2019 MIDWEST WOMEN ARTISTS SYMPOSIUM

MIDWEST WOMEN ARTISTS
CHAMPIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENT, 1960S TO THE PRESENT

Bradley University, Peoria, Illinois  November 7-8, 2019

This interdisciplinary conference will explore the contributions of Midwest women environmental and eco-artists to the art history canon, how the geography of the Midwest has influenced their practice, and the intersections of art and science in their work. This program addresses the gender gap experienced by women artists and their leadership in addressing evolving environmental issues facing our world.

**Keynote Address**  Art in the Age of Planetary Distress
Karen McCoy, environmental artist and professor of sculpture at the Kansas City Institute of Art, has experience combining artistic practice and environmental activism with a focus on the ecological, geographical, cultural, and societal histories of the site at which the work is created.

**Expert Lecture**  Art & Ecology: The Evolution of Artists Addressing Environmental Issues
Patricia Watts, founder and West Coast curator of ecoartspace, and Executive Director of American Women Artists, will provide an overview of the environmental and eco arts movements. Watts is a pioneering curator who has worked for 25 years with artists who engage the natural world in their art.

**Panel Discussions**

“Art and Place” will explore how the unique ecologies, geographies and cultivated landscapes of the Midwest have informed the practice of women environmental artists (past & present) who live and work there. Panel leader Cherie Sampson, environmental artist and professor of art at the University of Missouri, will be joined by Sarah FitzSimons, Jill Sebastian and Vivian Visser.

“Art Embracing Science” will explore the scientific issues that environmental artists addressed in their work and how eco artists embrace scientific methods and/or work directly with scientists to find solutions to environmental problems today. Panel leader Susan Snodgrass, Chicago-based art critic and editor, will be joined by Sara Black and Frances Whitehead.
**Presentations**

**Donna Neuwirth** is Executive Director of Wormfarm Institute, an evolving laboratory of the arts and ecology in Reedsburg, Wisconsin which she co-founded with her husband, Jay Salinas. Wormfarm Institute explores the links between urban and rural communities within and beyond the food chain, creating opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration.

**Candace Hunter** (artist, writer and water rights activist) will discuss her visual response to the global water crisis, *Dust in Their Veins*, an installation of mixed media art works intended to encourage conversation and action about the plight of women and children who are adversely affected by the lack of rights to clean water.

**Exhibitions**  
*Midwest Women Making Art Because the World Matters* (Heuser Gallery)  
*Change Agents: Midwest Women Eco Artists* (Hartmann Gallery)

**Organizers and Funding**

The Symposium is organized by the Department of Art and Design and Illinois Women Artists Project, with support from the Women’s and Gender Studies Department.

*The Symposium is generously funded by Illinois Humanities. Illinois Humanities is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Illinois General Assembly [through the Illinois Arts Council Agency], as well as by contributions from individuals, foundations, and corporations.*

*Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed by speakers, program participants, or audiences do not necessarily reflect those of the NEH, Illinois Humanities, our partnering organizations, or our funders.*

*Additional funding includes a grant from the university’s Intellectual and Cultural Activities Committee. This program has been made possible by a grant from the Fritz and Doris S. Reuling Charitable Fund, Taylor & Corinne French Fund, Alvin and Donna Haerr Family Performing Arts Fund, and the Swager Public Art Fund at the Community Foundation of Central Illinois.*

**Accommodations**

A block of rooms is being held at Mark Twain Hotel in downtown Peoria for MWAS attendees UNTIL OCTOBER 7. **Request GROUP ARTS19 for a rate of $99+ tax.**