

DuMA

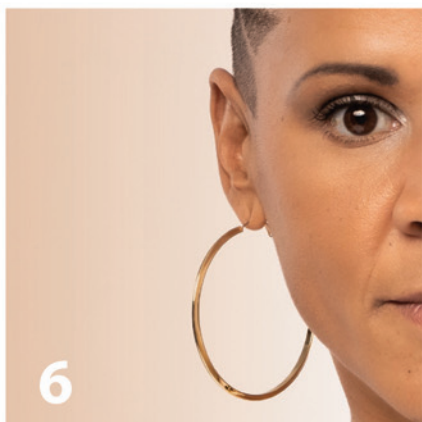
WINTER/SPRING 2023





Sections

- 4 Around the Museum
- 6 Winter/Spring Exhibitions
- 14 Winter Arts
- 15 Events and Programs



Exhibitions

BLACK THREAD BY JILL WELLS

Experience more than 4,000 black butterflies that fill DuMA's lobby and trace the routes taken by six million African Americans during the Great Migration.

BILL FARRELL: INVESTIGATIONS WITH CLAY

A comprehensive retrospective about the unorthodox approach of an artist and teacher who changed our understanding of the ceramic arts.

TIBERU CHELCEA: RANDOMLY ACCESSED MEMORIES

An Iowa-based artist first seen in the 2015 DuMA Biennial. Chelcea's inaugural solo exhibition at DuMA explores the inspiration he takes from his work as a computer engineer as well as the textile traditions of his Romanian heritage.



2023 Operating Support Grants Provided by:



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DUBUQUE
Masterpiece on the Mississippi

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Support provided by the Iowa Arts Council, a division of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Dubuque Museum of Art activities are made possible through the City of Dubuque's Arts and Culture Operating Support grant program.

Cover: Bill Farrell, *Popeye*, 1970s, glazed earthenware, 13x11x5 in., courtesy of the artist's estate.

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Making History Current

Dear Members,

I hope you and your families enjoyed the holiday season.

At DuMA, we are beginning a remarkable season of programs. Each artist featured this winter inspires us to look backward—at history and tradition—but also to push forward to new ideas. January 15, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, join me for the opening of **BLACK THREAD** a large-scale installation by Iowa-based artist Jill Wells. From historical themes, personal as well as socio-political, Wells' interactive work asks us to consider what we mean when we talk about inclusion. I am grateful to our sponsor GreenState Credit Union for making this exhibition, the first in an annual series of exhibitions of BIPOC artists, possible.

On February 11, we open *Investigations with Clay*, a career retrospective of Bill Farrell who, as an artist and teacher, changed how we think about the traditional ceramic arts. Please join me and our City of Dubuque partners February 12 for the sixth annual Winter Arts festival in Washington Park. I invite you to warm your hands with hot chocolate and then join our teaching artist in the park where families can carve their own masterpiece inspired by the Dubuque Symphony Orchestra's *Carnival of Animals*. Save the date for March 3, for Cocktails & Conversations.

In addition to Farrell, we'll celebrate the return home of the K-8 Student Exhibition for the first time since COVID, and the opening of *Tiberu Chelcea: Randomly Accessed Memories*. Chelcea is an Iowa-based artist who combines inspiration from his work as a computer engineer with the textile traditions of his Romanian heritage to create wholly new works of art.

Though it may sometimes feel like the dark days of winter and a time for hibernating at home, I very much look forward to being together and celebrating the artists—of all ages—who make our community and this Museum unique.

Happy New Year.

Gratefully,



Gary Stoppelman
Executive Director
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gstoppelman@dbqart.org

Collection Digitization Project Update

An online catalog of the Museum's collection is now publicly accessible online. For the first time in the Museum's 148-year history, and since it began collecting in 1914, the collection, including select loans, is available to all to search and browse from anywhere, at any time, for free.

From the most well-known works like the Grant Wood and Edward S. Curtis collections to the least known works that have rarely, if ever, been on exhibit, visitors to the online collection will be able to see an image and find essential data for every work including title, date, dimensions, medium and process, donor, and accession number. Some works have additional information and descriptions and Museum staff continue to expand the data that is available and add new acquisitions as they come into the collection. Visitors can search by simple or advanced searches, by collection, by artist, or find works that are currently on view, recent acquisitions, or part of the Conservation Corner program.

Curatorial Director Stacy Gage Peterson led this initial phase of the project along with two talented Collection Assistants, Deb Errington and Lydia Pakala, who were passionate about bringing the collection to the public. Their biggest challenge was assembling over a century of data into accurate, usable spreadsheets that could be uploaded into the new robust collection management system. This involved tirelessly cross-referencing thousands of hard files to correct inaccurate data, find missing data, and consolidate duplicate entries. They also gathered new data directly from over 2700 objects and photographed anything that didn't have a good image or any image at all. In all, this project has taken them two years to complete. The next phase of the project will involve expanding the information for each object with more descriptions, historical data, and multiple images, plus adding archival and study collections.

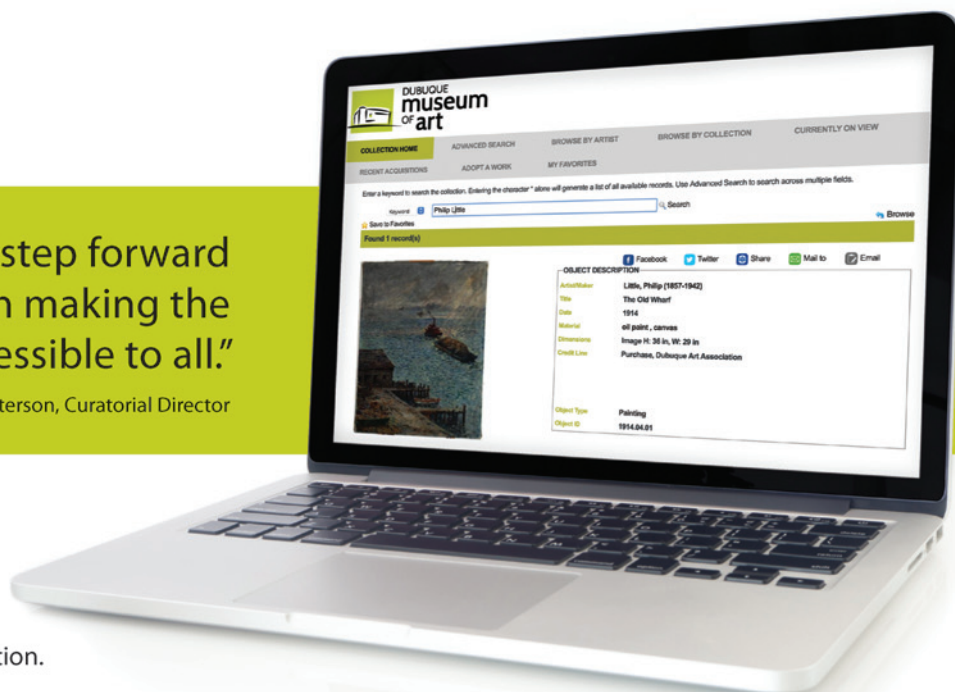
"This is a monumental step forward for the Museum in making the collection more accessible to all," said Peterson. "For first-time visitors to the online collection, I recommend two things to start. Do a simple search for Philip Little. This will bring up the earliest acquisition to the collection, not the oldest work, but the first one documented as being formally purchased by the Museum, then known as the Dubuque Art Association. It has been in very fragile condition for a long time so it hasn't been able to be on exhibit. Now you can click on its image and zoom in for a closer look at the work—even closer than what would be possible in the gallery. After that go to the Browse by Collection page. On this page, you will find tabs to all of the works by Arthur Geisert, Wood, and Curtis as well as options to see by medium all of the paintings, photography, prints, sculpture, or works on paper."

"This is a monumental step forward for the Museum in making the collection more accessible to all."

Stacy Gage Peterson, Curatorial Director



Scan the QR code or visit dbqart.org/collection.



Conservation Corner

Since our last Conservation Corner update in February 2021, three more works have been professionally conserved by paintings conservator Faye Wrubel. They include *Rushing Surf* 1928 by George Pearce Ennis (America, 1884–1936), *Dubuque III* 1934 by William E.L. Bunn (America, 1910–2009), and *Freight Cars* 1930s by F. Drexel Smith (America, 1874–1956). Notably, the painting by William Bunn was the preliminary painting for his 1937 WPA mural located in Dubuque's Historic Federal Building.

Thanks to the continued generosity of our visitors and donors, fragile paintings in the Museum's collection are able to receive the specialized care that they require. On your next visit to the Museum be sure to check out the Conservation Corner to view the currently featured work by Cris Glasell, *Farm - Swiss Valley*. You can also learn more about the Conservation Corner program on our updated collection website, dbqart.org/collection.



William E.L. Bunn, *Dubuque III*, 1934, oil on board, 24.25x20 in., purchase of the Dubuque Art Association, ND.23

DuMA²⁰²³ biennial

CALL FOR ENTRIES

Founded in 2003, the DuMA Biennial is a highly-competitive, juried exhibition highlighting leading contemporary, regional artists who are actively producing and presenting new work. This year's juror is Pamela Hugdahl, Executive Director, Rochester Art Center.

SUBMISSION PERIOD

December 12, 2022 to March 31, 2023

LEARN MORE AND APPLY

dbq.org/dumaBiennial2023



BLACK THREAD by Jill Wells

JANUARY 15–FEBRUARY 12

DuMA LOBBY

Artist and advocate Jill Wells brings her installation BLACK THREAD to DuMA for four weeks beginning January 15th. The work tells the story of The Great Migration (roughly 1910–1970) when African Americans from the South migrated to the industrial cities of the North.

As 4,000+ black butterflies glide from floor to ceiling, along every wall of the DuMA lobby, cascading from above, and wheeling in reverence, the narrative begins. BLACK THREAD presents the pathways and journey of The Great Migration, one of the largest movements of people in United States history. In honoring African American history, BLACK THREAD acknowledges the sewing of the fabric of America done by countless African Americans throughout U.S. history. Additionally, BLACK THREAD raises questions about freedom, transformation, labor, and economy, while celebrating the virtue of fortitude.

For Wells, making work that can be experienced by all is a cornerstone of her practice and informs her creative choices. This large-scale installation is both visual and tactile, allowing for increased sensory perception of the work. Museum visitors are allowed to gently touch the ground-level art pieces. BLACK THREAD asks the audience to think and feel outside their own lived experiences, in order to spark a broader conversation about access to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

RELATED PROGRAM

OPENING CELEBRATION

Sunday, January 15, 1–4 pm

See page 15 for details

SPONSORED BY:



Iowa-based artist, Jill Wells (America, b. 1980) has firmly situated herself within art and advocacy work. A 2005 graduate of Drake University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, she is known for her dynamic, colorful, and tactile multimedia works investigating race, history, stereotypes, accessibility, and human experiences. By exploring the powerful alignment between arts integration and Universal Design, Wells' work seeks solutions for innovative pathways into accessible art. In her practice, Wells engages with individuals of all abilities, through various interdisciplinary art workshops and talks to create new modes of working through the arts that are inclusive and representational. Without shying away from the complicated socio-political histories relevant to the world, Wells' interactive, multimedia works "are transforming the art scene through social engagement and she is building a future of advocacy through the arts." From 2012–15 Wells served as a Substance Use Activities Specialist for inpatient services. In 2015, Wells obtained her Iowa Boards as a Certified Alcohol and Substance Use Counselor for the state of Iowa and served as an inpatient and outpatient substance use counselor for 5 years. In 2020, she founded Artists X Advocacy Mentorship Program (AXA). In 2021, Wells was the recipient of the Iowa Arts & Culture Resilience Grant. Additionally, in 2021, Wells was a TEDx speaker on The Power of Public Art. In 2022, Wells became the first Harkin Institute Artist Fellow and was the lecturing artist for Al-Quds Bard College for Arts and Sciences in East Jerusalem for The Resistance Course on "The Disability Art, Revolution, and Advocacy in the USA." Her artwork is represented in the permanent collections of The Havelocks, Dublin, The Center of Afrofuturist Studies at Public Space One, The City of Iowa City, The University of Iowa; The Evelyn K. Davis Center for Working Families, and Disability Rights Iowa.

Photo credit: Jill Wells



Bill Farrell: Investigations with Clay

FEBRUARY 11–JUNE 4

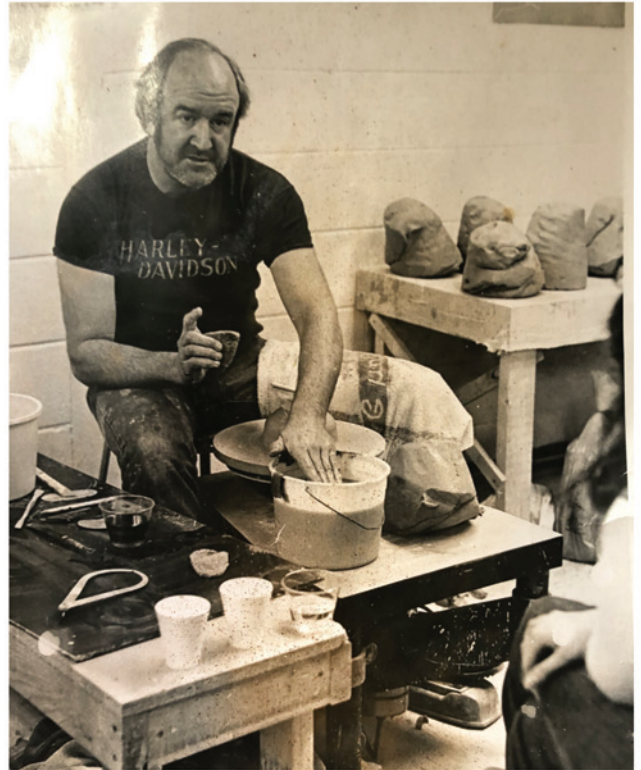
FALB FAMILY GALLERY

Pioneering ceramic artist Bill Farrell (American, 1936–2021) will be honored in a survey exhibition organized by the Dubuque Museum of Art and co-curated by Delores Fortuna and Tim Farrell that highlights his significant contributions to the field of ceramics and his dedication to life-long creating and teaching.

Farrell's life as an artist began in the traditional way, studying painting and art education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, earning a Master of Teaching Art degree at Penn State University, then teaching K–12 art. In 1966, an appointment at Purdue University opened up a new path when he was offered the opportunity to teach ceramics despite having no experience with clay. Never one to see challenges as roadblocks Farrell fortuitously enrolled in a ceramics course at the prestigious Alfred University where he studied under Val Cushing and Don Reitz.

Farrell became a professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) in 1968. There he launched three decades of intense exploration of clay, expanding his journey from practical vessels to sculptural forms. Farrell encouraged an openness to experimentation and demonstrated an unorthodox approach to art and teaching.

Despite his experimentations with form, Farrell never abandoned the vessel form. Recognizing that one energized the other, he split his time and thoughts between vessels and sculptures, back and forth.



Top: Photo from the artist's archives.

Bottom: Bill Farrell, Wood-fired Jar, 2000s, stoneware, 12x9 in., courtesy of the artist's estate.

Opposite page: Bill Farrell, *He Says, She Says*, 1981, enamel paint and cre pas on earthenware, 31x18x10 in., Dubuque Museum of Art, gift of the artist, 2015.44.



**His student and friend,
Israel Davis, describes
Farrell's influence.**

"His work made a shift from primarily utilitarian objects to sculptures and vessels that viewed clay as a mechanism for conceptual investigation and creative expression. In those early days of teaching at SAIC, the ceramics department was an outlier in the field emphasizing concept and freedom of expression over the craft of clay. Though Bill's teaching offered a balance between technical and idea-based projects, SAIC's ceramics department would be a pioneer in the avant-garde throughout the 1970s and 1980s. With courses such as *Non-Traditional Approaches to Clay and Multiples*, the curriculum and work of faculty pushed the envelope of how clay was used and considered as a medium within artistic practice. Bill's work with latex coated raw clay, objects that incorporated neon, and 'cold finishes' were no exception."

RELATED PROGRAM

COCKTAILS & CONVERSATIONS

Friday, March 3, 5–9 pm

ARTIST TALK

Saturday, March 4, 1:30 pm

See page 15 for details

A passion for motorcycles and antique cars also energized his work. Shapes like exhaust systems and tire tubes found their way into his work. A favorite of the artist was his *Tubes* series. The works in that series consisted of clay extrusions coated in rubber and paint and wired together.

Farrell received many honors and awards during his lifetime. In 1962, as an emerging artist, he was juried into the 22nd Syracuse Ceramic National at the Everson Museum in Syracuse, New York. He was a member of the National Council on Education in Ceramic Arts (NCECA) since its inception in 1966. He received the National Endowment for the Arts First Award in Ceramics in 1982 for his *Popeye* series of sculptures.

Below: Bill Farrell, *Falling Squares*, 1980s, glazed earthenware, 32x18 in., courtesy of the artist's estate.

Right: Bill Farrell, *Shaman*, 2001, bronze glazed stoneware, 24x13x7 in., courtesy of the artist's estate.

Opposite page, top: Photo courtesy of the artist's estate.

Opposite page, bottom: Bill Farrell, *Wood-fired Tea Bowls*, 2010, 4x4 in. ea., courtesy of the artist's estate.



Beginning in 1990, Farrell traveled the world building kilns in Bangladesh, Italy, and Lisbon; attending symposia and residencies in Finland, Taiwan, Le Borne, and the Netherlands at EKWC; and lecturing and teaching along the way. The residencies in Italy and Taiwan were highlights of his international experience. He reveled in the opportunity to work and collaborate with international artists.

In 1997, Farrell moved to a home and studio in rural Galena with partner Delores Fortuna. He remained there after his retirement in 2002 and continued to explore wood firing, especially the tea bowl form, and occasionally making large-scale sculptural installations. He continued to play an active role in the area art community. Farrell helped found the popular Twenty Dirty Hands pottery tour. He was included in the first Voices from the Warehouse District exhibition in 2005 and co-curated the exhibition *Innovations in Clay* in 2015 at DuMA. Through declining health, Farrell continued to find joy in his art, his hobbies, his children and grandchildren, and the many close friends he made throughout the world.



Tiberu Chelcea: Randomly Accessed Memories

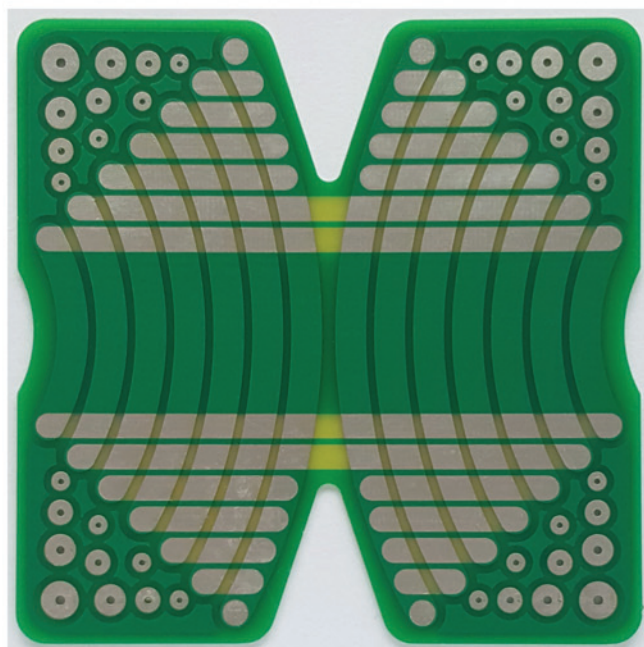
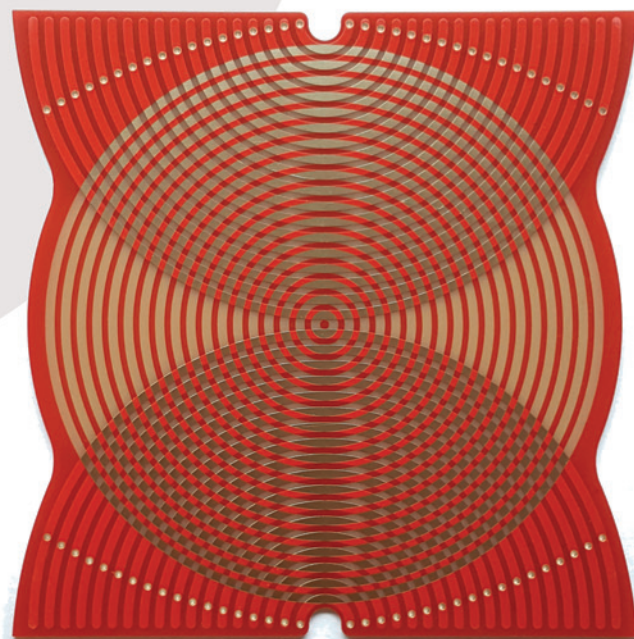
FEBRUARY 25–JUNE 11

KRIS MOZENA MCNAMER GALLERY

Romanian-born, Iowa-based artist Tiberu Chelcea combines his background in computer engineering with his artistic practice and Romanian heritage to create technologically-inspired, historically-grounded drawings, paintings, and digital and textiles works.

Technologies such as smart phones, thumb drives, and computers have a smooth utilitarian aesthetic, yet they hide from view their most important contents: memories, art, scientific equations, and entire histories of human ideas codified in strings of microscopic ones and zeroes. The works in this exhibition make visible this unobserved world.

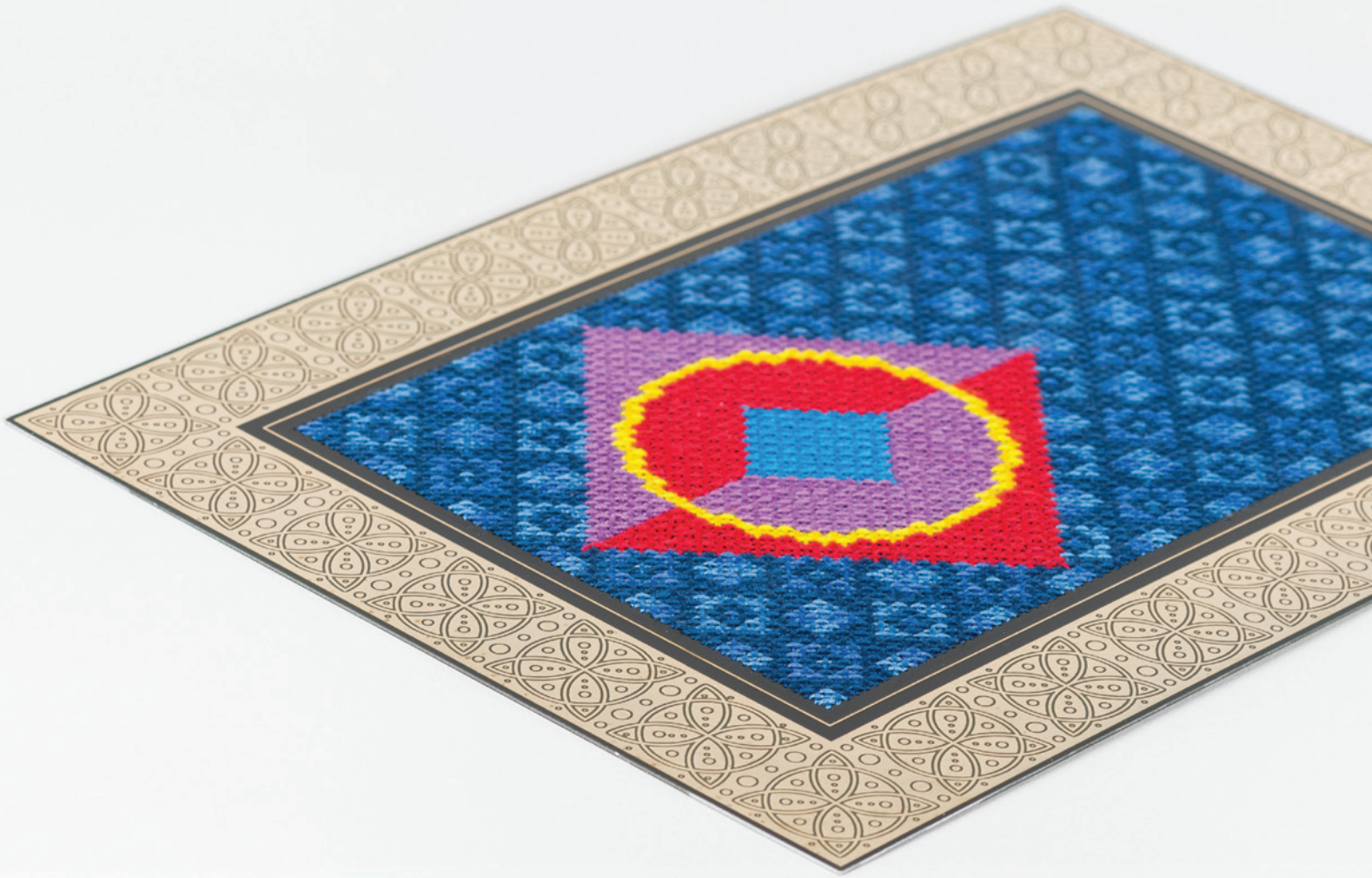
Chelcea's drawings and paintings are inspired by electronic circuit board designs and explore the graphic potential of electronic symbols. His painted circuit boards pioneer new techniques for using electronic design software to create art. These works are manufactured using the same process as actual circuit boards but are not functional. Some of the designs are created by an artificial intelligence (AI) network that Chelcea trained as his studio assistant. Chelcea is interested in using AI as a true artistic collaborator, where the AI learns from the artist and, in turn, inspires the artist. He has also experimented with teaching AI to identify and interpret digital images of artwork. Serendipitously, Chelcea will use this new technology on works in DuMA's newly digitized collection.



Top: Tiberu Chelcea, *PCB Drawing #32*, 2017, circuit board (FR-4, copper, solder mask, nickel, and gold), 4x4 in., courtesy of the artist.

Bottom: Tiberu Chelcea, *PCB Drawing #2*, 2016, circuit board (FR-4, copper, solder mask, and solder), 4x4 in., courtesy of the artist.

Opposite Page: Tiberu Chelcea, *Randomly Accessed Memory #20*, 2021, cotton yarn embroidered on custom circuit board, 12x8 in., courtesy of the artist.



Chelcea's textile works are part of an ongoing exploration of the connections between textile manufacturing and the electronics industry. His large textiles are inspired by Jacquard textile looms. These looms were the first automatically controlled machines ever created. Their design inspired the earliest attempt at building a computer and the punched cards that controlled them continued to be used for decades in modern electronic computers. His smaller weavings combine textile with his circuit boards and introduce hand embroidery. The cross-stitching patterns he uses are inspired by electronic symbols and recall the traditional Romanian garment patterns that Chelcea saw in his grandparents' home during his childhood in Romania.

Tiberu Chelcea moved to the United States in 1997 and received his Ph.D. in computer science at Columbia University. He worked at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania before settling to Iowa. He is currently a software engineer in the agricultural industry and lives with his wife and two children in Ames.

RELATED PROGRAM

COCKTAILS & CONVERSATIONS

Friday, March 3, 5–9 pm
See page 15 for details

Celebrate Winter

The Winter Arts Snow Sculpting Festival & Competition returns for its sixth year Thursday, February 9th through Sunday, February 12th in Washington Park.

Watch the sculpting in-progress from dawn until dusk Thursday–Saturday. Sunday at noon, the sculptors will put down their tools. From noon to 4 pm, families, friends, and first-time sculptors are invited to sculpt their own masterpiece (from smaller blocks and with professional guidance) inspired Dubuque Symphony's *Carnival of Animals*. Warm up with fried chicken from Birds food truck and hot cocoa served by high school students from the Community Foundation's YAPPERS program which introduces youth to the power of philanthropy. Take a guided tour of the Museum's (warm) galleries throughout the day and celebrate the winners at 3:30 pm.

Teams of professional, amateur and collegiate sculptors will compete by carving giant snow creations from 6x6x8 foot blocks of solid snow. Teams consisting of all Iowa residents will compete for the state title, a \$1,000 prize, and the opportunity to represent Iowa at the U.S. National Snow Sculpting Championship during the 2024 Winterfest in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. All teams will have the chance to be crowned the People's Choice award winner that comes with a \$300 cash prize.

Rachel Spurling got her start in snow sculpting while interning at DuMA. As a recent BFA graduate at Clarke University, she joined Jeremy Rudd and Kelsey Hammons in sculpting "Aquarius," winning the 2019 competition. Now in her fifth year of snow sculpting, Rachel can be seen on "Best in Snow" streaming on Disney+.

"My favorite part about snow sculpting is interacting with the public and explaining to them why all these crazy people are standing outside in the cold," said Spurling. "I love showing them our model replica and watching their face try to piece together how to get 'this' out of 'that.' It's great to be able to share this skill and possibly get more people interested in participating."

The perfect sculpting conditions aren't warm and sunny, as many assume, but rather 20–25 degrees and mostly cloudy. For artists like Spurling and Jenni Petersen-Brant, who usually work with ceramics, it's a fun and social medium. "There's a great camaraderie. Teams help one another out and share tools. That's the part I enjoy the most," said Petersen-Brant, who also serves as the Arts & Cultural Affairs Manager for the City of Dubuque. Echoed Spurling, "I always look forward to seeing new teams and/or sculptors join the competition, as well as seeing what they create."

MEDIA PARTNER:



Winter Arts Snow Sculpting Festival
February 9–12, 2023
Washington Park



Photo: City of Dubuque

"I love the uniqueness of this event, and the spectacle and wonder that it creates for people driving by or walking by. It's the perfect antidote to midwinter: even if you think it's cold outside, you'll bundle up to go check out the sculptures."

Jenni Petersen-Brant, snow sculptor and Arts & Cultural Affairs Manager for the City of Dubuque

This event is produced by the Dubuque Museum of Art in partnership with the City of Dubuque's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs.

Events and Programs

Exhibition Celebrations

BLACK THREAD

Sunday, January 15, 1–4 pm

Free with registration

1:30 pm / *Artist Conversation between Jill Wells and Ricki King*

In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, Ricki King of Roots to Branches Genealogy will join Des Moines artist Jill Wells for a conversation about her work, family story, and the Great Migration.

2:30–4 pm / *Celebration*

Explore Wells' immersive work in DuMA's lobby and enjoy food from Frannie's Barbeque and music by Iowa Music Award 2022 fan favorite, DJ Nita Beat.

K-8 STUDENT EXHIBITION

Thursday, March 2, 4:30–6:30 pm

Free with registration

Celebrate the return of the annual K–8 exhibition (and spring) to DuMA's galleries.

Reserve tickets for events at dbqart.org

COCKTAILS & CONVERSATIONS

Friday, March 3, 5–9 pm

\$15 members

\$20 adults

\$10 under 21

Free for 1874 Society

Admission includes one drink

Warm up with artisanal cocktails, artist conversations, and an evening of unexpected combinations.

5 pm / *Gallery Talk: Tiberu Chelcea*

Toast artist Tiberu Chelcea with a taste of Romanian spirit țuică, and then join him in the galleries for a conversation about his technologically-inspired, historically-grounded work.

6 pm / *Conversations with the Curators*

Visit with exhibition curators Delores Fortuna and Tim Farrell in the galleries as they share personal stories about Bill Farrell, influential artist, beloved partner, and father.

7–9 pm / *Artisanal cocktails and small bites of surprising combinations*

ARTIST TALK

Saturday, March 4, 1:30 pm

Free with admission

Paul Sacaridiz, Director of Cranbrook Academy of Art and former student of Bill Farrell, will present a talk focusing on the importance of Farrell's work, his role as a teacher, and the innovations and influence of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago on contemporary ceramics.

Student Exhibitions

ARTS TREK

The Museum plays host to over 750 second grade students this spring with its annual Arts Trek program. This long standing program offers students an opportunity to see how works of art relate to their school curriculum and life experiences.

Lead by trained docents (tour guides), students will learn about the role of an art museum and tour the exhibitions *Bill Farrell: Investigations with Clay* and *Tiberu Chelcea: Randomly Accessed Memories* exhibitions. To enhance understanding of the Farrell exhibition, students will engage with area ceramic artists who will demonstrate wheel throwing, coil, and slab building clay techniques.

Docents play an important role in the Arts Trek experience. If you are interested in becoming a docent please contact Margaret Buhr at 563-557-1851 ext 115 for more information.

K-8 EXHIBITION

March 1–31

A harbinger of spring, the annual K–8 exhibition features two-dimensional artwork by City elementary and middle school students.

HIGH SCHOOL EXHIBITION

April 5–May 5

DuMA's lobby comes alive with expressive and compelling two and three-dimensional works by students representing Dubuque's three high schools during the annual high school exhibition. Students create and install the work which is selected by art teachers.



DUBUQUE
museum
OF **art**

AN AFFILIATE OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

DUBUQUE MUSEUM OF ART
701 LOCUST STREET
DUBUQUE, IOWA 52001

dbqart.org



BLACK THREAD

Celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, Black history, and fortitude, at the opening of an immersive new exhibition by Jill Wells.

Join us for artist conversation, DJ Nita Beat, and Frannie's Barbeque.

Sunday, January 15 | 1 pm

FREE. Reserve tickets at dbqart.org.

Photo credit: Jill Wells