

MONEY FOR WOMEN/BARBARA DEMING MEMORIAL FUND, INC.
GRANTS AWARDED
MAY 2015 FICTION AND ART



Barbara Deming (1917-1984) was a feminist, lesbian, poet, writer, and nonviolent activist in the civil rights, anti-war and women's movements. She founded the Money for Women Fund in 1975 and said, "In my life I've been helped as a writer to do my work. I think it's fair that I try to help others." Now a memorial fund, and also sustained by the late writer and artist Mary Meigs and generous contributions from donors and former grantees, the fund gives encouragement and small grants to individual feminists in the arts (writers and visual artists). Our address is PO Box 717 Bearsville, NY 12409. Our website is www.demingfund.org. Deadlines for applications occur twice a year: June 30th for poetry and nonfiction, and December 31st for art, fiction, and mixed-genre. Judges and readers for this grant cycle were Maureen Brady, Julie R. Enszer, Martha Hughes, Marcia Smith, Roz Kuehn, Elin Menzies, and Pia Oste-Alexander. Grants were awarded to 14 women and totaled \$12,000.

Susan Abulhawa _____ **FICTION**
The Blue Between Sky and Water (Yardley, PA)

A novel spanning over 60 years and four generations of women in one Palestinian family of refugees from the 1967 war, narrated in part by Khaled, by a boy trapped in his immobile body.

Of everything that disappeared, Kinder Eggs were what I missed most. When the walls closed in on Gaza and adult conversations became hotter and sadder, I measured the severity of our siege by the dwindling number of those delicate chocolate eggs, wrapped in thin colorful foil, with splendid toy surprises incubating inside the eggs on store shelves. When they finally disappeared, and the rusty metal of those shelves stared back naked, I realized that Kinder Eggs had brought color into the world. In their absence, our lives turned a metallic sepia, then faded to black-and-white, the way the world used to be in the old Egyptian movies, when my teta Nazmiyah was the sassiest girl in Beit Baras. Even after the tunnels were dug under the border between Gaza and Egypt to smuggle the things of the living, Kinder Eggs were still hard to come by.

Award is to aid in completion of final draft, where the author will add a glossary of Arabic words, a family tree, notes, and an epilogue referencing the attack on Gaza, summer 2014.

Caitlin Hayes _____ **FICTION**
A Pain Like That (Ithaca, NY)

The characters in this collection of fourteen stories are coping with loss, both real and anticipated. The loss forces them to re-examine themselves, to move away from who they thought they would be and wonder who they will become. The stories at times dramatize how women and children protect or expose themselves by rebelling from the protection of others.

She shifts in the bed, tries to move her bad leg. "We should shovel before it gets so heavy," Ginny says in her sleep. Jane shakes her head. She knows about

places like this. That they'll pump you full of drugs so as not to have any trouble. So that you won't see it when it comes for you. Jane wants to see it. She doesn't want any tricks. Also if she can see it, she can face it, and if she can face it she can fight. She is not so old as some others, only seventy-six. Ginny is ninety.

Award is for basic living expenses to allow for a summer to break from teaching to finish the story collection.

Claudia Alvarez _____ **ART**
En El Jardin (NY, New York)

"En El Jardin will be a large installation consisting of 12 large sculptures...The nature of my project addresses current social and political issues related to war, discrimination, violence against women and children, and other inequities of power and their impact of individual and group behavior."



*En El Jardin, 2014, Ceramic, Work in progress,
 45" x 8' x 12'*

Award is for art supplies to finish installation.

Elizabeth Alexander _____ **ART**
Heirloom (Lowell, MA)

"For the past few years I have been cutting through bone chinaware and porcelain objects to remove their decoration and change the nature of these objects'

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utilitarian function...recently cutting through a partial set of wedding china and stacking it to create a more abstracted, larger work...The decoration, often floral, is a stand-in for delicacy, femininity, cultivation, indulgence, and beauty, and acts differently when it is removed from a porcelain teacup or added to a tool. When added, the presence of decoration projects desire, prosperity, and escapism onto objects and places that are often overlooked. When removed, the absence of decoration signifies loss, vulnerability, and a leveling of perceived unreachable places.”



Baumkuchen (Seville), in progress, hand cut porcelain, adhesive, 2014-

Award is to aid in expanding the work, materials, and time.

Patricia Grace King _____ **FICTION**
Rooster Hour (Chicago, IL)

King’s novel-in-progress, “Rooster Hour” is an international spy novel in the style of Graham Greene, but with a female protagonist. Val, a young human rights worker, becomes entangled with a CIA operative, Evan, at the height of Guatemala’s civil war. *Val walked out to the milpas, the fields, with the mayor to count the dead bodies. She wrote down the date and place where they found them. Who they were, or had been, was harder to tell. Their noses were missing, their tongues gouged out, the skin sometimes peeled from their faces. Together they tried—Val and the mayor—to estimate the hours since death. There were shadings of color: brown into red into purple-green-blue and then black...For the first several months, the mayor was better than Val at such details... She was there to record the things the mayor found in their pockets: grocery lists; fishing line; wallets, usually empty; a photograph of charm...So here she was...in a field cut from the side of a mountain, staring at her boots and a squashed stalk of corn and some little blue flower down there in the mud, while the mayor said in a voice muffled by his big green bandanna, “Drop*

your head lower. Turn away out of the wind.” As if it were the odor alone that had hit her.

Award is for travel to the town of Santiago to observe and become a student of the Tz’utujil language and culture.

Rachel Farmer _____ **ART**
Ancestors (Brooklyn, NY)

“I’m a Brooklyn-based artist, but my first 23 years were spent in Utah and I have ancestral roots in the mountain west, going back to the mid 1800’s. For the past six years I’ve been working on a series that plays with my Mormon pioneer ancestry, as well as larger western mythologies, hidden LGBT and women’s histories, and our contemporary relationship to the western landscape. I create ceramic figurines of pioneer women in action. They are small, delicate and playful – anti-monuments of sorts – in contrast to the bronze, somber pioneer statues I grew up around. These miniature sculptures feature women who are engaged in various activities, often laboring side by side, sometimes looking fierce and sometimes looking exhausted. They are shown as stand-alone sculptures, but I also travel with them out west where they become frozen actors in my photos and videos.”



Ancestors at Work (with Shovels), detail; figure 2.5"W x 4.5"H x 2"D; ceramic, fabric, yarn; 2014

Award is to aid in the creation of three new works in this series.

Lisette J. Norman _____ **FICTION**
Charli Penn & the Adventures of the Underground Palace (Staten Island, NY)

This coming-of-age story centers on a twelve-year-old girl in a matriarchal society named Charli Penn, who will soon be the leader of her magical tribe and is believed to be the one who could finally free the tribe of ancient rivals, though she has her own inner struggles to deal with along the way.

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It would be so easy to let Drey know about my special powers. But because there's not a bunch of girls walking around Harlem training to be magical goddesses, too, Mami didn't have to warn me twice not to tell a soul..."It's important that you master your powers." Mami's eyes land right on me like she can really see. My heart flinches. "You have to be ready, Charli. If you don't succeed, we could all be in great danger." She tucks the loose curls that have slipped out of her thick bun behind her ear. "But I won't be the leader for another four months," I remind her. "I'll get it together by then.

Award is for time away from work to finish the final chapters.

Emily Raboteau _____ **FICTION**
Portraits of Wildness: Stories (NY, NY)

"The Babysitter," from a larger collection of stories, deals with the loss of innocence resulting from a young woman's conflict with an older man.

Mrs. Fagan's emotional sloppiness was evident in the untamed afro of her adopted daughter, (they never said "daughter"). To them, unkempt hair was clear evidence of neglect. "Box braids, Dana. Do them tight." I explained that they did not have the right hair care products at the house, but I didn't tell my mother I'd come to know this by spying in every drawer during the kids' random naptimes... "Lord, give my child the strength to put that poor white woman's house in order," said my mother. Isaiah 38 was among her top five Bible verses. She sent me back with a jar of petroleum jelly, a wide toothed comb, a tube of Queen Verlene hot oil treatment, and a packet of bright little barrettes from the drugstore.

Award is for childcare to aid in finishing the collection.

Delita Martin _____ **ART**
I Come From Women Who Could Fly
 (Little Rock, AR)

"I work from oral family traditions, vintage and family photographs as a source of inspiration. I Come From Women Who could Fly is an on going series of mixed media works that explore the power of the narrative impulse. These works capture oral traditions that are firmly based in factual events and bring them to life using elements of the fantastic...I have used my experiences as a Black woman and artist to speak about women of color. By combining portraits with my process of layering various printmaking, drawing, sewing, collaging, and painting techniques, I can visually re-tell these stories that offer an underlying

social commentary, a wide range of instinctive and intuitive emotions, creative spirit, and allow an impartial voice that wants to speak to a particular past and future."



*The Dream Keeper, 53" x 65", Conte Acrylic hand-stitching
 Gelatin Printing Relief printing, 2013*

Award is for materials to complete the work in this series.

Elizabeth Wetmore _____ **FICTION**
Valentine (Chicago, IL)

This novel tells the stories of women and girls living in the oil fields of West Texas during the great oil boom of the 1970s as well as the early years of settlement at the end of the 19th century.

Begins out there in the oil patch, a few minutes before dawn, with a young roughneck stretched out and sleeping hard in his pickup truck. Shoulders pressed against the door, boots propped up on the dashboard, his hat pulled down far enough that the girl who sits less than ten feet away can see only the left side of his jaw. It is bone sharp, freckled and nearly hairless, a chin that will never need a daily shave, not really, no matter how old he might live to be, but she is hoping he will die young. Gloria sits perfectly still—she is a mesquite branch, a half-buried stone—and she imagines the roughneck face down in the dirt, as she has been these past few hours, lips and cheeks scoured by the sand, teeth shaky.

Award is to aid in travel to and from the Hedgebrook Retreat for Women Writers, and to complete revisions to novel by Fall 2015.

Janet Braun-Reinitz _____ **ART**
Planning Parenthood (Brooklyn, NY)

The project is a series of acrylic on indoor/outdoor canvas paintings based on the tradition of annunciation paintings, with a contemporary twist...In the current climate, women's reproductive rights are a particularly sensitive issue. I use high color, patterning and

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repetition to create a tension with the increasing darkness and desolation of my subject matter, a see-saw ride between hope and despair.”

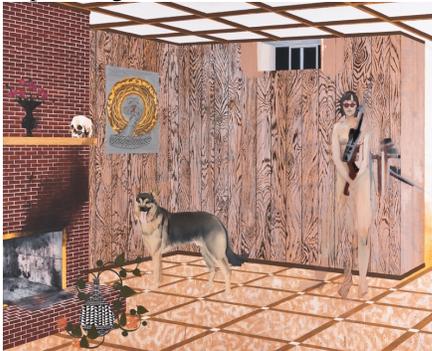


Danger Lurks in Forgetting: Incarceration, 96"h x 52"w, acrylic on canvas, 2013

Award is to aid in travel costs for artist-in-residency.

Elizabeth Malaska _____ **ART**
When We Dead Awaken (Portland, OR)

“This his body of work is a reexamination of the naked female body in the history of painting, a critique of the current global culture of patriarchal aggression, and an investigation of my own feminine psyche as subject to these—and other—forces. These paintings describe a world that has experienced social collapse due to unsustainable politics and practices. The survivors are female—armed, dangerous, and ready to defend their territory. This cautionary tale also serves as an allegory for a reassessment of women’s bodies as the primary subject of painting.”



You Will Become Me, 48x58.5", oil, Flashe, spray paint, charcoal and pencil on canvas, 2013-2014

Award is for childcare and materials to finish this project.

Helena Vallee Dallaire _____ **ART**

Bonnes à Marier (The Marrying Kind) (QC, CANADA)

“In this series of paintings I question the foundation of our definition of beauty, and the border-crossing of beauty as a synonym to identity. And most dramatically, of how that beauty can be associated with womanly strength when it ultimately restricts and muzzles her.”



Mursi, 16 x 20 inches, Oil on canvas, February 2014

Award is for materials to afford the framework and exhibition.

Leni Zumas _____ **FICTION**
Red Clocks (Portland, OR)

Set during a modern day witch trial in 2025, the novel imagines an America where abortion is illegal and fertility treatment drastically restricted. When a rural healer is accused of the death of a woman who came to her for help, she’s charged not only with murder, but also with witchcraft.

Fleischy sits on a stool between her open legs, snaps on latex gloves, says, “let’s see what we’re looking at today.” On a scale of one to ten, with ten being the shrill funk of an elderly cheese and one being no odor at all, how would he rank the smell of the biographer’s vagina? How does it compare to the other vaginas barreling through this exam room, day in, day out, years of vaginas, a crowd of vulvic ghosts? Plenty of women don’t shower beforehand, or are battling a yeast, or just happen naturally to stink in the nethers.

Award is to cover living expenses in Summer 2015 to work on novel full-time.

Please visit our website www.demingfund.org for more information, and like us on Facebook for updates on current and previous grantees, application deadlines, and information about Barbra Deming and her legacy.