



International Artist Judy Pfaff to Speak at Principia

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
March 12 2024 1:21 PM



ELSAH - A renowned artist is returning to the Riverbend after beginning her career here in the 1970s.

Judy Pfaff, known for her installation art and sculptures, will present a lecture at 7:30 p. m. on April 2, 2024, at Principia College. Pfaff attended Southern Illinois University Carbondale and Washington University before completing an M.F.A. at Yale University. She will discuss her art and inspiration at the free public lecture on April 2, 2024.

“This is going to be an amazing opportunity for the community to hear from an extraordinary artist of international renown,” said Penelope Schmidt, who helped organize the event. “We’re honored and thrilled that she is coming.”

Schmidt explained that this is the second annual lecture sponsored by the Schmidt family in honor of her father, James K. Schmidt, who has an exhibition gallery named after him at Principia. The Schmidt Family Lecture Series in Contemporary Art aims to bring well-known artists to Principia so they can share their art with students and community members.

“Our family wanted to extend and expand the outreach of this public gallery to include the community and offer an annual lecture that was really of significance in the realm of contemporary art,” Schmidt explained. “This is the second in an annual series of public lectures that are featuring really experienced and internationally renowned contemporary artists, and learning from them about a lifetime in making art, a career that reflects their own human experience and also technical proficiency in terms of their expression.”

As a painter, printmaker, sculptor, carpenter, welder and glassblower, Pfaff will have a lot to share with audience members. Schmidt said that Pfaff has an interest in climate change and environmental issues, which she often explores in her art. She said Pfaff’s work evokes “visceral” responses from viewers.

“They’re very provocative, very poetic in the sense that it’s a human response. It’s a personal response to these unexpected events in our lives, contradictory forces, the power of intuition and resilience,” Schmidt said. “Usually the very personal, when we dig down and find that, it becomes universal. And, of course, art is a way to generate empathy and inspiration and connection to each other.”

Schmidt hopes that attendees leave the lecture with “a sense of possibility.” She is excited to share Pfaff’s work with community members and students on April 2, 2024. For more information about Pfaff’s lecture and other upcoming events, visit PrincipiaCollege.edu/Calendar.

