



Searching for truth and beauty, preaching through the transforming power of the arts

Winter Newsletter 2015 Volume 17 Issue 1

Gathering 2015: “Catching the Spirit, Creating the Dream”



As we gather on the Great Plains in the heart of our country, at Heartland Spirituality Center in Great Bend, there is a fundamental simplicity of gathering that was and is close to the Native American tradition of that space and the Dominican Institute for the Arts.

Native peoples have powwows every summer to gather and share the stories, the meaning and depth of their traditions. This year we hope to do the same in that sacred circle of the Arts we call DIA. From the earliest gatherings we have taken time to simply be with each other, explore our work, and the depth of its meaning to us.

This year we hope to explore those riches. Elizabeth Slenker OP writes: “we will explore our commitment as artists in today’s world. We will scrutinize our own gifts as well as some of the heritage of the Native American people who embraced the land we visit.”

So how will we ground our exploration as Dominican Artists? As any Dominican endeavor through prayer, study, and the joy of the community we will seek to better understand how we can as Ann

GREAT BEND GATHERING IMPORTANT CHANGES:

For those flying:

Be aware that the final destination is Hayes Airport, Great Bend, Kansas. The flights from Denver to Hayes are: Leave Denver at 7:55am and arrive Great Bend at 10:08 AM or Leave Denver at 3:00 PM and arrive Great Bend at 5:13 PM. There is only ONE flight from Great Bend to Denver. It leaves Great Bend at 10:44 AM and arrives in Denver at 11:01 AM.

The Airline Carrier is United Express operated by Sky West. The plane has 50 seats. YOU are STRONGLY urged to make their airline reservations as soon as possible. DIA will pick up the cost for room and board for all staying Saturday with Sunday Departure and mass will be 4PM Saturday.

Gathering Dates Now: July 22-26 for all

Gathering 2015: Continued

Willits once said: "Feel the Flame, Catch the Fire, Burn with Peace." This impels our preaching.

There will be a panel from various artistic disciplines to illuminate our study followed by table discussion to enhance our creativity. We will also honor our past and see where that moves us forward.

But our study and preaching is not limited to experts, we each have something to share. "So," Elizabeth reminds us, "Be sure to bring a work of art you wish to share."

On a trip to Heartland farm there will be an opportunity for some exploration of the landscape as well as a picnic, and numerous activities based on Native American Spirituality. Elizabeth advises: "It would also be a good idea to bring a good pair of walking shoes, a hat, and a neckerchief."

We hope to see you then as we continue the adventure of preaching through the arts. Great Bend awaits...



Take the DIA Challenge!

Sometimes we need a nudge to get us to try something new.

The DIA CHALLENGE is to creativity together—in other words Collaboration!

Go to our website, www.diartsop.org and in our galleries find a work that inspires you or find one around you. Then create a poem, a dance, a song, a work of art that draws out its meaning for you.

Just maybe it could become part of our virtual gallery at the gathering or on the web.

If you do send the results to us At diartsop@gmail.com.



Dominican Artists of Latin America: “Showing the Way to God through Beauty”

From September 27 to October 3, 2014, Dominican artists with their colleagues and associates from the United States, Mexico, Argentina, El Salvador, Columbia, and the Caribbean islands assembled in Guatemala City to celebrate a conference entitled: *‘And Dwelt Among Us’: Art, Culture, and Preaching*. Among the participants were Kathy Rhody, representing the DIA, and Sister Valeria Nougue, whose friendship with Thoma Swanson inspired her to initiate a Latin American counterpart of the DIA in Venezuela in 2002. Subsequent gatherings were held in Mexico (2008) and Peru (2011). Participants were accommodated in Veritas House, Guatemala City, and held their meetings and workshops “in a marginal school” run by the Dominican Sisters of the Annunciation. According to the organizers of the event, the venue itself was chosen so that “the ministry of beauty can be a source of hope amid the sorrow, of showing the way to God through beauty.”

Like the planners of our U.S. Gatherings, artists in The Dominican Confederation of Latin America and the Caribbean arrange a schedule combining prayer, study, discussion, art exhibits, performances, and workshops for introducing new artistic techniques. One tradition which distinguishes the Latin American gathering is the creation of an original mural on-site during the conference. The process of producing the mural is collaborative and organic— from the choice of content, to sketching preliminary designs, through enlarging the sketches, painting them on canvas panels, attaching these panels to a huge canvas, and adding final colors and details— no one artist predominates. Working side by side throughout the week promotes an instant bond among strangers. The finished artifact remains on the wall as a gift from the artists to the host community. Six years ago in Mexico, the mural was left to adorn the exterior wall of a Dominican monastery.

One of the most memorable features of the Guatemala event was a unique “field trip” to a land-fill where destitute scavengers survive by sifting through mountains of trash to use, re-purpose, and sell. Nearby is a grade school, Francisco Coll Education Center, founded by the Dominican Sisters of the Annunciation. This free school, which originated in the 1990’s, benefits the whole community when its sixty students go home and teach their parents. Located in a blighted neighborhood, replete with littered alleys, scattershot streets, and makeshift shelters, the site presented quite a challenge as an exhibition space for art. On the day of the “field trip,” resourceful housewives offered baked goods



Dominican Artists of Latin America Continued

imagination. Then in small groups, the Dominican artists engaged the children in making artistic creations with new and recycled materials which the visitors had prepared and brought with them.

During the week, the group had the opportunity to listen to inspiration from Sister Valeria on “Art, Revelation of the Mystery,” and to discuss the inspiration for and from their own artifacts which they had brought to the gathering for this purpose. Of all these activities, the features which Kathy would most like to see adopted by DIA planners are the outreach into an impoverished community and the collaborative production of an artifact.

- Kathy Rhody OPA

For more pictures of Kathy’s experience go to www.diartsop.org and into her page on the gallery.



Reflections from the President

In this time when turmoil and violence grips our world, our preaching through the arts is a moral imperative. The arts touch our tears, broken hearts, and offer hope in ways nothing else can. This is the challenge that faces us – how can we be creative and do together what we cannot do alone. Collaboration helps us “become who God calls us to be” as our brother Quirico Pedregosa, Jr., OP writes.

How can we collaborate more with each other? One way is to “Take the DIA Challenge” described in this newsletter. Others are to seek out and offer our gifts to our congregations, committees, ministries, parish groups and neighborhoods. I know you are doing this but it is important that we share the stories as well as let others know when you need a collaborator.

Ann Willits OP wrote to us as the DIA Board, [She was once a DIA Board member herself]:

“I am part of a group which came out of our COMMUNITY DAYS gathering last August held at Sinsinawa. Our focus is FOSTERING RELATIONSHIPS FOR MISSION... I was asked to report on the DOMINICAN INSTITUTE FOR THE ARTS, its mission, membership and events. . . .

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your leadership and service. The focus of your entity, the zeal, authenticity and gusto of your vision was so obvious not only in your website, but by the many people who have been part of all that the DOMINICAN INSTITUTE FOR ARTS has accomplished. We thank you. As I presented the report on your work, your sense of mission edified us.

As the meeting progressed we became more and more aware that some of our Congregation members and associates might be unaware of your mission and focus.”

So it is time for you to tell the story on the website at diartsop@gmail.com . Thanks for all who have let us know about others shows!

In Memoriam



We Remember Jill Poehlman and Juliana Savoy whose joy and creativity graced our presence.



Dominican Former Motherhouse Project

By Elaine DeRosiers, OP

In 2009, seven Dominican congregations formed one new community, the Dominican Sisters of Peace. Those involved were from Oxford, MI; Columbus, OH; Akron, OH; St. Catharine, KY; Great Bend, KS; and both congregations in New Orleans. Two years later, the DeRicci Sisters from Elkins Park, Pennsylvania joined us.

One of the goals of the new congregation is to come together, to get to know more of the sisters who are now ONE. As a retiree at the St. Catharine Motherhouse with the ministry of Artist in Residence, it occurred to me that I could go to each of the former motherhouses and while spending some quality time there, do an oil painting of the house. How good for each of us to have a painting of our former headquarters!



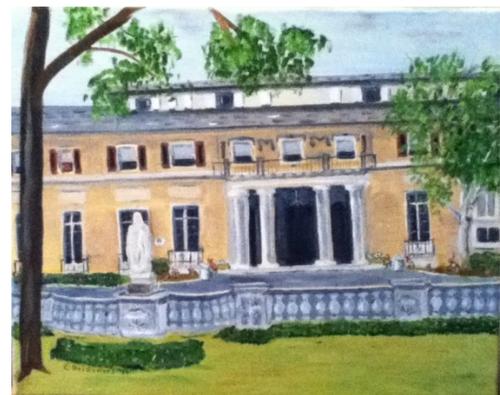
This project, I knew from the beginning, would be an experience of itinerant artistic preaching. It might take a year or more and a good deal of flexibility because

transportation would depend on getting to and from these locations by riding with sisters who were driving there for business or leisure. I might have to stay a healthy length of time—even months—between rides.



I began by painting my own former motherhouse in Kentucky. My first opportunity to travel was a ride to Our Lady of the Elms in Akron, Ohio on September 29. After almost three weeks there, I was driven to Our Lady of the Springs in Columbus for another period of the same length. In each place, I met my dual goal. I had time to participate in the life of the sisters, get to know each by name, and to produce a 16"by 20" oil painting.

On November 5th, I returned St. Catharine's to stay until after the Christmas holidays. I am relying on continued Divine Providence to help me further this project which I consider to have been given me as a gift from God. The end product will be a legacy of original paintings of the eight founding congregations, a familiarity with hundreds of our sisters, and a log to accompany the project.

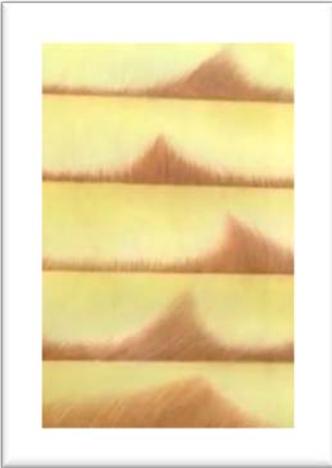


**Recent and
Current Shows:**

**Bernadine
Egleston, OP**

**Word Collages, Pencil
Art, and Wood Carvings
Works also of
Jan Schichting OP**

**Martin DePorres Center,
Columbus, Ohio
January 12-March 23, 2015**



This exhibit features the work of two Dominican artists who have very different styles and work in different media. See YouTube of her show on her gallery at www.diartsop.org.

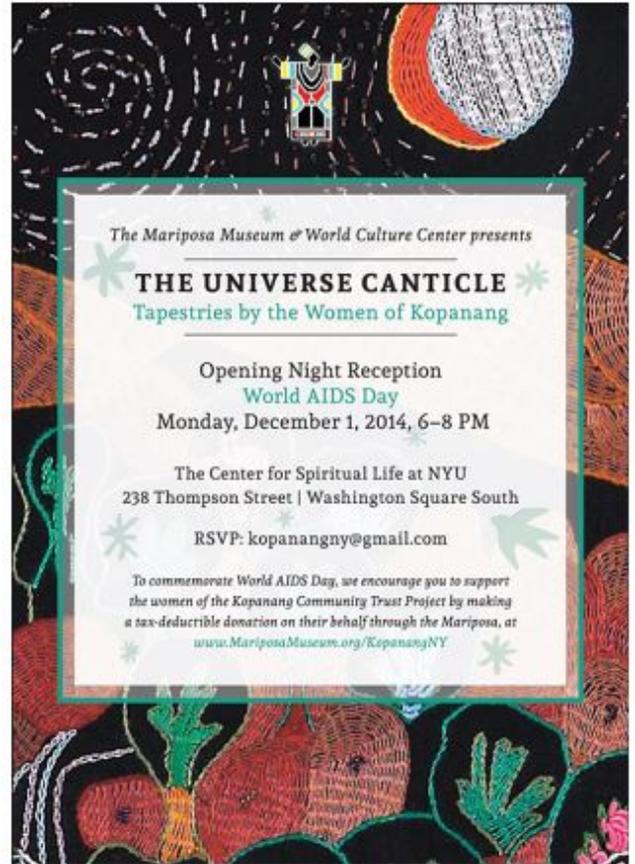
Joann Iannotti OP

The Clare Gallery is pleased to present *Intimate Spirits: Photography and Poetry in Conversation*, an exhibition by photographer and poet **Sister Jo-Ann Iannotti, OP**.



The exhibition displays both poetry and photography in concert accenting the power of word and image. This exhibition is free and open to the public and extends from January 19–March 15, 2015.

Sheila Flynn OP



Thoma Swanson OP



A YouTube of her show can be seen on our gallery at www.diartsop.org

What are you creating lately?

Email us at diartsop@gmail.com or emichael@caldwell.edu

Joeann Daley OP 1962-2015

The Evolution of the Artistic Imagination Sinsinawa Art Gallery April 11 to June 3, 2015

This exhibition spans over fifty years of art-making. These prints, collages, and mixed media works were chosen as guides into understanding how one artist sees the world. The two hundred “Styroart” vessels began in 2010, a new art form that takes the throw-away object and transforms it into a thing of great beauty. This series is collectively a single work of self-portraiture that explores community and spirit.

This new art form makes use especially of my skills as a printmaker. I have replaced my engraving tools with a ball point pen and the zinc plate with Styrofoam. I have retained my habit of hand coloring, now using Prismacolor markers on Styrofoam rather than watercolor on paper.

The works displayed give evidence that all art-making is a visual record of a life lived, leaving a trail of images behind. I invite the viewer to enter a world of visual images and follow the trail of my evolving imagination that connects the years, yet comes full circle. As T. S. Elliot expressed:

*We shall not cease from exploration.
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*

As you browse through the pages of my life, look for these elements and themes:

- * rich texture, patterns and borders
- * density of images, often used in a collage-like effect
- * use of words for graphic effect as well for meaning
- * making ordinary topics worthy of expression
- * a sense of mystery, humor, and surprise

- Joeann Daley, OP

Have your sent in your DIA Membership forms?

If you need some to share go to the membership page on www.diartsop.org for a download.



The Artist as Preacher: Homiletics in Styrofoam

Pictured here, where the imagery seems to be moving toward the artist as well as away from her, Joeann Daley’s work exemplifies, perhaps unconsciously, my favorite statement about preaching: “The homily’s first audience is the preacher herself.” And what are Joeann’s coffee cups saying to her, I ask myself as I “listen” to the poster announcing her forthcoming exhibit: “The Evolution of the Artistic Imagination.”

According to Joeann, these despised and disposable objects are calling to her for their transformation into something they have never even hoped for themselves before. It is the fact of their ordinariness that renders this transformation so profound. Are they not calling her, calling us, to the same? Is this not an artistic rendering of our vocation to bring the power of transforming love, not only to the ordinariness of our lives, but also to those whom society has discarded?

Next I notice how the artist’s hands are also preaching. They are in the act of both giving and receiving. And in the midst of an overwhelming complexity and interdependence of colors and shapes, the hands seem inseparable from the artist’s materials:—artist and artifact, creator and creation, noun and verb: One. The

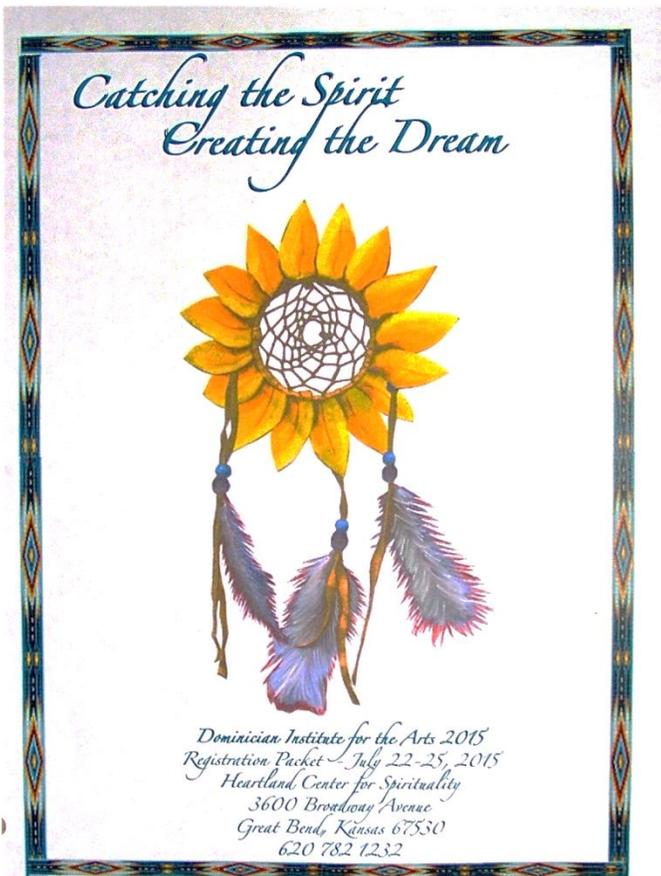
The Artist As Preacher

artist has not attempted to make her hands slender and picturesque. These are the hands of a lifelong printmaker who has worked with stubborn surfaces and unforgiving chemicals. Now they hold the soft cup gently as it gives itself without resistance. Thus, as she covers its nakedness with intricate designs, she feels herself moving toward "evolution."

In this visual homily that preaches to the preacher, words are the least prominent element in the design. Ideally, the artist-preacher is continually evolving from words into action.

- Elizabeth Michael Boyle OP

Hope to see you in Great Bend!
Remember it's July 22 -26!



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