

Permanent Exhibition

2ND FLOOR HALLWAY



For Fighting for the Right to Vote to Fighting For our Democracy

As America celebrates the Centennial of women winning the vote in 1920, WNDC showcases a careful selection of authentic Suffrage and political material.

Featuring leaflets, handouts and posters intended to spark conversation around messaging for women voters today. Generously donated by: **Ann Lewis** (W.H. Communications Director for President Bill Clinton and Sr. Advisor to the Senate and Presidential campaign of Hillary Clinton) and **Allida Black** (noted historian and friend of WNDC, leader of Ready for Hillary, Senior Advisor to the Hillary for American Campaign, and founder of the Eleanor Roosevelt Project). Lewis is founder of the Ann Lewis Women's Suffrage Collection, which can be found online via <https://lewissuffragecollection.omeka.net/>

Past Exhibition

December 3, 2020-February 23, 2021

E Street Artists: Climate Change Through a Personal Lens

When we view art on an issue as complex as climate change, we consider it in the context of our own lives. We are not told what to think, but we are invited to reconsider our assumptions and to face hard truths, to contemplate our loss. Art challenges us to action.

The E Street Artists get their name from the location of the Corcoran School of Art and Design at George Washington University where the artists met and worked under the guidance of Mira Hecht.



Woman's National Democratic Club

Exhibitions

Spring 2021

WNDC Visual Arts and Museum Affairs

Current Exhibition

February 25—May 18, 2021

ANNE MARCHAND

Tellus/Caelus: Seeing Earth & Sky



“...Once a photograph of the Earth taken from outside is available...a new idea as powerful as any in history will be let loose.” Fred Hoyle, astronomer, 1948

Tellus is the most ancient Roman goddess of the Earth. Servius (4th C AD) calls her “guardian deity of Earth and by extension, the globe itself”. Her consort is the sky god Caelus, whose name means the heavens or the starry sky. CR

The current exhibition features twenty recent paintings by Washington DC artist Anne Marchand. This solo exhibit marks a new level in the artist’s stylistic evolution over the last ten years.

As a painter, Marchand has been fascinated with images of the universe made by instruments like the Hubble telescope that have given shape and color to the vastness of space and have evoked for many the mysterious beauty of planets, stars, galaxies and nebulae. Over the past decade she has made paintings reflecting this outward gaze. A number of these paintings were selected for a solo exhibition I curated at Montgomery College in 2011 titled *Of Shining Worlds*; a title that reflects not only the marvels of space, but also the profoundly spiritual sensibility of this artist. Not surprisingly, she soon began to research world mythology about the origins of the cosmos, and launched a serious investigation into the work of comparative mythographer Joseph Campbell. In particular, she was drawn to the image of the Great Mother who appears in so many early creation myths around the world, and whose presence appeared in human art as early as 20,000 B.C. In fall 2017 she participated with Cianne Fragione and Pat Goslee in *Radix: The Eternal Feminine*, an exhibition I curated at the American University

Art Museum with larger, bolder, more colorful and more gestural work that aimed to express the concept of the Divine Feminine in abstract form. Still looking outward, the source of this inspiration was similarly abstract, and fundamentally spiritual in nature. Yet, the spirit of *Tellus Mater* would continue to draw her back toward Earth.

Marchand found a new path reading the latest edition of “space philosopher” Frank White’s book, *The Overview Effect: Space Exploration and Human Evolution* (2019). Based on interviews with astronauts who were in the Apollo program as well as on the International Space Station, the book articulates the psychological effect of actually seeing the Earth from space. While not their mission, in 1968, the astronauts of Apollo 8 were the first to turn their cameras away from the stars and toward the Earth, giving us the image prophesied by Fred Hoyle twenty years earlier: a photograph of the planet from the outside looking in. The effect of the experience itself on the astronauts was universally transformative, even overwhelming. Every one of them, whether from the 1960’s or much more recently in space have all acquired a new “whole earth perspective,” that is, a new understanding of the unity of all life on the planet and the interconnectedness of all its systems. Scientists all, each of them was changed by the experience of seeing the Earth, an oasis of life, suspended in the blackness and nothingness around it. It produced a spiritual or meditative state that they had never before considered. Among them, Edgar Mitchell, the 6th man to walk on the Moon in 1971, retired from the Navy a year later to found the Institute of Noetic Sciences with a mission to promote this new way of understanding our place in the universe. Planetary Collective has produced a short film titled “Overview” which we are including in this current exhibition of Marchand’s recent work. .

Now, at the beginning of 2021, the paintings selected for this exhibit are expressions of the artist’s heartfelt connection to her understanding of the unity of creation found in so many religious traditions, ancient and modern, as well as informed by consideration of the space images of the Earth and the stars—both *Tellus* and *Caelus*. They bring Marchand’s long interests in cosmology and mythology together, and in particular the idea of the coming into being of the material world we know, against the mystery of our existence. Just as viewing the photographic images of the planet from space can provoke some of the “overview effect,” it is hoped that seeing these expressive paintings will inspire viewers in a similar way. Full of brilliant color and gesture, with dense surfaces layered with acrylic, ink, charcoal and other media, these paintings can provide the willing viewer with a sense of the way that having that “whole earth” perspective can be both individually and universally transformative, leading toward a more peaceful and just world for all.

Claudia Rousseau, Ph.D., curator.