Ulrich Museum of Art exhibition honors local arts patron with one-of-a-kind, artist-made hats

“Fill It To the Brim” features more than a dozen hats made for Ruth Martin as she battles ovarian cancer

Wichita, Kan. May 30, 2014 — Ruth Martin’s strength and radiance in defiance of her struggle with ovarian cancer serve as an inspiration to the Wichita arts community—so much so that artist Randy Regier spearheaded a group of local artists, with the support of Jack Kellogg of Hatman Jack’s hat shop, to make Martin their muse and create one-of-a-kind hats for her.

The Ulrich Museum of Art is proud to present “Fill It To the Brim,” an exhibition of the artist-made hats that honor Martin, a beloved member of the arts community and an unfailing supporter of the programs and exhibitions at the Ulrich. The exhibition is on view June 5 – June 29 in the museum’s first-floor Ulrich Underground, Grafly Gallery, and features work by Regier, Chris Brunner, Curt Clonts, Connie Ernatt, Marc Durfee and others.

Martin has always been passionate about the arts, but after her retirement from teaching elementary school for 32 years she became a steady presence at every artist talk, gallery opening, and Final Friday in Wichita.

“ Asking others to be involved really came out of the fact that Ruthie shows up for everything and everybody when it comes to the arts,” said Regier, a local artist who belongs to an informal artist group that meets weekly to discuss art related topics.
Regier recalls that he learned of the return Martin’s cancer at an Ulrich event. “She approached me, smiling, as always, and said something to the effect of, ‘Well, this is the last time you’ll see me with hair for a while, back to chemo next week!’” he said. This is her second battle with ovarian cancer, following a one-year remission period.

“Of course I was deeply troubled by this and after a bit of hugging she said, ‘Maybe you’ll just have to make me a hat.’ It seemed important and apropos that her options for “interim hair” ought to be more than whatever thing I put together,” he said. “I’m so glad I asked others to be involved; we got such a rich diversity and array of responses, as she so rightly deserves.”

**About the Ulrich Museum of Art**

The Ulrich Museum of Art at Wichita State University serves as the area’s premier venue for new work by emerging and established artists of national and international reputation. The Ulrich Museum is home to the renowned 76-piece Martin H. Bush Outdoor Sculpture Collection—noted one of the top collections of its kind by *Public Art Review*—and a permanent collection of more than 6,300 works of modern and contemporary art. Established in 1974, the mission of the Ulrich is to expand human experience through encounters with the art of our time. To learn more about the dynamic public programs, events and exhibitions at the Ulrich, visit [www.ulrich.wichita.edu](http://www.ulrich.wichita.edu) and follow the Ulrich on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com) and [Twitter](http://www.twitter.com). The galleries are open Tuesday through Friday 11 a.m.—5 p.m., and weekends 11—5 p.m. The Outdoor Sculpture Collection is always open. Admission, parking, and group tours are free.

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