In celebration of Martin Luther King Day on **Monday, January 20, 2020**, we have selected 11 artists and pieces to highlight in celebration of the following:

- 40th anniversary of the celebration of Dr. King at MSU
- 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th amendment of the U.S. Constitution, giving women citizens of the U.S. the legal right to vote
- 150th anniversary of the first women students at MSU

We hope you enjoy reading about and/or visiting these pieces found throughout MSU’s campus!

*Credits:*
Christine Leese, Chief of Staff and MLK planning committee, Office of Administration (original concept)
Steve Troost, Campus Planner and Secretary to the Public Art On Campus Committee (PAOCC)
Unity III (2007 – Charles McGee)

Located at the Energy and Automotive Research Building

Art Piece Description
There is a captivating energy, and sense of movement created by the connectivity and magnetism of the sculptures form, representing the cohesion of mankind into a universal form. In its purest sense the piece depicts people coming together and the inherent beauty of this synergy. The artist’s life is rooted in the belief that people must connect and work together, not alone to achieve outcomes that benefit all including world peace. The artist believes the strength and progress will emerge out of connectivity rather than individualism.

About the Artist
Charles McGee was born in Clemson, South Carolina in 1924. At the age of ten his family left the farm and its rural lifestyle and moved to industrialized Detroit. He was immediately fascinated by all the signs and the kinetic movement and activity of the city. McGee then went on to study under artist Guy Palazzola at the Society of Arts and Crafts (now the College for Creative Studies) for 10 years before founding his own school in 1969. With a volunteer staff he founded the Charles McGee School of Art and taught children and adults until the school closed in 1974. He spent 18 years teaching art at Eastern Michigan University, has taught at the University of Michigan, and currently shares his experience with his students at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center. The College for Creative Studies recently awarded him with an honorary doctorate for his career as an artist and educator.

Over the years McGee has curated several exhibitions including Seven Black Artists at the Detroit Artists Market in 1969. That show was pivotal in his career, leading him to establish Gallery 7, an artists’ collective that lasted 10 years. In 1979, McGee, along with artist Jean Heilbrunn and others, founded the Contemporary Art Institute of Detroit in an attempt to invigorate the art scene. The organization continues to work toward realizing the original vision of a permanent contemporary art center. McGee continues to explore abstract compositions often using simple forms of straight lines, curves and dots to connote the passage of time and complex layers of experience.
Sculptural Improvisation II (2008 – Richard Hunt)
Located at the Biomedical/Physical Sciences courtyard

Art Piece Description
Many of Hunt’s pieces, including this one, are influenced by the surrealist ideas of other artists like Matta and Picasso. Hunt’s work has always taken an interest in the morphology and blending of natural and industrial forms. “It is my intention to develop the kinds of forms nature might create if only heat and steel were available to her”. He has also said that his work is “the kind of sculpture where you can take material and work it and rework it, cut something off, reposition something...” An idea that clearly supports the title of this piece.

About the Artist
Richard Hunt was born in Chicago in 1935 and received his B.A.E. from the Art Institute of Chicago in 1957. He was awarded the Logan Prize from the Art Institute of Chicago in 1956 while still a student there, and again 6 years later. The Museum of Modern Art in NYC purchased their first of his pieces in 1956. He was given a retrospective there in 1970. A major touring exhibition of his work was produced by International Arts & Artists, Inc. for Detroit’s Museum of African American History in 1998. Hunt has completed more than 100 commissions and has completed more public sculptures than any other artist in the country. His signature pieces include Jacob’s Ladder at the Carter G. Woodson Library in Chicago and Flintlock Fantasy in Detroit. He was appointed by President Lyndon Johnson as one of the first artists to serve on the governing board of the National Endowment for the Arts and he also served on boards of the Smithsonian Institution. Hunt is the recipient of numerous awards and honorary degrees. His work is always organic, with flowing, upward movement. Although abstract, it makes general reference to nature, growth, yearning, and reaching for light and life, which may account for his success with public art in a world that is generally resistant to abstraction.
The Butterfly Effect (2012 – Alice Aycock)
Located at Wells Hall

Art Piece Description
Located in Wells Hall, The Butterfly Effect reflects on the building’s function as home for the math and language departments. The sculpture is inspired by theoretical mathematics known as the Lorenz attractor, derived from the chaos theory. The purple, tubular shapes also bring to mind floral vegetation, vessels, megaphones, and satellite dishes. By combining all these characteristics, Aycock is able to embody Wells Hall and MSU in her art. The mathematical roots of the piece can be attributed to the mathematics department’s place in Wells Hall, while the reference to satellites and megaphones herald the addition of the Language offices. Additionally, the forms resemblance to organic vegetation connects both programs and the building itself to MSU’s preeminence as a land grant institution and a leader in the natural sciences and agricultural research.

The Butterfly Effect also explores the relationships between math and language. Language, similar to the Lorenz Attractor, is variable and unpredictable. Both are in a state of continual evolution and translation as human behavior and interaction changes. The fourteen elements of The Butterfly Effect reflect these observations in their varied sizes, distorted forms, and meandering shapes.

About the Artist
Alice Aycock was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania where some of her early influences came from her father, who was a construction engineer. She has a B.A. from Douglas College and a M.A. from Hunter College. She now lives and works in New York. Aycock began her career creating site-specific, public projects that involved reshaping the earth. She also began working on more permanent outdoor projects. In addition to her outdoor exhibits, she has several sculptures in museums and airports. Ms. Aycock teaches at many universities and colleges including the School of Visual Arts where she has been since 1991. She has received the Americans for the Arts Public Art Award, is a member of the New York City Design Commission, and was appointed to the U.S. General Services Administration’s (GSA) National Register of Peer Professionals.
Life Ray (2012 – Katy Stone)
Located at Life Sciences - Nursing

Art Piece Description
Katy Stone describes her art as having “visual magnetism and distinct material presence.” Her works are reminiscent of nature while suggesting growth, expansion, liberation, and transformation. She evokes these feelings through dramatic colors and shadows created by lighting and a layering technique that creates both two- and three dimensional interest, an impression of fragility, and a sense of timelessness. Life Ray is a classic example of Stone’s artistic vision. Recollective of plant life, her piece not only spreads along the wall but is based on a shaft of light symbolizing illumination, reach and direction, qualities that are reflected in the field of nursing and public health. Growth and life are indicated by the green shades of the art while red and blue accents add interest and contribute to the vibrancy of the piece. Additionally, Life Ray possesses trajectory, whether the reach is downward toward the viewer or an upward acceleration, the motion represents the journey of education and life.

About the Artist
Katy Stone grew up in rural Iowa and attended Iowa State University where she received a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a concentration in drawing, painting and printmaking before moving to Seattle to earn a Master of Fine Arts with a concentration in painting at the University of Washington. In both Iowa and Washington, Stone made strong connections with her surroundings and cites nature as her primary inspiration throughout her career. Stone puts a special emphasis on her move to Washington and the impact the lush vegetation and large trees had on her art. She recalls a shift in materials toward a variety of more evocative objects and her expansive use of naturalistic forms. She also continued to develop her work’s sense of elemental light and atmospheric expansiveness, further exploring the concept of the sublime and adding her own more personal take on the concept in her pieces. After moving to Montana for five years, Stone returned to Seattle in 2001 and began narrowing her artistic focus. After a career of creating temporary, site-specific installations with an ever greater variety of materials, Stone began creating permanent, easily identified images and using archival acetate for the majority of her projects Stone continues to work in Seattle and exhibits widely in the western U.S. Her work can be found in public commissions and collections throughout the country. She has recently started exhibiting overseas.
Collecting the Future (2014 – Alisa Henriquez)
Located at the Union Engagement Center and Multicultural Centers

Art Piece Description
Intentionally complex, overloaded and difficult to visually navigate, Alisa Henriquez’s paintings and collages draw fragments of images from popular media into one dynamic, dense network to question the messages that the images are tied to. Henriquez states: “My recent paintings source mediated images, graphics, and texts found in popular culture. Through the act of cutting, re-assembling, and painting a multitude of samples and fragments, I aim to re-animate the messages these media images perpetuate... In using such a layer approach, I hope to create works that move at an oblique angle to the overly simplistic identity constructions that are found in my media images that I source.”
Using the same layering approach for Collecting the Future she created a unique piece to reflect the values of the North Residential Neighborhood Engagement Center and the university. Henriquez challenged herself to find elements that represent the natural, built, and technological environment of our modern world, then used these images to reference the energy and excitement embodied by the university. She says that her art reflects on: “the excitement of discovery that accompanies intellectual inquiry, creative expression, and a future-oriented perspective, and its value in a university setting.” For this piece, the connections to technology are especially strong. Her methods of building whole images out of fragments is especially relevant as it parallels the way people use technology to experience the world.

About the Artist
Henriquez was born and grew up in Kingston, Jamaica. She attended the Emily Carr College of Art and Design and the Yale Summer School of Music and Art before earning her Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1988. She then earned her Master of Fine Arts in painting from Indiana University in 1993. Currently, Henriquez is an associate professor at Michigan State University where she teaches painting and is represented by A.I.R. Gallery in Brooklyn, NY. She has been featured in numerous group and solo exhibitions across the country and participated in a group exhibition in South Africa in 2000.
Conocimiento (Knowledge) (2014 – Yvonne Domenge)

Located at Old College Field

Art Piece Description
Simultaneously fluid and precise, Conocimiento’s spherical shape is reminiscent of a sports ball but is also symbolic of an athlete’s journey. The precision of the round shape and repetition of the design represents the discipline and mastery of techniques required to excel in athletics while the individual ribbon compartments appear to be in constant movement, as if chasing victory. This complex arrangement of the flat ribbons is actually a single sheet of metal that flows through the space to create the finished product in a manner similar to that of individuals coming together to form a successful team.

In a homage to Michigan State University’s colors of green and white, the sculpture is a shade somewhere between the two. As the viewer moves around the piece, or as the lighting changes, it emits a green glow that enhances the illusion of movement and gives a dynamic, ever-changing aura to the piece.

About the Artist
Yvonne Domenge was born in Mexico City in 1946. She studied plastic arts at the Outremont School in Montreal, Canada, the Corcoran School of Art in Washington D.C. and in Mexico City. She trained under the guidance of several noted sculptors and practiced various techniques such as gilding, enameling, and wood carving. This diversity of media is readily shown in her work today; with pieces made of wood, stone, cement, clay, onyx, marble, stainless and carbon steel, silver, ice, resin, wax, soap, and porcelain. Domenge also studied human development at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City and has taught classes on aesthetic appreciation, art therapy, sculpture, and drawing. She says that several of her courses are designed to: “contribute to the human artistic development in my country.” In particular, she runs a program called 'Sculptures created by the Community of the Buenos Aires Neighborhood’ where she uses her artistic and human development backgrounds to introduce disenfranchised youth to urban art, increase self-esteem, and encourage positive behavior. Domenge’s work has been displayed and commissioned internationally in Mexico, the United States, Canada, China, and Europe. She has received numerous awards. She is an honorary associated member of the sculpture section of the Royal Academy of Science, Letters and Fine Arts of Belgium. She is also a member of the National Fund for Culture and Arts which is dedicated to aiding young sculptors in their artistic endeavors.
**Her Sanctuary** *(2014 – Luke Allsbrook)*

Located at the Veterinary Medicine Clinical Care

---

**Art Piece Description**

Luke Allsbrook’s connection with nature is apparent in his work’s warm colors, soft textures, and inviting atmosphere. His paintings convey a sense of heightened realism that draws in the viewer and captures the emotion of the scene, creating an individual connection to his art and its subject. In *Her Sanctuary*, he conveys a peaceful, rural scene in which a young girl enjoys the companionship of her pets. Allsbrook reflects: “The girl in the painting has perhaps just come home from school. Papers she has been reading have fallen to the ground. They could be good or bad news according to the viewer, but have been forgotten in the company of her cat and dog who, jealous for her attention, has raised a paw to her lap. A single figure is chosen because it reinforces the idea that relationships with pets, even in a large family, are most often singular in nature. On the right is an old whitewashed chicken house, dappled in sunlight, and on the left is an old barn lit up in oranges and reds. The whole foreground where the girl is seated is lit in bright sunshine. The top of the painting is a dome-shaped canopy of shadowed leaves. They give the viewer the sense of covering protection and security which pets often convey. The slanting gesture of the girl’s pose is repeated throughout the painting, even in the blowing leaves of the tree.”

---

**About the Artist**

Allsbrook was born in North Carolina in 1971 and grew up in Georgia. He began painting young, taking lessons as a child and teenager and later studying art in college. He earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Indiana University and graduated cum laude from the Graduate School of Figurative Art of the New York Academy of Art with a Master of Fine Arts in painting. After completing his master’s degree, he moved back to North Carolina and established his studio in the mountains. He exhibits his work throughout the U.S. and is included in the collections of Forbes, Mercedes Benz, and The U.S. Department of State. Allsbrook’s work is also part of the Prince of Wales’ collection, whom he served as official tour artist during the prince’s visit to San Francisco in 2005. He is the recipient of several awards including the Elizabeth Greeshields Foundation Grant, and the Posey Scholar, he has taught drawing and painting at the New York Academy of Art, the Lyme Academy of Art, William Paterson University, UNC - Asheville, and in Italy for the University of Georgia Cortona Program.
Hieroglyph Carousel and She’s Carnivorous

(2015 – Renee Robbins)
Located at Chittenden Hall

Art Piece Description
Hieroglyph Carousel (left): Featuring vibrant forms that evoke multiple identities, Hieroglyph Carousel is a combination and blending of ancient language, single-celled ocean life, and carnival components that rhythmically grow across the canvas. She’s Carnivorous (right): Inspired by the carnivorous harp sponge, this painting is a merging of natural and imagined imagery that speaks to the ominous beauty, fragility, and diversity found in nature.

About the Artist
A graduate from Michigan State University’s Master of Fine Arts program, Renee Robbins lives and works in Chicago creating paintings, drawings, etchings, silk-screens, and woodcuts with natural elements at a variety of scales. Renee exhibits around the United States. Details/description about the art piece:
Inspired by the carnivorous harp sponge, this painting is a merging of natural and imagined imagery that speaks to the ominous beauty, fragility, and diversity found in nature.
Hidden Personality Quirks (2018 – Laurie Frick)

Located at the Engineering Boated Steel

Art Piece Description
In 1938, psychologist Henry Murray developed a system of needs as a theory of personality. He believed that everyone has the same basic set of needs, but individuals differ in their priority of those needs. 29 categories provided the perfect system for categorizing the thousands of questions users answered on the OKCupid dating site. The artist, Laurie Frick, manually sorted and applied the Murray scale to 388 of the 2000+ questions individual users of the site answered. Questions are crowd sourced by users of the site, and the number of questions answered by users is surprisingly high. Each set of answers were scored on a scale of 1-10 and averaged by category. Each of the 29 columns represent a personality trait or personality quirk that is typically hidden until you get to know that person well. Each horizontal row is an individual. Frick randomly selected 5 women and 4 men with a preference for data that worked around the obstructions on the wall. Colors are coded 1-10, orange and pink are the low scores, dark blues are the high scores.

About the Artist
Frick holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from the New York Studio School, and Master of Business Administration from the University of Southern California. She also studied at New York University’s ITP program. She recently was awarded residencies by Samsung research and the Neuroscience Research Center University of Texas. She is described as a ‘data artist’ and says: “exploring the bumpy future of data captured about us. We’re more than halfway thru the decade when humans shift from mysterious beings - to big data algorithms, where everything about us will be known.” Rather than worry, Frick envisions a time when personal data is a peek into our unique identity and a glimpse into our future. Frick questions, “Will it backfire? Our movements, choices, friends - even the food we ingest will be anticipated. How will it feel when self-delusion becomes impossible?” Using her background in high-technology, Frick creates hand-built works and installations, anticipating the day when patterns of behavior become patterned artworks, and the mass of data will predict our lives.
Snares to Wares Giraffe (2018 – Sophia Jingo, Mutilib Ngomijik, & Richard Tanner)

Located at the IQ Building

Art Piece Description
The largest piece out of the Snares to Wares Initiative, the life-size giraffe stands at 14 feet tall, and is made almost entirely out of wire snares recovered from an African national park. The base was made by MSU Shadows Collection, who repurposed 10-fallen trees from campus into the 1,000-pound stage for the giraffe. Snares to Wares is the group responsible for initiating this project, and is an organization based in Uganda that works to protect wildlife from poachers by reclaiming snare traps. In turn, they employ locals who recycle them into hand-made figurines and sculptures of the animals they originally were meant to capture. The group has employed 250 locals as artists to make the usually small scale figurines, and helps raise awareness about the illegal wildlife trade that is decimating so many of Africa’s iconic species’ populations. The giraffe sculpture is modeled after a Rothschild giraffe, an endangered species with only 1,500 left in the wild and was created by two Ugandan artists along Michigan State University’s art student, Richard Tanner.

Tanner states: “It really is Mutilib and Sophia’s artwork. They built the head and wrapped the snare around the frame that I built... They have never had any experience building anything to this grand size... Being informed and being able to see something that is life-size and has that Ugandan artistic feel, there is something so magical about this. The biggest thing that the giraffe will do is bring awareness to these issues and to the initiative.”

About the Artists
Sophia Jingo and Mutilib Ngomijik are two Ugandan artists employed by the Snares to Wares Initiative, which was created by Michigan State University Assistant Professor Robert Montgomery. His work in wildlife conservation research created a space for the two Ugandan artists and student, Tanner to collaborate. Living worlds apart with completely different experiences, it was an interesting project for the artists to work on together. Tanner states: “We all work really closely, but sometimes it can be difficult because there is a bit of a language barrier... But as soon as we tap into our common artist flow, then it is easy to understand one another; I rely on that. Jingo, and Ngomijik spent three months at Michigan State University running hands-on art events and building the giraffe during the late Michigan winter, before returning home to Uganda. Tanner will continue his education, with hopes of someday visiting Pakwach, Uganda, to meet the other 250 artists of the Snares to Wares Initiative.
Watershed (2019 – Michele Oka Doner)

Located at the Minskoff Pavilion Business College

Art Piece Description
Watershed has a double meaning. In addition to being a familiar campus landmark, the Red Cedar River is part of a larger network of contiguous rivers and their common watershed plan. The word itself has transcended its alluvial origins and now expresses the notion of a time when change happens, a period that marks a turning point.

The proposed artwork addresses this wonderful duality. Numerous thematic bronzes represent site-specific imagery, a multitude of fish that make their home in the adjacent river. The waters are rich in bass, pike, trout, carp, even an occasional salmon, almost three dozen varieties. The unique configuration of scales in each of these species, circular in form with concentric rings that echo the growth rings on trees, provides an exceptional point of departure for artistic interpretation.

Through another lens, individual scales, when seen together, are in aggregate a singular body. This metaphor, each student like a scale forming a student body, has wonderful poetic resonance. These students arrive from disparate places, separate entities destined to be joined into a matrix of fluid connectivity.

It is the artist’s belief that Watershed will stimulate the eye and mind of students and visitors to the Minskoff Pavilion, a visual voice that speaks of connection and purpose during this period of intense commitment to studies, to the road ahead, and the river by their side.

About the Artist
Michele Oka Doner is an American artist and author who works in a variety of media including sculpture, prints, drawings, functional objects and video. She has also worked in costume and set design and has created over 40 public and private permanent art installations, including “A Walk On The Beach,” a one and a quarter mile long bronze and terrazzo concourse at Miami International Airport. Her work can be found in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, Chicago Art Institute and more. She maintains a studio in New York City and received a Bachelor of Science and Design from the University of Michigan.