

FlinnGallery

GREENWICH LIBRARY



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For Immediate Release

JUST SHOES: WHERE ART, CRAFT AND FANTASY MEET

February 3 - March 16, 2022

What is it about the shoe that so captivates the imagination? Dorothy's ruby red slippers carried her down the yellow brick road. Cinderella's glass slipper reunited her with her Prince Charming. Carrie Bradshaw's red soled stilettos unlocked a life of urban glamour and sophistication.

Shoes also bear significant meaning in everyday life. They can denote socio-cultural identity or class standing. They can function as a means for creative self-expression or to identify oneself with others. Whether conceived for embellishment or purely for function, elegant or plain, wildly imaginative or beautifully simple, shoes are always revelatory. Small wonder they have proved inspirational to artists and laymen alike.

From February 3 to March 16, 2022, the Flinn Gallery, Greenwich, presents *Just Shoes: Where Art, Craft and Fantasy Meet*, an exhibition featuring more than 70 shoes by 20 artists. Curators Debra Fram and Barbara Richards selected the works on display from a larger collection of fantasy shoes commissioned by Jane Gershon Weitzman, Founding Vice President of Stuart Weitzman Retail. Wife of the renowned shoe designer, Jane had a vision to create a gallery of fictional shoes for their Madison Avenue store windows. She traveled the world to find artists who could help her fulfill her dream. In total, over a period of 12 years, more than 1,000 shoes were created.

Constructed from a surprising array of materials and forms, blending traditional craftsmanship with the totally unexpected, these shoes exist as artistic one-offs, cobbled together from cut and collaged paper, plexiglass, bronze, ceramic, wire, found objects, fabric, steel, rhinestones and more. On display are the whimsical and the architectural, the lavishly decorated and the outlandishly camp. Some designs are abstract and others figurative, referencing popular culture, the animal kingdom, and nature. Pure invention transports these shoes far from the utilitarian realm with which we usually associate them. Here, form owes nothing to function.

Notable artists whose innovative designs are on view include: Ann Johnson, who has had two of her sculptures displayed in the East Wing of the White House; Kevin Radu, who created a 911 memorial for the Chrysler headquarters in Detroit; Sharon von Senden, who designed and constructed more than 20,000 square feet of mosaics with nearly 5 million pieces of glass for the City Museum in St. Louis; Danielle Pollitz, who was commissioned to sculpt the *Angel of Hope* award presented to President Bill Clinton; and Joan Klimo, who designed shoes for Christian Dior.

Totally unwearable and joyfully defiant of practical use and anatomy, these fantastical creations exist purely to delight the eye and the imagination. They are sure to delight viewers of all ages, fashionistas and art lovers alike.

The Flinn Gallery, sponsored by the Friends of Greenwich Library, is located on the second floor of the Library's main branch at 101 West Putnam Avenue, Greenwich CT. The gallery is open daily Monday to Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Thursday until 8 pm, and Sunday 1-5 pm.

An opening reception will be held on Thursday, February 3, from 6-8 pm.

Events:

Shoes: In Conversation with Jane Gershon Weitzman and Christina Chiu

Saturday, February 26, 2-3 pm

Berkley Theater, Greenwich Library

Pre-registration through the Library, Masks and evidence of full vaccination required.

Greenwich Library and the Flinn Gallery bring Jane Gershon Weitzman to the Berkley Theater, on February 26 at 2 p.m. As former Executive Vice President and Founding Vice President of Stuart Weitzman Retail, Jane was the inspiration for the Flinn Gallery's current exhibition *Just Shoes: Where Art, Craft and Fantasy Meet*.

Jane will share stories of her partnership with her husband, renowned shoe designer Stuart Weitzman, and how they built their business together. She will also discuss her long-running project of finding artists who would create fantasy shoes for the window gallery of their flagship store.

Interviewer Christina Chiu is an award-winning writer and the author of *Beauty*, where the main protagonist is a die-hard shoe lover.

For more information, please call the Gallery: 203-622-7947 www.flinngallery.com