



EVERHART MUSEUM
NATURAL HISTORY. SCIENCE. ART.
est 1908

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Organization: Everhart Museum

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Photos attached to email

**“What Makes African American Quilts Compelling Art?”
Forum at Everhart Museum on Thursday, November 11 at 6:00 p.m.**

Scranton—On **Thursday, November 11 at 6:00 p.m.**, the **Everhart Museum** presents **“What Makes African American Quilts Compelling Art? A Conversation with Art Collector David Whaley and Everhart Museum Executive Director Kathy Johnson Bowles.”** During the forum, Whaley and Bowles discuss the background and design elements of the quilts featured in the Museum’s current exhibition ***Bold Independence: African American Quilts from the Collection of David Whaley*** and why these artworks are captivating. This event is free, but pre-registration is required by contacting general.information@everhart-museum.org or calling 570-346-7186.

The forum takes place in the gallery space of *Bold Independence*, which is on view through June 6, 2022 and features fifteen quilts created by African American women living and working in Alabama and Mississippi in the mid-to-late 20th century. During the forum, Whaley and Bowles explain the appeal of the bold designs, colors, patterns, and improvisational construction that exemplify the dynamic aesthetic of many quilts made in the region at the time. They also provide compelling background information about the featured artists and their life circumstances, as they endured incredible hardships, poverty, and injustice while making art that is now revered around the world. Whaley and Bowles also explore the visual traditions handed down from the artists’ ancestors enslaved from Africa.

Informed by scholarly research, professional expertise, and a keen eye for design, David Whaley of Richmond, Virginia, collected the quilts featured in *Bold Independence* over the last two decades. Although many quilt collectors choose by necessity or design to acquire anonymous works, Whaley's quilts are by known quilters whose lives and works have been chronicled by acclaimed scholars including Robert Cargo, Maude Southwell Wahlman, and the curatorial team who presented *The Quilts of Gee's Bend* (2002) at The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston in 2002, and later by The Souls Grown Deep Foundation.

Whaley serves as Design Director for Longwood University in Virginia. He has received over 80 national awards for his design work. As a dedicated champion of the visual arts, he has served on the Longwood Center for the Visual Arts' advisory board for 26 years and he is active in the leadership of the University and College Designers Association (UCDA) where he serves as President for the UCDA Foundation Board of Directors. He has also served on boards at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA), 1708 Gallery, and The Folk Art Society of America (FASA) in his hometown of Richmond, Virginia. David is a graduate of Hampden-Sydney College and is currently pursuing a Master of Liberal Arts degree in Museum Studies at Harvard University.

In addition to being the Everhart Museum's executive director, Kathy Johnson Bowles is a textile artist working with themes of identity and social justice, a folk art scholar, and art critic. She has served on the Folk Art Society of America's board for more than 15 years and is a frequent contributor to the *Folk Art Messenger* magazine, where she focuses on underrepresented artists.

About the Everhart Museum:

The Everhart Museum is located at 1901 Mulberry Street, Scranton, PA. It has temporary hours of 12:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. on Thursday and Friday; 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. on Saturday; and 12:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for students and seniors, and free for children 12 and under. Admission is free for Everhart Museum members as well as military and family. For more information and updates on expanded hours, please visit <https://everhart-museum.org/>, contact the Museum at 570-346-7186, or email general.information@everhartmuseum.org.

Founded in 1908, the Everhart Museum of Natural History, Science & Art is the largest general museum in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The Everhart Museum, located in Nay Aug Park in Scranton, is a not-for-profit institution dedicated to the collection, care, and display of a diverse array of artifacts, including natural

history, science, and art. Through our exhibitions and programs, the Everhart Museum has become an invaluable regional resource for educational and cultural opportunities. General support for the Museum is received from the Lackawanna County Office of Education & Culture, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the City of Scranton, and contributions from individuals and businesses.

Land Acknowledgment:

The Everhart Museum is located at the crossroads of several Tribal Nations, including the Lenni Lenape, Seneca, Munsee, Susquehannock, and possibly others. This part of Northeastern Pennsylvania is known for the coming together of the Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, also known as the Iroquois Confederacy, wherein peace was forged between the Nations in the late 16th century.

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Bold Independence

