

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Donna Dodson: *Sheroes*

August 30 – October 1, 2023

Featuring special guests Trina Baker, K. Melchor Hall, Maya Rubio and Kledia Spiro

First Friday: September 1st, 5 – 8:30pm, with a special performance, *In the Heels Of* by Kledia Spiro at 6pm

Artist's Reception: Saturday, September 9, 3 – 5pm, with artist talks at 4pm

Roundtable Discussion *Heroine Herstories and Contemporary Visions*: Sunday, September 10 at 2pm

With Donna Dodson, Maya Rubio and Kledia Spiro. Co-moderated by Dr. Clareese Hill and Dr. Ali Terndrup. Join us for this virtual event on [Zoom](#)

Boston Women Woodcarvers: Thursday, September 21, 6 – 8pm

Donna Dodson and Alison Croney Moses in conversation with Beth McLaughlin. Join us for this in person event co-sponsored and co-hosted with Abigail Ogilvy Gallery.

As 2023 ushered in a new set of woes for women including threats to health care, human rights and gender equality, artist Dodson's response was to create an army of *Sheroes* for her seventh solo show at Boston Sculptors Gallery. Her most recent woodcarvings are inspired by real life heroines – Hua Mulan, Tomyris, Beatrice Cenci and Caterina Sforza.

Dodson chose to collaborate with guests Trina Baker, K. Melchor Hall, Maya Rubio and Kledia Spiro because of their shared commitment to social justice. Dodson, Baker, Hall, Rubio and Spiro are united in their quest to create a new vision of women's empowerment. Hall responds to Dodson's sculptures and themes of superheroines and vulnerability with her prose poetry transformed into a digital soundtrack to accompany Maya Rubio's video, which highlights the process of creating collaborative animations with Trina Baker. While Hall's poems address the gendered contrasts of strength and weakness, youthfulness and aging, as well as the protection of the self and others in relationships, Baker's animations present contemporary visions of superheroines that challenge the stereotypical narratives of female action figures.

In Spiro's most recent body of work, she considers the inheritance and upholding of her family's legacy—one with significant achievements—as a weighty responsibility. Being a woman adds another layer of complexity, considering the historical challenges of prescribed gender roles. Yet, the support and contributions of unseen heroes, like Spiro's mother and grandmother, play a crucial role in making such legacies possible. Her family's legacy in Albania, rooted in the remarkable work of her grandfather and father, became her foundation. Supported by the efforts of her mother and grandmother, who defied societal norms, Spiro is empowered to leave her own mark, creating a new reality, and continuing their journey. In her performance *Oozing*, she stands on the shoulders of these unseen heroes, carrying forward their aspirations and breaking barriers. Their labor and sacrifices enable her to build her own legacy, step by step. She embraces the weight, leaving traces of progress as she goes, constantly evolving and opening up new possibilities for the future.

Trina Baker currently Chairs the Animation Department at Lesley Art + Design. Her paintings, drawings, and artist books have shown nationally and internationally in galleries and corporate collections. Baker's animations have received numerous awards including a Pixie, honoring outstanding work in Motion Graphics, Visual Effects and Animation, as well as two International CINDY (Cinema in Industry) awards.

Donna Dodson is a Resident Scholar at Brandeis University's Women's Studies Research Center, a Fulbright US Scholar, a Fellow at the St. Botolph Club and a member of the Boston Sculptors Gallery. She has exhibited her work, received favorable reviews and won grants locally, nationally and internationally. Dodson's work is in numerous private and public collections locally, nationally and internationally. Her well-known *Seagull Cinderella* sculpture attracts international media attention.

K. Melchor Quick Hall, PhD. is a Black feminist scholar-activist crossing disciplinary and national borders. She is a Resident Scholar at Brandeis University. Dr. Hall is the author of *Naming a Transnational Black Feminist Framework: Writing in Darkness*, and co-editor of *Mapping Gendered Ecologies: Engaging with and beyond Ecowomanism and Ecofeminism*.

Maya Rubio is an independent curator and editor at Boston Art Review. Her recent curatorial projects include *What's the Secret?* at Gallery 263 and *M'Kenzy Cannon: Please Let Me In* at Boston Center for the Arts. Rubio has also worked on several exhibitions at Emerson College, where she studied the business of creative enterprises and art history.

Kledia Spiro creates videos, performances, installations, and paintings. Born in Albania, Kledia was a member of an Olympic weightlifting team. An interdisciplinary, artist she uses weightlifting as a symbol of survival, empowerment, celebration, and as a vehicle for discussing women's roles in society, immigration, and times of war. Spiro has exhibited internationally and nationally, most notably at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Queens Museum, New York City; SAIC Sullivan Galleries, Chicago; Museum of Art, University of New Hampshire; and the ProArts Gallery in Oakland, CA. Spiro was the Keynote Speaker at the Centennial New England Museum Association Conference. She was selected as a TEDx speaker and performer for *The Pursuit of Creativity*.

Donna Dodson: *Sheroes* runs concurrently with Margaret Swan: *Flow*.

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