



The Lexington Art League is seeking submissions for ***Demographically Speaking***, a *Figurative Exhibition*, curated by Daniel Pfalzgraf, of the Carnegie Center for Art & History in New Albany, IN. While representations of the figure are at the forefront of this exhibition, Pfalzgraf lends a unique perspective to this exhibition by also requiring that artists complete a survey to accompany their work that focuses on diversity. The Lexington Art League’s mission is to reflect diversity and inclusion in all of their exhibitions and intends that this exhibition will reflect the vibrance of its community through the inclusion of works that speak to a diverse audience.

Given the power of figurative art to tell the stories that identify who we are, ***Demographically Speaking*** will also address the inequities found within gallery and museum exhibitions posing the question, “whose stories are being told in the art world?” - Daniel Pfalzgraf

Interested artists should submit the following materials and are asked to refer to exhibition timeline below prior to submitting their work to avoid shipping delays:

- Digital images of up to three works made within the past five years. Images should be in jpeg format at 300 dpi and roughly 4x6 inches.
- Short two page resume & artists bio, pdf format only.
- Completed survey scanned and sent in pdf format.
- Email submissions should be sent to sharris@lexingtonartleague.org. with ***Demographically Speaking*** in the subject line. **Electronic Submissions only please.**

Exhibition Timeline

Deadline for submissions	December 9, 2016
Artist Notification	December 15, 2016
*Deliver to LAL by	January 3, 2017
Installation	January 3-6, 2017
Opening Preview Party	January 13, 2017
Fourth Friday Reception	January 27, 2017
Exhibition Closing	February 12, 2017
Return Shipment	February 20, 2017

*LAL will cover the cost for return shipping.

Curatorial Narrative, ***Demographically Speaking***

Figurative art (including portrait art) may be the most ubiquitous genre of art throughout our history as a species. Indeed, how to draw figures of our families or ourselves is one of the first forms of representational art we learn in childhood. The popularity of figurative and representational art in “Capital A” Fine Art academic circles has waxed and waned over the past century, but it doesn’t negate its hold among the population at large. Images of our bodies readily convey our thoughts and emotions non-verbally as our brains are able pick up on even the slightest of cues in posture or facial expression. You don’t have to have the well-trained eye of an art connoisseur to be able to read body language. It’s engrained in our DNA. Our attraction to looking at ourselves is also evident in the irresistible nature of glancing at a mirror as we walk past, or with the “selfie” culture omnipresent on social media.

Representations of figures and portraits identify who we are, and tell our stories. So whose stories are being told in the art world? Art museums and institutions in the United States have a notorious reputation of presenting the white male/Western European view, reinforcing the power structure of American society. But does that viewpoint reflect those who are actually visiting the museums? Or is the white male demographic the only audience for museum exhibitions? Conventional wisdom and mission statements would assuredly say that that is not the case, but investigations into who and what is being represented within museum walls tell another story. In 1985, the artist collective [Guerrilla Girls](#) began a tireless campaign of pointed commentary on the art world, highlighting discrepancies unabashedly. Billboard by the Guerrilla Girls from 1989, and another updated in 2012:



(Progress? At least there seems to be a larger share of male nude figures on view).

The growth in LGBTQ Pride and #BlackLivesMatter movements in the 21st century has also added to the call for greater visibility, understanding, respect, and equal treatment of traditionally discriminated populations.

Call to Artists

Demographically Speaking, a Figurative Exhibition
Lexington Art League
sharris@lexingtonartleague.org

So, if we aren't a society made up of primarily of white men who like to paint nude women, then who are we? We are a diverse society, and one that is rapidly changing. In 2014, the U.S. Census Bureau found that for children under five, no singular racial/ethnic group controlled a majority of the population, which is just the beginning of a historical shift. The Census Bureau further added that by 2020, more than half of all children under the age of 18 are expected to be of a minority race or ethnicity, and by 2060, 56 percent of the total population of the U.S. will hold that distinction.

Our nation is speeding ever more swiftly towards that idea of being the melting pot we thought we were in grade school. We are composed of people of all ages, all sizes, shapes, colors. We are people who identify ourselves in expanding understandings of gender and sexuality. We are a nation that celebrates our right to worship (or to not worship) as we wish. We are a grand collection of people of varying physical, mental, and sensory abilities. If museums and galleries want to promote inclusiveness to their audience, then they should also be inclusive of the artists making the work and of what they are depicting. In order to attract and grow audiences who develop an appreciation for the power of art, it is essential to exhibit work that a diverse audience can relate to. And what better opportunity to develop connections with audiences than with a figurative exhibit?

--Daniel Pfalzgraf