

5) 1999 Elmi Kawther, *Layaal Al Rishiid*

Collagraph

Elmi Kawther was born in Ethiopia and granted political asylum to live in the United States in 1989. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Arts from UMW, a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA, and a Master of Fine Arts from the State University of New York in Albany, NY. Kawther began working with the National Park Service in 2006.

**19) 2008, Robert Lynn, *I Paint Raccoons Because Raccoons Like Everything*
*oil on canvas***

Robert Lynn received the Melcher's Gray purchase award twice, being awarded again in 2008 for this work embodying his technical prowess with the medium and his expressive style. As seen in On Painting Lynn relies on bold layers of colors and thick lines to construct his compositions. Here, Lynn introduces more figurative forms and onomatopoeia to create a stylistic and playful artwork.

**21) 2010, Katie Rosinski, *White Rabbits*
*Plaster, Latex Paint***

Katie Rosinski of Ocean Pines, MD, won the Melchers Gray Purchase Award for this sculpture work in 2010. The work presents a total of 39 white rabbit sculptures. Rosinski was again selected for her work Housed in 2012. She was the recipient for the Anne Elizabeth Collins Award the same year.

9) 2002, Bishop, R. Greg, *Roots*

Selected for his work Roots in 2002, Greg Bishop's images depict a surreal composition featuring a close-up of a pair of bare legs and feet suspended in the air, positioned next to a rough, weathered tree. The positioning of the legs and feet suggests a sense of weightlessness, creating a somewhat eerie and ambiguous atmosphere.

17) 2006, Dunn, Steve, *Majestic Silence*

Majestic silence presents a serene image of Mary Washington's very own Melchers hall balcony. Taken with a pin-hole camera, Dunn's exposure creates a sense of liminal belonging, bringing viewers into the quietness of the scene by capturing the shadow of the colonnade and

the inviting light beyond. The colonnade extends to the right with no definitive end, creating an intriguing angular line of shadow that neatly structures the composition.

16) 2006, Vitale, Gina M., *Fallen Pine Bough*

Block print

In 2006, Gina Vitale won the Melchers Gray Purchase award for her Block print *Fallen Pine Bough*. Vitale graduated from UMW with a BA in Studio Art the same year and currently works as a librarian for the Alexander Hamilton Memorial Free library. In her words, she is a “lifelong artist” who currently focuses on her jewelry work and has been a jewelry artist for over 6 years. As a student, however, Vitale focused her efforts on her painting and drawing ability. She went on to get her Master's in both Elementary Education and Library Sciences post-grad.

2013, Sidney Mullis, Rachael Juhan, *Don and Dale*

Don and Dale was acquired by the UMW Galleries in 2013. A collaborative work by Rachael Juhan and Sidney Mullis, The title *Don and Dale* references MaDONna (The Virgin Mary) and Mary MagDALEne, drawing from religious Christian iconography. Juhan and Mullis used this piece to express their frustrations with “the rigid and reductive ideas of womanhood that we were expected to embody.” Mullis recalls that, “At the time, [she] associated Madonna with the virgin birth of Jesus and Mary Magdalene with the label of prostitute.” *Don and Dale* address these limiting roles, questioning and confronting the narratives placed on women.

2015, White, Taylor, *A Lawful Order*

From Stafford, senior Taylor White was honored with the award in 2015 for his video piece entitled *A Lawful Order*. With work featured in over 50 exhibitions, White has built a prolific career as a contemporary painter and multimedia artist based in Richmond, Virginia. In 2024, he presented the exhibition *As You Weren't* at The Hole gallery in New York. He later returned to UMW to present a solo exhibition, *Origins: Taylor Anton White*, as part of UMW's annual studio alumni series, celebrating the beginnings of his career. His work brings together traditional mediums and explores their role in the digital age.

2021, Pawlica, Emily, *Femina*

Recent Studio Arts graduate Emily Pawlica received the Melchers Gray Purchase award in 2021. She is primarily a ceramic artist who looks to “Embrace the beauty and rawness of the feminine figure and feminine experience” through her work. She strives to cultivate “acceptance and awareness” throughout the body of her work by exploring the “natural processes, functions, and appearances of the female body.” Currently, she runs a ceramics studio called Studio Pawlicia and is the Phosphene Shop Manager here in Fredericksburg.