

# Association for the Wolf Lake Initiative

A not-for-profit organization and land trust

*Working across state boundaries to enhance Wolf Lake*

September 18, 2018

13<sup>th</sup> Greening of the Arts  
Launches concert series

Contact: Michael Boos 219 933-7149 or 312 220-0120

## *Immediate Release*

The 13<sup>th</sup> annual Greening of the Arts Reception, Show & Concerts opens at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 19 at the Bernard Gallery, Calumet College of St. Joseph (CCSJ), 2400 New York Ave., Whiting.

Sponsored by the Association for the Wolf Lake Initiative (AWLI) and CCSJ, the show features nine local artists through November 23. As in the past, Greening of the Arts show features artists who use recycled products or who focus on nature and the environment.

Works include paintings, prints, sculptures and photographs.

This year's artists include Marsha Browne of Chesterton, sculpture; Tamara Browne of Washington D.C., photography; Pat Hansen of South Holland, painting; Rebecca Moss of Oak Lawn, photography; Tom Mullins of Whiting, photography; Robert "Piro" Ramirez of Chicago, abstract paintings in acrylic; Suzy Vance of Beverly Shores, fiber; Maria Villarreal of Chicago, mask-making and papier-mache; and Roman Villarreal of Chicago, sculpture.

Participating in the student competition are entries from Hammond High School and CCSJ.

The art show opens at 5:30 p.m. with wine and cheese reception and live music by Bryan Pirosko. Scheduled at 6 p.m. is an artists' forum with opening remarks by Professor Walter Skiba, associate professor of arts and humanities at CCSJ.

The program begins at 6:30 p.m. with acknowledgment of volunteers, funders and donors to AWLI in 2018. Funders include Ford Motor Company Fund, Indiana Humanities, Legacy Foundation of Indiana, city of Hammond, and ArcelorMittal. Donors include Pete's Fresh Market, Chicago; Strack & Van Til, Whiting; and Walt's Foods, Dyer.

A 7 p.m. concert by Dave Dolak of Hammond follows. Dolak will play a mix of classical, classic jazz and pop music on acoustic guitar, He will add some folk songs of the region.

Dolak is a professor of instruction at Columbia College, Chicago, and teaches a course in instrument making.

Winners of the student competition will be announced at 8 p.m. at the end of opening day.

In past years the opening of the show featured a lecture on the *Nexus of Art and Nature*. This year the lecture will be replaced by a series of concerts which will follow the same theme.

The concerts will benefit the art program at Calumet College and AWLI.

The Dolak concert is the first of five. Subsequent performances will be held at the same time on Fridays through the run of the show. All but the second concert will be held in the Barbara Goodman "Blackbox" Theatre, adjacent to the art gallery.

On Oct. 26, organist Br. Benjamin Basile, C.P.P.S. and oboist Kathryn Brtko will give a lecture/demonstration and mini-recital featuring the recently restored 19th century Kimball pipe organ in the Bernard Gallery at CCSJ.

Brother Ben is associate professor of mathematics at CCSJ. Kathryn is principal oboe with the LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra and participates in music ministry with a number of churches in the NW Indiana/ Chicago area..

Miles Sullivan and Rich Wheeler perform on Nov. 2. Sullivan serves as treasurer of AWLI. He and Wheeler play mainly older style country blues, some folk and rock 'n' roll.

Both work for a major corporation in the tech sector and have played professionally in Chicago for years.

2400 New York Ave., Whiting, IN 46394

219 933-7149 ◆ 312 220-0120 ◆ FAX: 219 473-4259

[Michael@wolflakeinitiative.org](mailto:Michael@wolflakeinitiative.org) ◆ <http://www.wolflakeinitiative.org>

On Nov. 9, David Dolak returns to again play a mix of classical, classic jazz and pop music, He will add some folk songs of the region.

The Brilliant Estesian Ensemble will perform on November 16. The woodwind group includes Lupe Esquivel, bassoon, Park Forest, IL; Ken Carlborg, clarinet, Chicago Heights, IL; Niki Juarez-Cummings, flute, Steger, IL; Larry Meschi, soprano saxophone, clarinet, and bass clarinet, Highland, IN.

The Ensemble is composed of musical friends who met through the music program at Prairie State College. Its repertoire is an eclectic mix of original compositions and dedicated arrangements, which runs the gamut from classical to jazz, pop to rock.

Paul Somers is curator of the Bernard Gallery and serves as assistant professor, digital and performing arts, at CCSJ. Jack Walter is president of AWLI.

More information is available by calling AWLI at 219 933-7149 or 312 220-0120.

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**Note to Editors.** Below is a list of artists with additional information:

**Marsha Elise Browne** of Chesterton, IN

A retired art teacher at Hammond High School, Browne paints nature from landscapes to closeups of flowers and plants that dot the shorelines of Lake Michigan. She also works on recycled sculpture installations.

Browne served as assistant director of Curriculum for the School of the Art Institute from 1987 to 1991 and has worked in various teaching capacities at Crown Point, Hammond and Gary. She has taught classes for Porter County Parks and the Dunes Learning Center. She is an art consultant and visual arts instructor for South Shore Arts in Crown Point, Indiana.

A native of Gary, she earned a B.A. degree in Fine Arts from Indiana University Northwest and earned an Art Education Certificate from the School of the Art Institute.

**Tamara Browne** of Washington, D.C. and Chesterton, IN

Browne's work is reflective of art and nature in natural environments along the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and Mid Atlantic Region of the United States. The balance of economic development and nature is a constant battle that forces the public to adopt policies that jeopardize future generations. Through her photography, she sends this message.

She continues to exhibit work at public galleries and university venues.

Browne is a native of Gary, Indiana and a graduate of Ripon College in Ripon, Wisconsin. She serves as director of Government Affairs at a Washington D.C. international trade law and lobby firm.

She is past president of Big Brothers Big Sisters in the Washington D.C. area.

**Pat Hansen** of South Holland, IL

At the show, she will be exhibiting two oil paintings. Hansen has dedicated more than 40 years to creating realistic landscapes, still life, florals and animal portraits. She is a former director of a Montessori classroom and trained child care workers at Purdue University Calumet. Hansen also taught art at all grade levels in the East Chicago public schools.

Past president of Illiana Artists, she has won numerous awards during her career and her work is in corporate and private collections.

**Rebecca Moss** of Oak Lawn, IL

Moss is a naturalist with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. She is a former AWLI director.

**Tom Mullins** of Whiting, IN

Mullins is nature photographer who has exhibited locally.

**Robert 'Piro' Ramirez** of Chicago

Ramirez paints abstracts in acrylic.

**Suzy Vance** of Beverly Shores, IN

Vance uses fiber from animals and other materials to create images. She began selling her fiber paintings last year through her life coaching company, Suzy Vance, LLC. Before beginning her business of coaching people through personal transitions and career choices, she spent more than a decade practicing law after she graduated from DePaul University College of Law in 1975. She works with fiber as a medium. "Fiber is alive...it's alive even after it's been sheared from or made by any animal. I am fascinated by it, and I've been playing with fiber since my mother taught me to knit at the age of 12. Until recently, as a closet artist, I've played with knitting, weaving, spinning, and felting".

Artist's Statement: "Today I find I am "coming home"...to myself...here...now...as I was as a child. I've given myself permission not to "fix" me or others. In choosing to live "ten seconds at a time," I find myself more curious about everything around me. I am fascinated by the animals inhabiting this Earth, including people and all their creative capacities, I relish the exploration of what animals and the rest of the natural environment (the trees, flowers, birds and bees...) contribute to us. and how our physical surroundings, including the spaces we live in, nurture our lives, imagination, growth, and expression.

"My 'home' is the Earth. It is the essence of what is creative in life. In my fiber work I go to the source of how the Earth continuously fills me with wonder, joy, and possibility... especially the animals and the fiber they provide. The actual process of working with fiber is my way of going home and embracing my journey from beginning to end."

**Maria Villarreal** of Chicago, IL

She has served as a resident artist at Urban Gateways, one of two lead artists at the National Museum of Mexican Art, a muralist/mosaic artist at the Chicago Public Art Group, and lead artist at Gallery 37.

Villarreal also has been affiliated with the Field Museum's Park Voyagers, Chicago Park District and Chicago's Children's Museum. She is best know for her quilt-making, mask-making and papier-mache projects.

**Roman Villarreal** of Chicago, IL

A former steel worker and founder of Hammond's Warehouse Studio and co-founder of Under the Bridge gallery in Chicago, Villarreal sculpts multi-figured expressions of the human experience. He places an emphasis on the experiences of the Mexican-American community and people of color.

He recently created an 11-foot bronze statue erected at Steelworkers Park in the South Chicago community.

He has exhibited nationally and internationally. One of his stone sculptures is part of the National Museum of Mexican Art collections. Other works are among the collections of Chicago's Field Museum.

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