

# Providence Art Club

11 Thomas St Providence Rhode Island 02903, phone: 401.331.1114, [www.providenceartclub.org](http://www.providenceartclub.org)

## **Press Release**

### **Contact for Curatorial,**

### **Education, and Symposium questions:**

Catherine Little Bert and Nancy Whipple Grinnell

Co-Curators of Making Her Mark

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### **January 29 – February 24, 2017**

#### **Maxwell Mays, Mary Castelnovo, and Dodge House Galleries:**

*Making Our Mark Members' Exhibition*

### **March 5 - 31, 2017**

#### **Maxwell Mays Gallery:**

*Making Her Mark: The Women Artists of the Providence Art Club 1880*

#### **Dodge House Gallery:**

*The Archives: the Founding Story and Highlights of the Providence Art Club*

#### **Founders' Room:**

*The Original Founders of the Providence Art Club*

### **April 2 – April 21, 2017**

#### **Maxwell Mays & Mary Castelnovo:**

*Making Your Mark: Providence Art Club National All Media Open Juried Exhibition*

Beginning in February 2017, the Providence Art Club will host a series of exciting exhibitions celebrating women's important roles in the visual arts. The programs are in recognition of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Women's History Month in March 2017, as well as the early advocacy of women artists at the Providence Art Club, which was the first art club in America to admit both men and women at its 1880 founding. A Providence Art Club Members Show of contemporary works, *Making Our Mark*, inaugurates the series in February. In March, *Making Her Mark* will highlight these women founders in a retrospective detailing the rich story of the founding of the Club through historic paintings, archival materials and early records. Finally, in April the series will culminate in a dynamic National Open Juried Show, *Making Your Mark*, which will feature contemporary women artists from across the United States.

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The juror for *Making Our Mark*, the Club's Members Show, is Althea Ruoppo, Curatorial Assistant in the Department of Contemporary Art and Special Projects at the renowned Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, Texas. She will award over \$5,000 in prizes. The show will feature approximately 150 original, recent artworks by the Providence Art Club's exhibiting artist members, who were asked to consider the work by the pioneering women artists as well as artists who have influenced them personally, when creating work for this show.

*Making Her Mark: The Women of the Providence Art Club, 1880*, in the Club's Maxwell Mays Gallery, will trace the role of women artists at the Providence Art Club in its early years. The Providence Art Club, 136 years old, was a cultural force from its inception, bringing together Rhode Island artists and collectors through art and membership. The exhibition will feature work by a diverse group of women artists who were integral in the founding of the Club. There will be a focus on the emergence of women as professional artists and art educators in 1880. The work of these women artists exhibited together provides a thought-provoking historical context for regional American art. It also exposes the significance of 19th century art clubs in fostering domestic art and culture. Catherine Little Bert of Bert Gallery is the curator for the exhibition assisted by Nancy Whipple Grinnell, Curator Emerita of the Newport Art Museum. Together they bring their combined 60 years of research and writing on regional American painters to the project.

Simultaneously in March, two other exhibitions complement *Making Her Mark*. The Dodge House Gallery will be the site of an archival exhibit compiled from the treasure trove of Providence Art Club scrapbooks, photographs and inventory. The paintings of other early founding members will be on display in the Founders' Room.

The series will conclude in April with *Making Your Mark: Providence Art Club National All Media Open Juried Exhibition*, featuring approximately 60 artworks selected by Dr. Kathryn Wat, Chief Curator at the National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA) in Washington, D.C. Dr. Wat will also award \$5,000 in prizes to thirteen pieces. *Making Your Mark* brings the series full circle by highlighting the work of women creating art today.

## About the Providence Art Club



*Founded in 1880 to stimulate the appreciation of art in the community, the Club has long been a place for artists and art patrons to congregate, create, display and circulate works of art. Located along Thomas Street, in the shadow of the First Baptist Church, the Providence Art Club is a picturesque procession of historic houses, home to studios, galleries and the clubhouse. Through its public programs, its art instruction classes for members and its active exhibition schedule, the Providence Art Club continues a tradition of sponsoring and supporting the visual arts in Providence and throughout Rhode Island. All of the Club's exhibitions are free and open to the public.*