

Jill Wells, BFA, CADC

Born 1980, Des Moines, IA
Resides Des Moines, IA

EDUCATION

2005 BFA, Drake University, Des Moines, IA

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2023 *BLACK THREAD*, Dubuque Museum of Art, Dubuque, IA

BLACK THREAD, Simpson College Gallery of Art & Design, Indianola, IA

2022 *Feel*, ICC, Belfast, IE

Feel, Plymouth Gallery, Des Moines, IA

2020 *Moods, Messages, and Petty Realness*, Anderson Gallery, Des Moines, IA

2019 *The Cotton Memoirs*, Viaduct Gallery, Des Moines, IA

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2022 *In Living Color*, Threshold Gallery, Cedar Rapids, IA

2022 *Who We Art*, Polk County Heritage Gallery, Des Moines, IA

2022 *114th DMWC Art Exhibition*, Hoyt Sherman, Des Moines, IA

2021 *Greater Des Moines Exhibited XXVIII*, Polk County Heritage Gallery, Des Moines, IA

2020 *Iowa Exhibited XXXV*, Polk County Heritage Gallery, Des Moines, IA

2020 *Outrage to Change*, Octagon Gallery, Ames, IA

- 2017 *Greater Des Moines Exhibited XXIV*, Polk County Heritage Gallery, Des Moines, IA
- 2017 *The Art Affair: Des Moines Chapter of The Links*, The Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, IA
- 2003, 04, 05 *BFA Program Student Exhibits*, Anderson Gallery, Drake University Des Moines, IA
- 2003 *The Ice Cream Social*, The Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, IA. *(under maiden name-Simmons, Jill)

MURALS

- 2022 *I AM*, Principal Foundation Skywalk System, interior, 8 x 5', Des Moines, IA, Des Moines, IA
- SWOSH II King Yore*, exterior, 19x31', Des Moines, IA
- BLACK RENAISSANCE*, exterior, 40x17', Des Moines, IA
- R.I.S.E.*, Valley High School, interior, 18x13', Des Moines, IA
- Sound Wave*, interior, 31x9', interior, Des Moines, IA
- Dublin Love*, exterior, Havelock area, Dublin, IE
- Golden Glow*, Orchard Place PACE, interior 4x12', Des Moines, IA
- 2021 *The Oracles of Iowa City* (Lead Painter), Public Space One and The Center for Afrofuturist Studies, exterior 27x58' and 27x68', Iowa City, IA
- FUTURE*, The Evelyn K. Davis Center for Working Families, exterior 150x30', Des Moines, IA
- 2020-21 *Be the Change*, Disability Rights Iowa, interior 14x8', Des Moines, IA
- 2019 *MLK*, Forest Avenue Library, interior 5x3, Des Moines, IA

- 2014 *Above and Below*, Annett Nature Center, interior 13x8', Indianola, Iowa
- 2012 *Virtues*, St. Gregory Retreat Center, interior 6x10', Adair IA
- 2008 *Untitled*, Iowa Lutheran Hospital Children and Adolescence Behavioral Health Science Wing, interior 9x143', Des Moines, IA
- 2007 *Value Rings*, YMCA - Walnut Creek, interior 48x21', West Des Moines, IA
- 2005 *Water Lab*, Blank Park Zoo, interior 60x8', Des Moines, IA
- 1999 *Running Out of Time*, Creative Visions Human Development Center, interior 42x12', Des Moines, IA.

AWARDS/GRANTS/FELLOWSHIPS/RESIDENCIES

- 2023 Des Moines Register 2023 People to Watch
- 2023 Art Week Inaugural Fellowship Cohort, Des Moines, IA
- 2022 Harkin Institute Fellow, Des Moines, IA
- 2021 Mainframe Studios Artist-in-Residence, Des Moines, IA
- Iowa Arts Council Resilience Artist Grant, Artist X Advocacy (AXA) Mentorship Program, Des Moines, IA
- Artist INC. Inaugural Iowa Fellowship Cohort, Des Moines, IA
- 2020 Iowa Creative Incubator Inaugural Fellowship Cohort, Des Moines, IA
- Polk County Heritage Gallery Merit Award, juried exhibit, oil painting, 'In the Arms of an Angel'
- 2017 Polk County Heritage Gallery Merit Award, juried exhibit, oil painting, 'Penny Saved, Penny Earned E Pluribus Unum'

2000-05 Drake University Fine Arts Honors Scholarship, Des Moines, IA

SPECIAL PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

2023 Polk County Heritage Gallery, The Greater Des Moines Public Arts Foundation, The Harkin Institute, Mainframe Studios, Iowa Department for the Blind, AXA, The FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION PROJECT

Iowa Library for the Blind and Print Disabled, STEM Fest Multimedia Braille Art Project

Grinnell College, Black Cultural Center (BCC) Accessible Art Workshops

2022 MDW Atlas, Art + Accessibility Blog writer

Iowa Wolves Basketball, Celebrating Community African American History Month Jersey

Iowa Wolves Basketball, Disability Empowerment Game Night Jersey

Greater Des Moines Public Arts Foundation, Juneteenth Joy Community Grid Mural

Art Week, AXA mentorship mural collaboration

Art Week, AXA mentorship exhibits

City Sounds, BLACK BUTTERFLY public piano project

2021 SWISH, King Yore basketball court mural by Jordan Weber, (Painting Assistant)

Jack and Jill of America Inc., AXA youth art workshop

ArtForce Iowa Skywalk Activation Project, Iowa Department for The Blind

Ames Public Library, More Than Monoliths virtual art class, art instructor in a 30-minute painting lesson

2020	Des Moines Public Libraries and ASAP, pilot online art programming
2020-Current	Artist X Advocacy Mentorship Program (AXA), founded a mentorship program
2019	Orchard Place PACE, My Past & Future Hands project
2018	Orchard Place PACE, Art in Counseling pilot program
2016	ASAP Savor Fundraiser, curated live art experience
2015	St. Gregory's Retreat Center, Art in Counseling - program expansion
2014	St. Gregory's Retreat Center, Recovery and Mask Making workshops
2013	St. Gregory's Retreat Center, Art in Counseling pilot program
2012	St. Gregory's Retreat Center, Residential Murals pilot program

ARTIST TALKS + LECTURES

2023	<p><i>Panelist</i>, United Nations Zero Project: Inclusive Street Art, Vienna, AUT</p> <p><i>Keynote Speaker</i>, Brother 2 Brother, Sisters 4 Success, The Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, IA</p> <p><i>Panelist</i>, Arts as Community Engagement, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA</p> <p><i>Jill Wells: Made to Touch Art + Accessibility</i>, FDR Memorial Legacy Committee, Tom and Ruth Harkin Center, Des Moines, IA</p>
2022	<p><i>Guest Speaker</i>, Artists on Art, The Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, IA</p> <p><i>Jill Wells: Working Together Across Mediums</i>, Belin-Blank Youth Summer Art Residency, Des Moines, IA</p>

Jill Wells, on-air artist's talk, NPR/IPR News: Talk of Iowa, Des Moines, IA

Panelist, A Seat at the Table, Des Moines Art Festival, Des Moines, IA

Virtual Guest Speaker, The Disability Art, Revolution and Advocacy in the USA, Al-Quds Bard College for Arts and Science, Jerusalem-Palestine

Panelist, A Seat at the Table, A Conversation about Cultural Equity in the Arts, BLM Today and Tomorrow: Pain and Healing through Art, The Des Moines Arts Festival, Des Moines, IA

Guest Speaker, What We Can Do to Make Art Accessible to More People, Business of Art Conference Octagon Center for the Arts, Ames, IA

Keynote Speaker, Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration, Des Moines Forest Avenue Public Library, Des Moines, IA

2021 *Virtual Panelist*, The Role of Artist Incubators in a Vibrant and Diverse Arts Ecosystem, Arts Midwest, Minneapolis, MN

Jill Wells: The Power of Public Art, TEDx, Des Moines, IA

Panelist, The Buxton Initiative: MORE THAN MONOLITHS, Ames Public Library

Jill Wells, on-air artist's talk, 900 Views Podcast, episode 38 podcast, Des Moines, IA

Jill Wells: Artist X Advocacy, on-air artist's talk, KFMG's CULTURE BUZZ, Des Moines, IA

2020 *Jill Wells*: Moods, Messages and Petty Realness, virtual alumni artist's talk Anderson Gallery,

Artists' Roundtable: Outrage to Change, KHOI and Octagon Gallery, Ames, IA

2009 *Lecturing Artist: African American History and Art, Des Moines Area Community College (Newton, Carroll, Urban, West Des Moines, IA campuses)*

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

2023 Co-Juror, Grinnell College Museum of Art, BA Student Exhibition

Exhibition Curator, Polk County Heritage Gallery, The FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION PROJECT

2022 Mandela Washington Fellowship Focus Project Coach, Drake University, Des Moines, IA

2021 Solo Juror, Iowa State University Memorial Union Art Gallery, MFA Student Exhibition

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2023 Visiting Teacher: Art as Activism, Belin-Blank Center, University of Iowa

2018-2020 Art in Counseling, Orchard Place PACE, Des Moines, IA

2012-2018 Art in Counseling, St. Gregory Retreat Center, Des Moines, IA

2009-2021 Painting Teacher, After School Arts Program (ASAP), Des Moines, IA

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Principal Foundation, Des Moines, IA

Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, Des Moines, IA

Drake University, Des Moines, IA

Disability Rights Iowa, Des Moines, IA

The Harkin Institute, Des Moines, IA

Mainframe Studios, Des Moines, IA

Ames Public Library, Ames, IA

Knoxville Public Library, Knoxville, IA

Polk County Jail – Bridges Program, Altoona, IA

BOARD POSITIONS

2021 – Present After School Arts Program

2023 – Present The Greater Des Moines Public Arts Foundation

SELECT PRESS

MA editors, *Jill Wells BLACK THREAD*, Mutual Arts, January 2023

Gloss, Megan, *Art, and the Great Migration: Latest Dubuque Museum of Art exhibition shares Iowa's story in Black history*, Telegraph Herald, January 14, 2023

Nebbe, Charity, *Over 4,000 black butterflies installed at the Dubuque Museum of Art*, NPR/IPR News, January 13, 2023

Hamlet, Issacc, *Jill Wells, a 'caring and focused' artist, adds color to Des Moines with murals and mentorship*, The Des Moines Register, December, 23, 2022

Rossi, Lisa, *Making Art Accessible*, DSM Magazine, November 01, 2022

AT editors, *The Power of Touch*, Ability Today, October 25, 2022

Tugade, Amanda, *Iowa artist Jill Wells uses 'the power of touch' to make art more accessible*, The Des Moines Register, Oct. 22, 2022

Nebbe, Charity, *Please touch the art: Iowa artist explores disability rights in her multi-sensory work*, NPR/IPR News, June 3, 2022

James, Dana, *Visual artist Jill Wells' AXA mentorship program uplifts underserved artists in Des Moines*, Black Iowa News, April 22, 2022

Drinkwater, Jennifer, *For The Common Good: A Community Artist Interview with Jill Wells, The What's Good Project, October 26, 2021*

Crimmings, Joe, *Art and History: New mural will highlight local leaders' community impact, Des Moines Business Record Annual Real Estate Magazine, April, 2021*