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M. Katherine Uetz, Gallery Director, Department of Art  
Cheryl Nunez, Vice Provost for Diversity

*Approved by:*

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Suzanne Michele Chouteau, Chair, Department of Art

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Janice Walker, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

**Xavier University Multicultural Expressions of Faith Art  
Exhibition**

Proposal for Women of Excellence Grant

## 2a. Xavier University Multicultural Expressions of Faith Art Exhibition

2b. Amount requested: \$10,000.00

## 2c. Abstract

The purpose of the project is to affirm the mission of Xavier University\* through a community-engaged art endeavor that reflects the multicultural expressions of faith and spirituality of members of the university community. We refer specifically to one item in the mission: **Institutional Transformation: Finally, in order to remain vital and viable as an institution, we aspire to institutionalize these commitments in every aspect of our endeavor and to build a culture in which all are accountable for advancing them.** A fundamental building block of *culture* is visual art and the intentional collection and display of multi-culturally expressive art on Xavier's campus is our aim. Sponsored by the Department of Art in collaboration with the Office of the Vice Provost for Diversity, the Women's Center, the Center for Mission and Identity, the Dorothy Day Center for Faith and Justice, Brueggeman Center for Dialogue, University Communications, and the Center for Interfaith Community Engagement, this project will comprise a juried exhibition of original works of art (works of painting, sculpture, ceramics, fibers, printmaking, photography, and mixed-media), open to all Xavier alumni, faculty, staff and students. The selected works will then be exhibited in the Xavier University Art Gallery and Gallagher Student Center for public viewing. Purchase awards (again selected by jurors) made with the WOX grant monies will buy art for permanent exhibition on the university's campus. The project will advance institutional objectives related to mission and identity, diversity, community-engaged learning and outreach (*jurors will be sought from Xavier and local arts institutions; exhibition will be promoted to local schools and faith-based organizations*), and alumni engagement. It is a first step toward the acquisition of art guided by a mission-based, inclusive vision that seeks to broaden the scope of art currently found on this campus. To this end, the goal will be to establish a precedent for a more strategic process of future campus art acquisitions.

\*See Xavier's Mission Statement, [Xavier's Diversity Vision](#)

### 3. BUDGET

#### Purchase/Awards of Excellence - \$5,000

The number of purchase awards and awards of excellence will be determined by the jurors and will be increased if other projected expenses are less than estimated.

- Catalog design – student graphic designer – up to \$1,000
- Catalog printing – 500-750 copies – up to \$1,500
- Gallery Receptions for artists – up to \$2,000
- Other promotional and presentation materials (includes postage) - \$500
- Any unused funds will be used for awards

#### **Projected Timeline:**

Fall Semester 2012 – Development of Prospectus/Call to Artists announced.

Spring Semester 2013 – April/May Submission deadline.

Summer 2013 – Catalog design and printing, announcement/invitation to exhibitions and events, promotional materials.

Fall Semester 2013 – Exhibitions will be held in the Xavier University Art Gallery and Gallagher Student Center with the announcement of Purchase Awards and Awards of Excellence at the Artists' Reception in August. Presentations (gallery talks) by award recipients to the WOX Giving Circle members as well as the public (students, faculty, staff, and others) will be scheduled throughout the exhibition dates. Faculty in all disciplines will be encouraged to utilize the exhibition in their curriculum, but special efforts will be made to co-sponsor events in the gallery with our partners.

#### 4. Narrative

In 2006 Xavier University Gallery Director, Kitty Uetz, with the support of Fr. Leo Klein, began a project of identifying and documenting Xavier University's art collection. The extensive project produced a book: *XAVIER UNIVERSITY A Celebration of Art*, that presented a portion of collected art up until that time. The project also revealed the extent to which the collection reflected a generally Euro/Anglo-American identity. Over the subsequent years, conversations have occurred between Cheryl Nunez, Kitty Uetz and Suzanne Chouteau (among others) about the need to exhibit art across campus that reflects the multicultural diversity that Xavier now encompasses. We have found that there is no real plan for acquiring 'diversity inclusive' art to fill the wall spaces in our buildings, and generally no funding of art for this purpose. As a consequence, any art that is displayed on Xavier campus building wall space is arranged either through the donation of work, the generosity of time and work loaned by artists [and often organized by Ms. Uetz], or art is acquired/displayed by individuals in the different colleges without any guiding university vision. Of course, private offices have art that reflects the persons occupying those offices, however what we are most concerned with are those public spaces shared by all university community members.

We seek funding from the Women of Excellence Giving Circle as a means to bring these issues to light and to focus the conversation on the importance of art in our community. We believe the best way to share the visual language of a diverse community is to invite members of the community to submit their work for exhibition in two Xavier spaces: the Xavier University Art Gallery located in the A. B. Cohen Center and the Gallagher Student Center. While this call to artists is not exclusively to *women* community members, it will indeed support the mission and purpose of the Women of Excellence Giving Circle. It not only seeks to engage and inform our students intellectually, morally and spiritually toward lives of solidarity, service and success, but to recognize our entire community as being involved in this creative endeavor. Further we desire to honor, extend and advance the legacy of Xavier's and Edgecliff's extraordinary women graduates (many of whom were visual artists) by encouraging their participation. We will utilize events and publicity around the exhibition to promote WOX and diversity at Xavier.

We will utilize grant monies to support all aspects of this singular exhibit [create the prospectus, launch the call to artists via alumni relations, portal and web-links, fund a catalog, announcement/invitation card, receptions, community outreach] and most importantly to purchase art for the Xavier campus. We will ensure that the selection of these works is consistent with our mission by having an invited panel of judges from the Office of Vice Provost for Diversity, Dorothy Day Center for Faith and Justice, Center for Mission and Identity, and select Xavier administrators appropriate to the endeavor.

If funded, presentations of the purchased art will be shared with the Women of Excellence Giving Circle Members at various events. We would give details about each work of art from artist interviews, identifying their backgrounds and inspirations. The Women of Excellence Giving Circle will be recognized in all exhibition print and publicity. Members of Women of Excellence will be invited to all receptions and gallery talks, and special acknowledgement of their support will be given at all events.

The first measure of success of this event will be evidenced by strong and broad participation of artists in our Xavier community (alums, faculty, staff and students). We do not assume that submissions will be only from our art alums, students and faculty—in fact, we hope for a sizeable portion of the submissions to come from the ‘unseen’ artists of Xavier [of which we suspect there are quite a few]. Assuming that the submission response exceeds expectations, then other measures of success will follow, as the work and its expression will have accomplished the most important first step. As a rule, hundreds of Xavier community members attend our receptions—we will have several with the exhibit (at Cohen and Gallagher) that include talks about the exhibition and participating artists. Secondly, we will encourage faculty across disciplines to utilize the exhibition for class or extra-curricular potential. Ultimately, success will truly be measured by the wider realization that multiple visions and ideas are welcomed, and indeed even revered, at Xavier. As students move through their education at Xavier, our fervent hope is that they will experience a more inclusive feeling created by visual art across campus that reflects multi-cultural diversity and expressions of faith. With a WOX grant to launch this effort, our hope is that the university at large will acknowledge that ART transforms space, and thus transforms public awareness. Visual art on campus is as an important investment in our culture, as having a “mission” statement; it is a vision statement that is instantly impactful. Xavier University needs to be committed to its visual “mission and identity”—a grant endowed by the Women of Excellence Giving Circle will send a strong message.