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Recent Deaths in the Arts

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posted by Nora Griffin

In its monthly roundup of obituaries, CAA recognizes the lives and achievements of the following artists, curators, designers, photographers, filmmakers, and other men and women whose work has had a significant impact on the visual arts. This month was marked by the loss of the art historian Natalie Boymel Kampen, Magnum photographer Martine Franck, and the young Egyptian artist Amal Kenawy. CAA has published a [special obituary](#) for Kampen.

- **Lee Wick Dennison**, a long-time financial officer for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), passed away on August 31, 2012. She was 60 years old. Dennison joined the NEA in 1975 and campaigned for funding for arts organizations across the country through her various roles as grants officer, assistant director of the challenge and advancement programs, and director of organizational capacity. She received the Distinguished Service Award from the NEA twice, in 1988 and 1999
- **Martine Franck**, a versatile documentary photographer in the humanist tradition who was among the first women accepted into the elite Magnum photography agency, died on August 16, 2012, at the age of 74. Franck's images ranged from formal portraits of artists, such as Balthus, to intimate street scenes. She was married to the photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson
- **Hans Josephsohn**, a Swiss figurative sculptor, passed away on August 21, 2012, at the age of 92. His primitive-looking sculptures of reclining figures, heads, and busts on plinths suggest a marriage of classical art and expressionist fervor. He worked primarily in plaster, a material that for him was a cross between modeling and working with stone
- **Natalie Boymel Kampen**, a pioneering feminist scholar and professor of Roman art history and gender studies, died on August 12, 2012. She was 68 years old. Kampen was the author of *Image and Status: Roman Working Women in Ostia* and *Family Fictions in Roman Art* and served as chair of the *Art Bulletin* Editorial Board from 2009 to 2010. CAA has published a [special obituary](#) for Kampen
- **Amal Kenawy**, an Egyptian artist who showed her video, performance, and installation work in Cairo galleries and in many international biennials, died on August 19, 2012. She was 38. Her diverse artworks dealt with the subject of communication and translation, often to controversial and awe-inspiring effect. The performance *Silence of the Sheep*, staged at the Cairo Biennial in 2011, featured the artist as a shepherd leading a flock of artists and workers on their hands and knees through the city streets
- **Joe Kubert**, a Polish-born comic-book artist, died on August 12, 2012, at the age of 85. Kubert created many memorable cartoon heroes for DC Comics in the 1940s and 50s, including *Sgt. Rock*, *Hawkman*, and *Tor*, the first 3D comic book. He passed on his passion for drawing and invention at the Kubert School in Dover, New Jersey, founded in 1976 and still going strong today
- **Helen Scott Lidgett**, a lively British publicist, passed away on July 31, 2012, at the age of 63. Lidgett wore many hats during her varied career: she ran a popular vintage-clothing stall in Camden Town, wrote art criticism for London's *Time Out*, and was the famously flamboyant head of publicity for the art-book publishers Thames and Hudson. In later years Lidgett was a champion for arts funding and served as a cultural advisor to Prime Minister Gordon Brown
- **William Moggridge**, a British designer and educator, died on September 8, 2012, at the age of 69. Moggridge's invention of the clamshell design of the first laptop computer in 1979 was a revolutionary step for digital technology. He cofounded the product-design firm IDEO and worked on a range of products, from heart defibrillators to Palm Pilots. In 2010 he was named the director of the Smithsonian Institution's Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York
- **Dmitri Plavinsky**, a Russian artist associated with the Nonconformist Art movement, passed away on September 1, 2012, at the age of 76. His paintings and etchings explored imagery that flew in the face of officially sanctioned Soviet Realism. Plavinsky was one of a select group of artists to be shown in museums in the United States and in Europe, including the Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art
- **Jan Sawka**, a Polish-born artist, illustrator, and sculptor known to many outside the art world for his luminous stage sets for Grateful Dead concerts, died on August 9, 2012, at the age of 65. Sawka began his art career working as an underground graphic artist in Krakow, Poland. He has shown his work in museums throughout the United States and in Europe
- **Lee Sherry**, a New York-based abstract artist, passed away in August 2012 at the age of 65. Sherry attended Reed College with her fellow painter David Reed in the 1960s; she was also close to many writers in the Language school of poetry. Sherry designed the typography for several covers of the experimental poetry journal *Roof* and showed her work at Susan Caldwell Gallery in New York in the 1970s
- **Michael Seward Snow**, a British abstract painter who was associated with the St Ives artist colony in the 1950s, passed away on July 15, 2012, at the age of 82. His compatriot artists were Ben Nicholson, Terry Frost, and the poet W. S. Graham. Snow was a professor of art from 1965 to 1985 at Exeter College of Art in Devon, England
- **Steve M. Street**, a champion for the rights of adjunct faculty members, died on August 17, 2012, at the age of 56. Street had been a non-tenure-track professor of writing at the State University of New York at Buffalo since 1980. He was a frequent contributor to the *Chronicle of Higher Education* on the subject of adjunct benefits and most recently wrote about his own struggle with cancer in light of his adjunct position

Read all past [obituaries in the arts](#) in *CAA News*, which include [special texts](#) written for CAA. Please send links to published obituaries, or your completed texts, to [Christopher Howard](#), CAA managing editor, for the September list.

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