

The Gallery

@the Sharon Historical Society

Press Release
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The Sharon Historical Society & Museum Announces the Opening of
“*Distaff in Sharon: A Tribute to Melva Bucksbaum*”
Invitational Exhibition and Sale
The Gallery @the SHS – September 10 through October 28, 2016

SHARON, CT: The Gallery @the SHS of the Sharon Historical Society & Museum presents the opening of its show in The Gallery @the SHS, “*Distaff in Sharon: A Tribute to Melva Bucksbaum*”, an invitational exhibition and sale running from September 10 through October 28, 2016.

Melva Bucksbaum was born in Washington, DC and attended Maryland University. She famously transformed her early childhood passions for collecting dolls and glass animals into a career as one of the nation’s leading art collectors. Beginning in 1995, Ms. Bucksbaum managed the Martin Bucksbaum Family Foundation, and served as a Director of the Robert I. Goldman Foundation. Actively devoted to the arts and philanthropy, she served on the boards (among others) of The American Friends of the Israel Museum; the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Committee on Collections, Harvard University; the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars; and The Aspen Institute. She also served on the International Council of Museum of Modern Art, The International Committee of the Tate Gallery, and the Christie’s American Advisory Board and as Co-Chair of Collection Lambert Avignon in France. In 1996, Ms Bucksbaum and her family endowed a chair in the Graduate School of Design, Harvard University: the Martin Bucksbaum Professorship in Urban Planning and Design. She also endowed the Martin Bucksbaum Distinguished Lecture Series at Drake University, Des

Moines, Iowa. In 2000, Ms. Bucksbaum and her children inaugurated the Bucksbaum Award, which is given to an artist of distinction and promise selected from those artists represented in the Whitney Biennial. It was conceived to support an artist for a 2-year residency culminating in an exhibition of his/her work at the Whitney. In 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008 ARTnews magazine listed Ms. Bucksbaum and her husband, Sharon resident Raymond Learsy, as among the top 200 collectors in the world. In 2004, she and her daughter gave two major outdoor installation sculptures, by Joel Shapiro and Sharon artist Sally Pettus, to the Des Moines Art Center to be placed on loan to the City of Des Moines. Melva Bucksbaum passed away in August, 2015.

The exhibition at The Gallery @the SHS takes its inspiration from the ground breaking 2013 show curated by Ms. Bucksbaum at the Granary in Sharon titled "*The Distaff Side*," a diverse exhibition of paintings, sculpture, photography, and video by more than 100 female artists from the collections of Ms. Bucksbaum and Mr. Learsy. Artforum wrote of the show "The exhibition's title refers to the maternal line in a family and is appropriate for a show comprising only works by women artists. This exhibition—like her life in art—was about womanhood, and it served as a living will of sorts, a testimony to her belief in the power of contemporary art and the power of women in art. And the works included in the exhibition—by artists ranging from [Louise Bourgeois](#), [Agnes Martin](#), and [Ana Mendieta](#), to [Barbara Kruger](#), [Kara Walker](#), and [Laurie Simmons](#), as well as younger artists such as [Dana Schutz](#), [Isca Greenfield-Sanders](#), and [Taubha Auerbach](#)—exemplify this commitment." The wisdom of Ms. Bucksbaum's thinking and commitment to gender equality is reflected in part by last year's show entitled "No Man's Land," mounted at the Rubell Family Collection during Art Basel Miami Beach, an exhibition of more than 100 artists from the collection, all of them female.

The show at The Gallery @the SHS features work by local women artists Debra Bilow, Zelina Blagden, Tina Chandler, Karen Lesage, Ellen Moon, Catherine Noren, Sally Pettus and Kate Stiassni. Artists were invited to submit works in any medium (e.g. Oil, Acrylic, Watercolor, Photography, Pastel, Ink, Graphite, Drawing, Print, Mixed Media, Sculpture, Assemblage, Fabric, Stone, Clay, Metal). An opening wine and hors d'oeuvres reception to which the public is invited free of charge will be held on Saturday, September 10 from 5:00 to 7:00PM. All purchases support the Sharon Historical Society & Museum's mission.

The Gallery @the SHS is located at the Sharon Historical Society & Museum, 18 Main Street, Route 41, Sharon, CT. The gallery and museum are open Wednesday through Friday from 12-4, Saturday from 1-5 and by appointment. For more information and directions to The

Gallery @the SHS, call (860) 364-5688. For additional information about the Sharon Historical Society & Museum, visit www.sharonhist.org.