



VISITING THE
SORDONI
ART GALLERY
WILKES UNIVERSITY



K-12 Program

WHAT TO EXPECT

Educational programming at the Sordoni Art Gallery is made in collaboration with Pennsylvania State Certified teachers. Programming integrates state standards from major content areas including ELA, Writing, Math, History, and Science. Programs are designed to be accessible to students of any age and ability including special needs classes. Tours with related age-appropriate activities are created to target students' learning at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Related standards and key terms are listed with each show to make it easy for teachers to see how each show relates to their level and content areas.



TOUR SCHEDULE PREVIEW

Introduction to the Sordoni Art Gallery and Staff- 5 min

Get to know the Sordoni Art Gallery and the Sordoni Art Gallery staff. Learn about attending the exhibitions and programs the gallery offers.

Guided Tour- 30 min

The expert staff at the Sordoni Art Gallery will guide your group through the exhibition. Tours will provide important information regarding the historical and cultural background of the works as well as discuss the various tools, techniques, and philosophies used by featured artists. Connections are made to Common Core Standards and related content.

Independent Viewing/ Q&A- 20 min

Take some time to explore the exhibition on your own to develop questions and answers about the work on display. Then, we'll come back together to chat about what we have uncovered.

Hands-On Workshop- 45 min

Ready to take art into your own hands? We will take time to apply what we have learned in a workshop where we will create art using the technique and themes seen throughout the exhibition.



Memories & Inspiration: The Kerry and C. Betty Davis Collection of African American Art

ABOUT THE SHOW

The traveling exhibition *Memories & Inspiration: The Kerry and C. Betty Davis Collection of African American Art* presents sixty-seven selected works from a body of art amassed over thirty-five years by an ordinary working-class couple. Often choosing artworks over material items and other creature comforts, Kerry, a retired mailman, and Betty, a former television news producer, have opted instead to live with drawings, paintings, prints, and sculpture as their principal luxuries.

While their stated intention to "preserve cultural memories and provide their community with a source of inspiration" are goals shared by most art enthusiasts, Kerry and Betty do not search exclusively for well-known and/or documented artists, keeping in mind "the importance of gathering and preserving a spectrum of approaches to the black image in order to console the psyche and contribute to a more authentic articulation of the self." To this end, the Davises continue to be students of the visual arts through visits to galleries and museums and through their voracious reading of exhibition catalogs, artist monographs, books, and online data about artists, art genres, mediums, and history.



Uncharted Waters, 2021. Charles Edward Williams. Oil on board. Photo by Reis Birdwhistell



Lily C., 1973. Charles White. Etching. Photograph by Gregory Staley

ARTIST HIGHLIGHTS

Elizabeth Catlett (1915–2012)

When Catlett was a young girl in the early decades of the twentieth century, most art museums in the American South were closed to African Americans. Nevertheless, Catlett pursued her dream of becoming an artist. While earning her MFA in sculpture at the University of Iowa, she was encouraged to focus on subjects that were familiar to her, and so she centered much of her art on the daily lives of African Americans, particularly women. Catlett honed her social-realist approach to art at the Taller de Grafica print studio in Mexico, where she eventually moved to raise her family as a Mexican citizen. A versatile artist who worked in a variety of mediums, she is most famous for her sculptural work. Her works in this exhibition include a lithograph (*Prissy*, 1979) and a bronze sculpture (*Mother and Child*, 1980).

Romare Bearden (1911–1988)

In the 1960s, Bearden developed a mastery of the collage, in which he combined magazine clippings, fabric, and paint to create vibrant new imagery. During this time, a pivotal decade in the civil rights movement, his work also became more socially conscious, portraying life from the African American point of view with uncommon vividness. Much of the power of his art comes from contrasting the lives of African Americans in the rural South with that of their counterparts in the urban North, and from his remarkable use of visual metaphors involving religion, myth, literature, and music. A notable music-themed work by Bearden in *Memories & Inspiration* is his monotype *Record Date* (1979).



Listen with your eyes, 2005. Moe Brooker. Mixed media on board, Photo by Greg Staley



Field, 1968. Samella Lewis. Lithograph. Photograph by Gregory Staley

TERMS TO KNOW

You probably already know your Elements and Principles of Visual Art (9.1.A),- color, line, shape, form, value, texture, and space - but here are some other terms you may want to be familiar with before visiting the gallery:

Elementary

Abstract	Collage	Heritage	Diversity
Inspiration	Medium	Symbol	Portrait
			Equality

Middle

Photomontage	Harlem Renaissance	Civil Rights
Representation	Activism	Symbolism
Narrative		Social Justice

High

Black Arts Movement	Racism	The Great Migration
Intersectionality	Diaspora	Identity
		Visual Culture

GREGG DEAL

Feb. 4-Mar. 22, 2025

ARTIST HIGHLIGHTS

ABOUT THE SHOW

Gregg Deal, (Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe) is a multi-disciplinary artist, activist, and “disruptor.” His work is informed by his Native identity and includes exhaustive critiques of American society, politics, popular culture and history. Through paintings, murals, performance work, filmmaking, spoken word, and more, Deal invites the viewer to confront these issues both in the present and the past tense.

Deal challenges the perception of Indigenous people and culture while exploring nuances of identity and existence. In a 2018 TED Talk, Deal described his work as “honoring Indigenous experiences, challenging stereotypes, and pushing for accurate representations of Indigenous people in art.” It is in these “disruptions” of stereotypes and ahistorical representations which Deal uses the term to describe his work.



Still from *Punk Pan-Indian Romantic Comedy Performance*, 2022.

TERMS TO KNOW

You probably already know your Elements and Principles of Visual Art (9.1.A),- color, line, shape, form, value, texture, and space - but here are some other terms you may want to be familiar with before visiting the gallery:

Elementary

Indigenous Sculpture Tradition Mixed Media

Culture Storytelling Pattern

Middle

Performance Art Environmental Stewardship Sovereignty

Textile Conceptual Art Activism

Cultural Heritage Conceptual Printmaking

High

Appropriation The Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978

Colonialism Protest Art Decolonization

Cultural Revitalization Avant-Garde



Still from *Invisible Series*.

Gregg Deal is an unapologetic artist. His provocative artwork challenges, questions, instigates, and sometimes even laughs with his viewers. Engaging with art history, stereotypes, racism, and popular culture, he deftly weaves narratives through painting, performance, and sculpture. Deal’s art explores the world we live in through his lens of being Indigenous in modern America.

Deal’s paintings smartly dialogue with modern art historical movements, including Abstract Expressionism, High Modernism, Conceptual, Performance, and Pop. The profoundness of his work is revealed through the symbols, stories, and questions that emerge as he explores the clash between stereotypes and assumptions of a traditional western viewer versus his lived experience and the aspirations of the disenfranchised.



Still from *Redskin Performance*.

As a teenager, Deal gravitated to Punk because he related to the music’s expression of the marginalized outsider. References in Deal’s art come from the lyrics of his anti-establishment Punk heroes: Sex Pistols, Minor Threat, Black Flag, and Misfits. Growing up in a predominately white neighborhood in Park City, Utah, Deal did not experience a childhood with other children who looked like him or viewed the world like he did. It was not until he was in college, studying visual art at George Mason University, that he came across the work of James Luna. It was the first time he experienced another artist who was “unapologetically Indigenous.”

Most art depicting Indigenous people in the U.S. reinforces stereotypical tropes of assumed 19th or early 20th-century imagery—as if Native Americans are a uniform people frozen in time and trapped in sepia tones. Deal underscores the incredible diversity among the Indigenous who live within the borders of the United States. The federal government currently recognizes 574 Tribes speaking over 300 languages. Deal is careful to say he does not speak for Indigenous people; rather he speaks to his own experience.

Deal threatens boundaries in an art world steeped in imperialism. Having suffered censorship from art institutions, these conflicts have pushed him even further to explore his voice and stake his own space. His work grapples with challenging topics such as boarding schools, representation, visibility, racism, and historical atrocities, all of which are a threat to systemic expectations of how Indigenous artists exist within spaces not traditionally created for them. Yet it also celebrates individuality, hope, identity, and community. Gregg Deal asks us to “Rise Above” and glimpse the world through each other’s eyes.



The Space Where Spirits Get Eaten, 2022. Gregg Deal. Wooden Chairs, Oil Spangled Rug, Steel Hardware, Human Hair.

FAMILY TREE

Apr. 22-June 1, 2025

ARTIST HIGHLIGHTS

ABOUT THE SHOW

Family Tree brings together the work of four sisters to 'talk about trees.' As curators, painters, photographers and writers, we portray trees in conditions in and outside of human care and conflict. Genealogical roots and botanical roots intertwine.

In its beauty and force, 'nature' is often regarded as benign and apolitical. We do not expect trees to assume editorial stances or embody ideologies. Whether bombed or irradiated, contained, or marginalized, in underground union or standing in persistence, trees and their representations can offer solace and space—for the necessity of talking, listening, and learning.

Family Tree offers both critical commentary and sensual delight in visualizing the tree as refuge and livelihood, consumed and consuming, under assault and triumphant, as historical record, and as harbinger of things to come.



Elegy to the Underground, 2020. Sarah Slavick. Oil on canvas. 56 x 44 inches

TERMS TO KNOW

You probably already know your Elements and Principles of Visual Art (9.1.A), - color, line, shape, form, value, texture, and space - but here are some other terms you may want to be familiar with before visiting the gallery:

Elementary

Family Tree Descendant Balance Canopies
Ancestor Trunk Deciduous Trees Conifers Abstract

Middle

Phloem Foliage Concept Geneology
Common Ancestor Xylem Motif Homestead

High

Heartwood Lineage Geneology
Nature vs Nurture Whakapapa



Hong Kong Victoria Park, 2010. Madeline Slavick. Archival inkjet print 18 x 12 inches

elin o'Hara Slavick is Artist-In-Residence at the University of California, Irvine and has exhibited internationally. Her work is included in many collections, including the Queens Museum, The National Library of France, The Library of Congress and the Art Institute of Chicago. Author of two monographs, *Bomb After Bomb: A Violent Cartography* and *After Hiroshima*, her writings and images have been featured in *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *FOAM*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Asia-Pacific Journal*, and *Photo-Eye*, among other publications. She is also a curator, critic, poet, and activist.

Madeleine Slavick is a writer, editor, community arts advocate, and photographer. She has authored several books of photography, poetry, and non-fiction, has recited her poetry internationally, and was awarded the 2015 RAK Mason Fellowship. She identifies as Hong Kong Chinese after living in Hong Kong for nearly 25 years. She now lives in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Sarah Slavick is a professor at Lesley University's College of Art and Design. Numerous awards include a grant in painting from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and artist residencies at Baer Art Center in Iceland, the Millay Colony, and the Bemis Center for Contemporary Art. Exhibition highlights include *Big Bang! Abstract Painting for the 21st Century* at the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture



Fukushima Persimmon Tree Heavy with Contaminated Fruit III, 2019. elin O'Hara. Solarized silver gelatin print 20 x 16 inches

Park and Dix Artistes Americaines in Strasbourg, France. Her work has been featured in *The Boston Globe*, *Hyperallergic*, and journals of contemporary criticism, art and literature such as *Diacritics* and *Posit 9*. Slavick engages with the larger regional community as a union leader, activist, artist, gallery director, curator, critic, juror, and teacher.

Susanne Slavick is an artist, curator and the Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Art at Carnegie Mellon University. She studied at Yale University, Jagiellonian University in Krakow, and Tyler School of Art in Rome and Philadelphia. Her traveling curatorial projects include *When the Bough Breaks* (2019); *Marx@200* (2018); *Unloaded* (2015-19); and *Out of Rubble* (2011-15). Recent exhibits include those at University of Virginia, Gettysburg College, McDonough Museum of Art, Chicago Cultural Center, and Accola Griefen Gallery (NYCv). Honors include multiple grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the 2019 College Art Association Distinguished Teaching of Art Award and Carnegie Mellon's Henry Hombostel Teaching Award. She has published in books and journals including: *Formations of Identity: Society, Politics, and Landscape*; *Cairo: Images of Transition*; *Journal of Visual Culture*; *Technology and Culture*; *Hyperallergic*, and *Cultural Politics*.



Mushroom Cloud Tree, 2015. elin O'Hara. Silver gelatin contact print/photogram of paper peace cranes from Hiroshima and leaves from an A-Bombed tree in Nagasaki 12 x 10 inches

Visiting an art gallery has a positive impact on your students. Some of the benefits include:

- Visual arts help students build literacy skills
- Students get a firsthand look at historical objects and documents, including but not limited to: newspapers and magazines from the early 20th century, original art from around the world, photographs documenting major events in American history
- The arts help students develop intercultural awareness, understanding, and communication skills
- Art galleries provide students with the opportunity to access history, other cultures, and the natural world while building critical thinking and problem solving skills
- Art galleries target social emotional skills like empathy and compassion
- Students have access to hands-on, authentic learning experiences



Memories & Inspirations

Elementary

- Standard - 9.1.V.K.A1
- Standard - 9.1.V.K.B1
- Standard - 9.1.V.K.J1
- Standard - 9.3.K.F1
- Standard - 9.3.K.G1
- Standard - 9.4.K.B1
- Standard - CC.1.2.K.A
- Standard - CC.1.2.K.A
- Standard - CC.1.2.K.C
- Standard - CC.1.5.K.A
- Standard - 6.2.K.C
- Standard - 8.2.K.B
- Standard - 5.3.4.E
- Standard - 5.3.4.G

Middle

- Standard - 8.2.7.A
- Standard - CC.8.5.6-8.D
- Standard - CC.8.5.6-8.E
- Standard - CC.8.5.6-8.F
- Standard - CC.1.2.7.J
- Standard - CC.1.3.7.E
- Standard - CC.1.5.7.A

High

- Standard - CC.1.2.11-12.B
- Standard - CC.1.2.11-12.F
- Standard - CC.1.2.11-12.K
- Standard - 5.3.12.D
- Standard - 5.3.12.F
- Standard - 5.3.12.H
- Standard - 6.2.12.C
- Standard - 8.2.12.A
- Standard - 11.4.12.E

Gregg Deal

Elementary

- Standard - 5.1.1.C
- Standard - 5.1.1.F
- Standard - 5.2.1.C
- Standard - 5.3.1.H
- Standard - 5.4.1.D
- Standard - 6.1.1.A
- Standard - 6.4.1.A
- Standard - 7.1.1.A
- Standard - 7.1.1.B
- Standard - 8.1.1.A
- Standard - 8.1.1.C
- Standard - 5.2.3.A
- Standard - 5.3.3.F
- Standard - 6.1.3.A
- Standard - 7.3.3.A
- Standard - 8.1.3.B

Middle

- Standard - 5.2.7.D
- Standard - 5.3.7.C
- Standard - 5.3.7.H
- Standard - 6.1.7.A

High

- Standard - 5.2.9.B
- Standard - 5.2.9.C
- Standard - 5.2.12.B
- Standard - 5.2.9.D
- Standard - CC.8.5.11-12.F
- Standard - CC.8.5.9-10.B

Family Tree

Elementary

- Standard - 5.1.2.C
- Standard - 5.2.2.C
- Standard - 5.4.2.A
- Standard - 5.4.2.C
- Standard - 6.1.2.B
- Standard - 6.2.2.A
- Standard - 6.2.2.B
- Standard - 6.5.2.A
- Standard - 7.3.2.A
- Standard - 8.4.2.C

Middle

- Standard - 5.4.8.C
- Standard - 6.1.8.A
- Standard - 6.1.8.B
- Standard - 6.2.8.A
- Standard - 6.2.8.G
- Standard - 6.4.8.B
- Standard - 7.3.8.A
- Standard - 8.4.8.B
- Standard - 6.5.8.A

High

- Standard - 6.1.9.B
- Standard - 6.2.9.D
- Standard - 7.3.9.A
- Standard - CC.1.2.9-10.A



About the Sordoni Art Gallery

The Sordoni Art Gallery is a visual art exhibition space located at Wilkes University. Originally founded as a source of community hope after the Agnes Flood of 1972, the Sordoni Art Gallery brings diverse artists of regional, national, and international reputation to the Northeast PA region.

The mission of the Sordoni Art Gallery is to encourage an appreciation of the arts and an understanding of its role in society through direct engagement with art. Our main focus is to present high-quality exhibitions, related programming, and publications in a wide range of media, topics, cultures, and time periods. We have designed an experience aligned with the Visual Art Curriculum Framework and the Standards Aligned System (SAS) developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Our vision is to be a recognized and respected center for the creation of innovative learning environments and programs for the appreciation and study of visual art that benefit the academic and cultural community of Wilkes University and the surrounding region.

The Sordoni Art Gallery is a free-admission gallery. All Sordoni exhibitions and events are free and open to the public. Our state-of-the-art facilities are located at 141 S. Main St, Wilkes-Barre, PA. Please visit www.wilkes.edu/arts/sordoniartgallery/ for more information.

Please contact Melissa Carestia, Assistant Director to
book your visit with us today!
melissa.carestia@wilkes.edu

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ART GALLERY
WILKES UNIVERSITY

Call: 570-408-4325
Look: wilkes.edu/sordoniartgallery
Follow: [@sordonigallery](https://www.instagram.com/sordonigallery)

Located at 141 S. Main Street in
downtown Wilkes-Barre, PA
Visitor Parking available

Gallery Hours:
Tuesday – Friday: 10 AM – 5 PM
Saturday and Sunday: 12 - 5 PM
Closed on Mondays and University

Holiday Hours
Closed Oct 10- 13, 2024
Closed Nov 27 - Dec 1, 2024
Closed Dec 21, 2024 - Jan 2, 2025
By Appointment Only: December 16 -
20, 2024; January 3 - 6, 2025