



Newsletter – February, 2010

Tooting Our Horn

Since MA-NMWA's first organizational meeting on May 14, 2005, many great things have happened with the help of many wonderful people. We wanted to highlight some of our accomplishments and extend our appreciation to the talented and energetic people who have brought us so far.

MA-NMWA was incorporated on June 6, 2006, and subsequently received its IRS 501(c) 3 status in November of 2007...neither of which would have been possible without the tremendous efforts of our pro bono law firm, Wilmer Hale. We also received support from National Advisory Board members Cathy Bert and Noreen Andreoli, both of Rhode Island.

We have hosted 30 events attended by some 1,082 people since our first major event at Pine Manor College on October 11, 2006, featuring NMWA founder Wilhelmina Cole Holladay. Of those 30 events, 20 were held at different art museums where we viewed exhibitions or collections by women. None of the events could have happened without the motivated and hard working volunteers on our Events Committee, co-chaired by Louise Borke and Kristin Stashenko and committee members Merry Glosband, Josie Foote, Julie Enders, Sonja Hansard-Weiner and RSVP Queen Mary Ned Fotis.

Of NMWA's 19 state and international committees, Massachusetts boasts the largest State Committee paid membership at 107, thanks to the efforts and detailed record-keeping of Sue O'Brien and our dearly-departed Linda K. Ryan.

We have participated in two Women to Watch exhibitions sponsored by NMWA, which has allowed Massachusetts to sponsor two up-and-coming or under-represented women artists.....Lissa Rivera, photographer, and Hannah Barrett, figurative painter. We have exhibited at three Mass Conferences for Women at the Boston Convention Center exposing NMWA to literally thousands of women who had no idea there was a museum in Washington, DC, dedicated to art by women. We have a beautiful new website, established Constant Contact as our vehicle for communicating with membership, established our PayPal account and were accepted to the official non-profit world via GuideStar, the premier authority on all philanthropy. All of these accomplishments were a result of the hard work by our Community Outreach and Communications Committee, co-chaired by Carol Daynard and Jasia Tisdale and committee members Anne Tisdale-Ashford, Urszula Wojciechowska, Heidi Solomon and Bonnie Margulies.

MA-NMWA's fiscal responsibilities filings and reports have been adeptly handled by our volunteer Treasurer, Cathy Brown, CPA. We

have sincerely appreciated the donations of our members and non-members which have allowed us to put forth our best efforts at communicating the worthwhile mission of NMWA in Massachusetts.

It has been a true pleasure establishing this organization, and we look forward to our solid platform being creatively developed and expanded by President-Elect Sue O'Brien and our Board of Directors in the coming years. Many of our Board members have continuing terms, but we wanted to take this special opportunity to thank out-going Board members Micki Hirsch, Susan Cohen, Julie Enders and Heidi Solomon for their time and talents in giving MA-NMWA such a successful beginning. We also want to warmly welcome our newest Board members, Faith Perkins, Sarah Biller and Pam Resor.

It has been an honor to develop the connections and friendships we've made over the last five years. Thank you for your support and for all the fun!

Sincerely,

June Hutchinson & Jann Sheehy

Founding Co-Presidents



A Woman with Distinctive Taste

On Sunday, October 18th, 2009, just a day after the public opening, approximately 35 MA-NMWA members and their guests joined Paula Richter, Peabody Essex Museum's Curator for Exhibitions and Research and coordinating curator for the exhibition *Rare Bird of Fashion: The Irreverent Iris Apfel* for a private tour of the exhibition. In Paula's role as coordinating curator, she had spent a considerable amount of time with Iris Apfel and her husband Carl, as they prepared for this extraordinary exhibition. As a result, she was able to share with us many stories, including some not known to the general public.

The tour was followed by a lovely brunch, catered by the Hawthorne Hotel, where we had additional time to visit with Paula and each other. Last, but certainly not least, we headed to the museum shop, to see how inspired we really were by the style and passion of the "irreverent" Iris Apfel, as many of us purchased wardrobe additions that will keep us warm with memories of this enchanting outing at least until spring.

The World of Eleanor Norcross, Founder of FAM

The MA-NMWA luncheon and tour visit to the Fitchburg Art Museum on November 3rd was a wonderful success. Approximately 12 members attended and were delighted with the "back door tour" of the museum guided by Jane Keough and Janice Goodrow. Albeit a small museum in comparison to the MFA, attendees found it to be a "gem" secluded about an hour from the outskirts of Boston.

The Fitchburg Art Museum was founded by Eleanor Norcross in 1925 and the story about her life in Fitchburg, Washington DC, and Paris was fascinating. She painted with the Impressionists and she was the First American Woman to have her works shown in The Louvre.

After a very interesting tour of her Museum, we enjoyed a lovely luncheon in the Decorative Arts Gallery of the Museum. Members of the museum's Norcross Society along with Director, Peter Timms joined us at lunch, so much information about the museum and the MA-NMWA was exchanged and enjoyed.



International Conference at the National Museum

NMWA State Committee representatives traveled from fourteen states and seven countries, including France, Italy, Greece and Spain among others, to Washington, DC in November to attend the museum's National and International Committee Conference. MA-NMWA sent the largest group, and all in

attendance were rewarded by two days of stimulating speakers who updated attendees on efforts to grow the Museum's endowment, to use social media tools to expand membership and cultivate relationships with elected officials.

Mrs. Wilhelmina Cole Holladay, the founder of NMWA welcomed and thanked the committees for their invaluable work expanding the reach of the Museum. They will be crucial in the effort to increase the endowment to \$50 million from \$30 million for our 25th anniversary in 2012.

The Museum is undertaking a number of novel steps to expand the visibility of women artists. Susan Fisher Sterling, Museum Director, reported that contemporary women sculptors' large scale works will soon be installed along one of Washington's major boulevards in an outdoor gallery.

The museum launched its first blog, Broad Strokes, and is delighted by the enthusiastic response. It offers readers original content with behind-the-scenes looks at upcoming exhibitions, inside information on art in the collection, unique photos, and staff insights into working at the only museum in the world dedicated solely to women artists. The blog supplements the Museum's use of Facebook and Twitter. A full ten percent of Museum net revenue comes from membership dues, so ensuring connectivity is essential.

The highlight for MA-NMWA came the final day of the conference. Massachusetts was delighted to learn that Hannah Barrett had been chosen as one of the Women to Watch honorees. This success portends an exciting year ahead for the Massachusetts State Committee.

MA-NMWA Attends the Mass Conference for Women, December 10, 2009

Our stunning corner booth at the Mass Conference for Women was a hit with many of the thousands of women attendees. Our eye-catching floral arrangement and a pastel landscape in creation on-site, made us a noticed and popular site. Our member volunteers distributed almost 600 NMWA magazines and educated countless women about the existence and importance of the Museum in Washington, D.C.

We also used this opportunity to invite attendees to join our efforts in Massachusetts and to participate in our very active events schedule for 2010. Interest in MA-NMWA was enthusiastic and widespread. We look forward to welcoming our new acquaintances at upcoming events!

Women Artists of Cape Ann

On a crisp day in January, forty-seven members and guests went to Gloucester for a guided tour of an exhibit of over two hundred years of painting and sculpture by local women artists, including a portrait by Cecelia Beaux, from the permanent collection of the Cape Ann Historical Society's Art Museum.

The early painters were self-taught since no schools were willing to train women. Instead, the women formed supportive guilds encouraging diverse styles of work.

Although family responsibilities kept most from traveling, their art revealed attention to all subjects: landscapes, still life, genre, and finally abstract painting. In an adjoining room Leslie Hughes, an abstract painter of impressions of nature, talked about the work in her one-man show, *Grace on Water*.

After seeing the exhibit, we were treated to an inspection of the books of block prints by the women in the printers' guild The Folly Cove Designers in the Museum's library. The craftsmanship of fine line detail was astonishing, and the creativity with which the artists presented subject matter of daily life was equally impressive. These too are from the permanent collection.

Some of the attendees had arrived early to enjoy a good lunch in town and some stayed after for tea and a bite before heading for home. We always have fun on MA-NMWA events and urge you to join us.



