Art often allows us to approach ordinary topics in extraordinary ways. Here in the Midwest, we are in the heart of corn country. The view of my surroundings from my car as the stalks grow higher and higher throughout the summer is one of the many things that changes with the production of corn. This project is one attempt to help us explore the impact of the crop. "Why corn? It is solidly Midwestern, like I am. I have found through the deep exploration of corn, and many things related to our food system, more than its history and imagery, but the fundamentals of humanity itself," says Cathi Schwalbe one of the two featured artists in this exhibition.

Guest artist Margaret Berry says that corn has become "a simple golden expression of my enormous preference for such activities as sowing, germinating, creating, harvesting and renewing, whether in a real garden or the land of ideas." Both artists have used corn in their work for decades. Margaret Berry is primarily known for her work with encaustic and has exhibited and won awards nationally in this medium. This year Margaret is also working as artist in residence at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln. Cathi Schwalbe is a multi-media artist working often with clay, found objects, wax, water and other natural elements. She frequently engages in Social Practice to interact directly with audiences in her work.

Corn is much more than a food product. Simply put, it is the emblem of a culture. As Margaret Berry says more eloquently, "corn remains a life-going ancient and sensuous connector to cultures all over the world." This project hopes to explore a bit of the artistic vastness in the subject. This exhibition is not intended to be political in nature. Rather, Bone Creek has worked with both artists to share a statement about corn that resonates with them.

There are numerous components to the CORN project. You'll find throughout this newsletter and in future updates more information about a Corn Hunt, a Corn Fest, a Corn and Wax art workshop and a Cornshed of Poetry, bringing together Nebraska’s finest poets, writing about corn and the land.

Bone Creek’s programs are sponsored by many members including Allen Capital Group, LLC, the Butler County Area Foundation Fund and the Butler County Arts Council. The Nebraska Arts Council, a state agency, has supported this program through its matching grants program funded by the Nebraska Legislature, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment.

-A. Mobley Guenther, curator
EVENTS

Plein Aire Artist Workshop
Utah artist Simon Winegar led a three-day workshop, August 1-3, painting the landscapes and barns in the Bohemian Alps of Butler County. A wide variety of participants including recent high school graduates to retirees and professional to amateur artists enjoyed working in numerous locations. Winegar said, “Working outdoors from life is a great way to see the world around you and to experience art and visual perception, which is a fundamental aspect of human nature. I honestly think workshops are worthwhile for all people and walks of life. Thank you to the people of Nebraska and David City for making this workshop possible.”

Corn Hunt
Beginning Sept. 1 ceramic corn cobs will be hidden around the David City downtown square and some other locations around town. Please keep an eye out for them. If you find one, take a picture and post to the Bone Creek Facebook page to help spread the word from trending. Bring the corn cob into the museum to add to one of the artworks and receive a raffle ticket for a chance to win a ticket to Corn Fest.

Corn Fest
Amidst the football games and harvest season, Corn Fest will be an event not to be missed in your fall calendar. Bone Creek is hosting a unique farm to table dinner event at District 10 in Linwood, with wine tasting by Nissan Winery and music by Joe Cockson. This fundraising event will celebrate how corn has found its way into so many aspects of our daily lives. A $65 ticket will include a sneak preview of the exhibition, CORN, fine food and drink, a ceramic dinner plate made by Cathi Schwalbe, a silent auction with original artwork and an encaustic art activity with Margaret Berry. More information to come at www.bonecreek.org.

Corn and Wax Artist Workshop
Take home your own work of art! Margaret Berry will teach two encaustic classes, morning and afternoon on Saturday Nov. 12. This class is open to ages 16 and up. The cost is $30. More information to come at www.bonecreek.org.

EDUCATION

Summer Art Day Camp
We have been partnering with the Butler County Arts Council for 7 years to host the Summer Art Day Camps. There have been at least 6 three-hour sessions with new skills taught each year using various media. Participation in the classes continues to grow. We’ll be back again next year!

Butler County Fair
This summer Butler County 4-H students worked with Bone Creek collections manager Gabrielle Comte to create a corn mural for display at the fair. The project was inspired by CORN and used dried and dyed corn kernels to create the imagery.

Calling All Nebraska Artists
150 Artists, 150 Artworks, 150 Years of Nebraska in Miniature
In honor of Nebraska’s sesquicentennial, Bone Creek is planning a large scale juried exhibition and sale for the summer of 2017. Nebraska is filled with many talented visual artists. We want to celebrate them, their craft, and this great state. We are looking for artists to submit an original piece of agrarian art for exhibition and sale. Submission deadline is February 1, 2017.
Visit www.bonecreek.org for full application requirements.