

# John Michael Kohler Arts Center



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **New JMKAC exhibition explores role of arts in nurturing communities**

*Between You and Me*, a group exhibition focusing on the work of artists engaging in acts of connection and care, is on view at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, Wis., April 19 through Jan. 24, 2021. The exhibition is part of “On Being Here (and There),” a series exploring ways artists and cultural organizations initiate community connections and provide social sustenance.

In a gallery laid out as a community of spaces, visitors are encouraged to see artists not as people on the margins, illustrating modern life—but as neighbors integrated into our communities and integral to crafting a rich civic life.

*Between You and Me* features work by Chloë Bass, Sara Clugage, John Preus, Benjamin Todd Wills, Christine Wong Yap, General Sisters (Dana Bishop-Root and Ginger Brooks Takahashi), and the Harriet Tubman Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice, led by artists Lisa Jarrett and Harrell Fletcher.

Chloë Bass's *The Book of Everyday Instruction* investigates one-on-one social interaction. Unfolding in multiple cities, in public, in her studio, and within cultural organizations, Bass's project focuses on the nuance between self and other in close correspondence.

John Preus's "stoops" are part of a sculpture and design practice that combines reuse, community collaboration, and poetics in furniture making. His works evoke sites and occasions for dialogue.

Five years ago, Benjamin Todd Wills began writing letters to incarcerated citizens who never or rarely received mail. When he received a paper airplane from one of them, it so beautifully symbolized freedom that Wills asked others to send him one. He has amassed around 500 planes that visually connect viewers to fellow citizens serving time.

Christine Wong Yap has made exploring the processes that beget belonging central to her work. She creates tools, games, and documents that guide participants toward recognition of their course toward affiliation and fellowship.

General Sisters, founded by Dana Bishop-Root and Ginger Brooks Takahashi in North Braddock, Pa., began with the acquisition of a building. The—"How do we build a neighborhood grocery store, as neighbors?"—laid the groundwork for collaboratively developing practices that nourish a neighborhood impacted by systemic racial, economic, and environmental oppression.

Works by Sara Clugage illustrate her dinner parties that draw on the culinary styles from different periods of art history, teasing out the interconnectedness of culture, labor, and wealth while guests hear short lectures and play trivia.

Inside *Between You and Me* is another exhibition curated by the Portland, Ore.-based Harriet Tubman Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice, coordinated by artists Lisa Jarrett and Harrell Fletcher. Students at Harriet Tubman Middle School learn about curatorial practice and art criticism, eventually applying their skills as a team working in their school and at large. For this exhibition, they feature work by artist Lawrence Oliver from Portland's Public Annex, which serves residents with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Oliver is a multidisciplinary artist inspired by nature, YouTube videos, cartoons, and video games.

All these practices foreground the ways artists create art practices that support, nourish, and connect those around them.

For more information, visit [jmkac.org](http://jmkac.org) or call 920-458-6144. Admission to the John Michael Kohler Arts Center is free. It is located at 608 New York Ave. in downtown Sheboygan.

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**Photo ID:**

*Between You and Me*, installation view at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center.. Shown: works by (left) Harriet Tubman Center for Expanded Curatorial Practice: selected work by Lawrence Oliver; (center) Chloë Bass; (right) Christine Wong Yap. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.

**Hours**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Thursday: 10:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.

Saturday, Sunday: 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

**Location**

John Michael Kohler Arts Center: 608 New York Avenue, Sheboygan, WI

Art Preserve: 3636 Lower Falls Road, Sheboygan, WI

**About the John Michael Kohler Arts Center**

Founded in 1967, the John Michael Kohler Arts Center (JMKAC) is dedicated to generating creative exchanges between an international community of artists and a diverse public. Central to its mission is promoting understanding and appreciation of the work of self-taught and contemporary artists through original exhibitions, commissioned works of art, performing arts, community arts initiatives, and publications.

The Arts Center's collection focuses primarily on works by artist-environment builders, self-taught and folk artists, and works created in the Arts/Industry residency program. JMKAC is the world's leading center for research and presentation of artist-built environments. Beginning in August 2020, its collection of 25,000 individual works of art by more than 30 art-environment builders can be viewed year round at the Art Center's new satellite campus, the Art Preserve.

The John Michael Kohler Arts Center is supported by corporate and foundation donors, government grants, and its many members. The Arts Center is not an entity of Kohler Co. or its subsidiaries. The John Michael Kohler Arts Center is located at 608 New York Avenue, Sheboygan, WI. The Art Preserve is located at 3636 Lower Falls Road, Sheboygan. Admission to both is free. For information, call 920-458-6144, or visit [jmkac.org](http://jmkac.org), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#).