

Sharon McConnell-Dickerson



Sharon McConnell-Dickerson is an artist, lecturer, teacher, and speaker. Her work is featured in numerous exhibitions and included in museum, university, and private art collections.

Originally from New England, she worked as a flight attendant and chef on corporate jets. In addition to heads of major corporations, she flew with such notables as George and Barbara Bush, Donald and Ivana Trump, Al Haig, Henry Kissinger, and others.

After working in the corporate world for seven years, a turn in her life took place at the age of twenty-seven. She woke up in Chicago blind. She was eventually diagnosed with Uveitis, a degenerative eye disease. After several years of surgeries and treatments she became involved with sculpture. "Sculpture is the vehicle by which I access a lost sense," she says.

She moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico in 1996 to study all aspects of art. Taking a traditional approach, she learned from teachers and mentors including Arlene Siegel, Robert Refvem, Sam Scott, Dean Ericson, Ulrich Franzen, and Agnes Martin. She also went to Paris, France. There with the assistance of the curators and education directors of the museums and galleries did intense hands on sculpture and art studies in premier galleries and museums. After only ten months of study, she had produced a body of work consisting of eight bronze sculptures. Her earliest influence was Native American Blind Sculptor Michael Naranjo who showed her what was possible and rewarded her with her first solo exhibition at the Moxley, Ross, Naranjo Gallery. Her first life-sized work is reminiscent of French figurative sculptor Maillol. Her life-cast work is in the same tradition and methods of master life caster George Segal.

It is for her life-masks of legendary blues musicians that McConnell-Dickerson is best known. "I wanted to discover the faces behind the music I love, so I went to Mississippi to map out the visages of the real Delta Blues men and women." Her project took root and found a strong direction of its own, leading her to create masks of fifty-two musicians. This body of work has been exhibited in the New Mexico State Capitol Rotunda, the Albuquerque Museum, Willie Dixon's Blues Heaven Foundation in Chicago, Blind Faith Gallery in Clarksdale, Mississippi, The Blues Music Awards in Memphis; the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis; the Mississippi Arts Center in Jackson, Mississippi; the Tunica Museum in Tunica, Mississippi; Blues Passions Festival in Cognac, France, and at the Galerie le Clos d'Epicure in Cahors, France. It is currently touring with Exhibits USA-Mid-America Arts Alliance. Another edition of 40 masks are also touring the U.S. She donated the original life-casts to the Delta State University Archives. For this work, she is a recipient of the Blues Foundation's Keeping the Blues Alive Award for 2016.

Now almost totally blind, Sharon is seeking venues to exhibit her works, conducting life-casting workshops, lectures, and demonstrations, and travelling. She is also painting large scale minimalist works in oil on linen. Sharon insists that all of her exhibits (with the exception of the originals) be fully accessible to people with disabilities, and are please touch exhibits.

Sharon moved to Mississippi in 2006, where she met her husband David. They, along with her guide-dog Avatar are residents of Como, Mississippi.

Artist's Curriculum Vitae
Sharon McConnell-Dickerson
www.mcconnelldickersonart.com

Contact Information:

Sharon McConnell-Dickerson, 204 Sycamore St., Como, Mississippi 38619
(662) 526-1020, artist.smd@gmail.com or ddickerson233@gmail.com

Education and Special Studies:

2000 Paris France – Hands on studies with museum curators and education directors - Musee Du Louvre, Musee National Picasso, Musee Maillol, Musee Rodin, Musee d'art Moderne, and Musee D'Orsay

1997-2002 Santa Fe, New Mexico – Mentorship under Agnes Martin and Ulrich Franzen.

1997-2002 Santa Fe, New Mexico – Technical Instruction with Mentorship under Arlene Siegel, Robert Refvem, Sam Scott, and Dean Ericson

Solo Exhibitions:

2016 A Cast of Blues, National Blues Museum, St. Louis, Missouri

2015-2016 A Cast of Blues, Blues Hall of Fame Museum, Memphis, Tennessee

2015 A Cast of Blues, E.E. Bass Cultural Arts Center, Greenville, Mississippi

2015 A Cast of Blues, Wiregrass Museum, Dothan, Alabama

2014 A Cast of Blues, [Galerie Le Clos d'Epicure](#), Cahors Blues Festival, Cahors, France

2013 A Cast of Blues, Martell House, Blues Passions Festival, Cognac France

2012 A Cast of Blues, Tunica Museum, Tunica, Mississippi

2012 Blame it on the Blues Exhibition, Greater Jackson Arts Council, Arts Center of Mississippi, Jackson, Mississippi

2010-2011 Rhythm and Rails, Martin and Sue King Railroad Heritage Museum, Cleveland, Mississippi

2009 A Cast of Blues, Blues Music Awards, Cook Convention Center, Memphis, Tennessee

2008 A Cast of Blues, Unveiling of permanent exhibit, Gift from the Artist to The Capps Museum, Delta State University, Cleveland, Mississippi

2004 Unveiling of permanent exhibit, gift by Artist to Willie Dixon's Blues Heaven Foundation, Old Chess Records Studio, Chicago, Illinois.

1998 Sharon McConnell, "The Figurative Nude",
Moxley, Ross, Naranjo, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Group Exhibitions:

2014 Exhibits USA, A Cast of Blues, (Traveling Exhibit) Mid-America Arts Alliance, <http://www.eusa.org/exhibit/castofblues/description>, Kansas City, Missouri

September-October 2014 – MAAA Kansas City, MO

November –December 2015 – Temecula Museum, Temecula, CA

January –March 2015 – Bessie Smith Museum, Chattanooga, TN

March – April 2015 – Griot Museum, St. Louis, MO

September – January 2016 – Delta Cultural Center, Helena, AR

January – March 2016 – William Laman Library – Argenta Branch, North Little Rock, AR

April – May 2016 – Customs House Museum and Cultural Center, Clarksville, TN

July – August 2016 – Bennett Martin Public Library, Lincoln, NE

September – October 2016 - Oklahoma State University Museum of Art, Stillwater, OK

November 2016 – January 2017 Buffalo Soldiers Museum, Houston, TX

2009 A Soulful Journey Exhibition, National Civil Rights Museum, Memphis, Tennessee

2008 A Cast of Blues, Celebration of African-American Musical History during the first Presidential debate, Oxford, Mississippi

2006 The Fabric of Jazz and A Cast of Blues, Albuquerque Museum, Albuquerque, New Mexico

2005 Double Vision, A Cast of Blues, New Mexico State Capitol, Santa Fe, New Mexico

2004 Gerald Peters Gallery, Special Evening Concert and Preview of Masks (Honey Boy Edwards) Santa Fe, New Mexico

2004 Artist's Show, Au Boudoir Store and Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico

2003 Blind Faith Gallery, Renovated interior and façade of an old building and established a gallery and Artist's co-op, Clarksdale, Mississippi

2002-2004 Southern Breeze Gallery, Highland Village, Jackson, Mississippi

2000 The Mane Event Art Exhibition and Sale, Las Campanas Equestrian Center, Santa Fe, New Mexico

1999 Governor's Gallery Group Show, State Capitol Santa Fe, New Mexico

Workshops, Demonstrations, and Lectures:

2015 Children's Life-casting Workshop- 11 Children – Delta Cultural Center/KIPP School, Helena, AR

2015 Adult Life-casting Workshop – 12 adults - Greenville Arts Council, Greenville, MS
2015 Children’s Life-casting Workshop- 12 Children – Delta Cultural Center/KIPP School, Helena, AR
2014 Lecture and Demonstration – 300 children - Hernando Hills Elementary School, Hernando, MS
2014 Lecture, Strayhorn Elementary School, Sixth Grade Class, Strayhorn, Mississippi
2010 E.D.U.C.A.T.E - Community After School Programs – Art Instructor
2010 Creative Coaching Lecture - 150 Arts and Humanities Students, Community Lecture Series, Grayson County College, Dennison, TX
2009 Life-casting Workshop – 16 children (visually impaired), Clovernook School for the Blind, Memphis, TN (conducted in Como, MS)
2007 Lecture and Demonstration (life-casting Willie Seaberry) – 50 Art Students, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS
2006 Lecture and Demonstration (life-casting Ruth Brown) - 250 Arts and Humanities Students, Grayson County College, Dennison, TX
2003 Lecture and Demonstration (life-casting Pinetop Perkins) JBL Theater, Experience Music Project, Seattle, WA

Press- Printed and On-Line Media:

St. Louis News, St. Louis, Missouri, [Sharon McConnell-Dickerson – A Cast of Blues](#), July 2016
Noah Jodice – St. Louis Post-Dispatch, St Louis, Missouri, [National Blues Museum Presents Art You Can Put Your Hands On](#), June 2016
Rachael Warren – RSVP Magazine, Memphis, Tennessee, [Streetseens](#), February 2016
Mary Ekersley – Click Magazine, Memphis, Tennessee, [Sharon McConnell-Dickerson A Touch of the Blues: A Cast of Blues](#), February 2016
Michael Sheffield – Memphis Business Journal, [Exhibit gives fans a hands-on experience of blues greats](#), December 2015
Calvin Wilson – St. Louis Post Dispatch “[Visually Impaired Sculptor Creates Faces of the Blues](#)”, June 2015
Erica Sloan – St. Louis Magazine “Facing the Music: ["Casting the Blues" at the Griot Museum of Black History](#)” June 2015
Peggy Ussary – The Dothan Eagle, “[Artist captures the human face of blues music in Wiregrass Museum of Art exhibit](#)”, April 2015
Stacy Jeffries – American Blues Scene Magazine, “[Archival Artistry: The Faces of Blues Music](#)”, September 2014
Shirley Monestier – Shirley’s Spirit of Art Newsletter, Bordeaux, France, “Meet Sharon McConnell-Dickerson-Blind Figurative Sculptor- Part 1: Focus on Sculpting”, September 2014

Jean-Luc Garcia – La Depeche du Midi, Cahors, France, “Exhibition: L’ame du Blues au bout Des Doights” (The Soul of the Blues at the End of the Fingers), 16 July 2014

Bill Wilson – Mississippi Aesthetic Magazine, Jackson, Mississippi, “Sharon Dickerson”, Fall 2013

Francoise Digel – Recontre Cognac, Cognac, France, “L’hommage en Visages”, 22 June 2013

Eric Pupel – Nothin’ But the Blues, Cognac, France, 4 July 2013

Francoise Digel – Charente Libre, Angouleme, France, “Sharon McConnell-Dickerson – L’hommage en visages”, 25 May 2013
<http://blues.blogs.charentelibre.fr/archive/2013/05/25/sharon-mcconnell-dickerson-l-hommage-en-visages.html>

Busser Howell – 20/20 Blindsight, pp. 79-98, Pub. William B. Howell New York, 2013, ISBN: 978-0615709055

Natalie Richardson – Mud ‘N’ Magnolias Magazine, Meridian, Mississippi, “Blind Art”, December 2012

Unknown – Jackson Free Press, Jackson, Mississippi, “Storytellers Ball Juried Art Exhibition”, July 2012

Emily Darby Williams – Batesville Magazine, Batesville Mississippi, “Blues Trail: Hill Country Music Puts Como on the Map”, Summer 2012

LaReeca Rucker – The Clarion Ledger, Jackson, Mississippi, “Facing the Blues”, November 29, 2010

Joseph E. Havranek – Visions of Blind Blues Musicians, Pub. Elliott and Fitzpatrick, Inc., 2009 ISBN:978-0-9798786-4-0

Mississippi, “Students from Clovernook Center for the Blind Entertained”, June 25, 2009

Donna Taylor – The Southern Reporter,(cover story) Sardis, Mississippi, “Como Artist Conducts Workshop”, June 19, 2009

Donna Taylor – The Southern Reporter, (cover story) Sardis, Mississippi, “Famed Blues Singer Honey Boy Edwards was a Guest in Como Last Week” April 23, 2009

Anon. – American Profile, Insert to The Commercial Appeal, Memphis, Tennessee, “Did You Know” Reference to Capps Museum Collection, March 22, 2009

Steve Cheseborough – Book - Sacred Blues Sites, Reference to Capps Museum Collection, Delta State University

Mary Margaret Miller - Delta Magazine, Cleveland, Mississippi, “Feelin’ the Blues,” May/June, 2008

Mary Grace Chapman – Crosstie Festival News, Greenwood, Mississippi, “A Cast of Blues is a Must-See Permanent Exhibit,” Spring/Summer 2008

Chad Henson – Oxford Town Entertainment Weekly, Oxford, Mississippi, “Two-Stick Casts More than Sushi,” September 25, 2008

Donna Taylor – The Southern Reporter, (cover photo) Sardis, Mississippi, “Halloween Decorating” October 25, 2007

Donna Taylor – The Southern Reporter,(cover story) Sardis, Mississippi, “Blues Fun in Como”, July 12, 2007

Sherry Lucas – Southern Style, The Clarion Ledger, Jackson, Mississippi, “Artist Faces the Music: Original Plaster Casts of Blues Greats to Adorn Delta State,” March 6, 2007

Donna Taylor – The Southern Reporter, Sardis, Mississippi, “Blues Face Casts Donated to Delta Museum”, February 22, 2007

Leah Miller – The Tate County Democrat, Senatobia, Mississippi, “Eyes Wide Open”, January 30, 2007

Leah Miller – The Grenada Sentinel Star, Grenada, Mississippi, “Eyes Wide Open”, January 17, 2007

Herman Snell – Jackson Free Press, Jackson, Mississippi
“Blues ‘Life Mask’ Portrait Artist of Santa Fe to Move to Como” – November 10, 2006

Deborah Mashibini – Abq ARTS, Albuquerque’s Monthly Magazine of the Arts, Albuquerque, New Mexico, “Double Vision: The Message is in the Face”, January 2005

Paul Weideman – Pasatiempo, Santa Fe Ne Mexican. Santa Fe, New Mexico, “Casting Off The Blues”, February 11, 2005

Jerrie Whitely - Dallas Herold Democrat, Dallas, Texas, “Casting the Blues,” March 7, 2004

Patrick Miller - Albuquerque Journal Cover Story, Albuquerque, New Mexico, “Artist Masking Greatness,” February 1, 2004

Zelie Pollon - Dallas Morning News, Dallas, Texas “A Vision Driven by True Blues Passion”, May 26, 2003

Roger Stolle – The Clarksdale Press Register, Clarksdale, Mississippi, “Blind Artist Faces Off With Blues Legends”, December 9, 2002

Bartholomew Sullivan – The Commercial Appeal, Memphis, Tennessee, “They Broke the Mold”, December 5, 2002

Sherry Lucas – Southern Style, The Clarion Ledger, Jackson, Mississippi, “Blues Legends are Unmasked by Artist,” November 15, 2003

Sugar Mae – Big City Rhythm and Blues Magazine,Chicago, Illinois, “And I Ain’t Lyin’”, December, 2003

Andria Lisle – Living Blues Magazine, Greenwood, Mississippi, “ Turner Family Picnic”, July, 2003

Anon. - Mojo Magazine, London, England, “Blues Busters”, February, 2003

Anon. - Albuquerque Journal Cover Story, Albuquerque, New Mexico, “Roundhouse Serves as Art Gallery, “January 2001

Anon. - Santa Fe New Mexican, Santa Fe, New Mexico, “End of an Area, “December 2000

Press- Radio/Television:

Blues on the Couch – Vinny Marini – 28 January 2016

WSVX Radio Giant 96– A Trip with Penny Lane - 28 January 2016
WYPL Radio, Memphis Public Library – Eye on Vision - Vance Durbin
6 August 2015
KTBG Radio, The Bridge 90.9 Kansas City Missouri – Sarah Bradshaw,
2 October 2014
WHBQ Television, Fox 13 Memphis – Tom Dees, [“A Feel for the Blues”](#),
31 October 2012
KNLS – Paul Ladd, World Christian Broadcasting Shortwave Radio
Ministry, World Christian Broadcasting Corporation. 21 March 2010
“Southern Expressions”, Mississippi Public Television, TV Interview,
March 2009
“Living Juicy”, Ria Goldberg, New Mexico Public Radio, Radio Interview
2006
“Mississippi Roads”, Mississippi Public Television, TV Interview,
February 2003
“Mid-Day Mississippi” Mississippi Public Television, TV Interview,
May 2002
David Rhodes, Mississippi Public Radio, Radio Interview, March 2009

Appointments/Committees:

2016 Member – Mississippi Teaching Artist’s Roster – Mississippi Arts
Commission
2015 Member – Tennessee Teaching Artist’s Roster – Tennessee Arts
Commission
2013 Judge – King of Beale Competition – New Daisy Theatre Memphis,
Tennessee.
2009 Judge – International Blues Challenge – Blues City Café,
Memphis, Tennessee.
2009 Judge – King of Beale Competition – New Daisy Theatre
Memphis, Tennessee.
2008 Judge – International Blues Challenge – B.B. King’s Blues
Club, Memphis, Tennessee.
2000 State of New Mexico Rehabilitation Council, Commission for
the Blind
1992 President’s Committee for Concerns of the Disabled

Community Service:

2007- Present - Hosted and entertained musicians in Como Home: Jimbo
Mathus, Bobby Rush, Honeyboy Edwards, Hubert Sumlin, Mark Massey,
Kenny Kimbrough, Kenny Brown, and others.
2014 Lecture and Demonstration, Hernando Hills Elementary School, Third
Grade Class, Hernando, Mississippi
2014 Lecture, Strayhorn Elementary School, Sixth Grade Class, Strayhorn,
Mississippi

2012-2013 Board of Directors & Chairperson, Artist's Advisory Committee -
Como Arts Council
2012 E.D.U.C.A.T.E.- Director of Art Programs
2010 E.D.U.C.A.T.E - Community After School Programs – Art Instructor
2010 Como Civic Club - Fundraising Chairperson
2009 Art Auction, “Through Their Eyes”, donated Bronze
Sculpture, Uveitis Foundation, Boston, Massachusetts
2009 Fundraiser – Boys and Girls Clubs of Northwest Mississippi,
Batesville, Mississippi
2009 Workshop – Clovernook Center for the Blind of Memphis,
Como, Mississippi
2007 Art Auction, fundraiser, donated Bronze Sculpture, Uveitis
Foundation, Boston, Massachusetts
2007 Blues Ball Guitar Auction, Donated Gibson 335 Solid Body
Guitar with Sculpture of Honey Boy Edwards, Saint Jude
Fundraiser, Gibson Lounge, Memphis, Tennessee
2007-2011 Member, Civic Club, Como, Mississippi
2003 and 2010 Austin College Community Lecture Series, Demo-Lecture,
250 Arts and Humanities Students, Grayson County College,
Dennison, Texas
2000-2004 Mentor, Kids at Risk Program, Big Brothers/Big Sisters,
Santa Fe, New Mexico
1998 Volunteer, Prop Department, Santa Fe Opera, Santa Fe, New Mexico
1997 Volunteer, Gift Shop, Palace of the Governors, New Mexico Museum,
Santa Fe, New Mexico
1995 Paleontological Dig, University of London, Tortola, British Virgin
Islands
1992, 1991, 1990 Archaeological Dig, School of the Rockies, University of
Montana, Choteau, Montana

Collections:

State Capitol Art Foundation Collection, Santa Fe, New Mexico (gift from
Artist)

Governor's Gallery, State Capitol, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Capps Museum, (gift from Artist) Delta State University, Cleveland,
Mississippi

Willie Dixon's Blues Heaven Foundation, (gift from Artist), Chicago,
Illinois

Mr. Jimbo Mathus, Delta Recording Studio (gift from Artist), Como,
Mississippi

Mr. Michael Frank, Earwig Music, Chicago, Illinois

Mr. Dennis Herring, Sweet-Tea Records, Oxford, Mississippi

Mr. and Mrs. Bud Cheatham, Blues City Café (gift from Artist), Memphis,
Tennessee

Mr. Morgan Freeman (gift from Artist), Charleston, Mississippi

Ms. Shelley Ritter, (Delta Blues Museum) Clarksdale, Mississippi
Mr. Ivar Alver, Oslo, Norway
Mr. and Mrs. Jack O'Keefe, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Mrs. Jan Lynch, Floyd, Virginia
Ms. Rosa Catalano, Musquito, Wisconsin
Dr. and Mrs. Norman Rosenbaum, Scarborough, Maine
Dr. Michael Brown, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Mr. Gordon Dewitty (Regal Records) Orlando, Florida
Mrs. Joanna O'Keefe, Melbourne, Florida
Ms. Claire Phillips, Bozeman, Montana
Mr. Bernard Lewis, Santa Monica, California
Mr. Mike Hawkins, Coldwater, Mississippi
Mrs. Elizabeth Meskstroth, Evanston, Illinois
Mr. and Mrs. Bobby Kent, Como, Mississippi
Mr. Bill Wasser, Madison, Mississippi
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Chuda, Hollywood, California
Ms. Kate Gubelmann, Palm Beach, Florida
Ms. Agnes Martin Estate, Taos, New Mexico
Ms. Marie Dixon, Chicago, Illinois
Mr. and Mrs. Bobby Bland, (gift from Artist), Memphis, Tennessee
Mr. Othar Turner Family, (gift from Artist), Senatobia, Mississippi
Dr. Stephen Foster, Boston, Massachusetts
Mr. Maximillian Whitten, Senatobia, Mississippi
Mr. and Mrs. Kim Lawrence, Memphis, Tennessee
Ms. Terri O'Haire, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Dr. and Mrs. David McConnell, Kennebunk Beach, Maine
Mr. Albert T. Gonzales Family, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Mr. Michael Ostrowitz, Glenfield, Minnesota
Ms. Toni Mammory, New Jersey
Mrs. Sandy Hall, Crenshaw, Mississippi
Ms. Maggie Moran, Como, Mississippi
Cognac Blues Passions Festival and city of Cognac, France (gift from Artist)
Dianne and Owen Reed, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Mr. Michael Saripkin, Sardis, Mississippi
Ms. Francoise Digel, Angouleme, France
Mr. Bob Santelli, Grammy Museum, Los Angeles, California
Terri and Mike Massey, Senatobia, Mississippi
Mr. Busser Howell, New York City, New York
Blues Hall of Fame/Blues Foundation, Memphis, Tennessee
Mr. Carl Vermilya, Senatobia, Mississippi
Delta Cultural Center, Helena, Arkansas
Mr. Chuck Leavell and The Rolling Stones, Macon, Georgia
Mr. and Mrs. Billy Peek, St. Louis, Missouri

Awards/Grants:

2016 Recipient, [Keeping the Blues Alive Award](#), Blues Foundation, Memphis, Tennessee

2013 Nominee, Keeping the Blues Alive Award, Artists Category, Blues Foundation, Memphis, Tennessee

2009 Mentor Award from Sharde Thomas, Northwest Mississippi Community College, Senatobia, Mississippi

2009 Celebrity Recognition, Boys and Girls Clubs of Northwest Mississippi Fundraiser, Batesville, Mississippi

1997-2005 Grants from State of New Mexico Commission For the Blind:

- Sculpture Tutorial
- Life-Cast Tutorial and development of body of work
- Adaptive equipment and business development
- Computer Tutorial
- Clay Sculpture Tutorial

2005 Grant from Very Special Arts (VSA) for Art Exhibit, Roundhouse Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico

2005 Grant from Guide-Dogs for the Blind for Art Exhibit, Roundhouse Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico

2005 Grant from Los Alamos National Bank, to explore possibility of Native American Life-cast project

2003 American Graphic Design Award, along with Cisneros Designs for best designed brochure, for the Stripped Naked Brochure. Award appeared in Graphic Design USA 2003 Awards Edition