



CELEBRATING TEN YEARS!



invites you for

COCKTAILS AND CONVERSATION

Join us immediately following the 8pm, **March 8th** performance of *The Revolutionists* by Lauren Gunderson for “Cocktails and Conversation”. This event is free and open to the public. Attend the performance and stay, or if you’ve already seen the show, come on over by **9:45pm** and join in.



“Cocktails and Conversation” will include wine, a signature cocktail, fruits, cheese, desserts and a panel discussion.

The panel will include the cast of *The Revolutionists* and four “modern day revolutionists” from our own community. **Meet the panelists below!**



Ronni Newton (Moderator)

Managing Editor, We-Ha.com

Ronni has been a resident of West Hartford since 1998, and an active member of the community as a journalist and leader since she moved here. She is the former editor of West Hartford Patch, and during her three years at Patch she wrote thousands of stories, shot photos and video, posted to a variety of social media sites, and managed a team of local editors for other Patch sites. She is the recipient of two first-place awards from the Society of Professional Journalists.

Ronni has also worked as managing editor for lifestyle magazines, and freelanced as a writer and copyeditor. She even managed an oral history exhibition for the Noah Webster House/West Hartford Historical Society, volunteered with many local non-profits and was PTO president when her children were in elementary school.

Ronni’s past professional experience as a vice president in the role of consultant/client manager in the insurance industry gives her an exceptional ability to understand the distinct nature of any business.

She’s originally from Stamford, CT, and attended Westhill High School. She graduated from Duke University – where she met her husband – in 1983, with a degree in Political Science and Economics.

Her husband, Ted, is a West Hartford native (Kingswood-Oxford ’80), and he has often joked that within a few weeks of moving to town, she knew more people than he did. She has a daughter who graduated from Conard High School in 2013, UConn in 2017, and is currently in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program at UConn, and a son who graduated from Conard High School in 2016 and also attends UConn.



Stefanie Marco Lantz

Artist

Stefanie is a West Hartford based, mixed-media artist. Trained in art therapy in college she pursued her passion and made it full time in 2004, just before her daughter was born. In 2014 she founded the WEHA Artists Emporium to provide an online venue for artists to network, promote shows, and showcase their work. The group is a connector of people, just like Stefanie. WEHA Artists Emporium has now had many of its own juried shows, art hunts, public events and curates several local venues. She has produced several installation pieces through grants, at her children's schools and in concert with their art teachers. These projects followed her ideals of using found, recycled, repurposed and discarded objects to create visually engaging works of art.

She is inspired by many things including nature, music, Women's Rights, getting tough at Body Combat, and zest for life. She is an inspiration in not just surviving being hit by a car in 2017, but by fighting to recover, and thriving in her life with her husband, Carl, and children Callie and Flynn, and her dog Maple, as well as friends and fellow local artists.



Reverend Erica Thompson

Senior Minister, Asylum Hill Congregational Church

Rev Thompson was recently installed as the first female senior minister at Asylum Hill Congregational Church. She is the first woman to lead the 150-year-old Church, which has a rich history. She's a peace corps alum and started a non-profit that serves the people of Ecuador. Has led teams to the women's march and other social justice causes. Rev. Thompson earned her undergraduate degree in social work from Concordia College in Minnesota. A Peace Corps alumna, she spent three years in Ecuador before attending Princeton Theological Seminary. Her first call was as Associate Minister at Old South Union Church in Weymouth, MA, and she has been serving as an associate minister at Asylum Hill since 2006, and as acting senior minister since 2017. Rev Thompson loves diversity and justice.

ter since 2017. Rev Thompson loves diversity and justice.



Beth Bye

Commissioner for the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood

Beth Bye was appointed as Commissioner for the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood by Governor Ned Lamont in January 2019.

Bye, who served in the Senate from 2011 to the present and in the House from 2007 through 2010, will lead an office created in 2013 to coordinate and enhance various early childhood development programs and create a cohesive early care system.

In 2013, Senator Bye led the effort to create The Office of Early Childhood (OEC), one of the first such offices in the country. Her work as champion for the creation of the office is informed by her own, long-term experience since 1980 as an early childhood professional.

Beth's experience includes leadership positions at Auerfarm/Wintonbury Early Childhood Magnet School, Great by 8, a community partnership to support optimal health and educational outcomes for children ages birth to eight, the Capitol Region Education Council where she supervised its birth-to-three program, and also helped to open two early childhood magnet schools. Earlier in her career, Beth was the director at both the Trinity College Community Child Center and the University of St. Joseph School for Young Children, which was named a State of Connecticut model pre-school.

Commissioner Bye received her BA and MA in Child Development from the University of New Hampshire.



Andrea Cortez

Artist, Entrepreneur and Servant Leader

Artist, Entrepreneur and Servant Leader for the Community of Hartford. Andrea has owned and operated her Hartford based business, Tainted Inc., since 2015. which functions as a unique space that provides self discovery and self expression for women and the youth. Tainted partners with over 75 non-profit and for profit businesses in CT as well as over 300 artists.

Andrea is an active member and advocate for the Arts and Culture in our community, serving on the Cultural Arts Commission and The Permanent Status of Women for the City of Hartford. Andrea orchestrates over 50 community center events and workshops a year. Including, The Parkville Block Party in 2018, Community conversational series, and private workshops to empower women and those who identify as such. In addition, Andrea plays host and support to a wide verity of art centered events out of Tainted. Making it affordable and Safe for all those who are looking to create positive change in our communities through the arts.



Rebecca Hart



Olivia Jampol



Jennifer Holcombe



Erin Roché