

Kristin Simmons, the Artist In Residence for the SDG5 Global Alliance has unveiled her first commissioned pieces at the UN in New York.



“I don’t know if art can solve a political problem, but it can reflect it and encourage conversation. I’m not aiming for people to say ‘the art is good, bad, or I hate it.’ I want people to engage with it, regardless.”

KRISTIN SIMMONS



Gender equality is perhaps the most pivotal of all the Goals, because empowered women and girls will help lift all the others.

Award-winning artist Kristin Simmons has unveiled *Women Of Change*, the first of four commissioned original works of art created to help bring Goal #5: Gender Equality into the world of popular art.

The series is sponsored by (and benefits) the SDG5 Global Alliance, a nonprofit omnivin movement lifting the work of a range of leaders and causes that pursue gender equality across sectors.

Simmons has won the National Endowment of the Arts Award, the Orra White Hitchcock Award, had her work displayed in solo shows, and is featured in prestigious galleries around the world. She has appeared at curated venues such as the Whitney Museum in New York and is the first SDG5 Global Alliance Artist In Residence. *Women Of Change* was presented for the first time at the inaugural Family Office Impact Summit at the United Nations on September 5, and will be exhibited at the UN Headquarters in New York beginning December 16 this year.

Influenced by her own narrative of growing up with a working mother and her own experiences in the real life *Mad Men* atmosphere of her first jobs in advertising, *Women Of Change* portrays an accurate but unfortunate reality: in the 21st century, women continue to face significant pay inequality. Recent data suggests that

women earn an average of 80 cents to every dollar earned by men in the United States, with an even greater inequality in other parts of the world.

The piece itself features 80 “pennies” of women – including living legends such as Oprah, Ruth Bader Ginsberg and Melinda Gates – who have trailblazed within different industries. The intention is to hopefully add additional coins as the pay gap between men and women narrows. The Kruger-esque question about “What Sense (cents) Will You Give Up For A Dollar?” is a play on words meant to provoke and inspire viewers to not only understand the pay gap, but also respect and learn

about historically pivotal women. In the series, Simmons will employ contrasting imagery, visuals and typography to create portraits, and promote meaningful conversation about what defines and confines the female experience in the 21st century. Limited edition prints are now available with proceeds going to SDG5 causes.

Simmons believes that art can provoke uncomfortable topics that can be addressed in a collaborative way – much like the way the UN uses conversation, diplomacy, and integrity. She hopes to give a voice to female artists and inspire conversation around the eradication of harmful gender stereotypes.

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