



prairie arts

The Newsletter of the Prairie Arts Council

PAC Show Makes Memories

Leslee Nelson uses perhaps the most intimate art medium of all: Cloth. Quilts that hug us. Napkins that dab our lips. Handkerchiefs that collect our tears. Textiles with memories serve as the canvas for Madison artist Nelson, who is displaying 30 years' worth of work during her solo show "Making Memory Cloths" running from March 4-27 at the Prairie Arts Center Gallery in Princeton. On March 5 from 1-3 p.m., Nelson also will sit down at our gallery table and invite anyone to make a "memory cloth" — a piece of handiwork that, through the meditative process of embroidery, helps stitch together the past. "Whenever I have an exhibit and I'm there, people start telling me their stories and saying, 'I wish I could do that.' And I say, 'Well, of course you can. Go ahead,'" Nelson said of her memory cloths.

Nelson's retrospective at the Prairie Arts Gallery will include a broad range of work, from pieces incorporating hand-me-down quilt squares to multi-layered charm dolls and large, complex hangings made from Japanese Gampi paper. But the conversation pieces, literally, are



her memory cloths, sparked by an exhibit she saw in 2005 titled "The Art of War." Featured were memory cloths from South Africa: brightly colored fabrics embroidered with images from the maker's memory. Next to them hung the text of the stories behind the memories — experiences left out of the official record of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. "They talked about how part of (the process of memory cloths) was the making of it, and part of it was putting it on the wall until it no longer triggered a response," she said.

"They were so delighted that I had fallen in love with their process and was doing it here, too."

There will be a reception for Ms. Nelson on Friday, March 4 from 6-8 pm at the Prairie Arts Center Gallery. Also during her retrospective at the Prairie Arts Center Gallery, Nelson invites anyone to stop by between 1-3 p.m. on Saturday, March 5 to make their own memory cloth. She will have supplies available, but participants can choose to bring their own memory-imbued cloth, such as a table napkin or handkerchief.

In our gallery....

“Imagine That”, The Art of Jeanne O’Melia: April 1-May 1

Jeanne O’Melia has studied art at Iowa State University and Augustana College as well as at The Clearing in Door County, Wisconsin. Traveling extensively throughout the world, she makes line drawings in ink or paints in watercolor on location. Her drawings from travels and at home are the inspiration for cyanotype prints, acrylic paintings and found-object sculptures “I employ a variety of media to express my feelings and reactions to the world we live in,” said O’Melia.

“I have been drawn to depicting the human figure since I first learned to draw. People come in all shapes and sizes and are fascinating to watch. Watercolor was the first medium I used. I still take my watercolors, paper and a sketch book with me on trips, even biking or kayaking,” O’Melia said.

About 20 years ago O’Melia began making sculptural figures from found objects, brazing metals together. Growing up on a farm near Princeton, she knew about welding. Most metal scraps were found during bicycle tours. “I’ve added dumpster diving to gather a wider range of found objects. Gradually I have used other materials--plastic, paper, and even cigarette butts. A variety of adhesives are used to hold the pieces together including JB Weld and Gel Medium,” she added.

“I have been creating large papier-mâché heads for years. They get burned with their clothed, firecracker filled bodies each New Year’s Eve at midnight. It makes a great celebration. Many ethnic groups have used papier mâché in art and for festivals, and I’ve always been



fascinated by them,” O’Melia said.

O’Melia has taught art as part of the Illinois Arts in Education Artist Roster program. In Puerto Viejo, Costa Rica and San Cristobal de las Casas, Mexico, she volunteered to work with children creating art from found objects. “Being up to my elbows in papier mâché paste with a group of first graders is really fun for me,” she added.

Her work has been exhibited in the Quad Cities and other venues throughout Illinois and in Cook, Minnesota. She also exhibited in Montreal and Atikokan, Quebec and won first place in Friends of Quetico Provincial Park art show. She was a delegate on a “Friendship through the Arts” Tour in China. “Art for me is an avenue through which I can bloom. Growing up on a farm, I have always loved nature and her bloomings. Experiencing nature, being a part of it, caring for it anchors me in the stream of life. For me, art is like breath itself.

This exhibit contains my latest watercolors and acrylic paintings and collages. There are also sculptures created within the in the last five years. I really like trying new art forms. I have been doing a few abstract works inspired by music. There are always several art works going in my studio at one time. I am never bored. I enjoy creating for special exhibits with a theme. There is always some new challenge ready for me to tackle. It makes my world go round,” she said. There will be a reception at the Prairie Art Center Gallery on Friday, April 1 from 6-8 pm. Jeanne will also offer a “Trash For Treasures” Collage Class for Children on Saturday, April 9 from 10 a.m.- 12 p.m.; and for adults, age 17 and above also on Saturday, April 9 from 1-3 p.m.. Both classes will be offered at a \$5 fee, including materials, but you must pre-register by Thursday, April 7. Please call 815-875-2787.

In our theater....

“Love Letters” to be performed this spring

From their first scrawled valentines of childhood to the last guilty goodbyes, Melissa Gardner and Andrew Ladd’s letters reveal youthful innocence, fears and fancies, goals, and dreams. Their love affair takes them from grade school through middle age. They ponder opportunities lost and love squandered. Letters often reveal more than face to face conversation allows.

Please join us for this unique theatre experience as we peek inside the envelopes and into the hearts for two longtime friends.

Princeton’s Jill Marti and Kevin Glover are tentatively set to perform in the show.

Date and time to be announced

In our gallery....

2nd annual Springtime Brunch & Trivia

The Prairie Arts Council second annual Springtime Brunch and Trivia will be held on Saturday, April 30 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

As Downtown Abbey will finish its last season this spring, the Prairie Arts Council has decided to celebrate the popular PBS series with this event. The 20th century English themed brunch will feature games of Downtown Abbey trivia. Participants will see satin ballgowns, feather headpieces and gorgeous kid gloves along with starched white aprons and black dresses for the serving class. The male serving staff will be presented in starched white shirts and waist coats with tails.

The menu will be quite elegant with an English theme and beautiful formal table settings and white linen clad tables.

Attendees are invited to dress in period attire complete with hats and



The popular television series “Downton Abbey” will be signing off the air this spring after six seasons. The PAC will host the second annual Downton Abbey Brunch and Trivia in honor of this series.

gloves or your loveliest formal spring frock to add to the festive atmosphere. The Springtime Brunch and Trivia event will be held at the Prairie Arts Center gallery, 25 Park Avenue East in Princeton.

Tickets will be on sale starting March 15th for \$25 per person. Call Mary Sue Goldsmith at 306-264-7468 to reserve your place at the table.

In our gallery....

Upcoming events at the PAC

“The Wonderful World of Flowers”: May 6 – 29

Opening Reception Friday, May 6, 6:00-8:00p.m.

This exhibit will be open to anyone who wishes to exhibit their floral artwork. The artwork must be of a floral theme and can be photography, any paint medium (if wallart, must be ready to hang), or 3-dimensional. You can submit up to five works of art and the work can be for sale or NFS (not for sale). Artwork will be accepted on Tuesday or Wednesday, May 3 or May 4 from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. or 4– 6 p.m., and picked up Tuesday or Wednesday, May 31 or June 1 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. or 4– 6 p.m. If you have any questions, please call Melody Best at 203-522-6805.

Floral Watercolor Party, Friday evening, May 20, 6:00 – 8:30pm

Gather your friends and family for a fun and creative evening learning to paint beautiful flowers while sipping a glass of wine and completing a ready-to-frame painting. All materials will be provided and individual instruction. Yes, you can do this with no art experience.

Friday, May 20 6– 8:30 p.m. \$35 includes all materials and wine

You must pre-register by Wednesday, May 18. Please call 203–522-6805.

PAC to host garage and bake sale May 14

The Prairie Arts Council will hold a garage and bake sale on Saturday May 14 at the center. The sale will be held from 8 a.m.- 2 p.m. All proceeds will benefit the Prairie Arts Council Scholarship Fund. Donations of baked goods and items for the sale will be greatly appreciated. Step into spring and clean out anything you are not using or want and bring it to the center. You may drop off items for the sale on Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m. after May 1. Baked items may be dropped off the day of the sale. Come out and support this great cause.

Thank you to our supporters

Annual holiday ornament sells out

The Prairie Arts Council would like to thank John Damon for his work on the wonderful hand-made 2015 Christmas ornament of the Railroad Station. The Station is the fourth ornament in a PAC series that began three years ago and has grown in popularity to the point of selling out in less than three weeks this past year. All sales proceeds are contributed to the Prairie Arts Council general fund.

Thank you for supporting the PAC with your membership!

Your financial and volunteer support is vital to our arts programming.

Please return this form and remittance to:

Deb Young, Membership Chairman

24 Park Avenue East, Princeton, IL 61365

Make checks payable to Prairie Arts Council

Name _____

Business Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

*E-Mail _____

*In an effort to “Go Green”, the PAC would like to notify members of events using e-mail. If you would like to receive our newsletter and other event notifications through your e-mail, please fill out, or simply leave it blank.

____ I still prefer to receive my newsletter by US postal service.

Categories of Membership

____ Student..... \$10	____ Monetary Donation _____
____ Single..... \$15	____ Memorial Gift _____
____ Family..... \$25	in Memory of _____
____ Sponsor..... \$50	
____ Patron..... \$150	
____ Corporate \$300	

I am willing to volunteer my time and talents. Please check all that apply:

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| ____ Appetizers | ____ Mailing | ____ Maintenance | ____ Membership | ____ Newsletter | ____ Publicity |
| ____ Baking | ____ Programming | ____ Photography | ____ Painting | ____ Sewing | ____ Ticket Sales |
| ____ Carpentry | ____ Typing | ____ Usher | ____ Cleaning | ____ Host | ____ Graphic Arts |
| ____ Gardening | ____ Fund-raising | ____ Web design/upkeep | ____ Rummage Sale | ____ Theater | |

____ Artist/Fine Art Exhibitor. Please specify: _____

____ Performing Artist/Musician. Please specify: _____

____ Teaching. Please specify: _____



24 Park Avenue East
Princeton, IL 61356
815-875-2787

theprairieartscouncil.org



Programming partially funded by
the Illinois Arts Council,
Illinois Valley Fine Arts Trust,
and the Sun Foundation.

Calendar

March 4, 6-8 p.m. “Making Memory Cloths” reception

March 4-27 - “Making Memory Cloths” gallery show

April 1, 6-8 p.m. “Imagine That” reception

April 1-May 1 - “Imagine That” gallery show

April 9, 10 a.m.-noon - “Trash For Treasures” Collage Class for Children

April 9, 1-3 p.m. - “Trash For Treasures” Collage Class for Adults

April 30, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. - “Downton Abbey Brunch & Trivia”

May 6, 6-8 p.m. - “The Wonderful World of Flowers” reception

May 6-29 - “The Wonderful World of Flowers” gallery

May 14, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. - PAC Garage & Bake Sale

May 20, 6-8:3 p.m. - “Floral Watercolor Party” for Adults

Our support system...

Thank-You Members!

Student

Maye Martin

Single

Delores Angel
Susan Barlow
Rebecca Best
Carol Bird
Leigh Ann Bulthuis
Lorrayne Cabral
Harry Clucas
N. Dana Collins
David Cudlip
Marie Etter
Linda Fine
Janet Grossman
June Harmon
Jan Heaton
Marty Hines
Susan Jacobsen
Marjorie Johnson
Lucille Kann
Pam Lange
Fran Lewis
Dr. Jon McCutchan
Mary Michael
Kathy Missel
Audrey Monier
Paula Morrow
Judy O'Brien
Donna Pfeiffer
Patricia Polson
Peggy Robinson
Joy E. Schertz
Ethel Scruggs
Jack Schmitz/
Sundance Gallery
O.V. Shaffer
Roger Swanson
Esther Tracy
Diane Van Drew
Letizia Vangelisti
Jeanette Wedding
Ramona Wedding

Family

Daniel and Gina
Acker
Fred and Melody Best
Paul and Lou Brown
Tania and Aric Bowen
Belinda Brown
Keith and Julia Cain
Jim and Nancy
Carlson
Sandy and Joe
Carpenter
Sarah Cooper and
Steve Gunning
John and Theresa
Cotter
Bill and Sue Cox
Dennis and Donna
Dickison
Gordon and Carol
Dremann
Dr. Gary and Marilyn
Eckberg
Sara Edlefson
Dennis and Cathy
Elliott
Mike and Jan English
Steve and Jan Esme
Charles and Linda
Gebhardt
Vicki Giehl
John and Jeany
Gewin
Roger and Linda
Gustafson
Rick and Jane
Holmbeck
Sue and Jim Howard
Harold and Jeanee
Hutchinson
Phil and Pam
Kaufmann
Tim and Cheryl
Kunkel

Paul and Jan Lohaus
Guy and Joan
Marella
Roger and Linda
McCabe
Mert McIntosh
Jill and Andrew
Marti
Patti Ann Moynihan
Terry and Sally
Munson
Phillip and Elizabeth
Naffziger
Todd and Marcia
Obenhaus
Anita and Bruce
Obenhaus
Bill and Barb Ollila
Dr. Ketan and
Aparna Patel
Robert and Deb
Russell
Sam and Vikki
Schiera
Don and Barb Schiff
Jay and Lara
Schneider
John and Lynda
Smith
Larry and Christine
Smith
Tony and Donna
Sorcic
Roger and Joanne
Swan
Ray and Cheri
Swanson/Ray
Swanson
Construction
Dave and Sharry
Taylor
Marcel and Diane
VanDenBorre
Gene and Lisa

Vincent
Alan and Lynne
Weber
Bill and Deb
Young
Associate
Bill and Sallee
Beneke
Dr. Robert and
Colleen Bockel
Dave and Jone
Booth
Linda Bortak
Joan Chinal
Ed Council and
Bridget McMcaus
Bea and Gary
Coates
John and Sue
Garvin
Gayle Grace
Paul and Nancy
Kautz
Barbara LaVelle
Anna M.
Roadhouse
Patricia Rudzinski
Conrad Swenson
Bob and Kay
Telfer
Sponsor
Marjorie Albrecht
Kathy Ballard
Steve and Laurie
Bonucci
Dr. Paul and
Bridgette Castelein
John and Mary
Damon
Liz Draper and
Tom Pranka
Don and Gloria

Eklund
Bill and Peggy
Harrison
Dan and Margaret
Martinkus
BJM Fine Art
Carol McGee
Pete and Karen
May
Tony and
Stephanie Morrow
Gail and Betty
Peterson
Dr. Timothy Puhr
DDS
Pat Rudzinski
Don and Nedda
Simon
Carolyn Workman
Terry Zearing/
Flour House Inc.
Patron
Gale Bonucci
Dr. Rex and Ami
Chamberlain
Charles Gebeck
William and Betty
Ann Losey
Julia McCutchan
Jeanne Coulter
O'Melia
Edward Burke and
Fredericka Veikley
True Wahlgren
Ambassador
Greg and Marilyn
Anthony
Chuck and Pam
Hanson

Happy Birthday to the PAC!



Founding board members in attendance at the Gala included (from left) Ron McCutchan, Deb Puetz-Young, John Henning and Robert Russell. (All Gala photos by Dan Ackers)

The year 2015 marked the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Prairie Arts Council. The annual gala fundraiser held in October was a celebration of that event. Honored that evening were founders Deb Young, John Henning, Ron McCutchan and the late Mary Win Walter-Norris. Also honored for his contribution in setting up the not for profit corporation was Attorney Robert Russell. Each were asked to recall events leading up to the forming of the organization. Young stated that in the spring of 1995 she contacted McCutchan, Henning and Norris to ask if they would be interested in helping her start an Arts Council in Princeton. She remembers that each one, without hesitation, agreed to help in any way they could. Bob Russell was contacted by John Henning to

inquire about his willingness to help with all of the legalities of setting up a not for profit corporation status. Russell agreed and the organization was on its way to becoming an entity which could help promote the arts in our community and the surrounding area. The group met monthly (and sometimes weekly) in various locations around Princeton as planning became a priority in what the expectations would be of an Arts Council. Shortly after, Denise Gordon volunteered to fill the position of Secretary and Henning approached Chuck Gebhardt who later consented to fill the position of Treasurer. After the first newspaper article was published regarding the formation of the Prairie Arts Council, Nedda Simon was the first person to call

Deb Young and express a desire to fill a position on the newly formed Board of Directors of the Prairie Arts Council. Months later it became clear that in order to become a viable source in the eyes of the community and to make all of the ideas and dreams come true, the organization needed a physical location to become visible and help the community realize that this is a serious group of people who intended to present many arts opportunities. One year later, the Prairie Arts Council purchased the former Christian Science Church on the Court House Square as their physical location. The Prairie Arts Center is now home for the Prairie Arts Council and its many activities offered throughout the year.

A note from our president...

Improvements at the PAC in 2015

Dear Members,

Many improvements were made to the physical building in 2015 thanks to grants and the support of our members and patrons. Are some of the highlights...

- 1) New windows were installed in the "Fireplace Room" and the Gallery.*
- 2) All large windows in the theater were reglazed and painted.*
- 3) The kitchen now has additional storage cabinets.*
- 4) All gutters and downspouts were upgraded and repaired.*

We thank you all for your financial aid in these endeavors. We are so fortunate to have this wonderful building to promote the Arts in our community and realize we must be diligent in putting our best face forward.

Steve Esme