

Amazons Among Us by Donna Dodson May 5th-June 6th 2021

Featuring guest artists Trina Baker & Kledia Spiro and poet Melchor Hall

First Friday opening event/performance “I should have stuck to ballet” with Kledia Spiro and Janelle Gilchrist Dance Troupe: May 7th @ 8p (in person event and live streaming on Boston Sculptors Gallery Facebook page)

A Virtual Conversation with Chanda Prescod-Weinstein on the Future of the Feminist Imagination, Thursday May 20th @ 7pm

First Friday closing event/performance “She’s a Beast” with Kledia Spiro and Janelle Gilchrist Dance Troupe: June 4th @ 8p (in person event and live streaming on Boston Sculptors Gallery Facebook page)

2020 felt almost apocalyptic, rife with divisive politics, racial unrest and a Pandemic that took over half a million American lives. Yet, on the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage, history was made when a woman was elected Vice President, ushering in an era of hope as more women rise to take leadership roles in all fields. It is fitting that Wonder Woman celebrates her 80th year as America’s most famous heroine in 2021. The world needs heroines now, and Dodson creates them for this exhibition.

In her new series of wood sculptures, Dodson re-imagines Albrecht Durer’s “The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse” as Amazon warriors. She uses the traditional medium of woodcarving to suggest that these women have always been among us, but that gender misconceptions have prevented us from recognizing them. Drawing inspiration from legendary warrior women such as the ancient Amazons of the steppes, the Dahomey of West Africa and the Rani of Jhansi, Dodson’s amazons portray courage, strength and grit. Dodson chose to collaborate with artists Trina Baker and Kledia Spiro, and poet Melchor Hall, because of their commitment to social justice. They are united in their quest to create a new iconography of female empowerment.

In Dodson’s collaboration with Baker, whose work deals with sexual assault and domestic violence, the artists translate Dodson’s Amazon warrior sculptures into three-dimensional digital characters to create a short animation demonstrating their superhero qualities. To continue this project, Dodson has received a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program award in the Visual Arts for the 2021-2022 academic year from the U.S. Department of State and the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. In Vienna Austria, Dodson will be an artist in residence at Tricky Women, the world’s only digital animation studio for women, to write the storyboard and script.

Spiro feels a deep connection to the fictional character Xena, the Warrior Princess. For this exhibition, she premieres sculptures, photographs, and a two-channel video in honor of Xena. Audience members will have the opportunity to wear Spiro's interactive sculpture. Spiro wonders whether we can become our own superheroes, particularly as "girls". Can we unchain women from society's expectations of mothers, good housewives, eroticized objects, and irrational emotional beings?

Hall responds to Dodson's sculptures and themes of super-heroism and able-bodiedness with several prose poems on display as part of the exhibition. Hall's poems address the gendered contrasts of strength and weaknesses, youthfulness and aging as well as the protection of self and others in relationships.

This exhibition offers the audience inspiring words and images of women to uplift and inspire the amazons among us who have yet to discover their own superpowers.

Trina Baker has shown her paintings, drawings, and artist books nationally and internationally in galleries and corporate collections. Baker's animations have received numerous awards including a Pixie, which honors outstanding work in Motion Graphics, Visual Effects and Animation and two International CINDY (Cinema in Industry) awards. Trina's work tackles social justice issues such as domestic violence and sexual assault. She is the Chair of the Animation Department at Lesley University.

Donna Dodson is a Visiting Scholar at Brandeis University's Women's Studies Research Center and a member of the Boston Sculptors Gallery. She has complete numerous international residencies and her work is in many private and public collections. Her "Seagull Cinderella" sculpture attracted international media attention. Donna will be a Fulbright US Scholar working as an artist in residence at Tricky Women in Vienna Austria in 2022. Dodson is a graduate of Wellesley College. Her forthcoming paper "What do we call courageous women" will be presented at the Society for Classical Studies annual meeting in 2022.

K. Melchor Quick Hall, PhD., is a Black feminist scholar-activist crossing disciplinary and national borders. 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*](#) with Gwyn Kirk. "[Framing Reproductive \(In\)Justice: A Picture Perfect Gruesome Negress Hurt-story](#)," her poem about Black mothers and their children was published in MoMA Magazine.

Kledia Spiro creates videos, performances, installations, and paintings. Born in Albania, she was a member of an Olympic weightlifting team. Kledia uses weightlifting as a vehicle for discussing women's roles in society, immigration, and war. Spiro has exhibited nationally at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Queens Museum, NY; SAIC Sullivan Galleries, Chicago; Museum of Art, University of New Hampshire; and the ProArts Gallery in Oakland, CA.

Donna Dodson: Amazons Among Us runs concurrently with *Wood stone poem Meditations on The Natural* by Andy Moerlein. All events are free and open to the public following COVID -19 protocols. For More Information Contact: Almitra Stanley, Director, Boston Sculptors Gallery 617.482.7781 bostonsculptors@yahoo.com or Donna Dodson 617-960-6708 donnadodsonartist@gmail.com



**A Virtual Conversation with Chanda Prescod-Weinstein on the Future of the Feminist Imagination: Intersectionality, Collaboration and Transformation
Thursday May 20th @ 7pm**

[Register in advance for this virtual event](#)

Dr. Chanda Prescod-Weinstein is an assistant professor of physics and astronomy and core faculty in women's and gender studies at the University of New Hampshire. She is also a columnist for *New Scientist* and *Physics World*. Her research in theoretical physics focuses on cosmology, neutron stars, and dark matter. She also does research in Black feminist science, technology, and society studies. *Nature* recognized her as one of 10 people who shaped science in 2020, and *Essence* magazine has recognized her as one of "15 Black Women Who Are Paving the Way in STEM and Breaking Barriers." A cofounder of Particles for Justice, she received the 2017 LGBT+ Physicists Acknowledgement of Excellence Award for her contributions to improving conditions for marginalized people in physics and the 2021 American Physical Society Edward A. Bouchet Award for her contributions to particle cosmology. Originally from East L.A., she divides her time between the New Hampshire Seacoast and Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her first book, *The Disordered Cosmos: A Journey into Dark Matter, Spacetime, and Dreams Deferred*, (2021) is published by Bold Type Books.



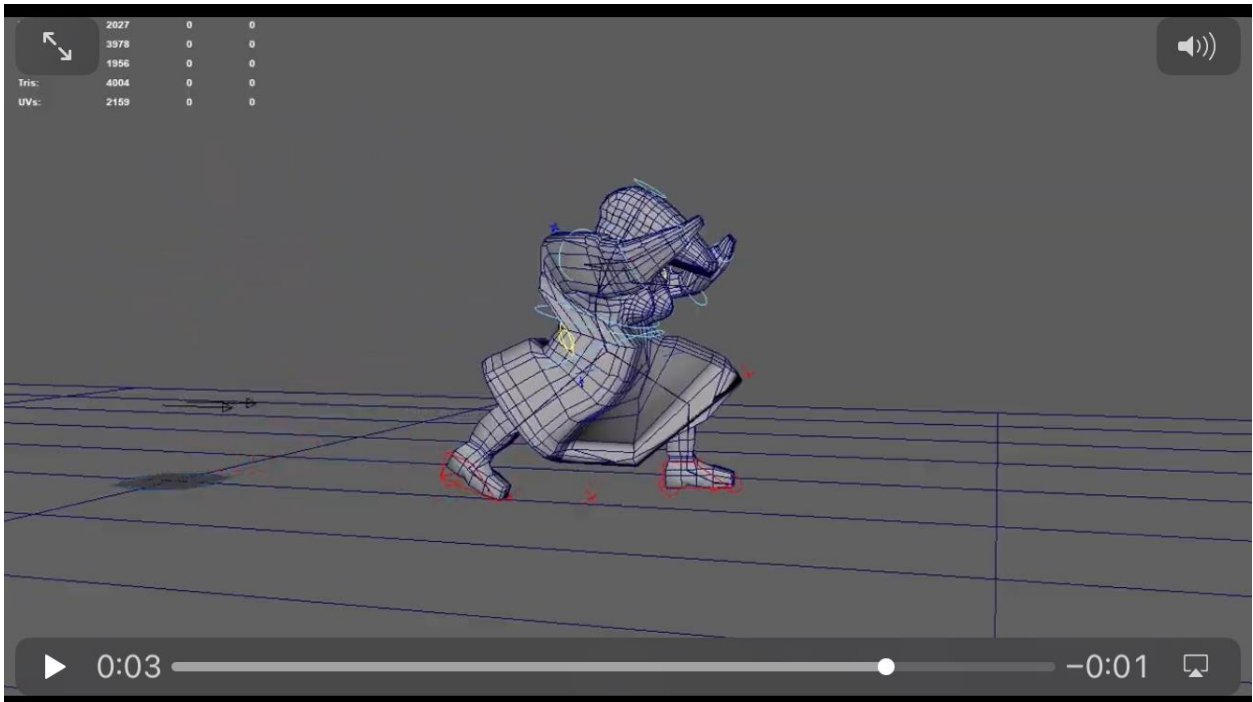
Alpha Female, 41"hx14"wx17"d, spalted pear wood, oak, paint 2020 by Donna Dodson



Alpha Female, detail



Tight., Grace Exhibition Space, NY, NY, 2019 performance still, by Kledia Spiro



Alpha Female animation still by Trina Baker, 2021

Additional Online Programs in connection with this exhibition:

Women Warriors: Donna Dodson and Trina Baker in Conversation. A Virtual Lecture series made possible by a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Dodson and Baker both take inspiration from civic minded heroines from their own families: Dodson's great Aunt, an officer in the WACs, and Baker's grandmother, who served four terms in the Connecticut state legislature.

Women Warriors: A Civic Duty, sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Sudbury with generous support provided by the Sudbury Cultural Council, Sunday May 2nd @ 2pm. [Watch a Recording of this event](#)

Women Warriors and Social Justice, sponsored by the First Parish Church of Stow and Acton with generous support provided by the Stow Cultural Council and the Acton/Boxborough Cultural Council, Saturday May 8th @ 7:30pm. [Visit www.bostonsculptors.com to Register in advance for this virtual event](#)

Women Warriors and Artistic Collaboration, sponsored by Artspace Maynard with generous support provided by the Maynard Cultural Council, Thursday May 13th @ 7pm. [Visit www.bostonsculptors.com to Register in advance for this virtual event](#)

Brandeis University Women's Studies Research Center Spring 2021 Lecture

Thursday April 27, 2021, 5-6:30 p.m. During the Leonard Bernstein Festival of the Creative Arts (this event was not recorded)

Amazons – Non-Western Perspectives and Contemporary Interpretations in Art

The Amazons of Greek lore have fascinated the imagination of Western audiences for thousands of years. Lesser known in the West are the stories of the historical women upon whom the legend of the Amazons are based, such as Tomyris, the warrior queen of the nomadic Central Asian tribe of the Massagetae. In this wide-ranging lecture, Walter Penrose, Jr. will discuss the ethnic variations which allowed women to be fighters in far flung places from ancient Scythia and China to modern Dahomey and India. Donna Dodson will then discuss how warrior women from these non-Western cultures have inspired her most recent artistic endeavor in which she translates Albrecht Durer's *The Four Horsemen*, from the Apocalypse Series, into sculpted "Amazon" women warriors.

Co-Presenters Walter D. Penrose Jr, Associate Professor of History at San Diego State University, is the author of *Postcolonial Amazons: Female Masculinity and Courage in Ancient Greek and Sanskrit Literature*. Donna Dodson, a Scholar at the Brandeis University Women's Studies Research Center, is an award-winning sculptor.