

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Women's Studio Workshop Names Sharon Louden as New Executive Director

Kingston, NY – Women's Studio Workshop's Board of Directors is proud to announce the appointment of Sharon Louden as their new Executive Director, coinciding with the organization's 50th anniversary. A respected artist, educator, and editor of the *Living and Sustaining a Creative Life* book series, Louden's appointment follows a national search. She is only the third Executive Director in the organization's history. Louden officially began her role on September 1st, bringing her passion, vision, and deep commitment to supporting contemporary artists.

Board President Rachel Weiss shared, *"We are thrilled to welcome Sharon to WSW. Her legendary dedication to nurturing artists at every stage of their careers aligns perfectly with WSW's mission. Sharon's ability to build community, prioritize accessibility, and champion equity and inclusion has made her an invaluable leader in the arts. She leads with authenticity and follows through with conviction."*

Louden's first major initiative is to celebrate WSW's 50th anniversary. *"I am deeply honored to lead this historic and vital institution, especially during this milestone year,"* Louden remarked. *"Since 1974, WSW has built a legacy of fostering community, inclusivity, and empowerment through their renowned programs in book arts, ceramics, printmaking, and papermaking. I look forward to advancing this mission through new partnerships and collaborations, ensuring WSW remains at the forefront of artist advocacy and creative freedom for the next 50 years."*

In related news, outgoing Executive Director Lauren Walling has joined the Board of Directors as an emerita member.

Upcoming 50th Anniversary Celebration

WSW will host a special 50th-anniversary celebration on **November 16th** at the WSW campus from 3:00-7:00 pm. In the lead-up to this milestone event, WSW has launched the **"50 for 50" fundraising initiative**, aiming to raise at least \$50,000 to lay a strong foundation for the next half-century of the organization.

"Join us on November 16th as we celebrate 50 years of radical programming, artistic innovation, and unwavering support for historically underserved artists," Louden said. *"Together, we can*

ensure the voices of women, trans, intersex, nonbinary, and genderfluid artists continue to thrive.”

To donate to WSW’s celebration of 50 years and contribute to the next 50, you can visit their website here: <https://wsworkshop.org/birthdaybash/>

About Sharon Louden

Sharon Louden is an accomplished artist, educator, and community advocate with over three decades of experience. She is the editor of the acclaimed *Living and Sustaining a Creative Life* book series, which amplifies the voices of underserved artists. Louden is known for her leadership in fostering collaborations across nonprofit, academic, and business sectors, and her efforts to create platforms where artists can share their needs and aspirations.

Her work is part of prominent public and private collections, including the Whitney Museum of American Art, the National Gallery of Art, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Louden’s forthcoming book, *Last Artist Standing: Living and Sustaining a Creative Life Over 50*, will be published by Intellect Books and distributed by the University of Chicago Press in early 2025.

About Women’s Studio Workshop (WSW)

Founded in 1974 by four visionary women artists—Ann Kalmbach, Tatana Kellner, Barbara Leoff, and Anita Wetzel—Women’s Studio Workshop (WSW) emerged in response to the lack of creative spaces and arts education for women. What began as a small teaching collective has grown into a globally recognized organization that supports the artistic voices of women, trans, intersex, nonbinary, and genderfluid individuals.

Since 1974, WSW has brought over 5,000 artists from across the globe to work in the printmaking, hand papermaking, letterpress printing, photography, book arts, and ceramics studios. Over 6,500 Ulster County youth have participated in WSW’s Art-in-Education program. WSW’s artists’ book grant program has published more than 240 artists’ books, collected by special collections of major libraries and museums including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Tate Modern, and The Library of Congress, among others.

Women’s Studio Workshop programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature. Additional funding comes from the National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, Hershey Foundation, Ruth Arts, Milton & Sally Avery Arts Foundation, Cowles Charitable Trust, Agnes Gund, Durst Foundation, NOVO Foundation, Hauser & Wirth Institute, Strypemonde Foundation, Stewart’s Shops, Klock Kingston Foundation, and Windgate Charitable Foundation.

To learn more about WSW's 50th-anniversary celebration and the "50 for 50" initiative, visit <https://wsworkshop.org/birthdaybash/>