



# Visions

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF ART AT SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE

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## A Letter from the President of the Friends of Art

Welcome to the first e-Visions, a special edition of The Briar Wire devoted exclusively to the arts at Sweet Briar College and published by the Friends of Art.

Founded in 1937, [FOA](#) is a group of alumnae and College supporters who simply love visual art. We recognize that the study of the fine arts develops a better understanding of both the present and the historical world, fosters critical and creative thinking, and simply enhances one's overall life. The FOA actively supports academic enrichment through the acquisition and presentation of visual arts for the college.

Currently the College's art collection has more than 4,000 objects, ranging from ancient Roman coins and a Rembrandt etching to a wide variety of contemporary artists. Our most recent focus has been to grow one of the finest teaching collections of women artists in the United States. As stewards of the collection, one of our goals is to make the collection more available to the College, other educational institutions and the local community to view, study and research. Karol Lawson, the director of the College's art collection and galleries, serves as our staff liaison. She is working to develop an online database of the collection. Additionally, throughout the year Karol curates exhibitions, oversees the care of the whole art collection as well as the Sweet Briar Museum, teaches in the arts management program, and collaborates with other departments to bring exciting events to campus.

We are especially thankful for the leadership of FOA's past President Molly *Sutherland Gwinn '65*, who served us well for an extended term through calendar year 2015. Our appreciation extends also to alumnae at Sotheby's and The Potomack Company who advised us on the collection during 2015's upheaval.

The Friends of Art are excited about Sweet Briar's bright new future and, like you, we are extremely grateful to President Phil Stone and the remarkable staff who have worked so hard to keep our wonderful school alive and well.

We would welcome your membership in the Friends of Art. See the end of this newsletter or [click here](#) to help us continue our mission!

*Nan Dabbs Loftin*

**Nan Dabbs Loftin '81, President  
Friends of Art**

## FOA Makes Two Additions to SBC Art Collection

The Friends of Art, a small board of alumnae volunteers, is pleased to introduce you to **Toyin Ojih Odutola** and **Cynthia Henebry**, the newest contemporary women artists to join Sweet Briar's collection.

In the fall of 2014, the board traveled to New York City for a meeting at Sothebys, a visit to Storm King and to select a new addition to our emerging women artists collection.

"*You are enough - as is*" by Toyin Ojih Odutola fit our profile of emerging women artists perfectly," says Molly *Sutherland Gwinn '65*, immediate past president of the FOA. "We were searching for works by artists of diverse ethnicities and backgrounds and were thrilled to acquire her drawing shortly after her debut year of 2013. Odutola's drawing is a study of the



male nude (one of her brothers) that reflects the classical tradition, but what makes it so interesting is that it is executed in startlingly mundane materials—ballpoint pens and markers. With the addition of her work we were able to add three nice themes: emerging artist, cosmopolitan background, and innovative and approachable technique (always relevant for a studio art student).”



Toyin Ojih Odutola, *You are enough – as is*, 2013, gel marker on paperboard, 44 x 28 inches. Purchase made possible by the Friends of Art, 2014. Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery.

*Mavis and Marshall*, a photograph by Richmond’s Cynthia Henebry, joined the collection this past fall. She is an artist, educator, and activist who teaches at Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts and is represented by Page Bond Gallery, Richmond, VA.

A 1995 graduate of Bates College, she received her MFA from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2014. Her 2014 MFA thesis addressed the topic *Child as Other: The Crisis of Representing Childhood*. Recent and upcoming exhibitions include: The National Portrait Gallery; The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; Houston Center for Photography; Camera Club of New York; Philadelphia Photo Arts Center; Texas Women’s University; Candela Gallery; and Page Bond Gallery, Richmond. Her work is included in corporate, private, and public collections such as The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and Capitol One and has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Real Simple*, *PDN*, *The Sunday Telegraph*, *NEXT*, *Nido*, NPR’s *The Picture Show*, and most recently on the cover of *The Georgia Review*. In 2016, Henebry was named the runner-up for the National Portrait Gallery’s triennial Outwin Bochever Portrait Prize. The artist serves as member of the board of the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts.

Of her recent studies Henebry writes:

*“Since 2011, I have been engaged in a photographic investigation of the relationship between the chaos and conflict that can exist in the adult world and the internal life of the child. My own autobiography guides this process, and informs the choices I make about the people I work with as well as decisions about how to depict them, and how to let them depict themselves.*

*“I think a lot about growing up: how to do it well, and what happens when the parts of us that are meant to grow up don’t. How the eternal children that live within us pass things onto the children we are in charge of helping to grow up now: grief, joy, fear, isolation, anger, abandonment, pride. How we are all walking around with seven-year old parts of ourselves manifesting as we trying to parent actual seven year olds, or run corporations, or uphold the law, or deliver the mail. I marvel at this every single day.” ●*

Born in Nigeria and raised in Alabama, Odutola studied at the California College of the Arts in San Francisco and she currently resides in New York. She made her debut at a major commercial gallery in New York in 2013 and later the same year was featured in a solo exhibit at the Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art. This drawing dates from the year she came to national attention and is related to a series of drawings from that year called *Of Another Kind*. In a 2013 conversation with *Interview Magazine* she noted that *Of Another Kind* began when her interest was piqued by a sculpture:

*“It came from a postcard that I bought at some museum store. It was a sculpture of a young boy in gilded bronze. His skin was black, and his hair was this shocking blond.... I loved the black-and-gold combination repeated throughout. So I started researching references. The more examples I would find, the more I had to type in ‘Moorish sculpture’ or ‘Moorish portraiture,’ the mode for portraying ‘Moors’—basically, blacks—in Medieval and Renaissance Europe.”*



Cynthia Henebry, *Mavis and Marshall*, 2014, archival ink jet print, 32 x 40 inches. Purchase made possible by the Friends of Art, 2016. Courtesy of the artist and Page Bond Gallery.

# Welcome, new FOA Board members!

## Allison Roberts Greene '81

B.A., Sweet Briar College in Art History, Special Study European Civilization; Certificate from Sotheby's Works of Art Course, London (1982); Certificate from Gemological Institute of America, New York, Colored Stones and Diamond Identification, (1983)

*"I look forward to serving with great pleasure on Sweet Briar's Friends of Art board. I hope my enduring passion and support for the arts over the years will provide a benefit to the board. My volunteer activities include being a founding member and an advisory board member for Walk On Equine Assisted Activities. Also, I am a supporter and social member of various charities and organizations."*

## Tresy Robinson Hillyer '83

B.A., Sweet Briar College, English and Studio Art; Masters in Liberal Arts, Spring Hill College (2000); currently serving as Treasurer, Overseas Hardwoods Company, Mobile, AL

*"Though I am not employed in the arts, I have maintained an active interest and look back on my days of immersion in the arts at Sweet Briar with great fondness (and longing!). I am honored to have been invited to participate again with the Sweet Briar Friends of Art and look forward to exciting days to come." ●*

## Campus Updates

- Barton-Laing Professor of Art History **Christopher Witcombe** has had a busy summer researching Egyptian art at the Louvre.
- **Kimberly Morse-Jones** has been promoted to Associate Professor. She was one of several professors who experimented with tech-assisted distance learning in spring semester 2016. This summer she is mentoring an honors research student interested in the role of women in general and women of color in particular in the history and art of cartooning.
- Professor of Art **Laura Pharis** and Visiting Assistant Professor **John Morgan** anticipate three majors in the Class of 2017. In 2015-2016 they established a Sweet Briar community critique group for faculty, staff, student, and alumnae artists, resulting in *Perpetuity*, a Babcock Gallery exhibition. [Click here](#) to read an article for more information.
- **Karol Lawson** is serving as Acting Director of the Arts Management Program. In the fall of 2016 she will be joined by **Natalie Szabo**, who recently earned a doctorate of music in clarinet performance with an emphasis in arts administration from Florida State University.
- Nationally renowned photographer **Medford Taylor** will join Sweet Briar's art department in the fall. He commented: "I watched the video of Mayor Teresa Tomlinson's commencement address at Sweet Briar and I was hooked. I truly believe that Sweet Briar is destined to be stronger and even more relevant than at any time in its one-hundred-and-ten-year history." For information on Taylor see [www.medfordtaylor.com](http://www.medfordtaylor.com). [Click here](#) to read an article for more information. ●



*Natalie Szabo, who is joining the faculty in the Arts Management Program.*

## Announcing the 2015-16 Student Prize Winners

In 2016, the FOA awarded two \$2,500 student internship awards. These competitive prizes are career stepping stones and the money is used to offset any costs the student will have while working on an academic-credit internship at a museum or studio. These annual awards are given to enrolled Sweet Briar undergraduates for creative work related to the College art collection and must be used for career enhancement opportunities. Judges are selected FOA board members, faculty representatives, and art gallery staff. We are pleased to announce the following winners:

The Friends of Art Museum Internship Prize for an off-campus, academic-credit summer internship in an art museum went to **Grace Culley '17**. An art history major from Louisa County, VA, Culley was successfully placed in the educational programs department of the Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Richmond.

**Mary McDevitt '17** was selected for the Friends of Art Creative Visual Arts Internship Prize for an off-campus, academic credit apprenticeship/internship in the gaming and animation field during the summer. "This is [just] the beginning of my journey," said studio art major and chemistry minor McDevitt, from Yulee, FL. "I hope this internship will help get me into graduate school to study video game design."



*Grace Culley '17, recipient of the FOA Art Museum Internship Prize and her dachshund, Phoenix.*

## Other FOA Creative Awards

The Friends of Art of Sweet Briar College is also proud to announce the recipients of this year's student awards in the categories of writing, studio art and internships. The awards are intended to recognize undergraduate excellence while encouraging student interest in, and use of, the College's art collection. "Friends of Art realizes the importance of acknowledging the hard work of Sweet Briar students," said Nan Loftin, president. Eligible creative work must be original and recently created. Applicants and submissions may come from any academic discipline.

The Friends of Art Writing Prize went to art history major **Scotia Marshall '17** of Hillsville, VA, for her poem "Silence in the Outfield," which was inspired by Paul Cadmus's painting "Two Heads." Marshall, who minors in Medieval and Renaissance Studies and is pursuing an Arts Management Certificate, says the artist's personal life played a big part in her inspiration. "Artists cannot create without making a portrait of themselves in some way, and I found Cadmus' homosexual repression in the boy he depicted," she said. "From there, I imagined what emotions the boy could be experiencing and what may have occurred to create the odd atmosphere in the piece."

Sophomores **Velocity Haigh** and **Kollin Kirven** both earned honorable mentions: Haigh for "Amelia," a music composition for oboe inspired by Joan Snyder's multimedia print "...and acquainted with grief;" Kirven for her poem "Soviet Birds," which was inspired by the spring 2016 Soviet propaganda poster exhibition in Pannell Gallery.

The Friends of Art Studio Art Prize was awarded to music major and Virginia Beach native **Corin Diaz '19** for an acrylic painting that references Christ walking on water. A Soviet poster titled "Enough!" served as her inspiration. ●



Scotia Marshall '17 recipient of the FOA Writing Prize for her poem "Silence in the Outfield," which was inspired by Paul Cadmus's painting *Two Heads*.

## Alumnae Spotlight: Art Therapist Ann Roach '13

by Margaret Brunstad '72

Thanks to a recommendation from her college counselor, Ann Roach added Sweet Briar to her college search. As she recalls, "I drove up the long driveway, the trees parted, and I fell in love. I had a feeling I had not felt at any other school, and just knew this would be the place for me. Sweet Briar felt like home!"

Since graduating in 2013, Ann wasted no time maximizing her Sweet Briar experience. She graduated with a BA in art history, a minor in studio art and a certificate in arts management. After graduation, she began preparing for a career in art therapy, a relatively new field that uses creative expression as a therapeutic technique. Ann graduated from George Washington University in 2016 with a Master's degree in art therapy. While there, she participated in two separate international opportunities focusing on the application of art therapy practices.

First, Ann traveled to India, where she explored the practice of art therapy for mentally ill homeless women. Next, she and 12 other students traveled to a small village north of Cape Town, South Africa, where they worked with the local community advocating for art therapy programs in the area. Ann describes these experiences as "humbling but powerful," and adds that each demonstrated the universality of art, and the power of art in making connections and navigating cultural differences.

As with most fields, meaningful practical experience is a must. Ann has therefore spent the past two years completing two different full-time internships. One was with a continuing care retirement facility, where she helped an elderly but independent resident use art as a way to reflect upon and draw meaning from her life's journey. She also used art to provide outlets for helping treat dementia patients. Ann is now wrapping up her second internship working with children and adolescent patients at a military hospital. With the guidance of a licensed art therapist, she is learning to apply clinical and behavioral practices to achieving group therapy goals.

As Ann explains, "Art therapy is a new and developing professional field, and the reality of finding employment is complicated. To begin with, an art therapy counselor's license is required, a process that takes three years. Currently, only 12 states offer this licensing program." Fortunately, one is the state of Maryland where Ann now resides.

When asked what she hopes to be doing ten years from now, Ann responded: "Art is in my blood, so it has to be something arts related. Professionally, I want to be a fully-licensed art therapist and have my own practice in a facility integrated with other 'expression therapies.' I would love to pioneer such an entity in the state of Maryland."

For more information about the field of art therapy: <http://arttherapy.org/> ●



# Pannell Gallery and the Sweet Briar Art Collection: Preserving the Legacy

by Linda Lipscomb '73

Until 1984, Sweet Briar did not have a dedicated space to house the school's art collection. The award-winning Anne Gary Pannell Center, formerly the Refectory, served as the main dining hall until the 1980s. An extensive renovation in 1984 provided a long-awaited facility to house the Sweet Briar art collection and art library, as well as art history department offices and classrooms. For the first time, students, alumnae, parents, and the Sweet Briar community were able to access the collection and enjoy special exhibits.

Few colleges can boast of both an architecturally-significant building and a high-quality collection. The gallery's exterior design is a rare collegiate example of Ralph Adam Cram's Georgian Revival style. As one of the College's four original buildings (1906), Pannell is included with the core campus buildings on the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places.

With the opening of Pannell, both the gallery and the art collection became an important part of the Sweet Briar experience. Pannell provides an ongoing opportunity—centralized, convenient, and accessible—for students and professors to examine and research significant paintings, prints, drawings, photographs, sculptures and other works of art.



Today, Pannell is in need of repairs and funds to properly protect both the building and the art collection. Recently, Sweet Briar has taken several steps to address the most immediate needs. For example, the flat roof at the rear of the building has been replaced. That work also allowed for the removal by a professional beekeeper of two very large hives of honeybees! Termites were also discovered during

springtime work and the building was treated. This year, too, Physical Plant arranged to have the gallery ceiling in the gallery painted, a project necessitated by peeling paint due to high humidity.

Friends of Art recently spoke with the College about the most pressing needs of Pannell. One of the most important is the need to replace the aging and inadequate HVAC system to maintain a suitable, controlled environment. Balanced humidity and a constant temperature are essential to protect original works of art from deterioration and mold. This fact is even more critical since works on paper comprise a significant proportion of the art collection. Other issues requiring attention are the replacement of aging gallery lights and window coverings with fresh and more efficient products, the removal of carpeting from gallery walls for a cleaner more contemporary appearance, and dealing with worn floor carpeting at the entrance to the gallery. ●

## Gallery News

The next time you are on campus, be sure to check out our galleries. Our changing exhibits for the fall semester feature work from our collection as well as work by faculty and students.

**Pannell Gallery:** M - Th, 10 am - 5 pm; F, 10 am - 2 pm; Sun, 1 - 4 pm

**Babcock and Benedict Galleries:** M - F, 9 am - 5 pm

**Sweet Briar Museum:** T, W, Th, 1 - 4 pm

*Closed during Thanksgiving Break, Reading Days and Exams.*

**To make arrangements for tours: 434-381-6248 or [klawson@sbc.edu](mailto:klawson@sbc.edu).**

[Click here](#) for more information about exhibitions and programs in our galleries.

[Click here](#) for more information about exhibitions and programs in our museum.

### **Pannell Gallery**

**Set/Repeat/Multiply: Artworks in Sequence:**

Sept 5 - Dec 9

This exhibition will feature paintings, prints, and drawings that incorporate repetitive patterns, make use of serial storytelling, or are based on repeating motifs or sequences. All are from the permanent collection.

In conjunction with this show, the College is pleased to present **Sequence: An Evening of Performance: Nov 4, 7:30 - 9:30 pm.** Dance, music, and dramatic readings presented by performing arts students who are inspired by and reference the works in this exhibition.

### **Babcock Gallery**

**Andrea Eis:** Aug 22 - Oct 9.

Reception and gallery talk Oct 4, 5 - 6 pm.

[Click here](#) for more information about Andrea Eis.

**Millicent Young:** Oct 20 - Dec 9.

Opening reception and gallery talk Oct 20, 5 - 6 pm.

[Click here](#) for more information about

Millicent Young.

### **Benedict Gallery**

**Gray Dodson:** Sept 15 - Nov 20.

Opening reception Sept 15, 5 - 6 pm.

[Click here](#) for more information about Gray Dodson.

### **Sweet Briar Museum, Whitley Gallery**

**Simply Justice and Fair Play: Civil Rights at Sweet Briar 1960 - 1964:** On view through Nov. 11

This installation focuses on a seldom-recalled episode of civil disobedience by Sweet Briar students—the 1961 picketing and boycotting of a Lynchburg drug store to protest racial segregation.

### **Sweet Briar Museum**

**Ghost Stories of Sweet Briar:** Oct 30, 2 - 3:30 pm and 4 - 5:30 pm. Children 16 and under must be accompanied by an adult.

This program features readings of poems and short stories written by Sweet Briar students in the early 1900s. The selections concern ghostly sightings on campus.

Call or email Claire *Dennison* Griffith '80, Director of Major and Planned Gifts, at 434-381-6131 or [cgriffith@sbc.edu](mailto:cgriffith@sbc.edu) if you are interested in making a gift of \$10,000 or more.



# Why join the Friends of Art?

Consider becoming a Friend of Art at Sweet Briar. Your gift will make a permanent impact on the College's visual arts programs and help maintain and increase the vitality, integrity and the strength of Sweet Briar College and the visual arts.

- Since 1937, FOA members have built a permanent art collection that is a vital component of the curriculum.
- We recently expanded our collection of acclaimed women artists, two of whom are highlighted in this publication.
- We provide financial scholarships for student internships, which is a valuable recruitment tool.
- Sponsor studio art and writing contests and support Sweet Briar's visual art programs with supplemental funding.

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