### Studio Art

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Page</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca J. Brown</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jhalil A. Cain</td>
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<td>MaryAnna R. Coleman</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Grace C. Concannon</td>
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<td>Taryn C. Deitrick</td>
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<td>Ashley R. Duvan</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>Jinming Dong</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Kristine M. Kopia</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>Elizabeth A. Petersen</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Joshua V. Pickering</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>Anne W. Richardson</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Sneha Shrestha</td>
<td>15</td>
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</table>

### Art History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Bacon</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Barone</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julia Daniel</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taryn Deitrick</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>Ashley Duvan</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>Chelsea Jones</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>Kyle Lawson</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>Alexa Mahinka</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Kevin Murray</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diana Nitowski</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Richardson</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
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<td>Kathleen Santoro</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Shea</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Spindler</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Stapleton</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bethany Thompson</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwendolyn Williams</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Wixted</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It gives us great pleasure to introduce the Gettysburg College Art and Art History senior Capstone projects for 2010. 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 Visual Arts Department places on creativity and scholarship in a liberal arts education.

This year marks the largest graduating class of Art History majors in the history of Gettysburg College. Students have brought their own twist to familiar subjects, like Matisse, Kandinsky, Rauschenberg, Stella and Richard Hamilton. Others have investigated the dynamics of gender in the work of male artists, like Degas and Munch, or brought attention to strong women artists and patrons, such as Frida Kahlo, Jackie Kennedy and the sisters of the Napoleon Bonaparte. Some projects bring to life the distant or the historic—the architecture of Beijing, the color purple in the Ancient Roman and Medieval world and the symbolism of the pomegranate across cultures. Some projects revel in the current and the topical—graffiti art, contemporary French photography used for gender subversion and the intercultural dynamics of Middle Eastern identity and sexuality. Many students chose to expand from a specific work or site—Frank Lloyd Wright’s Fallingwater, Hugo van der Goes’ Portinari Alterpiece and the medieval high crosses of Clonmacnoise in Ireland. Students have been inspired by study abroad and internship experiences, and, thanks to funding from the Provost Office, the Mellon Summer Scholars Program, Dr. B. Katharine Stroup Brooks Fund and the Freeman Foundation, many have received grants to study their works first-hand.

Our studio artists also offer viewers a variety of works, from sculpture, photography, ceramics and painting to installation and fashion design. These students have eclectic interests and diverse backgrounds - it has made for lively critiques! They have spent many hours in their own studios and countless additional hours reading about and viewing other artists’ works through visits to museums, galleries and artist’s studios. Many have participated in study abroad programs around the world, received grants, exhibited in regional, national and international exhibitions, and held internship positions which have impacted their work. All of these elements helped to shape their personal artistic message and will continue to shape our understanding of contemporary art.

The Department of Visual Arts, and indeed, 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 best investments for the future. This group has been a strong and ambitious one, and many students have been accepted into graduate programs in Art, Art History and Architecture.

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

Senior Exhibition

Wednesday, April 28 – Sunday, May 16
Schmucker Art Gallery

Opening Reception: Wednesday, April 28, 5 – 7 p.m.
Student Gallery Talks: Saturday, May 1, 1 – 3 p.m.

Rebecca J. Brown, Jhalil A. Cain, MaryAnna R. Coleman
Grace C. Concannon, Taryn C. Deitrick, Ashley R. Duvan
Jinming Dong, Kristine M. Kopia, Elizabeth A. Petersen
Joshua V. Pickering, Anne W. Richardson, Sneha Shrestha

Schmucker Art Gallery
Gettysburg College
corner of N. Washington & Water St.
Gettysburg, PA
17325-1400

717-337-6080
gallery@gettysburg.edu

Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Building is accessible.
www.gettysburg.edu/gallery
Ideas based in globalization in regard to the evolution of global and personal cultures have inspired my work. Cultures are as vulnerable to change as we are as individuals. My interest in this is in how individuals create their own identities in this increasingly interconnected world.

My work also explores one of life’s greatest conundrums: the notion of connectedness. I am largely influenced by indigenous Andean traditions of understanding how we as humans and the environment are all connected through a naturally occurring energy. I am interested in how this indigenous understanding of connectedness through nature conflicts with modern notions of global interconnectedness through technology. Can these two understandings of interconnectedness exist together?
When I start a work, I don’t have any preconceived ideas. I like to work alone and respond to the materials. Figures are a dominant theme in my work and drawing helps to bring the figures into my sculpture. I don’t believe that art needs an explanation and I am happy for the viewer to make their own interpretation of the sculptures I make.
My time spent abroad in Florence, Italy has greatly influenced me. I have used inspirations from the places I have travelled to create these pieces. I feel the use of mixed media demonstrates the varying and diverse experiences from abroad. Different people, places, and specific elements are translated into my work concentrating on the aspects of lighting, shapes, and contrast.
Photography allows me to take a piece of reality and turn it into something that I can call my own. I am most interested in fashion photography and the intersection of clothing, photography, and art. I want to create pieces that are compelling and I often include bright and metallic colors in my work to create a feeling of high energy. The use of mixed media allows me to push the limits of what photography can do as a medium and I enjoy experimenting and working with my hands to create different forms made from pieces of photographs.

Grace C. Concannon

Metallic Mindset
Photography / Mixed Media, 2010
My art focuses on the natural shapes of food through line, form, color and light. My strong interest in still life painting comes from my study in art history of painting from Prehistoric time through the 21st Century. Humans have a need to create, especially to recreate what they consume. Painting in a still life fashion with edible objects, such as food, relates to the world in a practical and logical manner.
My art is a representation of my journey to find who I am. My experiences abroad nourished my thirst for exploring the unfamiliar and by using foreign language I wish to trigger a similar sense of curiosity in the viewer. I always choose black to act as my foundation, on which I use more vibrant colors to express the way I feel. Like music, there are many layers to my art, and with the use of words I have left a strand of my own voice on the canvas.
As an emerging artist with broad interests in various disciplines, I intend to use the most basic materials as the carrier of art and to generate ideas from the most ordinary behaviors such as eating, dressing and living. Usually, I prefer to use light and shade as the main performance style in my work and to demonstrate my knowledge and attitude of philosophy, particularly the interrelations among people, materials, and objects.

The most ordinary objects in daily life thus carry new meaning to inspire the viewer to reflect on their own lives, decisions and attitudes which they have faced or will face. This kind of thinking is the theoretical foundation I use when I am working on sculpture and conceptual art.
Portal
Mirror, approx. 3’ x 3’

To me, art is absorption and reflection. Every form of art that I create acquires something from me, whether it is my attitude, emotion, personality, or current thought process. This piece of me is what really composes my art because it echoes who I am as the artist. I don’t want my work to just be what it is, but some kind of indication of who I am. If someone sees a piece of artwork that I have produced and can recognize that I have done it without any hint of who the artist is, I have successfully created something unique.
The time I spent studying abroad was the most influential of my undergraduate career. I was able to experience firsthand much of the art I had previously learned about while simultaneously immersing myself in unique cultures. Every new country was like a fresh adventure; each city held some secret to be uncovered. My travels throughout Europe allowed me to express my sentiments and experiences through photography. The images I made while studying in Italy are filled with what I hoped to bring home upon the culmination of my semester abroad. I strove to capture in the frame what I saw, not what I was meant to see. I searched for what touched me outside the realm of famous landmarks and attractions; I found it on street corners, in parks, even at restaurants. My photography is a reflection of how I experienced each culture and what each culture truly reflected to me.
The subjects I address in my show are humans, animals, fantastic creatures and combinations of the three. Through the anthropomorphication of non-human creatures and animalistic depictions of humans I will be able to illustrate what separates the human world from the animal world and vice versa.

Joshua Pickering
I have always been curious about the interaction of shapes and how they fit together. Against a flat surface, a shape creates an illusion of positive and negative space. Combining this sense of space with three-dimensionality, I look to test the limits of the conventional picture plane. My work is an experiment with the confrontation of shape, volume and geometry. I love that a subtle line and the particular way color is applied to a surface can transform the final product. These paintings demonstrate my issue of control and the integral process it took to create this series.
Sneha Shrestha
Where are you?
Walk to the left part
Walk to the opposite
Walk towards the light
Walk to the opposite
Walk towards the warmth
Walk towards the opposite
Find your balance?

Sneha Shrestha

Campur
Plywood, canvas, acrylic paint, light bulb, 16’ X 12’, 2009-2010
Art History Senior Projects

Art History Symposium

Wednesday, April 21, Thursday, April 22, and Friday, April 23
Bowen Auditorium, McCreary 115

Please join the Visual Arts Department for a stimulating and engaging series of 15-minute research presentations with images by the Art History seniors. Refreshments will be served.

Wednesday, April 21: 4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Elizabeth Petersen, Diana Nitowski, Sarah Stapleton
Katie Santoro, Sarah Bacon, Anne Richardson, Thomas Shea

Thursday, April 22: 4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Chelsea Jones, Julia Daniel, Taryn Deitrick, Ashley Duvan
Jennifer Spindler, Kyle Lawson, Laura Barone

Friday, April 23: 3:15 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.
Alexa Mahinka, Bethany Thompson, Sarah Wixted
Kevin Murray, Gwendolyn Williams

Receptions following
In January of 1941, a critically ill Henri Matisse underwent the second major surgery of his life. After three months of recovery, Matisse felt as though he had been given a “second life”, characterized by a new attitude towards life and art. Although he was confined to his bed for the remaining thirteen years of his life, Matisse worked with renewed energy in creating joyful, colorful cut-outs reflecting his emotional responses to the natural world.

In my thesis I will explore Matisse’s affinity for these cut-outs as well as the techniques he employed in the creation of these works ranging from quite small to mural-sized. This evaluation of the art produced in the last period of his life will also examine the influence of travel and nature on Matisse as it is conveyed through the colors and motifs, such as coral, leaves, animals, and other forms of vegetation, used in his cut-outs. And lastly, I will argue that Matisse, due to his poor health and inability to travel as well as the onset of World War II, desired to use these cut-outs to transform the walls that surrounded him into a tropical paradise for “his mind to wander in”.

Sarah Bacon

Sophie Calle is the 21st century flâneuse, a conceptual French photographer who playfully meanders through societal and artistic boundaries, often examining men through the lens of her camera and her unconventional relationship with text. Untrained, voyeuristic, and blurring the lines of truth and of artistic media, Calle’s works addressing themes of power and controlling/being controlled by men through deadpan photographs and directive anecdotal text are examined. By looking specifically at four works addressing male/female relationships, Calle’s influence from a French visual and philosophical tradition and her acute awareness of the power of narrative become clear. In these works, the concept of the male gaze, traditionally a male painter objectifying a female subject, is shattered by Calle, the female photographer scrutinizing and objectifying men. She hijacks traditional means of control over perceptions of women, the written word and visual image, and replaces them with an account re-written by herself, her camera, or other women to legitimize women’s voices experiences. Placing Calle in context, connections to Surrealism and Dadaism, and what makes the banal intriguing are also discussed. Calle changes the rules, re-appropriating the act of identity making and gender roles, often leaving men, unknowingly, at her mercy.

Laura Barone
Kandinsky and the Path Towards Abstraction through his Horse and Rider Motif

Russian-born Wassily Kandinsky was one of the pioneering artists of the early twentieth century, and is known for his desire to convey the spiritual in art through abstraction. On his quest towards complete abstraction in art, the image of a horse and rider became a key figure in Kandinsky’s iconography. This motif can be seen as a symbol of a search for liberation, and the artist’s personal “battle” to overcome conventional aesthetic values tied to materialism. Kandinsky seemed to have an affinity with the animal, and the rider motif can be seen in his work from the very beginning up to its dissolution into abstract forms.

The horseman was even incorporated into the cover designs for Kandinsky’s well-known treatise On the Spiritual in Art of 1911, and on The Blue Rider Almanac. My thesis will examine how the horse and rider motif came about, and how it relates to Kandinsky’s vision for a better artistic future. It will analyze the evolution of the horse and rider to the abstract, geometric forms which replaced the motif. In particular, I will explain how the geometric form of the circle came to hold more ‘inner possibilities’ to Kandinsky, and how it became a stand-in for the horse and rider.
While studying abroad in Lancaster, England, my interest in the United Kingdom’s Pop Art movement flourished. Frequent trips to the Tate Modern, in London, England allowed me to enjoy the artwork of Richard Hamilton. Richard Hamilton is considered to be the “Intellectual Father of Pop Art”, but is often overlooked when discussing this movement. His, “Just what is it that makes today’s home so different, so appealing”, 1965, is considered to be one of the earliest pieces of Pop Art. His fascination with American culture, media, and consumerism is intriguing, and is the reason I have focused on Richard Hamilton and the United Kingdom’s Pop Art.

Art History **Taryn Deitrick**

*Pop Art in the United Kingdom: The Independent Group and Richard Hamilton’s exposé of American Culture*
Robert Rauschenberg: the language of art with no respect for grammar

Robert Rauschenberg is widely recognized as a very creative American artist during his time. His eccentric personality and need for experimentation led him to create many unconventional works that used new concepts of composition. In his art, there is ongoing change; however there are also ideas which seem to remain consistent behind his pieces.

Two of Rauschenberg’s major influences were musician and composer, John Cage, and dancer and choreographer, Merce Cunningham. It becomes important to understand the valued relationship among the three artists, as they grow dependent upon each other for inspiration, insight, and criticism. Other influences included Jasper Johns and Marcel Duchamp, whose thoughts also nourished Rauschenberg’s approach.

I will examine the conceptual foundation within Rauschenberg’s art using primary sources of interviews, and direct quotations from the artists themselves. I have explored Rauschenberg’s work against a background of original responses to questions about his pieces. My quest is to determine whether there are constants in his art, or if change itself is the only constant. It is clear that Rauschenberg understood that change is inevitable in life and that he sees change as a necessity in relevant art.

Edgar Degas is best known for his portrayal of women during the late 19th century. Many of his works were criticized for their content, particularly those showing what Degas believed to be the modern woman. Today there is still a cultural bias against the artist and his treatment of the female in genre and portrait paintings. Accused of voyeurism and misogyny, Degas went against the norms of the time with his portrayals of modern women. He showed them as individuals, rather than relying on popular stereotypes and idealizations that other artists used in their works.

One of the most controversial works by Degas, L’Absinthe, portrays a woman in questionable circumstances, and many still consider it inappropriate. Critics of Degas focused on his paintings featuring lower class women in sordid environments and this is where I have focused my analysis of these criticisms. My thesis focuses on the ways Degas chose to paint the female, and why his contemporaries considered his works to be poor representations of women.

Youssef Nabil (b. 1972) is an Egyptian photographer who has spent much of his career abroad. His work showcases his own disconnect from where he lives and works and the desire to remain connected with Egypt. His disconnect is presented in a series of self-portraits taken in cities he has stayed in. Through these works I will examine how he depicts himself depends on how connected he is to that place, despite his visit only being temporary. In examining how his work displays a desire to remain connected with Egypt I will be focusing on content and style. Nabil is noted for his fascination with Egyptian Cinema and the world that older movies depicted. I will only briefly touch on this, with my main focus on his subject matter. With this I will focus not only on objects, but on the depiction of men and women. With this issues of sexuality and Orientalism will be discussed as well as common perceptions of what Egypt is.

Kyle Lawson
Although Jacqueline Lee Bouvier Kennedy was one of the most acclaimed women of the Twentieth Century, few people are aware of her deep impact on the arts in America. As First Lady, her main goal was to renovate the White House, which she wanted to present as America’s house, providing a window on the history of the Nation. Her unprecedented television tour of the White House stimulated a massive increase in the numbers of visitors who now saw important works of art she had obtained, such as Gilbert Stuart’s 1797 Portrait of George Washington and Rembrandt Peale’s 1800 life portrait of Thomas Jefferson. She also was instrumental in expanding the Nation’s appreciation of art from other nations, playing a central role in arranging for the first exhibition in the U.S. of the Mona Lisa. In addition, she promoted the performing arts through her revolutionary approach to White House entertainment, and had an unsurpassed influence on fashion and the fashion industry. Her final contributions to the arts included helping arrange for artwork donations from various countries to her husband’s memorial, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. My thesis will examine Jackie Kennedy’s unparalleled contributions to, and support of, the arts during and after her service as First Lady.
Frank Lloyd Wright, often considered the greatest American architect, completed Fallingwater, in 1939, when it graced the cover of Time Magazine. Time labeled it Wright’s ‘most beautiful job’, and as a result, the house captured the imagination of the public. Wright’s design was revolutionary and needed an equally revolutionary client to make the building become a reality. Edgar Kaufmann and the Kaufmann family, of Pittsburgh, accepted Wright’s unique design and became the renowned patrons. An interesting relationship formed between Wright and the Kaufmann’s throughout the construction of the house. Wright’s design, featuring the philosophy of organic architecture, was able to unify man with nature. With influences from the Japanese, Wright succeeded in combining the spirituality of nature with art and science to create the epitome of organic architecture. Fallingwater is entirely reliant upon the cantilever, which Wright uses along with the horizontal line throughout the house. Wright unifies the interior space with the exterior nature through an ingenious use of ventilation and windows. He successfully connects the inhabitant of the house with nature, specifically the 30-foot waterfall, which flows underneath the house. Many visitors are awed and inspired by the connection felt with the waterfall and the natural landscape. Fallingwater is the ultimate example of organic architecture as the surrounding nature impacts the resident to create a unique relationship between the occupant, the house and the landscape.
This thesis seeks to understand the economic and artistic interdependence between Florence and Flanders during the 15th century. Both countries were to witness unprecedented financial and artistic prosperity during this time, and this was in no small part due to the presence of Italian banking firms in Flemish cities. The most notable of these businesses, and the one to produce the most impressive commissions, was none other than the Bruges branch of the Medici bank. Centering around Flemish masterpieces commissioned by the Italian managers of this firm, my thesis explores the ways in which this intercultural patronage led to a rich interlacing of artistic exchange between these two nations, and the influences that they had on the art produced in Italy during the Renaissance.
The most rewarding experience for an Art History major is to raise a question and then uncover the answer, which is where the idea for my thesis began. I was initially interested in the origins of purple and the reasons why it became a symbol of royalty. Through research I learned that the color has been important since its discovery around 1600 BC, but it was not until the Roman Empire that purple reached its highest manifestation as an imperial sign. Consequently, I was struck by another question; how did the imperial purple of Ancient Rome affect the development of Christian art? This thesis focuses on the history of purple and how it transformed from status symbol to imperial icon in Ancient Rome. It then traces the Early Christians’ appropriation of purple discussing the changes in symbolism it underwent to suit the new needs of the Church. Purple, as an important emblem was used by both the Romans and Early Christians as a source of legitimacy, and although their intentions were similar, their manifestations of the color differed greatly.
During the modern age of the sixties, American artist created compositions with the intention to inspire the viewer to leap into the unknown and experience art in their own way. Frank Stella is an American artist who is best known for his significance in minimalism and post-painterly abstraction. He has a boundless creative energy that has reinvented itself through a career of five decades. Early in his career Stella wanted to achieve the illusion of complete flatness within his paintings. He tested the limits of two-dimensional space with his curiosity of geometry, his unique interaction of line and his ever expanding scale. Stella’s aesthetic evolved from simple linear patterns to increasingly complex shaped canvases, until he finally introduced three-dimensionality into his work in the early 1970s. For the last twenty years, Frank Stella has been intensely experimenting in the field of architecture. He has developed more than several architectural proposals but almost all were never executed. Could a man known as a cornerstone of minimalism be considered a true architect? This thesis will examine the anticipation of architecture through Stella’s career and his growth from minimalism. The transition from painter or sculptor into architecture is a difficult leap for artists in the modern age. Stella’s unusual architectural designs are based on a pictorial quality of form rather than function, possibly aiding in his lack of success. I will explore the mechanics of Stella’s painting and their effect on his drive toward architectural design.
Edvard Munch (1863-1944) was a Scandinavian artist who gained fame on an international level. Munch’s childhood was tainted by the death of his mother and sister. At an early age, Munch was exposed to themes such as sickness, loneliness, helplessness and death. His early loss of innocence lead to a lifetime filled with anxiety and depression. Munch’s style and content never drifted from the torment of his life; rather his misfortunes became the vessel to his expressionistic style for which he is so famous. Although his personal history might lead us to sympathize with Munch, the artwork he produced from 1894 to 1896 leaves us questioning whether the man behind the paintings is deserving of our compassion. Munch’s work produced during that period gives a disturbing peek into the man’s troubled soul. Munch’s inability to trust women and his fear of being alone resulted in images where all else appear powerless next to the female who is represented. The goal of this thesis is to study Munch’s relationships with women and explore how he visually communicated these relationships and feelings toward women.
China has the oldest on-going uninterrupted artistic canon on earth. And for most of its history, it was isolated from the western world by geographical and political barriers. The nearly 4,000-year historical imperial rule of China ended in 1912, and in 1949, the Communist Party, under Mao Zedong, established the People’s Republic of China. Since then, the former USSR has collapsed, making China one of five communist nations in the world, and by far the most successful. Each historical regime, be it of/by/for the people or not, had an idea about what it meant to be Chinese. This was reflected in the art produced. Architecture is a little different. It is limited by its function, because it must serve a purpose. If it does not serve that purpose, the market economy demands that it be torn down. What monumental architecture did in the past, was to convey the right to rule. Much like the archetypal castle in the west, capital centers and monuments in China reflect the grace and bounty of ancient emperors. This concept has not stopped. The present-day PRC adopts a very global–some might say capitalistic–approach to architecture. And that is China’s problem. How does architecture reflect the people, when the people may not reflect the architecture?
The word graffiti derives from the Italian word grafficare, meaning “to scratch”, referring to markings of vandals dating thousands of years ago examples of which can still be seen at Pompeii. This definition still remains a large umbrella term for what is now a wide range of street art. But now galleries who are exhibiting graffiti art are springing up in major cities around the world, transforming the idea of graffiti itself. This paper focuses on the evolution of graffiti art over the past forty years, beginning with the cultural movement during the 1970’s in NYC and ending with present-day street artists. The conditions of NYC fueled the creation of an urban art expression unlike any other before it, one defined by its lack of formal education and its disregard for rules. Temporary, individualistic, and spontaneous, the genre provides artists with a limitless amount of space and a wide palette of colors. This raw form of art has transcended into a medium used by current artists who play with the notion of anonymity and the work’s accessibility to the public. Chiseled off brick walls and pasted onto canvases, graffiti art that was originally made to clash with society has crept into the mainstream of fine art in various forms. Will this disintegrate its original intentions and erase its essential characteristics? Or has graffiti merely evolved into its full potential as an art medium? I believe the answer may be in the writings on the wall.

Frida Kahlo said of her work: “They thought I was a surrealist but I wasn’t. I never painted dreams. I painted my own reality”. French surrealist Andre Breton described Frida’s work as “pure surreality”, recognizing the dream-like quality and fantastical elements seen in many of her paintings. Frida publicly denied his label, saying, “I never knew I was a surrealist until Andre Breton came to Mexico and told me I was.” Her life experiences, including an accident that would forever cause her emotional and physical pain and a marriage that left her in constant suffering, became her intense oeuvre. Her paintings explicitly narrate her physical constriction, pride for her Mexican culture, and marriage to husband and fellow artist Diego Rivera. This thesis will attempt to answer whether Frida belongs to the Surrealist movement many critics have placed her in. If she does not belong in the Surrealist movement, where does she belong?
Napoleon’s Sisters: Patronesses of Controversy

Napoleon is well-known for his astronomical rise to power during and after the French Revolution. With his ascension in France, art and social customs began to change at the same time as the political atmosphere and there was a clear alignment of the new French Empire with the Roman Empire and the monarchies of the Bourbons and the Carolingians.

Napoleon gave his sisters Elisa, Pauline, and Caroline titles and the control of lands within his jurisdiction. With this new income and power, these women became prolific patrons of the arts in their own right, commissioning music, jewelry, grand houses, paintings and sculptures from the top artists of the time.

The portraits they commissioned of themselves clearly reveal their own personal ambitions as well as the desire to reinforce the position of their family within the European power structure. Caroline’s portrait by François Gérard shows an investment in affirming the Bonaparte’s position among Europe’s aristocracy while Pauline’s personification of Venus Victorious by Canova raises debate about the place of women in French society. These portraits show the complex reconciliation between the French Revolution and the ancien regime as well as the role of gender in society, both of which raise questions about the legacy of Napoleon.

Bethany K. Thompson

In the middle of Ireland on the banks of the river Shannon lies the now ruined monastery of Clonmacnoise. However, in the early medieval period, Clonmacnoise was large and powerful enough to be considered a city. Scholars, kings and pilgrims braved the journey to the site because of its unique collection of knowledge, high quality art, and certainly not least, it’s sacredness. It was indeed a sacred space, a place not immune to the profane, but purposefully set aside from it.

The abbots and bishops of Clonmacnoise walked a thin line between the sacred and the profane. On one hand, they needed money and support from secular rulers for defense and religious activities. On the other, they needed and wanted a sacred place where monks could study, work and pray. The great stone crosses of Clonmacnoise are the physical manifestations of all these needs. These crosses, among the most ornate and highly developed in Ireland, mark the border between the profane and the sacred. By their placement, uses and content, these crosses accomplish the desire of the rulers of Clonmacnoise: to have co-existing, yet separate secular and sacred spaces.
The pomegranate is an ancient fruit which was widely distributed throughout Europe, Asia, and North Africa by the end of the Neolithic era. The cultivation of this Iranian fruit throughout the ancient world predated the construction of Stonehenge, the foundation of the city of Troy, and the invention of the pottery wheel in China. The pomegranate’s ancient heritage imbued it with deep-rooted symbolic meanings that transcend its diverse application across cultures as a symbol of prosperity, fertility, and bounty. In addition to the general symbolism inherent in the fruit’s natural characteristics, each culture developed its own distinct iconography surrounding the pomegranate. Through a comparative analysis of the use of pomegranates as a motif in Italian Renaissance Madonna paintings, Asian Decorative Arts, and Northern Renaissance still lives and genre paintings it is possible to isolate the individual cultural aspects attributed to the pomegranate by the diverse civilizations who valued the fruit.
The Visual Arts department educates students in the history of art and the practice of art, teaching these as separate but interrelated disciplines. You gain an appreciation of continuity and change in art by exploring the historical and cultural significance and the aesthetic structure of works of art. Courses, studio work, and other projects develop your aesthetic sensibilities and your understanding of the visual environment in ways that go beyond the routine.

Courses in the history and theory of art investigate our understanding of what constitutes art and examine art in various historical and cultural contexts throughout the world, spanning everything from Neolithic art to modern, postmodern, and avant-garde traditions.

Studio courses in drawing, painting, printmaking, ceramics, photography, and sculpture sharpen your sense of sight, enhance your skills of visual expression, and broaden your creative abilities. Trips to renowned museums in nearby Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., enrich your learning. And the 1,660 square-foot Schmucker Hall Art Gallery provides an ideal exhibition venue for student and professional work.

An art major prepares you for graduate or professional study and for a range of careers in art and related fields. Visual arts graduates have distinguished themselves as professional painters, printmakers, sculptors, and photographers; as graphic designers; as industrial designers; and in a range of other careers.

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