



Educator Resource Guide:

*The Three Graces: Polly Apfelbaum,
Tony Feher, & Carrie Moyer*

September 26, 2015 – January 3, 2016

*Compiled by the
Education Department*

Image: Carrie Moyer,
Tickler, 2015, acrylic
on canvas.

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EVERSON MUSEUM OF ART

AN INTRODUCTION

In ancient Greek and Roman mythology, three enchanting goddesses known as Graces personified the attributes of creativity: beauty, joy, and wonder. In a recasting of this mythical triumvirate, the Everson introduces three contemporary artists from New York City whose colorful abstract works embody the same sensibilities but in very different forms and media. Joy, wonder, and beauty abound in the bold and sensuous biomorphic paintings of Carrie Moyer, the vibrant fabric and clay sculptures of Polly Apfelbaum, and the magical site-determined installations of Tony Feher. In addition to new works made specifically for the Everson, the exhibition will include selections from the museum's collection chosen by the exhibiting artists.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This educator resource guide was designed by the education department for use in conjunction with field trips to the Three Graces exhibition, or for use as a stand alone classroom resource. The materials included here contain curriculum connections and can be adapted for use at any grade level.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Curator of Education
Associate Curator of Education

Kimberly A. Griffiths
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Artist Biography

POLLY APFELBAUM **NEW YORK, NY**

pollyapfelbaum.com

Polly Apfelbaum is a New York City-based artist (b. 1955) who employs the use of color as communicative device within her richly dense, and often complex, abstractions. While studying painting and earning her BFA from the Tyler School of Art in 1978, she was greatly inspired by a talk given by installation artist Judy Pfaff. Pfaff made sculpture that used color, a “forbidden combination within the art academy,” at the time. When Apfelbaum eventually began to create sculpture, “her student-learned prohibitions [in regard to painting] no doubt only fixed her determination to get color, and color’s potential, fully into her art.” Apfelbaum’s works exist in a space that innovatively spans between painting, sculpture, and installation. It is her mission to provide viewers with the opportunity to experience these three artistic areas simultaneously.

In many of her works, Apfelbaum uses different kinds of synthetic velvet, which is an affordable or cost effective imitation velvet found in remnant stores in New York City. Apfelbaum is most interested in the way in which this fabric choice affects her viewers on a sensual level. Once dyed with dazzling pigments the fabric is ideal for picturing the flow and ruptures of inner life. The color does not merely rest on the surface, rather it is embedded in the medium. Apfelbaum weaves together pieces of the dyed synthetic velvet, layering and creating innovative compositional structures as she develops each artwork. In her recent installation entitled, “Deep Purple, Red Shoes,” Apfelbaum mixes contemporary discourse with the tradition of hand-woven carpets from Teotitlan del Valle, Oaxaca in Southern Mexico. In addition, local sheep wool is used, which is colored with natural pigments from the region.



Apfelbaum’s intent is for viewers to bring their own life experiences to her art, thus fostering interaction and allowing the viewer to extract their own meaning. She uses the same approach when titling her works. The titles often refer to artistic process, or simply suggest an abstract concept. She evokes strong emotional responses and sensations with her intuitive ability to transform paper, fabric, and other materials into colorful, rhythmic works. During, “the cutting, tearing, folding, and binding of papers and other materials... cuts, tears, and the like... define and retain localized physicality.” As an artist, “Apfelbaum investigates the way that color, form, and texture can be used to move us beyond current paradigms of vision and the visual into new frameworks in which to experience art.”



**Polly Apfelbaum. Reckless
Extreme Abstraction. Albright
Knox Museum. Buffalo, NY. 2005.**



Deep Purple, Red Shoes, Bepart, Waregum, Belgium, March 22 - May 31



Hand dyeing process in Oaxaca, Mexico



Dyeing & Weaving Process

Polly Apfelbaum's colorful rugs are hand dyed and hand woven in the Mexican village of Teotitlan del Valle in Oaxaca, Mexico. This village holds over 5,000 weavers working alongside a handful of skilled natural dyers. Threads for the rugs are hand-spun from local sheep wool. Rugs from this region are high in quality due to the unique extraction of natural dyes. These dyes are obtained from natural materials such as wool, moss, native Campeich wood, Marigold, Madrone bark, Muiltle shrubs, pecan shells, and wild tarragon. The most precious dyes, however, are extracted from Cochineal and Indigo. Cochineal is known as "blood of the prickly pear" because it comes from cactus-like plants that are hosts to a worm called Cochineal whose blood is bright red. The deep vibrant tones obtained from these natural materials are long lasting.

Skilled natural dyers extract pigments from natural materials similar to how tea is made. After the material is ground up, water is added and then heated. Natural fixatives are then applied to make the color last. Tones of dyes can range depending on the acidity and alkalinity of the mixture. After the dye is extracted, wool threads are dipped and soaked in the dye. Soaking time depends on the desired color. Experimental dyeing techniques are used to obtain unique colors.

Artisans of Teotitlan del Valle have been weaving rugs for centuries. Weaving is a very time consuming method of creating fabric or textiles. Creating these textiles requires the interlacing of two different threads together at right angles. Designs for rugs are sketched out on large sheets of paper to function as a guide for the weavers to follow as they work on their creations.



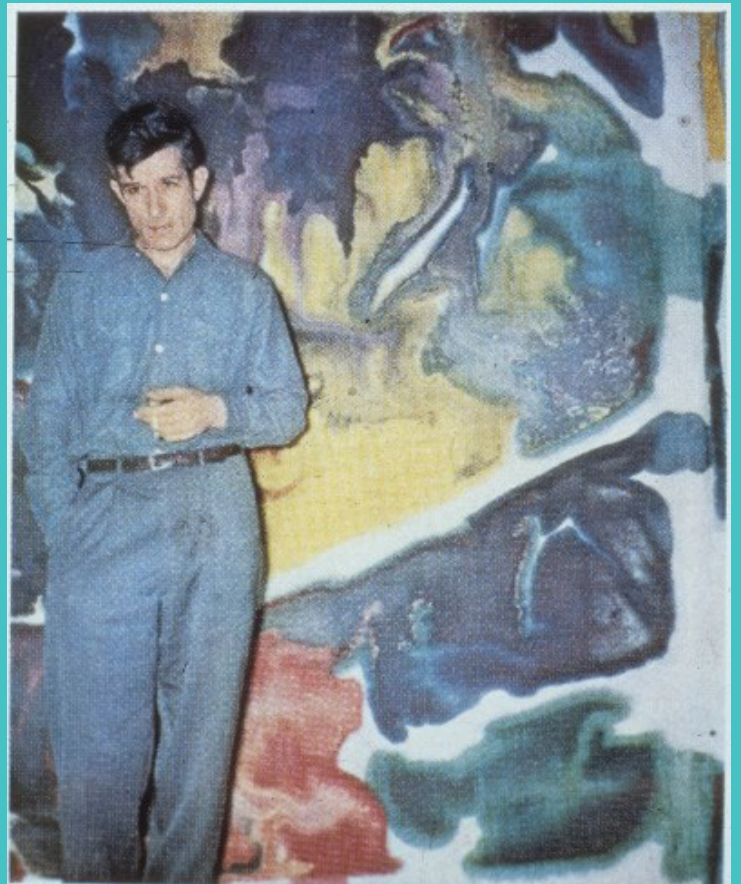
Morris Louis, Alpha-Delta, 1961, PC 68.22



Morris Louis, Twined Column I, 1960, PC 68.24

Louis' Influence ►

Inspired by Helen Frankenthaler's luminous paintings, Morris Louis developed a similar approach, manipulating the canvas so the paint flowed into stripes and organic forms. Louis is best known for his veil paintings, made by pouring very thin paint onto canvas laid across the floor. The rich pigments soaked into the unprimed canvas as they flowed across it, forming translucent layers of color. Louis developed his technique after meeting Frankenthaler, whom he described as, "the bridge between Pollock and what was possible." Apfelbaum chooses to design her installation in reaction to two Louis works entitled, "Alpha-Delta," and "Twined Column I," both from the Everson's permanent collection.



Artist Biography

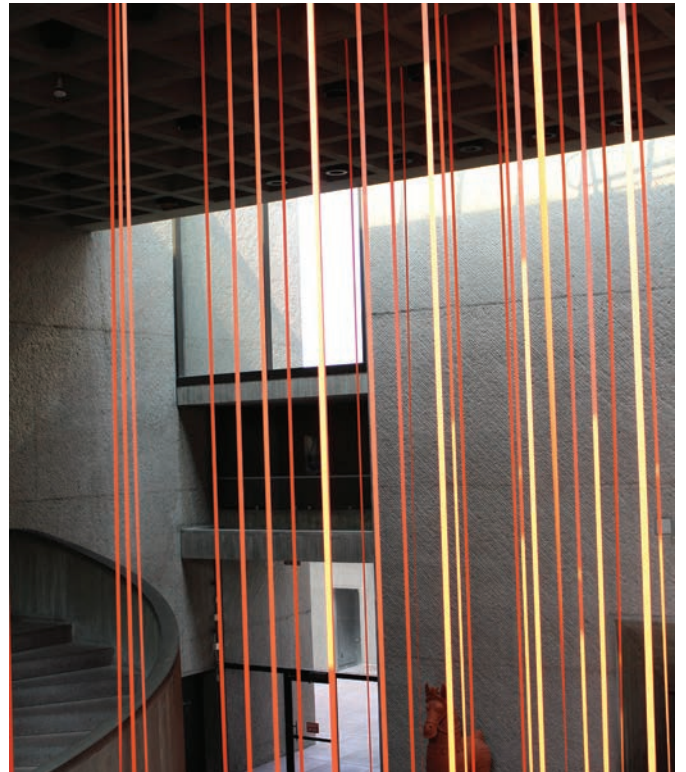
TONY FEHER NEW YORK, NY

Tony Feher is a New York City-based artist (b. 1956) who challenges viewers to see the various qualities he observes within objects of everyday life. In his work he, “simply aspires to release these qualities into a more visible [and] present context.” However, the so-called “release of qualities,” becomes more complex once Feher imbues the found objects with personal meaning. His, “practice is deeply personal, culled from all the things, people, places, and events that have defined his life for more than half a century.” Objects he works with include, but are not limited to, wire pieces, wrappers, nylon cords, glass jars, marbles, bottle caps, cans, plastic bottles, crates, and paper or plastic bags. Concerned most with the characteristic of clarity within his sculptures and installations, Feher exemplifies a true minimalist mindset.

Engaging in both studio work and large-scale, site-determined, often architecturally-based installations, Feher embraces the elements of time, place, and space. In a way, Feher claims a noticeable place in human history for the common man, by bringing seemingly unworthy and unimportant found objects to light. He hopes to create moments of “order and beauty,” in an attempt to contrast the “chaos and ugliness” of daily life. Feher asks, “[viewers] to look as carefully as [he] does at the incomparable treasures the world offers up every day.”

Feher Inspired by Everson Architecture

Inspired by I.M. Pei’s architectural genius, Feher has created site-specific installations within the interior and upon the exterior of the museum. Orange painter’s tape can be seen hanging from the ceiling of the interior sculpture court, as well as hanging as fringe on the exterior of the building. Pei’s architectural structure sought to simultaneously challenge the traditional museum typology through its innovative form, while also existing as an object of modern art in its own right. Feher draws upon Pei’s innovation when fully embracing his time within the space of the Everson.





Tony Feher
(Chanting One), 2008



Artist Biography

CARRIE MOYER BROOKLYN, NY

carriemoyer.com

Carrie Moyer is a Brooklyn-based artist (b. 1960) who is not at all afraid to express herself in innovative ways. While earning her BFA from Pratt Institute (graduated in 1985), Moyer developed her political consciousness and passion for feminism, which in turn influences her style and expression. Moyer's paintings are filled with boldly pigmented acrylic pours that echo the energetic movements seen throughout her chosen compositional structures. Her work is inspired by and often references elements found within Surrealism, Synthetic Cubism, and Color Field painting. During a short period of disenchantment with painting, Moyer turned to graphic design. She earned an MA in computer graphic design from the New York Institute of Technology in 1990. The ultimate clarity and rigidity of the graphic design process soon led Moyer back to her true passion, painting.

Though no longer a practicing graphic designer, Moyer still considers graphic design to be a central aspect of her process as an artist. She begins by creating small collages from black and white pieces of paper. These "graphic templates" are, "a kind of scaffolding for the pours and other information to hang onto." They become the overall structure of each painting. Though the templates provide Moyer with a good sense of direction for any given piece, she feels free to change and rearrange elements within the composition during the drawing process upon the canvas. Then once the outline is drawn, the canvas is placed on the



floor and she begins to pour her paint. For Moyer, "it is important to [her] that there is beauty and a sense of discovery in [her] work." These two noted characteristics are inherent in her paintings. Moyer is, "interested in abstract painting that feels referential and familiar in a way that you can't exactly articulate." She hopes that titling her works will help guide viewers toward an idea of what each work is meant to evoke. However, Moyer encourages viewers to truly look at the works and in turn, come to their own conclusions. Currently an Associate Professor in the Art and Art History Department at Hunter College, Moyer is both practitioner and educator in the field of art.



Carrie Moyer, *Herr Doktor*, 2012
Acrylic, glitter, graphite on canvas. 56 x 72 inches



Carrie Moyer. *Untitled*, 2014
Monotype. 26 x 40 inches



Frankenthaler's Influence ▶

A true inspiration to Moyer, Helen Frankenthaler pioneers the “stain” painting technique. Frankenthaler pours thinned paint directly onto unprimed canvas laid on the studio floor, and then works from all sides to create floating fields of translucent color. The paint has the appearance of watercolor and spontaneity, yet it is still controlled. For her installation space at the Everson, Moyer is inspired by Frankenthaler's work entitled, “The Human Edge,” from the Everson's collection.



Helen Frankenthaler, The Human Edge, 1967

Vocabulary

Abstract ▶

An abstract artwork does not contain easily recognizable people, objects, or places. What we do see are colors, shapes, forms, line, and sometimes the feeling of movement. Abstract art is more about what it makes you feel than creating a specific narrative or story.

Assemblage ▶

A form of sculpture comprised of found objects, or everyday items, arranged in such a way that they create a whole piece. The objects may be natural or man-made.

Color Field Painting ▶

An artistic movement that relies on color as being the subject matter of any given work. Techniques used to create a color-field painting include brushing, pouring, spraying, and staining canvas.

Contemporary Art ▶

The art of today that is idea-driven and process oriented. Made by artists living and working within our lifetime.

Found Object ▶

A natural or man-made item found by an artist and kept because of an intrinsic and/or aesthetic value.

Graphic Design ▶

The art and practice of planning and projecting ideas, experiences, and messages with both images and words.

Installation Art ▶

Artwork that is created or constructed on the site where it is exhibited, often to transform the look and feel of that place.

Minimalism ▶

An artistic movement that drastically reduced expressiveness and illusion by the use of simple geometric shapes, flat color, and arrangements of ordinary objects. The minimalist painter or sculptor is mainly interested in how the viewer perceives the relationship between the different parts of the work, and then of the different parts to the whole piece.

Surrealism ▶

An artistic movement that uses images based upon the world of dreams and fantasy.

Synthetic Cubism ▶

The later phase of cubism, characterized by an increased use of color, as well as the imitation or introduction of a wide range of textures and material into painting.

Weaving ▶

A method of fabric production in which two distinct sets of yarns or threads are interlaced, usually at right angles, to form a fabric or cloth.

HOW TO DISCUSS CONTEMPORARY ART

Consider the formal qualities ▶

(color, composition, style, scale, mood, media and materials)

Questions to ask yourself and/or others:

- 1) What do you see?
- 2) How do you think the artist made this work?

Consider the concept ▶

(ideas, choices, and process that contribute to the work)

Questions to ask yourself and/or others:

- 1) Why do you think the artist made the work in this way?
- 2) What does this work remind you of?

Consider relationships ▶

Questions to ask yourself and/or others:

- 1) What connections can you make to this work?
- 2) How does the work relate to your own ideas, experiences, opinions, and/or assumptions?
- 3) What visual, literary, and/or historical references do you see in this work?
- 4) What can this work tell you about the artist, yourself, and/or the world around you?

Art is rarely created in a vacuum. Artists constantly reference the past by building on timeless themes, critiquing outdated models, researching forgotten histories, or borrowing traditional methods and techniques to realize new ideas. Contemporary art encompasses multiple themes and mediums that are provocative, open-ended and explore deeper meaning. This type of art can be collaborative, experiential, interactive, and/or a form of social critique. As poignantly stated by artist Tom Huff,

“...Anything and everything ... [can] be art.”

▶ Curiosity, openness, and dialogue are important tools for engaging with works of contemporary art. Rather than questioning whether an artwork is good or bad, try using an open-ended methodology and an inquiry-based approach. Approaching contemporary art in this manner encourages students to see and understand, rather than assume. Consider a work of art as an opportunity for students to discover meanings and not simply find a correct answer, or interpretation.

Activity Ideas

BEFORE TRAVELING TO THE MUSEUM Activities for the Classroom

Activity 1: Engaging with Abstraction, inspired by Carrie Moyer

Begin a discussion with your students about abstract art and perhaps about abstraction in general terms. What are some elements one can see in an abstract painting? Are these elements always definable? For example, what do the students see in Carrie Moyer's 2012 painting entitled *Rock, Paper, Scissors*? How does the painting make them feel? Then after the discussion, have students create their own abstract artwork on a piece of colored construction paper. Allow the students to better understand Moyer's artistic process by first cutting various shapes out of black and white construction paper. Then, they will arrange the cut shapes on top of the colored paper until they are pleased with their composition. Moyer refers to this process as creating "graphic templates." Lastly, have them trace and/or color in the shapes with crayons, colored pencils, markers, etc. End the lesson by having students share their drawings with one another.



Frieze, 2009
Acrylic, glitter on canvas
45 x 71 inches



Untitled, 2011, green glass bottles and red glass marbles, 11 x 36 x 3 1/2 inches.

DURING THE MUSEUM VISIT

Activity 1: What type(s) of art do you see?

Have your students keep track of the types of art they see throughout the exhibition. You can create a chart beforehand with rows labeled: painting, sculpture, installation, fiber, and mixed media. Then as the students move through their guided tour, they can place check marks (in pencil!) next to the designated labels you have provided. If they are ever unsure as to what type of art they are seeing, they may place a check mark next to "mixed media," thus indicating that multiple techniques and styles were used by the artist.

Activity 2: Which of the Three Graces will you choose?

Once your students have viewed the *Three Graces* exhibition in its entirety, have them choose which of the three artists' work they connected with the most. Then, have them think about and answer the following questions:

- * Which artist did you choose? Why?
- * How does that artwork make you feel?
- * What connections can you make to the work(s)?
- * Is there one piece that stood out to you more than the others? If so, why do you think that is?
- * If you could ask the artist one question about their art in general, or a specific work of art they created, what would it be?



Polly Apfelbaum, *Love Alley*, 2011,
32×68 inches, edition of 35

AFTER TRAVELING TO THE MUSEUM

Activities for the Classroom

Activity 1: Design your own installation, inspired by Tony Feher

Have each student choose a “special found object” from either your classroom or their own homes in preparation for creating their own installation in a space at school. Examples of found objects include, but are not limited to clean bottles, cups, jars, marbles, string, coins, baskets, branches, and leaves. Show students the space and have them consider that space when thinking about the arrangement of the objects. They will choose how to assemble their objects in relation to the message they wish to convey, or the concept they wish for their classmates to think about. When the installation is complete, have students discuss why they chose the objects they did.

Activity 2: Wishful Weaving, inspired by Polly Apfelbaum

Before teaching this activity, purchase felt sheets in a variety of colors from your local craft store. Then, cut half of the sheets into 1 inch strips and form groups of each color for your students. While teaching this activity in the classroom, have students begin by folding a felt sheet in half, hamburger-style. While the sheet is still folded, have them draw a series of lines across the fold in marker, but make sure they leave about 1/2 inch before the edge of the sheet. Next, have them cut along the lines they drew. When they are finished cutting, they may unfold the sheet. The students may now choose a variety of the pre-cut 1 inch felt strips and can start weaving the strips into the large piece of felt. Once each strip is woven through, secure the strips with tacky glue on the backside of their work of art. Like Apfelbaum, the students have successfully taken an affordable material and created a colorful, woven, and communicative artwork.

A LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES IN PRINT FROM PAST EXHIBITIONS

Polly Apfelbaum, Studio K, Kiasma, Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki

Polly Apfelbaum: Installations 1996-2000, Bowdoin College Museum of Art

Polly Apfelbaum: What Does Love Have To Do With It, Stephen D. Paine Gallery at Massachusetts College of Art

Polly Apfelbaum, Institute of Contemporary Art at University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

Carrie Moyer: Interstellar, Worcester Art Museum

Carrie Moyer: Pirate Jenny, The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College

Tony Feher, Blaffer Art Museum at University of Huston

Tony Feher, Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College

Tony Feher, Pacewildenstein

SCHEDULING A TOUR

The Everson provides guests of all ages an opportunity to enjoy, learn, and connect with art through a variety of free docent-led tours. Choose from one of our many thematic tours or take a general tour of the permanent collection or temporary exhibitions.

Docent-led tours are available ***Wednesday through Friday, 10:00 AM – noon***. Afternoon and weekend tours are available on a limited basis. ***Tours are one hour in length.***

Group size is limited to ***60 people maximum***, but larger groups may reserve two consecutive sessions. One docent will be assigned to every ten students.

To schedule your tour please contact Qiana Williams, Associate Curator of Education (315) 474-6064 x303 or email qwilliams@everson.org at least three weeks in advance. Tour dates book quickly, so it is recommended that you have alternate dates in mind. Please find a tour request form attached to this packet.

RELATED PROGRAMMING

FAMILY PROGRAMS

Artful Tales, 1.00pm, Free

September 26 You are Stardust by Elin Kelsey

October 10 Wild by Emily Hughes

November 14 A Perfectly Messed-Up Story by Patrick McDonnell

For children ages 3 and up and their caregivers. Enjoy an afternoon of storytelling and gallery exploration with a Museum docent. Stories are inspired by themes found in the Three Graces exhibition- joy, beauty and wonder! To register, contact Kimberly Griffiths, kgriffiths@everson.org, (315) 474 6064 x308.

Family Day! Halloween Happenings

October 24, 11am-5pm

Enjoy Halloween themed activities all day long. Art making, tours, trick-or-treating movies and more! Join in art making inspired by Three Graces artists Polly Apfelbaum, Carrie Moyer and Tony Feher! Have fun using recycled materials, pipe cleaners, rags and more to create a colorful woven piece using a simple loom. Pour and roll paint to make a colorful abstract print. Use tape in unusual ways to create a vivid sun catcher.

Sunday Funday

(Ages 4 and up)

Sundays September 27 through November 22

2-4pm, Free

Drop into the Everson for fun, free activities, hands-on crafts, games and more led by our dedicated volunteers.

Baby and Me Tours

October 2, November 6, 11.30am, Free

Moms, Dads and caregivers can enjoy a tour while babies enjoy the stimulating colors and shapes of the artwork. Tours will focus on a different theme each month. Afterwards, stay to eat lunch (or feed baby) in the Everson Lounge. Bring your own lunch, or purchase one from the Everson Lunch Cart.

ADULT PROGRAMS / HAPPENINGS

TGIF Tours

October 16, November 20, 12.15pm, Free

Start your weekend early with the Everson TGIF Tour, led by various members of the Everson's talented staff, each with a special point-of-view. After a 30-minute tour stay to chat and eat lunch with the Museum's pros in the Everson Lounge. Lunch can be purchased from the Everson Lunch Cart.

Witches Brew Halloween Party 21+

October 29, 5-8pm

Cover charge Members \$10, Non-Members \$15

Join us for this spirited evening of art, local craft brews, and Halloween treats. Come as you aren't – costumes encouraged, but not required.

Ladies Night

November 19, 6.00pm-8.00pm

Members \$20, Non-Members \$25

Pamper yourself before the holidays and have a fun night out with friends. Enjoy an evening of health and beauty.

Artist Gallery Walk

October 22nd, 6.30pm, Free

Meet artists from the exhibition Three: Graces: Polly Apfelbaum, Tony Feher and Carrie Moyer.

Artists on Art Audio Tour

Take a self-guided tour and listen to audio narratives by artists from the exhibition Three: Graces: Polly Apfelbaum, Tony Feher and Carrie Moyer. Borrow an iPod from the Visitors Service Desk.

Joy, Beauty & Wonder

September 26-November 15, 2015

Joy, Beauty & Wonder was a call to photographers of all ages to share their original photographs expressing their inspiration from the themes of joy, beauty and wonder. Themes are drawn from the exhibition Three Graces: Polly Apfelbaum, Tony Feher and Carrie Moyer.

EDUCATORS

Art Connections! Educator Workshop

September 28, 1.00pm-4.00pm

Members \$10, Non-Members \$15,

Pre-registration required, space limited

Join the education department for a private viewing and tour of Three Graces: Polly Apfelbaum, Tony Feher and Carrie Moyer. Explore new approaches for teaching and learning contemporary art practices for use in a classroom setting. Three Graces artist Carrie Moyer will discuss her work, lead a hands-on workshop and provide ample opportunity for the exchange of ideas. Please contact Qiana Williams at qwilliams@everson.org or 474.6064 x303 to reserve your space.



EVERSON MUSEUM OF ART

TOUR REQUEST FORM

REQUESTOR'S NAME: _____ TODAY'S DATE: _____

SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

AGE OF GROUP: _____ NUMBER IN GROUP: _____ (60 VISITORS MAXIMUM PER TOUR)

Please note the Everson Museum is open for docent led tours from Wednesday to Saturday, 10:00am—5:00pm, and Sunday, from noon—5:00pm.

TENATIVE DATE OF TOUR: _____ PREFERRED TIME: _____

ALTERNATE DATE: _____ PREFERRED TIME: _____

TYPE OF TOUR:

We offer many types of tours. Please select a tour type by checking your choice below:

- Visual Thinking Strategies Architecture Art History Ceramics
- iPad Pals (Presentations) K—12 College-level Seniors
- General Spanish or French Speaking

OFFICE USE ONLY:

DATE RECEIVED: _____ INFORMATION TAKEN BY: _____ MASTER CALENDAR ENTRY DATE: _____

GOOGLE CALENDAR ENTRY DATE: _____ STATISTIC DATA ENTRY DATE: _____

CONFIRMATION PACKET SENT ON: _____ CONFIRMATION SENT TO DOCENTS ON: _____

DOCENTS CONFIRMED:

PLEASE SUBMIT FORM TO: QWilliams@everson.org

401 Harrison Street • Syracuse NY 13202 • 315-474-6064 x 303 • eversonmuseum.org