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The Phipps will host community forum to complement upcoming exhibit

Jan 2, 2022

Hudson, Wisc. — The Phipps Center for the Arts in will present a free community forum inspired by an exhibition of paintings and digitally designed posters by Duluth-based artist Moira Villiard. The exhibition, titled “Doublethink: The Rights of the Child” www.artbymoira.com/rightsofthechild, will be presented in The Galleries of The Phipps from Jan. 21 through Feb. 27. The forum is designed to encourage people from different faiths and cultural backgrounds to come together, share perspectives, learn from one another and make connections across differences.

Villiard’s exhibit sheds light on the contradictory beliefs and behaviors towards children’s rights while calling attention to the concept of “doublethink,” or the state in which a person holds two or more contradictory beliefs, behaviors or attitudes towards a topic or situation. One example she highlights is the fact that the United States is the only member of the United Nations yet to ratify the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child which created an international framework to ensure governments implement policies that invest in child development and protect them from violence and exploitation, according to a press release from the Phipps.

The Forum will open with an artist talk by Villiard in which she will provide insights into the re-search she conducted while working on the exhibit, discuss

how they are reflected in her work, and address the impact she sees of “doublethink” on children’s rights issues. Her talk will be followed by a presentation by Moira Lynch, professor of politics, geography and international studies at the University of Wisconsin at River Falls, who will trace the origin and history of human rights, and address how the status of children has changed over time.

Break-out sessions facilitated by community members will follow the presentations. Potential topics include the relationship of the child and the body, access to clean water and a healthy environment, family relationships and a safe home environment, hunger and poverty, and access to and autonomy over the content of education.

Paul Johnson will oversee this portion of the Forum. Johnson is a graduate of Hudson High School and the founder of Proactivism, a social business offering coaching and training to eradicate racism.

The Forum will conclude with participants reconvening to share highlights of the break-out discussions with one another. A reception will follow.

Speaker biographies:

Moira Villiard

Moira Villiard is a dynamic visual artist, proficient in a variety of artistic genres, including portraiture, illustration, graphic and digital design and as a muralist. She is also a community organizer, curator and passionate arts educator concentrating her efforts around issues of equity and justice including arts access, creative placemaking, environmental sustainability, youth empowerment, and acknowledgment of Indigenous land, culture, and history.

Moira (pronounced “Mee-Ree”) grew up on the Fond du Lac Reservation in

Cloquet, MN, and identifies as a Fond du Lac direct descendant of both settler and Indigenous heritage - Anishinaabe paternally and Delaware Lenape maternally. For three years she worked as the Arts & Cultural Programming Coordinator for the American Indian Community Housing Organization.

Villiard currently works as a freelance consultant, designer, speaker, and grant-writer. She was broadly recognized in 2019, when she received the 2019 Duluth NAACP “Take a Stand for the Revolution” award, 2019 Emerging City Champions fellowship, Forecast Public Art 2019 Early-Career Project Grant, 2019 YWCA Women of Distinction award, and The Duluth News Tribune 20 under 40 award. In 2021 she received multiple grants for projected animation work and was the featured artist in the Northern Lights MN. Illuminate the Lock Event, and recently received the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council Established Artist grant for an upcoming exhibit around gaps in mental health crisis care in Northeastern MN.

Villiard’s work has been featured in numerous shows in Duluth and around Minnesota, including her recent solo show, “Rights of the Child” at Zeitgeist, and group shows “Beyond Borders” at MacRostie Arts Center and “We the People” at the Minnesota Museum of American Art. She received an Associate of Liberal Arts degree with a Servant Leadership Certificate from the Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College and a BS in Communicating Arts and Global Studies from the University of Wisconsin at Superior.

Moira Lynch

Moira Lynch is a professor in the at the University of Wisconsin at River Falls. Prior to this, she was a faculty member in the Department of Political Science at Loyola University Maryland (2012-2020). Her research examines the conditions for justice during internal armed conflict, human rights prosecutions, transitional justice in post-communist Eastern European states, gender equality in post-conflict settings and justice efforts related to policing in the United States. She teaches courses on international politics, global justice, global climate policy,

gender, human rights, and conflict/war.

Lynch received her BA in Interdisciplinary Studies (politics and gender studies) from Miami University and her PhD in Political Science (International Relations and Human Rights) from the University of Minnesota.

Paul Johnson

Paul Johnson is the founder of Proactivism, a social business that helps white-identifying individuals become meaningfully engaged in anti-racism work. He is an Intercultural Development Inventory Qualified Administrator, a Gallup Clifton Strengths Coach, and YWCA Racial Justice Facilitator. He believes that all white individuals play an integral part in ending racism but need to understand what that role is and how to use our power and privilege for good.

Johnson received his BA in Psychology from St. Olaf College and his MA in Leadership from Augsburg College.