Press Release for “Selenophilia”

“Selenophilia,” a group exhibition of new works by Spartanburg artists Teresa Prater, Beth Regula, Louisa Coburn, and Tracey Timmons, will open on September 17, 2015 at the West Main Artists Cooperative (WMAC) in Spartanburg. This theme show will showcase jewelry, ceramics, mixed media materials on canvas and in sculptures, and both watercolor and oil paintings.

“Selenophilia” means “loving the Moon and finding it soothingly captivating.” In their diverse works, these four artists have explored their own relationships to the moon and moon-related mythology, literature, symbolism and popular culture.

Teresa Prater is the Charles A. Dana Professor of Studio Art in the Department of Art and Design at Converse College in Spartanburg, where she is responsible for teaching classes in painting, drawing, design, the creative process, and book arts. She received her BFA from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, and her MA and MFA from the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. She is a founding member of the West Main Artists Cooperative. For “Selenophilia” Teresa created a new series of oil paintings focusing on the more mystical aspects surrounding the moon. Building upon her previous imagery of horses, wolves, and the female figure, her new paintings capture the darker and more mysterious side of mysticism, symbolism, mythology, and popular horror culture. Her paintings will span historically from the ancient lunar goddess Artemis, to the modern day cultural icon of the werewolf. Teresa’s love for mythology, fantasy, and science fiction provided her the catalyst to have fun and push her limits on imagery and content for this theme show.

Beth Regula is a mixed media artist and received her BFA from Winthrop University. She has retired from teaching art in the Spartanburg County public schools, and currently serves as the Chair of the Management Board at WMAC. Beth started the process of working on “Selenophilia” by sketching ideas about the moon. She wanted to work big and to challenge her use of mixed media materials. As she worked, she found that her sketches took on a look that she had not anticipated at the beginning stages of planning for this exhibit. They became a visual representation of how women play, work, and support each other. The moon became only a symbol that drew together the four artists involved in this show. For Beth, the process of creation has been a journey of discovery and a revelation of the true friendship that exists among lovers of the moon.

Louisa Coburn came to the field of art rather later in life, after a career in teaching and editing, and works in both clay and watercolor. Her love for the moon was nurtured by watching moonlight on snow-covered fields during cold New York winters, listening to countless moon references in the pop and rock songs of the 40’s, 50’s and 60’s, reading science fiction and fantasy, and absorbing the images and
texts of children’s books such as Thurber’s “Many Moons.” She is drawn to orb and disc shapes in her watercolor and ceramic pieces, and usually includes some reference to a moon shape in her paintings. For this series, she has explored totem images and the concept of there being “many moons,” each with specific meaning and appearance for the viewer.

Tracey Timmons, is the Office Manager for Ballet Spartanburg, and is a self-taught jewelry designer, creating jewelry using traditional metalsmithing techniques since 2005. She began working with Precious Metal Clay (PMC) five years ago, and has worked jointly with the two techniques since. Tracey’s work is encouraged by romance and nature, and her creations are handcrafted primarily with fine and sterling silver and semi-precious stones. She is a one-person business and makes her pieces by hand in her home studio. Creating statement pieces is her specialty and she thoroughly enjoys the challenge of creating a custom piece for a client. For “Selenophilia.” Tracey has incorporated moonstone, labradorite, and opal into works which play on lunar themes in nature and literature.

The opening reception for “Selenophilia” will be held on Thursday, September 17, 2015, from 5-9 p.m. at West Main Artists Cooperative, 578 West Main Street, in Spartanburg. The exhibition will be on display until October 10, 2015 during normal business hours. WMAC is open from 10 until 6 Tuesday through Friday, and from 10 until 4 on Saturdays.