



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WARTBURG RECEIVES TRANSFORMATIVE ARTS INITIATIVE GRANT

[*Mount Vernon, New York*] – Wartburg, an award-winning provider of comprehensive senior residential and healthcare services, is proud to announce the receipt of the 2022-23 Mount Vernon Arts Initiative Grant presented by Arts Westchester. These initiatives are designed to help Westchester County artists and local cultural organizations enhance the services they provide to Mount Vernon Residents.

Wartburg has partnered with the Pelham Art Center and Arts Westchester to provide a series of 3 art exhibitions that will be housed in the newly re-furbished Waltemade Skilled Nursing Center, the home of Wartburg's nursing care. The lobby refresh was made possible by contributions from Home Depot Foundation, Bob's Discount Furniture, Precision Painting NY, and other individual donations. Over the course of a year, the funded program will transform this space into a cultural center and each of the 3 planned exhibits will feature an artist's reception and a correlating art class which will be offered free to Mount Vernon residents.

The first exhibition begins on September 24, 2022 and can be viewed daily between 9 am and 5 pm. ***Playful Abstraction*** is a group art exhibition which includes artists Erika Hibbert, Barry Mason, and Judith Weber, and curated by the Pelham Art Center. ***Playful Abstraction*** is an exhibition that shows a range of playful abstract thinking as expressed in painting, collage, printmaking and non-traditional shapes.

Erika Hibbert, originally from Johannesburg, South Africa recently moved to New Rochelle, NY where she continues her artistic practice and is a teacher of visual art at the French American School in Larchmont, NY. Hibbert's visual language of abstraction is related to the human experience, nature, and conscious obstacles. The pieces "tug between nature itself and human interventions into the natural world are paralleled by the tension between accidental, spontaneous, gestural and immediate marks and marks that are considered, deliberate, meticulous and labored." The larger pieces, ink on canvas, in this exhibition are visual metaphors and symbols of life struggles but ultimately speaking through art to ensure our Co-existence. Hibbert is currently a member of the Pelham Art Center Artist Club.

Barry Mason, after receiving his BFA from the Corcoran School of Art, has been painting in his Mount Vernon Studio for 40 years. His large shaped abstract canvases are immediately recognizable. He has been called "this generations Basquiat" by artist, curator and philanthropist Danny Simmons. J. Sanders Eaton of Gallery & Studio Magazine has said "Mason's paintings with their brilliant colors, dynamic irregular formats, and forms that (for their often, angular symmetry) hint at African folk motifs, can be compared to the music of the great American composers like Ellington and Mingus." The paintings with saturated colors and bold gestures also include text on his works, written backwards so the messages must be deciphered. Mason is a member of the Pelham Art Center Artist Advisory Board, and an art educator at Pelham Art Center and Horace Mann. Along with the larger pieces, there are some small "buttons" or mini abstractions so anyone can accommodate a Barry Mason in their home.



Judith Weber, artist, educator and art advocate has served on the boards of both the New Rochelle Council on the Arts in New Rochelle, NY and the Clay Art Center in Port Chester, NY. Co-founded Media Loft, Westchester’s only live/work condominium established for artists in Westchester County, and continues to engage as an educator designing workshops for those who are seeking to age creatively. After many years of being a professional ceramicist, Weber now creates collages and paintings that incorporate printmaking techniques. The mixed-media techniques give Weber the opportunity to experiment, imagine, and learn. “Arriving at that final product is about process—but process does not mean structured, planned development. Instead, I have found that intentionally not planning offers the freedom to be fully spontaneous, opening a space where I can relax, discover, and listen to what the work needs from me at each stage.” describes Weber. She is an artist “committed to exploring the techniques needed to create unusual and highly personal work.”

“Over the years, Wartburg has always been a center of Arts and Music,” says CEO David J. Gentner, Ed.D. “This unique collaboration allows us to continue in this legacy and bring new and exciting opportunities to our residents and the greater community.”

About the Pelham Art Center

Pelham Art Center is a non-profit educational and cultural institution committed to providing public access to see, study and experience the arts, foster lifelong arts appreciation and thereby strengthen the community. The Art Center was founded in 1970 and now serves more than 16,000 people each year. These events and programs are made possible, in part, by ArtsWestchester with funds from Westchester County Government with the support of County Executive George Latimer. Pelham Art Center also receives funding from: New York State Council on the Arts, A State Agency, TD Charitable Foundation, The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), and Pelham Community Members and Annual Fund Donors.

About Wartburg

Wartburg, located in Westchester County, NY, offers integrated, comprehensive senior residential and healthcare services. Unlike conventional retirement communities, Wartburg provides a wide range of services to both residents living on their beautiful 34-acre campus and people in their own homes. From independent, assisted living and award-winning nursing home care to inpatient/outpatient rehabilitation, home care and adult day care services, their continuing care approach has earned them a trusted reputation. Wartburg also provides caregiver support at every stage with an array of options to find the level of care that considers the whole family. Wartburg was named one of the “Best Nursing Homes in New York State” by *U.S. News & World Report* for the tenth consecutive year in 2021.

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"High Fever" by Erika Hibbert