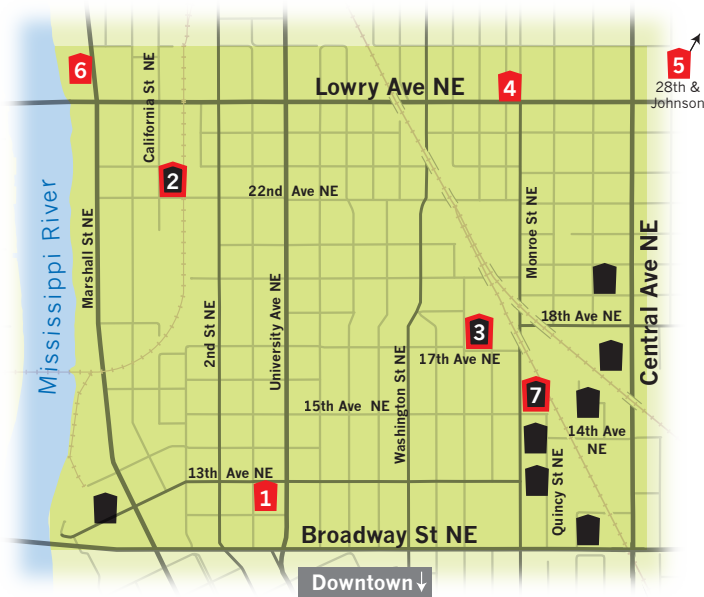




arts INSIGHTS

A page about artists and The Arts at Work by the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District in collaboration with the Northeast.



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More sculptures take root

Story and photo by Mike Madison

Mary Johnson's whimsical sculptures can be seen blocks away. Her most recent installation, Lizard Lounge, has a new permanent home at East Side Neighborhood Services (ESNS), 1700 Second St. NE.

"I started and completed it in 2008 but I've worked on it several times. It's based on 1950's roadside attractions. They always had a catchy name. It's made with stucco. The materials are all genuine to what a 1950s roadside attraction would be made with."

Johnson's process: The larger-than life pieces are first drawn up. For the Lizard Lounge, she first built the shack that is in the middle of the piece. She then made a steel armature right off of the shack, started with a circle then a long rod. Johnson used a lot of steel scraps, then metal lath followed by a layer of mortar mix. After the mortar she applied a layer of stucco and finally latex paint.

Max Rabbitat, another of Johnson's pieces, is across from Mojo Coffee near the railroad tracks at 22nd Avenue and California Street



NE. "It stands for 'maximum habitat.' A rabbitat is a habitat for rabbits. That piece was made in 2009." "The [recent addition of a] PPE mask was to show Max standing in solidarity with the people during COVID-19," Johnson explained. Embedded in the rabbit sculpture are objects and trinkets that were collected and put into the piece by children who

worked with her to complete the piece.

Johnson works out of the Casket Arts Factory Building. Currently, she is working on some gallery pieces. She will also be an adjunct professor at St. John's this fall and in the faculty show there. "I'm always working. Work, work work. I love my studio!" smiled Johnson.

PechaKucha returns

by Candy Kuehn

The public is invited to a virtual PechaKucha, to be held on Zoom Sunday, September 13, 2020, 7 pm. Called "Art/Include/Act," four artists or organizations will present fast-paced 20 slides in 20 minutes presentations.

Artists are making news for helping express and heal recent and historical trauma. But the practice of bringing communities together through arts is time-honored. "Art/Include/Act" looks at the social prac-



tice of involving community members, voices through collaborative art-making. Visual and/or performing arts, temporary or permanent.

Participating artists include Ta-coumba T. Aiken, Pat Grady, fiber artist and Chief Embellishing Officer of Embellishing Bliss!, Oyate Hotanin Voice of the People, and Kira Carillo Corser.

Watch the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District Facebook page for the event with Zoom link or other registration information.

Airport show deadline 9/15

Online submissions have been streaming in for three Northeast Minneapolis Arts District exhibit opportunities at MSP International Airport; it's not too late to apply, due September 15.

Part of the Arts@MSP program, work will be on display January through December of 2021.

Arts District artists may apply to one of the two juried exhibit opportunities: "Passages" or "The Art of Abstraction." A looping slide show and materials addressing the District's history will accompany the "Passages" exhibit in a large two-case display area in the airport's main mall.

District artists may submit three images each for the looping slide



show, subject to approval by airport management and must be appropriate for an all-ages, all-cultures audience.

Co-curators who will choose the work are, for the "Passages" exhibit: Maggie Thompson and Christopher Aaron Deanes. For "The Art

of Abstraction" exhibit: Ta-coumba T. Aiken and Sarah Nicole Knutson.

All artists who have a studio, live, work, or have a year-round exhibit location within the boundaries of the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District (both sides of boundary streets included) are eligible. Boundaries are Broadway to 26th Ave. NE, Central Avenue to Marshall Street NE (the Mississippi River).

Submissions are due September 15, 2020. There is no fee to apply. Submission criteria and instructions are available at <https://north-eastminneapolisartsdistrict.org/programs/airport-exhibits/>

Contact email: airport@north-eastminneapolisartsdistrict.org.

Quarantine Confidential with Hend Al-Mansour

Rosalux Gallery has done a series of articles about their artists called Quarantine Confidential. The articles touch upon challenges, funny moments, and reveal what artists do during these challenging times with their creative minds. Thank you, Rosalux Gallery and the artists, for sharing these interviews with the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District.

courtesy of Rosalux Gallery

What's your favorite disaster movie?

The title is "Between Heaven and Earth," a 1960 black and white Arabic movie that took place in a crowded elevator that got stuck in a tall building in Cairo.

Who or what has had the biggest influence on your career/work?

My inspiration comes from my childhood memories of women in my family and my community. My work examines the gender hierarchies in Arab culture where I grew up. I am intrigued by women's domestic spaces and the clandestine communities that thrive there. In addition, moving to the U.S. made me conscious of a new identity. I now belong to a marginalized minority which made me turn back to my heritage. I draw on Islamic art and architecture to portray social practices in my former home.

What are you working on right now? What's coming up for you on the calendar for the future?



Images courtesy of the artist: Hend Al-Mansour, and Medina's Maidens.

Anything you want to plug?

I am studying animation and my plan is to make an animated painting. I have made a 1-minute loop in October 2019 and now I am working on a larger project. It is called "Henna Sky;" it will be animation of an Islamic mythology where women play a central role. Welcoming the immigrant, Mohammed, they sang and drummed. The starting image of this animation is my digital print "Medina's Maidens."

What is your mother's maiden name?

When I first came to America I was confused between "maiden name" and "surname." I thought they are different ways to say "family name" in sophisticated America. As it happened, where I grew up there is no such a thing. We are born into a name that is predetermined for us by all our ancestors. Our parents have to come up with only our first name. Therefore, there is more than one middle name, actually the middle names are endless: it consists of your father's and all his paternal ancestors' first name. You have to have a family name of course, and that is the tribe or subtribe name.

So my name is: Hend Abdulrahman Mohammed Abdulrahman Mohammed + endless names, Al-Mansour. Well, I don't remember them all (and most of them are repetitious anyway) but I have a family tree somewhere in my files. However, for practical reason the government restrict our names to four. First name, father's first name, grandfather's first name, and family name. So, my mother is the only member of my nuclear family that has a totally different name than us.

Follow us on social media to see what we are creating behind closed doors!

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