

MONEY FOR WOMEN/BARBARA DEMING MEMORIAL FUND, INC.

PO BOX 717, BEARSVILLE, NY 12409

GRANTS AWARDED

JUNE 2022 FICTION - MIXED GENRE - VISUAL ART



Barbara Deming (1917-1984) was a feminist, lesbian, poet, writer, and nonviolent activist in the civil rights, anti-war, and women's movements. In 1975, when she founded the Money for Women Fund, Deming 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 sustained by generous contributions from donors and former grantees, Money for Women gives encouragement through small grants to feminist writers and visual artists.

Submission periods for applications occur once a year: January 1-31, with poetry and nonfiction awarded in odd years, and visual art and fiction in even years. Judges in 2022 for fiction and mixed genre were Nicole Dennis-Benn, Danielle Flores de Benzerga, Roz Kuehn, Glenda Pleasants, Ruthann Robson, Ivelisse Rodriguez, Mina Samuels, and Libby Shmais. For visual art: Michaela Pilar Brown, Clarity Haynes, Maja Kihlstedt, Myra Kooy, Carol March, and Sa'dia Rehman. Grants totaling \$20,500 were awarded to 15 women.

Carina Kohn _____ **FICTION**
(*Wappingers Falls, NY*)

Nested Doll

Inspired by Maggie Nelson's The Argonauts and Edmund de Waal's The Hare with Amber Eyes, this novel uses the prevalence of objects as a language to explore an immigrant Jewish family from Soviet Ukraine that grapples with Soviet mysticism, illness, displacement, sexuality, and family loyalty.

It is October of 1979 and at age twenty, Bella has named herself Head of Family and Criminality. She sits on the floor of her family's shared bedroom and slips three amber stones off their chains. One for herself, her mother, and Baba Busha—or so it was supposed to be, when leaving the Soviet Union with amber was legal. Bella scoops her stones into a short pile by the base of her armchair, which unfolds at night into what is her bed, and assesses: She has cushioning to remove.

Grant will fund submission and editing costs.

Grace Roselli _____ **VISUAL ART**
(*Los Angeles, CA*)

Pandora's BoxX Project

This photographic portrait archive addresses the changing face of women, trans, and non-binary individuals in fine art over the past six decades. Ultimately, 360 portraits representing many generations, races, and ethnicities will celebrate the extensive and lasting legacy of womxn creators and visionaries.



Portrait of American visual and performance artist Helene Aylon (1941-1920), photographed in New York, NY, 2019.

Grant will fund ongoing costs of making the project.

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Jasmin Charles _____ **VISUAL ART**
(*Marshal, NC*)

Listen With Your Eyes - Afro Latina Abstract Expressionism

Listen With Your Eyes is a body of paintings that are both calming and gently stimulating for the conscious viewer. The works are mostly about radical joy, usually balancing darkness with humor.



"Forgiveness," 91 cm x 91 cm, acrylic on canvas, 2020.

Award will fund production and manufacturing costs.

Laura Maylene Walter _____ **FICTION**
(*Cleveland, OH*)

Beauty Surge

Two women suffer a delayed-aging syndrome caused by a toxic environmental exposure in their college days—a phenomenon that preserves their youthful looks for decades, but at a cost. This novel-in-progress centers on themes of youth, beauty, female friendship, and cultural perceptions of aging.

Underwater, time slowed to a stop. Carly drifted, surrendering the weight of her body to the performance. She rolled before the viewing glass, her iridescent bikini top flashing, her hair billowing like strands of kelp. When she needed a breath, she sipped air from the hose like drinking soda from a glass bottle. She'd performed this routine so many times it was mostly automatic. In the water, her body wasn't her own anymore. In the water, she was ancient and anonymous, a mythic creature rather than a frail human with skin that took in moisture and wrinkled.

Grant will fund travel and research costs.

Pamela Loring _____ **FICTION**
(*Hull, MA*)

The Disappearance of Belmira Alvarez

In 1972, a housewife, a cop and a lawyer ride the bumpy road to selfhood in an era of burgeoning social change. The Disappearance of Belmira Alvarez explores the damages of abiding by society's gender expectations, the costs of challenging convention, and the arduous personal journey toward living a life of one's own.

The nurses told me that natural childbirth was best for the child, the mother just an afterthought. This body, something I used to take pride in, is now a milker, a wiper of shit, a purveyor of food. Now that I sit behind a breast and not a desk, my family embraces me. My mother pats my shoulder, beams at Annabelle, and reveres the man she thinks Joe has become. Man, father, and husband, she idolizes them all. My father tells me he is prouder of me than he has ever been. After all the years I ran his business better than he did.

Grant will cover living expenses while finishing the manuscript.

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epli pastorfield-li _____ **VISUAL ART**
(Northfield, MA)

home//made

This documentary photography project is rooted in the belief that visibility is medicine. It is an opportunity for queer folks to celebrate their trans, butch, and gender non-conforming families, while challenging the dominating and insufficient cis-hetero definition of "family."



"cowboy," photograph, 2022.

Award will pay for travel costs.

Cathy Hsiao _____ **VISUAL ART**
(Chicago, IL)

Mother's House: Seed to Sculpture 花密音

This project documents research into the material symbiosis between limestone-based materials and organic plant dyes. It collects and catalogs the artist's experiments with extracting color from plants and combining it with cement and hydrostone for casting purposes.



"Flower for 38 (ma's kitchen)," 3 ft x 2 ft x 3/4 in, architectural building materials, indigo dye, avocado dye, sumi ink, drywall mesh, UV ecopoxy, 2020.

Grant will fund the supporting online and printed matter for the project.

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Shanna Merola _____ **VISUAL ART**
(Detroit, MI)

Love Canal; Evidence of Injury

This project examines the industrial legacy of North America's first Superfund site through the unsung history of women who organized, struggled, and suffered for environmental justice in their neighborhoods. Broader themes explore adaptation, toxicity, reproduction, mutation, survival – and the interconnectedness of our fragile ecosystem and the human body.



"Chlorobenzene C₆H₅Cl," 35"x50," handmade/analogue sculptural photo collage, 2021.

Grant will fund exhibition materials and research trip.

Yxta Murray _____ **FICTION**
(Studio City, CA)

God Went Like That

In 1959, a nuclear reactor at Simi Valley's Santa Susana Field Laboratory experienced a core meltdown. Panicking lab engineers vented radiation into the nearby suburbs for weeks. God Went Like That studies this disaster from the perspectives of women of color, poor people, queer people, and others.

There is no "why," Miss Rodriguez. There is only "how." From the clamor of our births to the silence of our deaths, all events arise through a calamitous process that is known by one word, a curious word, a word that signifies the lip print on the glass, the mutation of the cell, the dragon's flight, the unexpected touch of the hand, the brown bear of strength, and the life-blasting enigma of love. That word is "accident," Miss Rodriguez. "Accident."

Our poor planet flies through space on the wings of an accident, Miss Rodriguez.

Grant will cover the cost of research materials.

Khalisa Rae _____ **MIXED GENRE**
(Durham, NC)

Unlearning Eden

This YA novel in verse is about the unlearning of religious shame and repression around desire, sex, love, and queer identity. A girl with a spiritual, hetero-normative Black upbringing questions queerness while unlearning the traumatic teachings of the matriarchs and religious figures in her life.

Taxonomy of the Self

Lily of the Valley forms colonies and has the tendency to be invasive. The plant will consume the garden bed if not taken care of.

In this story, the father's colony strangles all the sunlight out of the forest. Its leaves become octopi, seven feet tall, suspended, omnipresent and nuclear.

If you are birthed from poison, does that make you poisonous?

Award funds completion of the project.

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Amanda Rizkalla _____ **FICTION**
(Madison, WI)

Hungered: A Novel

Hungered tells the story of Sofia—a half-Mexican, half-Egyptian eleven-year-old girl who lives in a car with her mom and brother. Told as a series of vignettes, the novel uses its fragmented form to examine familial cohesion in the face of economic uncertainty.

It is just becoming morning and the sun is grey-white, moon-like. It is gloomy and smells like earthworms out, like wet dirt, and I want to ask mama if it is going to rain. She says she knows in her bones when it will happen, that they ache when the sky threatens to spill. Rafa and I watch as she kicks up asphalt with her shoes.

When she comes back inside, she is smiling. "They're letting me start tomorrow," she says, putting her phone back into the cupholder. Mama says this is a reason for us to celebrate.

Grant covers living expenses during the revision process.

Beth Weeks _____ **FICTION**
(Vadalia, OH)

Zucchini

This short story collection views sex and love through an asexual lens. In seven stories, the collection dissects the notion of attraction, explores the intersections of sexual identity and trauma recovery, and portrays intimacy without physical desire.

You met the salesman in March of 1984. You were working as a receptionist at a Volvo dealership after dropping out of college. That day, you sat uncomfortably in your chair as you stared through your boss's office window, where you could see a straight-backed man, clean cut, what your mother would have called "sharp." His laughter boomed through the building. He seemed too large to be contained. You slurped your scalding Swiss Miss and chewed dehydrated marshmallows. Nobody bought cars on Tuesday mornings.

Grant supports travel and expenses to attend writing residencies.

Danielle Lopez _____ **VISUAL ART**
(Oakland, CA)

Three Dykes Walk Into a Bar...

Weavings, fiber sculptures, and props reveal three characters who are young dykes, coming of age between the 1990s and now. The tapestry weavings resemble film stills that, alongside costumes and props, depict these characters' lives.



Detail: "such a fucking cliché," 36 in. x 38 in. x 6 in., hand-embroidered and machine-sewn stretch velvet, sequin fabric, and polyfill, 2018. Text reads: "Why do i keep falling for straight girls?!"

Grant funds materials, equipment, and photography costs.

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Charlotte Sherman _____ **FICTION**
(*San Pedro, CA*)

Sisters of the Good Death

This novel-in-progress is about a quintet of lifelong friends and a fateful decision they made as teenagers to save one girl from her father's abuse. Issues of class, race, environmental justice, spirituality, aging, and friendship are braided into the plot.

The friends were in Luiza's driveway. They were always at Luiza's house – one-level. Sprawling. The sun wasn't quite high but Luiza's brow shimmered, the grease in our plaits and braids glistened. The top rope was at 12 o'clock. Who was turning? All five of us jumped in. Luiza first. Luiza eternally first. *Mailman, mailman do your duty.* Then me. *Here comes a lady with an African booty.* Margeaux skittered between the yellow ropes. *She can do the pom-poms.* Tomorrow next. *She can do the splits.* "Come on, Grace," we urged. *I bet you \$5 she can't do this.*

Grant will go toward living expenses during revision.

Elvira Clayton _____ **VISUAL ART**
(*New York, NY*)

Ritual Cloths

These quilted textile works explore the brutalities that enslaved women faced on auction blocks. This series is part of the ongoing project Cotton and Rice, which focuses on the stories of the 436 people sold through the largest recorded slave auction in US history.



"Ritual Cloth no.1," 7'x6' - plant and found object-dyed osnaburg, indigo-dyed cotton, thread, cotton plant, copied archival photograph, hand stitched and quilted, 2021.

Grant funds fabrics and other materials to complete the quilts.