up with them in the Clay studio one Sunday afternoon and asked about their experience.

How did you decide on a class at VisArts?

Andrea: When she was younger, NayNay saw a movie where a girl was working on a clay wheel and has always wanted to try it. Andrea looked around for a class and heard about the Visual Arts Center. I knew that many Big/Little teams enjoy the free Side by Side classes on Saturday mornings, and I called to ask about other possibilities. When they told me about their scholarship possibilities, I got excited!



What has it been like working together to learn something new?

NayNay: I love it! The very first week we each figured out how to throw a pot on the wheel. Actually, I got the hang of it before Andrea did! I just really got into it and did it. We both are getting better at trimming our pots.

Studio S Successfully Launches

Studio S, our new seniors in the arts program, is underway and receiving great reviews. Offered in partnership with Senior Connections, Senior Center and YMCA of Greater Richmond, these classes were designed with the aim of improving local seniors' quality of life by helping them access the arts and engage in the creative process. A recent survey of the current Studio S participants showed that we are successfully achieving this goal. One student said, "The class gives me something to look forward to and a chance to meet and interact with new people."

Other comments showed that Studio S is helping the students build social networks, stimulate creative thinking while flexing their imagination, and exercise interpersonal skills. Through working with different colors, patterns and textures, our students have agreed that they are discovering talents they never knew they had. In the words of one student, "Art classes help me explore a whole new part of myself (I worked in math and computers most of my life.) Being creative is fun."

The new students are not the only ones benefiting from Studio S. Their feedback is also opening our eyes to ways in which we can expand our audience and make VisArts more accessible to seniors. Classes will continue to meet once a week through May. Studio S is made possible from a United Way Wellness Initiative grant and is part of a larger outreach program that addresses the arts, health and community building.

For more information, contact Aimee Joyaux at 353-0094 or Mary Catherine Kolbert at 353-3171.



Instructor Rhona Arenstein shares a participant's joy in what they can do with clay.

One of my favorite pots was one that I messed up on – I put a hole in it trimming, and I was going to throw it away, but our instructor, Susan Quinild, told me I could embellish it to fix it. So I added hearts over the holes and it turned out better because now it has character! I cannot wait to take it home to my mother as a gift.

Two generous sources have provided this opportunity for Andrea and NayNay: Wells Fargo Advisors and the Visual Arts Center's newly-formed Clay Guild.

A generous grant from Wells Fargo Advisors has provided 26 adult scholarships to qualified individuals who need assistance with tuition for studio classes. This spring, 13 individuals for the Richmond area and an additional 13 adults from Safe Harbor have had the opportunity to take classes, including *The Art of Sewing*, *The Creative Spark*, *Drawing Fundamentals*, and *Photography*. The Clay Guild's scholarship fund is specifically designed to support a student working in ceramics. Pat Morris, one of the founding members of the Clay Guild is thrilled Nay Nay and Andrea are the first recipients of their scholarship funds. "All the Clay Guild members love being here at the Visual Arts Center. We love the community of working in the studios together, and the motivation behind establishing the scholarship fund is that each of us wants to share our love of this place with others."

For more information on The Adult Scholarship Fund or the Clay Guild, please contact AimeeJoyaux@visarts.org.

Meet the 2010 MASTER Teacher: Jim Valentine

"A great person. A great potter. A great teacher. Jim's combination of these three qualities brings something magical to the classroom," says one of Jim Valentine's students, and everyone in the studio agrees.

Jim Valentine, VisArt's recipient of the 2010 Master Teacher Award, has over 30 years teaching experience in Richmond City and Hanover County public schools. As a boy, Jim says, "I grew up working in the garden on cool country mornings, and from lunchtime on, I'd get lost in the woods looking for raccoons, kingfishers, and wildlife doing their thing. All summer long there was a fly rod in my hand. These experiences shaped the way I made art. I drew what I saw and used mud out of the creeks to sculpt very primitive stuff. My art stayed in the woods. The outdoors was my studio."

Jim's career aspiration was to be an environmental scientist but was always driven by the need to make art. Jim graduated from VCU with a BFA in Art Education and a minor in Crafts and Ceramics. He got "turned on to teaching kids" when he worked at the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia's St. George's Camp at Shrine Mont one summer. "I was on duty 24/7 and, true of anything you do with that kind of intensity, I either was going to figure out I liked working with kids - or not!"

In his early years of teaching, Jim worked for 11 different Richmond City Schools in a three-year period. "The kids I enjoyed most were the hearing impaired children. In our art room, we worked on skills that reinforced measuring and math. I learned so much about teaching from those kids and the dedicated teachers who worked with them. They lived their job. Those children were their life."

Jim took an opportunity to teach middle school students in Hanover County in the 1970s. He says of middle school students, "If you don't like 'em in class

on Monday, no problem, because they'll be a different person by Wednesday's class! They are sophisticated enough to do complex work but they still possess a naïve quality that tends to get bred out of us in high school and college." The challenge of teaching middle school students is that, as a teacher, "I couldn't fake it. I had to stay organized and learn how to shift gears to keep things rolling and my students motivated. I figured out early that if I loved 'em up, they worked hard for me and did incredible work."

Jim believes that the best art teachers are the ones making art. He always made time to keep painting, printmaking and working in clay. If he went for a few days without making



Master Teacher Jim Valentine received a \$500 check and another prized Hawaiian "aloha" shirt when he was recognized at Collectors Night in March.

anything, he says, "I'd get all hinky . . . I need to make art as much as I need food!" An illness took Jim out of the classroom, but after he "got over feeling sorry for" himself, he received a flier for what was then the Hand Workshop and decided to enroll in one of David Camden's clay classes. "I felt like I had come home. Everyone was happy. Everyone was excited about what they were doing and excited that I was new and excited about the things they could share with me. The class atmosphere at VisArts is a great combination of informal but serious. Instructors and students are serious about what they are making and very open to what every person brings to the learning environment."

Jim started teaching at VisArts in 2003 and generously gives his time and shares his talent and experience with our students in both youth and adult classes. "And, boy, I love my students here at the Visual Arts Center!" Jim exclaims. "They're even BETTER than my middle school kids. They bring their life experience to class, come in with their own thoughts about what they want to create and are wide open to new possibilities. I learn an awful lot from my students every day. They are wonderful sources of inspiration and are just FUN people to be around."

It is with admiration and gratitude that we celebrate JIM VALENTINE, our 2010 Master Teacher.

In Your Words: Bridget L. Marshall

I haven't stepped foot in an art class since graduating from VCU. I now work in marketing, and somewhere in the day-to-day of my career-driven life I stopped making time to paint. As the ball dropped over Times Square this year, I made a resolution: rediscover my creative muse. In February I dusted off my paintbrushes for the *Watercolor Crash Course* taught by Shelly Bechtel Shepherd. I'd forgotten how nice it was to take time out to do something I loved, just because I loved to do it. My hiatus from art made me a little foggy on the basics. Shelly did a fantastic job of brining me back. Her clear explanation of the techniques was just what the doctor ordered. It was a solid six hours of inspiration. You know what they say, "Time flies when you're having fun." I can't wait to sign up for my next class!



A New Partnership with Safe Harbor



The Visual Arts Center is delighted to be partnering with Safe Harbor in providing adult scholarships for women and men whose lives have been touched by domestic violence. This year, VACR received a grant from the Wachovia/Wells Fargo Foundation to allow us to offer scholarships to adults. VACR is offering a baker's dozen (13) scholarships to Safe Harbor clients with the hope that the classes they take will stimulate creative thinking, help realize hidden talents, and provide social opportunities in a creative atmosphere. These are all important components to having a healthy quality of life. Successful and positive experiences keep a person feeling confident and capable.

VisArts Is Web 2.0!

There's so much going on at VisArts, and we want everyone to be able to see it, know about it and be a part of it! That's why we've joined Facebook, Twitter and Flickr! Search for "visarts richmond" on any of these social networking sites and add us as your friend to get invitations to events, view photographs and learn more about the Visual Arts Center and what we're up to!

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