

# Arts & Entertainment

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## Special events mark Scottsdale Artists' anniversary

BY KRISTINE CANNON  
Progress Staff Writer

The Scottsdale Artists League celebrates its 60th anniversary this year with special events that kicked off this month, including an exhibition at new coffee shop Sweetwaters Coffee & Tea.

The exhibit, which features around 40 original pieces of artwork created by 10 of the League's artists, will remain on display through Aug. 5.

"They're very community-minded," Scottsdale Artists League President Marsha Klinger said of the Sweetwaters staff. "[They] couldn't be more accommodating to us."

Response to the exhibit has been positive so far. According to Klinger, they've already sold a handful of pieces.

"As a locally owned business, we want to support local artists, our coffee shop was designed with lots of wall space to display artwork," said David Greenberg, owner of Sweetwaters, which opened in



Sweetwaters Coffee and Tea Owner David Greenberg and Scottsdale Artists League President Marsha Klinger pose in front of a few pieces for sale at the new exhibit on display at the coffee shop. (Pablo Robles/Progress Staff Photographer)

October.

Prior to the opening of the coffee shop, Greenberg invited Klinger to view the space and gauge her interest in displaying the League members' artworks at the

2,000-square-foot shop indefinitely.

"She loved the space, and we love having beautiful artwork on our walls, which is changed every month," Greenberg said.

Founded in 1961, the Scottsdale Artists

League has grown significantly since. The organization started with a group of Arizona artists and increased in size to include several hundred members.

Now, the League has become a major art association within the state, and they continue to pursue their mission of encouraging, practicing, promoting and advancing "the interest, appreciation, and application of all forms of art."

To celebrate the League's accomplishments over the decades, they're hosting the 60th Anniversary Celebration Raffle.

Through Dec. 7, raffle tickets are available for \$10 each.

A total 600 tickets will be sold and 60 works will be donated to winners of the raffle at the final drawing held on Dec. 7 at Maria Goretti Church Hall on Granite Reef Road.

"The past year has been challenging for the creative arts," Klinger said. "Scottsdale

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## New SMoW collection rich with women artists

BY KRISTINE CANNON  
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Since the opening of Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West (SMoW) in 2015, one of the comments most often heard by Dr. Tricia Loscher, assistant director for collections, exhibitions and research is, "Where are the women artists?"

Thanks to a recently acquired collection of more than 300 works by 25 women artists, SMoW can now more confidently answer that question.

SMoW acquired one of the largest donations of female artworks ever gifted to an American institution: "The Fran and Ed Elliott Southwest Women Art Collection."



Dr. Tricia Loscher, SMoW assistant director for collections, exhibitions and research, presents some of the art from The Fran and Ed Elliott Southwest Women Art Collection, slated to open to the public in 2023. (Pablo Robles/Progress Staff Photographer)

The Elliott Collection is the first to boast an all-female lineup of artists – all with some sort of connection to Arizona.

"Remarkably, all of the 25 artists whose works grace the collection have a connection to the state of Arizona, having either resided, studied, or worked in our state," said Mike Fox, SMoW director/CEO.

"Our institution is immensely grateful and appreciative of our responsibility to extend the legacy, not only of our friends Fran and Ed Elliott, but the legacy of all the women artists represented in this unparalleled historical collection."

Loscher added, "They open a new chapter for SMoW, and create important

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Art League members have continued to create."

And they will present their latest works at the celebration raffle.

Leading up to the raffle, the League hopes to host a reception on Aug. 5 for the current Westminster Village Art Show & Sale.

The League has historically held a reception to kick off the annual art show at the retirement and assisted living facility in Scottsdale. However, it was postponed this year due to COVID-19.

And while the public is unable to view the artworks currently on display at Westminster, the League members, including Klinger, are seeing an increase in artwork sales.

"What we're finding out is people are buying artwork now," Klinger said, adding that she's even sold several works to her doctor.



Scottsdale Artists League President Marsha Klinger poses with her oil painting titled "Ode to Monet," which won Best of Show at the Scottsdale Artists' School Fine Art Show earlier this month. (Marsha Klinger)

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dialogue."

The Elliott Collection will provide SMoW with many rotating exhibitions, traveling shows, educational programming and, according to Loscher, an endless diversity of themes and stories.

"It is past time these artists reclaim their rightful place in Arizona's cultural and artistic heritage and are recognized" she said.

"This collection is about reclaiming a place in our museum for these early Arizona artists and making them visible, thus helping to make all women artists throughout the ages and the world visible," she added.

One featured artist is Marjorie Thomas, Scottsdale's first professional resident artist.

The exhibition features more than 150 of her drawings, paintings, sketches, and photos.

"Thomas was a true Arizona art pioneer,

having arrived before Arizona's statehood," said Dr. Betsy Fahlman, Arizona State University professor and SMoW trustee who helped make the acquisition happen.

Also featured is Jessie Benton Evans (1866-1954), who settled in Scottsdale, taught young artists and held regular salons in her Italianate villa. The Elliott Collection boasts 13 Evans' oils, one pastel and five etchings.

"This collection complements SMoW's mission to share with others the beauty of our state's diverse and rich cultural perspectives, backgrounds, and heritage – which each of these artists brings to the Southwest," Loscher said, adding:

"And what better place than SMoW where we can address the public's request to learn more about women artists starting with the collection of Fran Elliott, who was one of the most highly respected collectors of one of the most well-represented collections of early Arizona women artists?"

Fran and Ed Elliott spent years unearthing and championing the stories of dozens

of neglected female Arizona artists.

Loscher first became aware of Fran Elliott's collection in the 1990s while working on her master's thesis on Arizona artist Kate T. Cory, whose work is well-represented in the collection.

Fran was so supportive of Loscher's thesis that she attended her Cory exhibition opening at the State Capitol Museum.

In 2015, Ed Elliott became involved in SMoW in the absence of Fran, who had passed away one year prior, loaning several paintings to SMoW's inaugural exhibition.

"Ed believed in our museum, and it is a great honor and privilege for us that his wish was to donate Fran's collection," Loscher said.

The collection will not only help advance and amplify the voices of women artists, but will also shed light on the women artists actively helping to create art in Arizona.

"Visitors will see for themselves the unique perspective of these artists and their magnificent talent, the diversity of mediums and techniques that they em-

"He bought four pieces of my art," she said.

Klinger also sold a piece at the Scottsdale Artists' School Fine Art Show earlier this month, where she won Best of Show.

The new owner of Klinger's oil painting titled "Ode to Monet" told Klinger "she had to have it in her house."

"It's been a goal that I wanted to do probably for the last 10, 11 years," Klinger said of winning Best of Show.

Three other League members also took home prizes.

Brigitte Scaloni's oil painting "Lovely Flower" placed first, Peggy Hunt's oil painting "Hee-Haw" placed second, and Barbara Bagan's oil and cold wax piece titled "Tuscan Treasures."

"And we had four people receive honorable mentions," Klinger said proudly.

For more information about Scottsdale Artists League's 60th anniversary, the raffle, and other upcoming shows and exhibits, visit [scottsdaleartistsleague.com](http://scottsdaleartistsleague.com).

ployed," Loscher said.

"They were independent spirits with great creativity, perseverance and courage. The Elliotts' name and these artists can now be celebrated by our visitors from Arizona, America, and the world."

Loscher called the Elliott Collection a "watershed moment" for SMoW.

"This collection is unique in Arizona and indeed in the country," she said. "This collection will undoubtedly serve to heighten our reputation among other leading cultural institutions, the public, and artists alike."

SMoW is planning a major exhibition of the Elliott Collection in 2023.

Ed passed away last year and Loscher said he was "extremely supportive" of the exhibition and looked forward to seeing it.

"I'm sure Fran and Ed's spirits will be there when we celebrate their lives and the generosity of their important gift when we open the exhibition," she said.

**Information:** [scottsdalemuseumwest.org](http://scottsdalemuseumwest.org)

# Know anything interesting going on in Scottsdale?

Send your information to [wschutsky@scottsdale.org](mailto:wschutsky@scottsdale.org)

