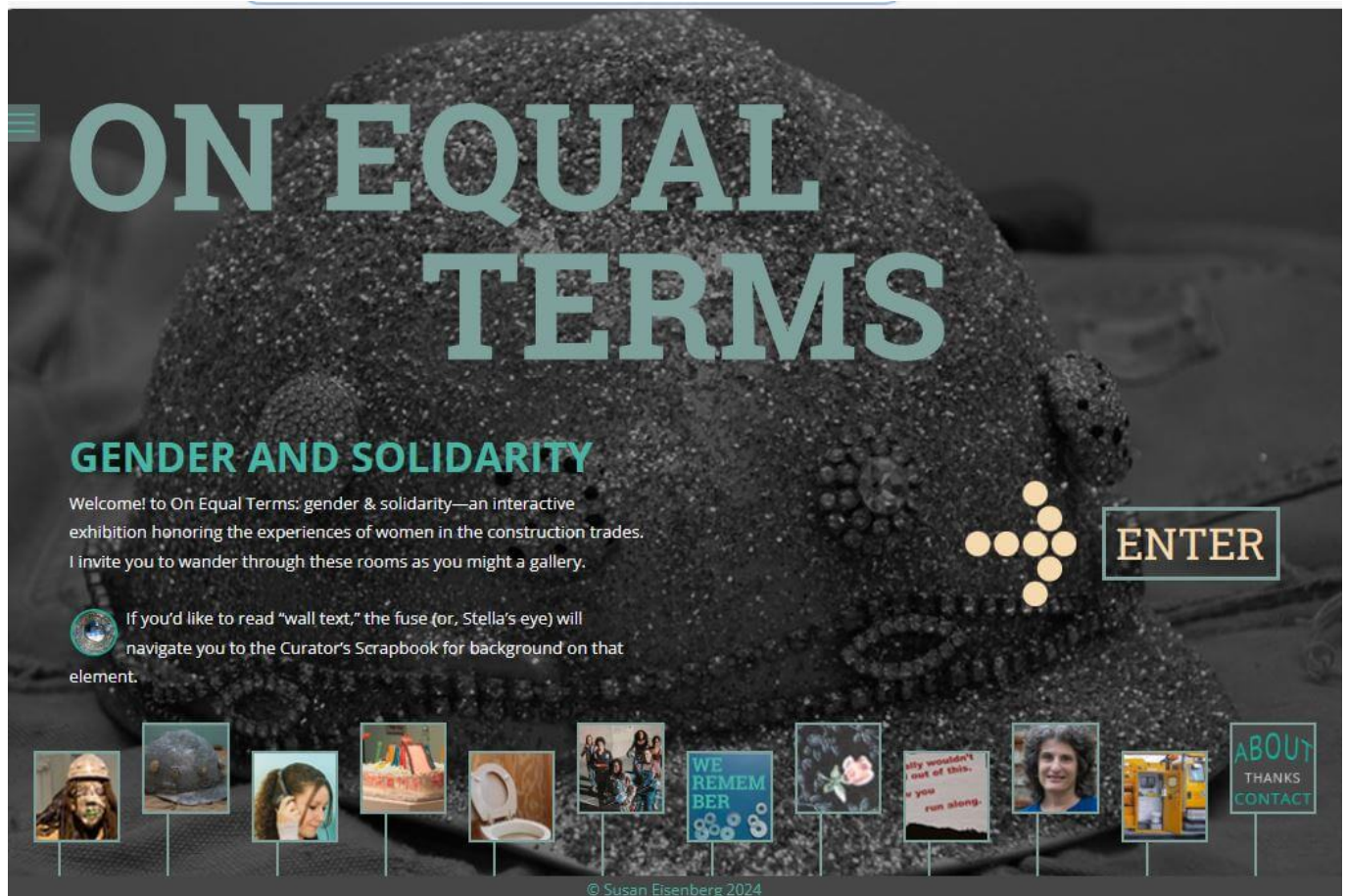




On Equal Terms-Gender and Solidarity

Posted on March 25, 2024 by Susan Eisenberg

I am deeply pleased that *Labor* has published a review of my interactive digital installation, [On Equal Terms: gender & solidarity](#), and that Duke University Press is allowing free access to Sharon Szymanski's essay about the website: ["On Equal Terms: gender & solidarity by Susan Eisenberg"](#).



On Equal Terms website. Credit: Susan Eisenberg

Sharon Szymanski's thorough and thoughtful review, "On Equal Terms: gender & solidarity by Susan Eisenberg" provides historical background to the digital installation and practical suggestions for its classroom use. As a professor of labor studies, her students include members of NYC building trade unions who complete an associate's degree at SUNY Empire State university simultaneously with their apprenticeship.



Tarn Goelling, Liz Shuler, (current AFL-CIO President) and Susan Eisenberg at the AFL-CIO exhibit, 2019 based on Eisenberg's work. Credit: Susan Eisenberg

Szymanski's review points to how the digital installation is both specific to the more than four-decade history of women breaking into the building trades — their representation still just 4% — and resonant across all occupational fields whose workforce is transitioning from exclusion to inclusion, or addressing internal occupational segregation. She writes:

"While the content of this art installation is perfect for labor history and labor studies students or union-based workshops, this virtual installation can make any class come alive. Eisenberg's art installation represents the experiences of real workers, raises many questions that are crucial to the labor movement ... and provides opportunities for delving into related historical, economic, political, and cultural issues."

For those unfamiliar with the twists and turns of tradeswomen's history Szymanski provides background and a lengthy reference list. Her review covers most of the installation's 12 interactive room, including the Curator's Scrapbook which serves as wall text or exhibit guide; Backed by Law; Wallpaper Testimonies; Moms; We Remember, that expands the notion of work-related deaths; the Bathroom Shack; the Listening Room; and Bold Ideas. She shares provocative discussion questions and assignments she has used in her classroom.

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From the website exhibit. Credit: Susan Eisenberg

Author



[Susan Eisenberg](#)

Susan Eisenberg, MFA, is a poet, author, visual artist, oral historian, and policy analyst who was among the first women in the country to become a journey-level electrician in union construction. Her books include *We'll Call You If We Need You: Experiences of Women Working Construction, With a New Preface* (2018), re-issued from the original (1998); and numerous poetry collections. She is the poetry editor for the journal *Labor: Studies in Working Class History*

