ART STUDIO AND ART HISTORY SENIOR PROJECTS

It gives us great pleasure to introduce the Gettysburg College Art and Art History senior Capstone projects for 2015. These projects serve as the culmination of the Studio and Art History major. They are as rich and varied as the students themselves and exemplify the commitment the Department of Art and Art History places on creativity and scholarship in a liberal arts education.

The Art History research projects show remarkable breadth and individual personality, inspired by students’ own experiences and interests from study abroad, internships or previous classes. There is a truly global range and an emphasis on important social issues. Students have explored how artists like Ai Wei Wei and Gerhard Richter have questioned authority and national identity in their respective homelands of China and Germany. We see the diverse ways that art and politics intersect from the Renaissance to the present day, ranging from the impact of the Tibetan exile on images of Buddha to the collecting of works of art and natural wonders at the Habsburg court of Rudolf II in Prague. Issues relating to gender are brought to the forefront, as portraits by Leonardo da Vinci are reexamined and the misunderstood legacy of Camille Claudel is given an important and timely reconsideration. Students have examined the work of well-known artists like Toulouse-Lautrec, the role of the spiritual in abstract art and the reinterpretation of Shakespeare by the Surrealist artist Salvador Dali. Thanks to funding from the Provost Office, some received grants to study their works first-hand, attend conferences or visit specialized research centers, including trips to New York, Philadelphia, Washington, DC and the Dali Museum in Florida.

Our Studio Art majors combine visual research, media-specific techniques, and development of concept into personal voice in this stellar array of creative artworks. The scope of their collective artistic inquiries is far-reaching, and the content of our Studio Art majors’ technical pursuits is equally expansive—influenced by their lives, their academic studies, and their travels abroad. The media range of their work includes hand-painted linoleum prints, sculptural ceramics, deliciously glazed paintings, reinvented found objects, illustrative drawings, and transcendentally traditional paintings. Inter-media artworks defy single-material labels, combining multiple media techniques into a new integrated form, as seen here in embroidered body prints printed with unfired clay and paint, found-object installations layering nostalgia with video, and last, but so very not least, installation-esque sculpture blending found objects, wax casting, painting, and manipulative temperature.

In this poignant and nuanced grouping of studio artwork, our Studio Art majors’ conceptual content and format includes highly intimate moments of pleasure…and grief of a father’s death, through celebration of life. You will experience juxtaposed playful patterning of the sea will refresh the bend. Content ranging from smartly silly de-contextualization, the abstract spontaneity in fluidly folding clay, and the playful patterning of the sea will refresh you. Finding true self-portrait after the loss of a birth mother dream, building the power of one’s gendered body emblazoned and emboldened with the reclaimed tools of domesticity, and the “tension of self-destructiveness” all anchor the experiential depth of our Studio Art majors in this striking exhibition.

The Department of Art and Art History and the entire Gettysburg College community should be proud of the quality and engagement that we see in the work of these fine graduating seniors. Now more than ever, a dedication to one’s passion and an ability to rise to new challenges are the far-reaching, and the content of our Studio Art majors’ technical pursuits is equally expansive—influenced by their lives, their academic studies, and their travels abroad. The media range of their work includes hand-painted linoleum prints, sculptural ceramics, deliciously glazed paintings, reinvented found objects, illustrative drawings, and transcendentally traditional paintings. Inter-media artworks defy single-material labels, combining multiple media techniques into a new integrated form, as seen here in embroidered body prints printed with unfired clay and paint, found-object installations layering nostalgia with video, and last, but so very not least, installation-esque sculpture blending found objects, wax casting, painting, and manipulative temperature.

In this poignant and nuanced grouping of studio artwork, our Studio Art majors’ conceptual content and format includes highly intimate moments of pleasure…and grief of a father’s death, through celebration of life. You will experience juxtaposed current events in digital time, profoundly ordinary moments in landscape, a fantasy novel world, and the questioning of useful objects while stretching function around the bend. Content ranging from smartly silly de-contextualization, the abstract spontaneity in fluidly folding clay, and the playful patterning of the sea will refresh you. Finding true self-portrait after the loss of a birth mother dream, building the power of one’s gendered body emblazoned and emboldened with the reclaimed tools of domesticity, and the “tension of self-destructiveness” all anchor the experiential depth of our Studio Art majors in this striking exhibition.

Please join us in celebrating the successful capstone projects at the upcoming Art History Capstone Symposium presentations and Studio Art Exhibition and Gallery Talks. We hope you will enjoy learning about our students’ great work and will wish them well in their future endeavors!

Tina M. Gebhart
Assistant Professor, Art and Art History

Felicia M. Else
Associate Professor, Art and Art History
Senior studio art majors present their capstone projects in a variety of media.

EXHIBITION: APR. 29–MAY 17
RECEPTION: WED. / APR. 29, 5–7 P.M.
GALLERY TALK: THUR. / APR. 30, NOON
SCHMUCKER ART GALLERY
The idea of imbalance is contrasted with a strange stillness of the work—objects appear to be frozen in the midst of their own slow decomposition. Instability can be invasive, consuming—it permeates. It is a degree of destruction that hangs on the verge of disaster without rendering the subject utterly unrecognizable. This state is communicated through the mutability of the materials, specifically wax and wood; both mediums are organic and vulnerable and prone to change in a way that recalls our own vulnerability.

The idea of imbalance is contrasted with a strange stillness of the work—objects appear to be frozen in the midst of their own slow decomposition. It is through this seeming dissolution that I make my internal external, sometimes graphically and explicitly, even when censored by material softness.

These pieces collectively question the things that destroy us—societal pressures, historical baggage, and, perhaps more often than anything else, ourselves. Each piece communicates the tension of self-destructiveness, whether the destruction is accomplished or merely attempted. Often, the subjects of the work do not realize how pivotal their own role in their devastation is, so it is left to the viewer to gather how responsible they truly are.

From here, we must ask if is it enough to be complicit in our own annihilation, or must we play an active part? Varying degrees of participation are present within the series, from fragile abstract pieces that were created by combining incompatible mediums that should have ruined each other, to installations that question the culpability of communities as a whole. These sculptures look at instability and destruction, specifically self-destruction, in an uncomfortable way, encouraging the viewer to look at how they may be, in their own small way, doing the same.
How can you simultaneously celebrate someone as you grieve his loss? After his cancer prognosis took a turn for the worse, I spent the summer of 2014 with my father and with such questions.

The resulting series of work can be both haunting and celebratory. The pieces challenge the viewer to meet my father while also feeling his absence. All of the pieces are linked through a more conceptual meaning and value of time, allowing each viewer to have a personalized interpretation. Flexibility in media and format presents the public with a variety of ways to experience this body of work. By suggesting a presence or representing past moments, the work speaks to the pain that comes with losing someone as well as the joy of sharing the memories left behind.

Completing this series has given me an outlet to think abstractly about the various stages of grief and loss, while forcing me to confront anxieties I had previously ignored. The outcome is a body of work that allows the viewer to enter and exit safely, with a variety of emotions and new understandings of loss experienced in between.

Shannon R. Callahan

The outcome is a body of work that allows the viewer to enter and exit safely, with a variety of emotions and new understandings of loss experienced in between.
When I was younger and first discovered I was adopted, it seemed there were so many things I could never possibly know about myself. It was particularly hard when other children in school would boast about their cultural backgrounds and similarities to their families. In an attempt to understand myself and my features I became initially fixated on portraiture, primarily self-portraits. My work now is a product of these early examinations of myself and a refinement on the topic. The beginning of this spring semester I discovered my birth mother online. I had always assumed that finding her would answer all of my questions. I found it left me with more uncertainty.

In this body of work I focus on illustrative moments, exploring the disconnections and connections between personality and facial features. Moments on the individual level are the central theme. My work examines how people are not defined by their facial features or biology alone, exploring personality as the most descriptive feature. I hope to expose the personality behind the illustration.

My intention is for the audience to learn something about themselves while viewing this series of portraits. I hope that an audience can better understand that our lives are made up of everyday moments which define us. We are not specifically defined by our physical appearance or our facial features. We are defined by our personality and our lives as well.
The process of flattening a three-dimensional figure onto fabric creates distorted and semi-grotesque images as the clay and the paint become the skin.

Through gestural body prints, I show the innate imperfections and sexuality of the female body that are often hidden beneath social constructions of desirability. Moving the body print past the abstract image popularized by Yves Klein, I use my own body in a more figurative and independent way. My use of self breaks apart the active-artist/passive-model dichotomy and gendered power dynamic, unlike Klein’s use of models as “female brushes” and objects for the male gaze. Stripping myself and pressing my own painted body against fabric is a public display of my own insecurities with my naked body; I am allowing myself to be vulnerable. Rather than an expression of pure form and color, my prints act as a celebration of my unique imperfections as well as an examination of how I have been taught to present myself to the world.

The process of flattening a three-dimensional figure onto fabric creates distorted and semi-grotesque images as the clay and the paint become the skin. The presence of an exaggerated body is therefore infused in the cloth, embracing a grittier version of the female form imbued with an empowered physicality and sensuality. Embroidered thread and integrated domestic objects highlight details such as body hair, nipples, and genitalia, evoking sexuality and independence. In addition to the surface tactility and texture of these pieces, the life-size scale and sculptural three-dimensionality creates a level of physical engagement, designating these unconventional forms as sovereign and strong.

Fiber work and embroidery are historically domestic skill sets, and by using them in a subversive manner, I separate my female forms from the patriarchal function of the female body in art, eschewing the many conventional beauty standards undermining women’s bodies and mental states. I invite viewers to reflect on the fantasy and oppression of physical ideals. If we are all imperfect in some way, why passively uphold standards that condemn our bodies and how we use them?

Jasmine T. Colahan, Bare Intentions, 2015, box spring, sheet, thread, copper, terracotta slip, and acrylic, 40 x 59 x 7 1/2 in. Photo by artist.
Travel is exhilarating. Grand monuments and stunning landscapes fill itineraries and memory cards. However, in traipsing from one tourist hotspot to another, everyday views of the local environment are missed. Colorful graffiti in a foreign language emblazon dirty concrete walls. Geese nibble a bicycle tire in a carefully reimagined historic town. Locals go about their day in front of distinguished architecture and sweeping vistas.

My paintings focus on these small ordinary moments of exploration, which are just as beautiful and meaningful as big iconic ones. They make the unseen seen. The seemingly unremarkable becomes remarkable simply because it is noticed and expressed in new ways.

Kelly H. Crosby

There is quirkiness as the banal gains spontaneity and personality, and the temporary and transitional moments of travel achieve permanence.

From my own collection of photographs, and with oils on panel, I recreate scenes from my time studying abroad in Europe. My paintings capture this through lines and curves, depth and perspective, angles and planes. The style is realistic to mimic the veracity of the experience. Sharp contours, defined shapes, highlights and shadows draw focus, while soft curves and loose strokes offer visual repose to balance the composition. Color also reinforces the message. Neutral tones cover the majority of the composition, and bright spots of color highlight the details.

The medium, process, and final work itself offer a chance to relive these moments. They evoke a new level of appreciation for the experience and revive notions of wonder. At the same time, the work is significant in its own right. The basic is beautiful, the habitual has humor, and the present connects back to the past.

Historic landmarks and sweeping vistas only offer so much. Attention turns to the commonplace. Atypical views and unknown people become subject matter and express the character of the city and landscape even more so than the must-see sights of travel guides. My paintings make the transience of exploration permanent and cast light on beautifully ordinary moments.
his body of work is a set of painted print illustrations for *The Witch King*, a fantasy novel I am writing for my English Honors thesis. Like the protagonist who has to reconcile modern life with his Renaissance background, the illustrations straddle old and new art worlds, encompassing Victorian and Art Nouveau illustration, Russian icons, German blokboeks, twentieth century Polish illustrations, webcomics, and contemporary online watercolors. By translating *The Witch King* into the visual realm, I re-explore and reinvigorate the impact of my writing, and broadcast the protagonist’s experience to a second audience, through a second sense. The prints do not necessarily depict the most charged scenes of the book, or even depict them exactly as they are described; instead, they include a range of formats: still lives, formal portraits, and domestic landscapes. Thus, the illustrations not only illuminate elements of the story by giving them a visual equivalent, but also reveal more of *The Witch King* by having details the book does not, and vice-versa.

In illustrating a story that pivots on sacrifice, the body of work naturally steps into the realm of religious art. Christian visual symbolism, such as halos and emblems of martyrdom, emphasize the transformative and redemptive themes in the novel. Unlike a traditional icon, used as a tool for the worshipper to transcend the mortal world into the divine, this set of fantasy novel prints serves as a new kind of icon, one that paradoxically transports the viewer to a new spiritual experience.

By translating *The Witch King* into the visual realm, I re-explore and reinvigorate the impact of my writing, and broadcast the protagonist’s experience to a second audience, through a second sense.

"Ola I. Czajkowski"

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Ola I. Czajkowski

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The *Witch King* tells the story of Samerkand, a young king of a magical country of witches hidden in the primeval Polish forest. Samerkand is exiled to the human world by the airwitch upper class after he tries to cast a forbidden spell to help the earthwitch lower class gain equality. Throughout the story, Samerkand struggles greatly with the failure of his spell, the trauma of his exile, and his position in the civil war racking his country as everything he ever cared about explodes beyond his control. He is also challenged by his new identity as he feigns amnesia to blend in among the humans of Białowieża, the real-life village embedded in the forest. With help from Piotr Borowicz, his adopted guardian who found him in the woods, Samerkand learns about the nature of guilt, responsibility, and sacrifice, and eventually returns to his home country to face his fears and finish what he started.

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Ola I. Czajkowski, *Samerkand is Found*, 2015, Linoleum print and watercolor on paper, 10 x 13 in. Photo by artist.
Mary M. Ferrara

My ceramic works explore the relationship between conscious and subconscious art-making processes. Initially, I pursued ceramics as concrete and functional, and this was the interesting part for me. Through lots of working time, I have developed greater interest in process and the spontaneity of ceramics.

Motivated by my love for fashion, these slab-built pieces resemble the organic and natural form that fabrics can create when touched. Slab building allows me to embrace the unintentional, giving my pieces a more organic and fluid composition. While my pieces are very intentionally built to look like fabric, I also spontaneously allow the slab to fall into place and take on its own form.

Although the work ranges in size, each piece is glazed with a single glaze to allow the focus to be on the form of the piece. In this body of work, the subconscious and conscious making process is made visually concrete through the movement of the slab.
These hand-embellished linoleum prints are samples for repeating fabric patterns, intended for swimwear designs. My art derives from my deep passion for the beauty of the sea—environmentally, organically and culturally. Different types of pattern work involving stylized forms, moods and arrangements are my aesthetic focus. My designs often reference Baroque architectural details as well as the Rococo art objects. For example, one composition approach uses repeated intricate forms, all rotating around the same central form creating a balanced flow of visual energy. The discipline of printmaking lends itself well to the graphic nature of my work.

This series is pop, playful, rich in color, dramatic, whimsical, experimental yet conscious, still yet flowing. It is just scratching the surface of what I want to say to the world about the ocean and its impact on my life, and life itself.

Olivia J. Hartgers

Olivia J. Hartgers

Boroque Octapus

2015

Linocut: Ink on paper and oil colored pencils

12 X 18.5 in.

Photo by artist
these pieces were developed from old household items and were reinvented; not simply refurbished, but turned into something new. The outcome of this body of work is a range of function—from embracing ease of use to substantially challenging the idea of use. Some could be easily functional in one’s home, but others are not working pieces of furniture; having been rejuvenated in a way, yet destroyed again.

This artwork has an unexpected and unclear feel to it. Sometimes it is difficult to tell what was used to decorate or create the object. What each piece is portraying is also up to interpretation. The colors used are satisfying to the eye such as the light blue, white, and gold. This contrasts with the broken shards, which gives it a risky element against the calming colors.

Every piece of furniture has its specific job in a home, but these works have altered that instinct of where a table goes or what makes a chair. It is exciting to see an everyday household item transformed in a more curious way.

The colors used are satisfying to the eye such as the light blue, white, and gold. This contrasts with the broken shards, which gives it a risky element against the calming colors.

Joanna L. Hess

The outcome of this body of work is a range of function—from embracing ease of use to substantially challenging the idea of use.

Joanna L. Hess
Side Table
2015
Found table, ceramic, adhesive, and paint
30 x 19 x 66 in.

Photo by artist
When I layer these images through my paint, I also work the paint to create its own dialogue within the painting and add to the overall narrative.

Events taking place thousands of miles apart appear within millimeters of each other on a computer screen. Events of joy and the best of humanity appear side by side with stories of terror and war. To better understand these contrasts and strange relationships between disjointed events, I intentionally juxtapose and layer news events, painting to evoke tensions both in content and technique.

The events I choose involve high-energy scenes with lots of human action, apparent or hidden. Visually, the source images I select are scenes charged with energy. When creating compositional relationships between these events, I look for interactions between the storylines and the visual elements. These interactions may parallel or contrast and are apt to change as I continue to work with the images and develop the compositions.

When I layer these images through my paint, I also work the paint to create its own dialogue within the painting and add to the overall narrative. From rough, thick areas of three-dimensional paint to thin drippy glazes, I pair and contrast painting techniques to create tensions and increase ambiguity.

By layering images and paint, I create veils, to partially obscure my subjects. This conceptual technique references the distance between us and the figures, while becoming the haze we must see through to understand events that happen at such a spatial and cultural distance. To overcome some of this distance between myself and my subjects, to bring events happening around the globe closer to home, to broaden the sphere in which I live—I have begun to include aspects of my life within these paintings.

Anika H. Schneider

Anika H. Schneider, Fire and Water: Destroyed Manila Slum and Beirut Tide Barrier, February 2015, Oil paint on panel, 18 x 24 in. Photo by artist.
It’s just a room pushed to the back of a house for its leaking smells and unspoken privacies. Its discussion is rare, limited to a few short questions. Guests are constantly looking for it, but do they continue to look once they find it?

Inspired by the bathroom mat that keeps my feet warm in the morning, I have explored the items existing in public and private bathrooms. The everyday, functional items existing within these spaces are commonly overlooked yet they present compelling complexities. With clay, I express, exaggerate, and define these complexities, while focusing on the object’s form, movement, and conceptual absurdity.

The items represented are seen, felt, or used on a regular basis. They provide a reoccurring function to their handler; however, rarely receive the credit they deserve. As consumers, we invest a great deal of money and time in these objects, only to hide them among the soiled, private activities of society. Through the de-contextualization of these objects, I guide the viewer to perceive them differently, un-silencing their comic relief.

Through the de-contextualization of these objects, I guide the viewer to perceive them differently, un-silencing their comic relief.

Madison M. Senseney

Bathroom Mat
2015
Cone 6 stoneware, tile, and plywood
32” x 16”

Photo by artist
Fashion has always been a part of my life. Incorporating fashion with my passion for painting is my primary approach in this body of work. My fashion sketches/paintings are rooted in my experience interning for fashion houses while living in NYC for 6 months and broadening my perspective on fashion.

Fashion is not simply wearing cool clothes; it’s about expressing myself and showing my personality through colors, different fabrics and styles without having to say it. My maxim is “If you dress good, you feel good.”

By contrasting different fabrics and putting textures together that would not typically go together I create an edgier look. My illustrations represent my personality and idealized style. I am sassy and so is my taste.

I find inspiration in many fashion artists who use unconventional materials in their drawings (like Grace Ciao who uses beautiful flower petals in her sketches) as well as many designers’ pieces on and off the runway.

My illustrations represent my personality and idealized style. I am sassy and so is my taste.

**Linsey M. Tambone**

*Blue Coat*
2015
Water color and water color pencils on canvas
9 x 12 in.

Photo by Ashlie Cantele
CAPSTONE 2015

ART HISTORY

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PRESENTATIONS SYMPOSIUM

THUR. / APR. 23
5–6:30 P.M.
FRI. / APR. 24
4–6:30 P.M.
SCIENCE CENTER 200

Please join the Art and Art History Department for a stimulating and engaging series of 15-minute research presentations with images by the Art History seniors. Refreshments will be served.
When depicting women in portraiture, he succeeded in transforming the boundaries of their traditional portrayal through the rendering of his creative genius and artistic dominance.

In Milan, at the height of the Renaissance, Leonardo da Vinci was regarded as one of the most revolutionary masters of his time. When depicting women in portraiture, he succeeded in transforming the boundaries of their traditional portrayal through the rendering of his creative genius and artistic dominance. In doing so, he challenged Milanese society to see women and portraiture as a genre, in a newfound light.

Within Italy in the 15th century, it was accepted that female portraiture was highly idealized. The ruling Sforza family, in addition to others, would commission artists to paint portraits of young women at the time of marriage; a long-standing ritual courtship. However, the female face became a formula; idealized to the point where there was a copious lack of individuality and physical resemblance was almost entirely lost. Leonardo had a different philosophy; he sought and believed he could express a woman’s character through his representation of them on the canvas. He understood that if he could imitate the truthful beauty of the sitter in tandem with the representation of her character, then he would inevitably set a new standard for the female “ideal” within portraiture.

Leonardo found this ideal woman. Her name was Cecilia Gallerani, the mistress of Ludovico Sforza. The painting came to be known as The Lady with the Ermine, from which I explore the ways that led this painting to be deemed the first modern portrait. Fusing character into his representation, he created a dynamic union between anatomical naturalism, beauty, and individuality. Coinciding with these features Leonardo uses powerful symbolism that alludes to the affair of Ludovico and Cecilia through the depiction of the ermine in tandem with the social and political facets that were taking place at the Court of Milan.

Leonardo was never trying to compete with nature, but to simply imitate it. Imitated beauty on the canvas is permanently preserved. He believed the ability to do this was a testament to an artist’s genuine talent because the viewer has the power to compare the picture with that of the sitter’s true identity. Leonardo da Vinci accomplished this notion within his portrait of Cecilia Gallerani and it was through his innovative portrayal of her that he was able to create a novel orthodox within the depiction of women within portraiture.
Just as Claudel is often overlooked in a biography of Rodin, this investigation into Claudel’s inspirations does not simply accept him as the driving force behind her pieces...

French sculptress Camille Claudel has gained recognition in the past 30 years due to a focus on her tragic life rather than her artistic talent. Despite critical acclaim and respect amongst her peers during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, her affair with Auguste Rodin and her struggles with mental illness have cast a dark, dramatic shadow over modern interpretations of Claudel’s oeuvre. Considering how difficult it was for a woman to be working as an artist at this time, Claudel’s sculptures should not be outweighed by her personal life. In order to challenge the reader not to accept a simple biographical analysis of her oeuvre, I am looking at select works and considering how Claudel incorporated other art genres, daily life and literature references. Just as Claudel is often overlooked in a biography of Rodin, this investigation into Claudel’s inspirations does not simply accept him as the driving force behind her pieces, but instead chooses to go beyond Rodin in search of a renewed acclaim, and a new legacy, for Camille Claudel.

In order to challenge the reader not to accept a simple biographical analysis of her oeuvre, I am looking at select works and considering how Claudel incorporated other art genres, daily life and literature references.

Camille Claudel, Vertumne et Pomone, Also called Çacountala, 1906, Marble, 37¼ x 32¼ x 15¾ in., Musée Rodin, Paris
The connection between spirituality and religion has always been significant throughout the history of the fine arts. This semester of research has focused on examining the most recent divergence between the definition of “spiritual” and the definition of “religious” and how the redefining of these two terms has respectively transformed the fine arts. It explores the rich history of the fine arts to expose the defining moments of these two terms individually as well as important movements and artist responsible for re-defining them.

Beginning in the 20th century art is becoming less strategically iconic and increasingly ambiguous. Wassily Kandinsky and Piet Mondrian are credited with this abrupt change in spiritual direction with purely aesthetic intentions. These two artists were responsible for the introducing a modern theory to the previously established artistic philosophies. Between the 1950’s and 1960’s the teachings of the New York School became increasingly popularized. These teachings in combination with the increasing ambiguity of forms at the beginning of the 20th century cultivated an entirely new form of Modern Art characterized as Abstract Expressionism. This movement was established by such artist as Mark Rothko and Robert Motherwell. The Abstract Expressionist are important because they completely uninvolved the spiritual with the religious. Spirituality now becomes a philosophy that aids in the creation of the work rather than an Iconic representation of a religious figure.

Contemporary Art is a direct product of this transition into ambiguity and transformation as well as divergence between spiritual and religious philosophies. The movement is an amplified Minimalist response to the Modernist movement. The ideas surrounding the spiritual and religious have been completely disconnected and have been redefined by the simplistic forms of minimalism. Examples of significant artist associated with this movement are Ian McKeever and Gerhard Ritcher.

The research considers the Contemporary significance of both the religious and the spiritual. Each remains an important and viable concern in the delineation of the Contemporary Arts. They can be used to examine the arts crucially in a way that can explain a century of redefining the fine arts within a historical context.

Wassily Kandinsky and Piet Mondrian are credited with this abrupt change in spiritual direction with purely aesthetic intentions.
Gerhard Richter explored themes of memory and national identity in a society with a controversial past and a difficult recovery. He broke the silence that permeated the country and created a dialogue about remembering, memorializing, and politics.

After World War II, Germany had difficulty facing the atrocities of the war and ignored the flaws in the country’s recovery. Richter witnessed first hand the social and political struggles of the country as a citizen of Nazi Germany and the German Democratic Republic, societies that required strict conformity to their ideologies. Upon his escape to West Germany, where he was exposed to Pop Art, Abstract Expressionism, and the expected rejection of Socialism, Richter forged a painting career devoid of stylistic or content conformity.

Richter’s family paintings and his October 18, 1977 series from 1988 directly confront Germany’s struggle to recover from the Second World War. The family paintings address the ways in which World War II affected his own family’s dynamic and identity. The October 18, 1977 series comments on the events involving the Baader-Meinhof group inside Stammheim Prison, and in doing so highlights social unrest and political controversy in Germany in the 1970’s. Richter’s refusal to stay silent about these issues allowed him to bring to light the reality of Germany’s condition. Although these pieces were painted in a photorealistic style, the literal blurring of these images makes a statement about clarity, perception, and reality while toying with the norms associated with the mediums of painting and photography. Richter addresses unspeakable topics with an unconventional painting style to create a dynamic juxtaposition of ambiguity and directness.
n the cover of night on the winter of 1959, His Holiness, Tenzing Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, fled Tibet on the back of a mule and never returned to his homeland. Since this time, the displacement and plight of the Tibetan people by the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) has caused a discontinuation of the stream of cultural and religious practices previously handed down through generations. Through this process, the production and quality of Tibetan Mahayana Buddhist Thangkas have undergone evident change.

A Thangka is a Tibetan religious painting that depicts a Buddhist deity or in some cases a Mandala. These images are painted as scrolls on textiles such as silk or cotton. Thangkas contain immense religious significance in both their production and their purpose as informational and devotional images. The production of Thangkas is a skill that has been handed down within the Tibetan monastic community for thousands of years.

This research aimed to compare Tibetan Mahayana Buddhist Thangka depictions of the deity White Tara before and after the exile of the 14th Dalai Lama. In this research I investigated depictions of the deity White Tara and provided a comparison of White Tara Thangka images from both pre and post Tibetan decampment from modern day China.

I found that the Diaspora of the Tibetan people greatly affected productions of White Tara Thangkas in the post Tibetan evacuation period. These changes in geography and the discontinuation of the flow of knowledge have turned Thangka production from a highly religious and methodical practice into a highly commercialized practice. General trends have shown that this has caused a deviation from the original White Tara Thangka production formula. New variations of symbolism, iconography, proportion, color and shape have begun to surface. It is yet to be determined how future Thangka production will emerge in the newest wave of second and third generation Tibetan refugees. As time goes on this research may provide valuable insight into the direction of approaching Thangka production led by the newest generation of the post-exile community in the many years to come.

Lindsay R. Harrington

Surviving the Tibetan Exodus: A Comparison of White Tara Thangka Images from Pre and Post Tibetan Exile

New variations of symbolism, iconography, proportion, color and shape have begun to surface.
As the gentleman walks into the Moulin Rouge, he is greeted by the steady rhythm of tinkling glass, hushed conversation, and chairs scraping the hardwood floors. A hauntingly lit face leans into his field of vision and momentarily distracts him from the peculiarly situated party before him. Two women stand at the back of the room, one adjusting her hair in front of the mirrored walls which drip with activity and movement. As the gentleman’s gaze dawdles over each of the conspicuous personalities in the room, his eyes eventually rest on a strange combination of silhouettes: that of a tall, gangly man and an abnormally short one, complete with bowler hat.

From the moment he was born in 1864, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec was expected to one day assume his father’s title as the Comte de Toulouse-Lautrec. Although Henri’s mother, Adèle, the Comtesse, and his father, Alphonse, were first cousins, the long-term results of their son’s genetic birth defects did not reveal themselves until he broke a femur and a thighbone, both of which resulted in his bones ceasing to grow beyond the age of fourteen. For the remainder of his life, Henri would stand at a mere four feet eleven inches.

Toulouse-Lautrec’s foray into the nightlife of Montmartre, at the height of its alluring glamour and infamous eroticism, was an act of rebellion against his mother’s incessant protectiveness. During the fin de siècle, a period during the late nineteenth century largely associated with both decadence and death, Montmartre could boast the most representative population of Paris: the high and the low, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Within the confines of these seedy, cobblestone streets, Toulouse-Lautrec frequented dance halls, café-concerts, operas, circuses, brothels, theaters, cabarets, and various other venues that would become the subjects of his most famous lithographs and paintings. This presentation will examine a few of Toulouse-Lautrec’s most iconic works, especially his paintings, and look at his treatment of the predominantly exaggerated and grotesque characters. My research will also explore the influence of Japanese woodcut prints and the ways in which Toulouse-Lautrec’s interpretation of them embodied the Post-Impressionist movement.
At the turn of the seventeenth century, Prague was a bustling cosmopolitan city at the center of European artistic culture. The newly crowned Holy Roman Emperor, Rudolf II, had revitalized the city, making it the seat of Hapsburg power. From within the confines of the castle, Rudolf took to collecting—an obsession generations old amongst men of the Hapsburg line. Soon Rudolf’s castle became host to one of the most encyclopedic kunstkammern the world had ever seen. In true Renaissance spirit, Rudolf sought to obtain all things fantastical and unusual to create a microcosm of the wonders the larger world had to offer. To capture a world eternally in flux, Rudolf collected paintings, gems, sculptures, rare books, magical talismans, scientific tools, and everything in between.

Rudolf’s collection, stemming from his own interest in art, science, and magic, became an unexpected political tool of the Hapsburg Empire. The rare items he collected, the environment he fostered, and the mystery surrounding his collection enticed people in and helped Rudolf to accomplish his political goals. Foreign dignitaries and ambassadors quickly learned that they could garner the Emperor’s favor if they could secure rare or fantastical items. Rudolf also found that his collection had the power to lure important people to Prague and bolster his own image. His collection, although seductive to foreigners, served as a distracting financial drain on the Hapsburg’s resources and ultimately resulted in political ruin. This presentation will look at some of the more unusual items in the collection and how they contributed to Rudolf’s success and failure as Holy Roman Emperor.

Alison K. Lynch

The Art of Politics in Rudolfin Prague

Giuseppe Arcimboldo, Vertumnus (Emperor Rudolf II), 1590, oil on wood, 70.5 x 57.5 cm, Skokloster, Sweden.
Over the past couple of decades, Chinese artist-activist Ai Weiwei has solidified his place in the contemporary art world on a global scale. His works have both criticized and attempted to raise awareness about the corruption that continues to plague the Chinese government. In fact, the artist’s family has a history of conflict with the government. For example, in 1958, when Ai was just one year old, his father was labeled an “enemy of the people” and therefore the entire family was sent to a labor camp and eventually exiled to rural China where they lived for 16 years. This would not be the last time that Ai would experience government brutality. In April of 2011 the artist was arrested without cause and detained for 81 days. His incarceration resulted in outrage and even protests around the world. Eventually, Ai was released and gradually gained recognition as the face of civil rights within China. Despite all of this, Ai continues to believe in the universal right to freedom of expression and continues to demand that his government assume responsibility for their wrongful actions.

This research aims to examine Ai’s major works, the sense of illusionism they possess, and how this reflects a side of the Chinese government that many do not see. His art visually deceives the viewer, evident in works, such as his *Snake Ceiling* (2009) and *Sunflower Seeds* (2010). His audience often believes they are seeing one thing, when in reality they are looking at something completely different. Ai often speaks of this so-called “fake smile” that the Chinese state displays for the rest of the world. He believes this was especially present in the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing, which ironically Ai played a large role in as one of the architects of the main stadium, better known as the Bird’s Nest. Using his art as a vehicle, Ai not only exposes this “fake smile” but questions it as well.
Although William Shakespeare's 16th century classical literature is rarely contextualized with the eccentricities of 20th century artist Salvador Dali, Shakespeare's myriad of works have withstood the test of time and continue to be celebrated and reinterpreted by the likes of performers, scholars, and artists alike. Along with full-text illustrations of well-known plays, such as Macbeth (1946) and As You Like It (1959), Dali returned to the Shakespearean motif with his two series of dry-point engravings (Much Ado About Shakespeare and Shakespeare II) in 1968 and 1971 and ten scenes from Hamlet in 1973.

The epic language of Shakespeare has spilled over from the theater to the world of visual arts; Shakespeare's plays are an eclectic repertoire of iconic characters such as Prince Hamlet and Othello as well as timeless themes (both comic and tragic) that easily lend themselves to an extraordinary diverse range of illustrations; from the 18th century historical narratives of Francis Hayman, 19th century whimsical paintings of William Blake, Victorian renditions of John Everett Millais, and then eventually leading to the 20th expressive freedom of Dali. Salvador Dalí's representations, like his predecessors, aim to capture the essence of each Shakespeare play using specific iconographic elements in order to create a visual narration.
Art & Art History majors' annual trip to New York City. Students and professors visited the George Adams Gallery, Greenwich House Pottery, and had a networking dinner with alums and special guests working in the art field. Photo by Shawna Sherrell.