

AKBS Art Journal

COVID-19 PAGES: A Virtual Art Exhibition by Women, for Women, about Women

AKBS Art Journal

Published on: Apr 22, 2021

DOI: 10.21428/1bd3d6d0.a4aac6f2

License: [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC-BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Abstract: COVID-19 PAGES: The Influence & Inspiration of Women is a virtual art exhibition that celebrates women and the essential work they are doing to mitigate the effects of the pandemic around the world – even as they are disproportionately negatively affected by it. The theme, “The Influence and Inspiration of Women,” is conceived to inspire creativity through visual arts as well as stimulate thoughtful discussion about women in leadership and inspirational roles who are making a positive difference locally, nationally, and globally in all sectors of the economy. The exhibition is a collaborative effort among three organizations: Wells International Foundation (WIF), Anderson Brickler Gallery (ABG), and Thinking CAP: Collaborative Art Projects (CAP).

Keywords: COVID-19, art, women.

COVID-19 PAGES: The Influence & Inspiration of Women is a virtual art exhibition that celebrates women and the essential work they are doing to mitigate the effects of the pandemic around the world – even as they are disproportionately negatively affected by it. The theme, “The Influence and Inspiration of Women,” is conceived to inspire creativity through visual arts as well as stimulate thoughtful discussion about women in leadership and inspirational roles who are making a positive difference locally, nationally, and globally in all sectors of the economy. The exhibition is a collaborative effort among three organizations: Wells International Foundation (WIF), Anderson Brickler Gallery (ABG), and Thinking CAP: Collaborative Art Projects (CAP).

ABG’s founder, Dr. Celeste Hart, is an endocrinologist and long-time supporter of the Wells International Foundation (WIF). She came up with the idea for an exhibition to honor the pandemic’s first responders and essential workers in May 2019. As WIF’s Founder and CEO, I immediately embraced this idea because of my passion for working with and uplifting women. Women’s empowerment and the Arts are two of WIF’s Strategic Focus Areas, and all of our work centers on educational and cultural projects and programs. A celebration of women through the arts is completely aligned with our mission and vision.

Dr. Hart introduced WIF to Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo of Thinking CAP: Collaborative Art Projects, who is ABG’s curator and art administrator. BowensSaffo has poured heart and soul into curating COVID-19 PAGES through her inspired artistic vision. Bowens-Saffo invited senior IT consultant Kiah Graham to join the PAGES team to engineer the technical elements required to deliver a seamless, rewarding

experience for exhibition viewers. Our mutual passion for the project and our excellent teamwork have generated new and profound friendships that we will cherish long after the exhibition closes.

The **PAGES** present powerful artworks created by women, for women, about women. They offer a global perspective on what mothers, wives, teachers, nurses, doctors and other healthcare workers,

politicians, police chiefs, small business owners, corporate employees, organizers of community service programs, and more are doing and how they are feeling during the pandemic, wherever they are in the world.

The works contributed by our professional women artists for Phase I of the exhibition are poignant and compelling, and support for the project's theme and associated educational programming has been overwhelmingly positive. We couldn't have asked for better endorsements of our work than the participation of our Legendary Artist - Faith Ringgold - in the exhibition and the powerful statement of solidarity contributed by Susan Fisher Sterling, Alice West Director of the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

Additionally, we are pleased to welcome Carrie Mae Weems as our Honourable Guest and to help raise awareness of her public art project, RESIST COVID/TAKE 6! This project "promotes preventive measures and dispels harmful falsehoods about COVID-19; while also paying homage to front-line and essential workers who have placed themselves in harm's way." As does COVID-19 PAGES, it "brings together a diverse group of artists to project our voices in a way that ... brings the general public into a conversation of heightened awareness of this problem."

Work has already begun on Phase II, which is reserved for artworks contributed by women and girls from K-12 schools, universities, youth groups, shelters, eldercare facilities, and other service organizations around the world. Inspired by the works contributed by our professional artists, these amateur artists will submit works on the same theme - celebrating the essential work of women across the globe. Phase I of the exhibition launched on International Women's Day - March 8, 2021. Phase II is scheduled to launch on June 23, 2021.

COVID-19 PAGES: The Influence & Inspiration of Women can be viewed at:

<https://wellsinternationalfoundation.org/covid-19-pages-exhibit/>

About the author: Dr. Monique Y. Wells is a visionary, a change maker, and a steward of legacy. She is a native of Houston, Texas and a 28-year resident of Paris, France.

Through her entrepreneurial work as a veterinary pathologist and toxicologist, travel professional, writer, speaker, and mentor, she embraces and harnesses the power of education to change lives. Find her on LinkedIn at:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/mywparis>