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Library of Virginia and Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Announce Mary Gabriel's *Ninth Street Women* as Winner of Annual Art in Literature Award Gabriel to be honored at the 2019 Library of Virginia Literary Awards in October

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Richmond, VA – The Library of Virginia and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts are pleased to announce the winner of the annual **Art in Literature: The Mary Lynn Kotz Award**. The judges selected **Mary Gabriel's *Ninth Street Women: Lee Krasner, Elaine de Kooning, Grace Hartigan, Joan Mitchell, and Helen Frankenthaler – Five Painters and the Movement That Changed Modern Art***. Gabriel will be recognized on Friday, October 18, 2019, at VMFA and on Saturday, October 19, 2019, at the Library of Virginia's annual Virginia Literary Awards Celebration.

ABOUT THE WORK

Set amid the most turbulent social and political period of modern times, *Ninth Street Women* is the impassioned, wild, sometimes tragic, always exhilarating chronicle of five women who dared to enter the male-dominated world of 20th-century abstract painting—not as muses but as artists. From their cold-water lofts, where they worked, drank, fought, and loved, these pioneers burst open the door to the art world for themselves and countless others to come.

Gutsy and indomitable, Lee Krasner was a hell-raising leader among artists long before she became part of the modern art world's first celebrity couple by marrying Jackson Pollock. Elaine de Kooning, whose brilliant mind and peerless charm made her the emotional center of the New York School, used her work and words to build a bridge between the avant-garde and a public that scorned abstract art as a hoax. Grace Hartigan fearlessly abandoned life as a New Jersey housewife and mother to achieve stardom as one of the boldest painters of her generation. Joan Mitchell, whose notoriously tough exterior shielded a vulnerable artist within, escaped a privileged but emotionally damaging Chicago childhood to translate her fierce vision into magnificent canvases. And Helen Frankenthaler, the beautiful daughter of a prominent New York family, chose the difficult path of the creative life. Her gamble paid off: At 23 she created a work so original it launched a new school of painting.

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These women changed American art and society, tearing up the prevailing social code and replacing it with a doctrine of liberation. In *Ninth Street Women*, acclaimed author Mary Gabriel tells a remarkable and inspiring story of the power of art and artists in shaping not just postwar America, but the future as well.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mary Gabriel is the author of *Love and Capital: Karl and Jenny Marx and the Birth of a Revolution*—a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, and the National Book Critics Circle Award—as well as *Notorious Victoria: The Life of Victoria Woodhull, Uncensored*, and *The Art of Acquiring: A Portrait of Etta and Claribel Cone*. She worked in Washington, D.C., and London as a Reuters editor for nearly two decades and lives in Ireland.

ABOUT THE AWARD

Art in Literature: The Mary Lynn Kotz Award recognizes an outstanding book published in the previous year that is written primarily in response to a work (or works) of art while also showing the highest literary quality as a creative or scholarly work. This unique award, established in 2013 by the Library of Virginia and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, is named in honor of Mary Lynn Kotz, longtime contributing editor of *ARTnews* magazine and author of the award-winning biography of artist Robert Rauschenberg. For years Kotz has spoken passionately about the need for clear, exciting writing about art.

Award submissions can include works of journalism, poetry, fiction, biography, or history, as well as museum exhibition catalogs. The inaugural award recipient was *The Innocence of Objects* by Nobel Laureate Orhan Pamuk. Last year's winner was Donna M. Lucey for her book *Sargent's Women: Four Lives Behind the Canvas*, in which the fascinating backstories of women painted by John Singer Sargent come alive in a seductive, multilayered biography. The Art in Literature Award is presented each year during the annual Virginia Literary Awards celebration weekend, which takes place in Richmond, Virginia.

EVENTS

Friday, October 18, 2019 | Art Meets Literature: An Undying Love Affair

VMFA, Marble Hall, 6:00–7:30 PM

This event will feature a presentation by the award recipient, Mary Gabriel, followed by a book signing and reception.

Saturday, October 19, 2019 | Library of Virginia Literary Awards Celebration

Library of Virginia, 6:00–10:00 PM

The winners of the fiction, nonfiction, and poetry awards—as well as the People's Choice Awards—will be announced on Saturday, October 19, 2019, at the 22nd Annual Library of Virginia Literary Awards Celebration honoring Virginia authors and friends. This gala event, sponsored by Dominion Energy, attracts authors, publishers, and those who enjoy the written word. Featured speaker will be noted cookbook author and owner of the Red Truck Bakery, Brian Noyes. Author Adriana Trigiani will again serve as host for this event.

For ticket information, please call 804.692.3813 or visit www.literaryva.com.

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September 6, 2019