2018

College of Fine Arts 2017-18 Year in Review

College of Fine Arts

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College of Fine Arts community,

We will look back on this past academic year as the start of great change at Western Michigan University. The first year with our ninth president, Edward Montgomery, was one of transformational initiatives and fresh perspectives. In addition, we gained four new members of senior leadership, Jennifer Bott, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Terri Goss Kinzy, Vice President for Research; Candy McCorkle, Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion; and Tony Proudfoot, Vice President for Marketing and Strategic Communication. We welcome these new faces to campus with excitement for the opportunities and changes they will bring.

As we look forward, it is important to look back to what brought us here. In this year-in-review newsletter we are celebrating the successes of our students, faculty and staff. From popular community events to the opening of the Richmond Institute of Design + Innovation, the College of Fine Arts is always unveiling something new. Inside, you will also find milestone moments, including the retirements of fine arts family members, award winning student ensembles and the accomplishments of distinguished alumni.

We look forward to seeing you at an upcoming event, and in the meantime, we encourage you to follow along with us on social media and our blog, The Fine Print.

Daniel G. Guyette, Dean, WMU College of Fine Arts
THE 2017-18 ACADEMIC YEAR

BY THE NUMBERS

252 new students
enrolled in the College of Fine Arts in the Fall of 2018. Coming in with an average GPA of 3.6 and an average ACT score of 24.5, these Broncos are some of the best and brightest students on campus.

17,180.7 miles
traveled by CFA manager of recruitment and outreach, Natalie Faculak, as she searches for talented young artists to join our community.

4 retirements
David Little, Professor, Music - Voice | David Smith, Professor, Music - Music Education and Music Therapy | Jane Baas, Professor, Dance and Associate Dean Lee Honors College | Richard de Peaux, Professor, Art - Painting

36 blog posts
published on the Fine Print, ranging from advice on getting involved on campus to interviews with esteemed alumni. Subscribe at finearts.wmich.edu/blog

273 degrees awarded
to students in the 2017-18 academic year. Including 235 bachelor’s and 38 master’s degrees.
1. Distinguished Alumni Award Honorees

Each fall, in the spirit and tradition of homecoming, the College of Fine Arts welcomes four accomplished graduates back to campus to celebrate their achievements. Nominated and selected by faculty and administrators in their unit of study for demonstrating outstanding success in their field, these individuals are honored with the College of Fine Arts Distinguished Alumni Award.
Melanie George  
B.A. Dance

Since graduating from Western Michigan University, Melanie George has forged a multifaceted career as a jazz dancer, choreographer, educator, scholar and advocate. According to her artist statement, “my scholarship purposely and strategically informs my choreography and pedagogy. I have great interest in upsetting traditional hierarchies in dance on the stage and the page.”

Alex Jokipii  
B.A. Music Education

Alex Jokipii has held the position of Principal Trumpet with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO) since 1998. A native of Escanaba, Michigan, Jokipii’s earliest training in music began at the age of 11 when he took his first lessons on the B-flat trumpet his mother had kept from her days in the high school band. In addition to playing with the BPO and teaching privately, he is also on the performance faculty at the State University of New York at Fredonia.

Palmer Jankens  
B.A. Theatre

Palmer Jankens is the Sound Supervisor at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, where previous design credits include Ride the Cyclone, Mary Poppins, 42nd St. (Paramount Theatre); Days Like Today (Writers Theatre); Juno (TimeLine Theatre); Annie Get Your Gun and Oliver! (Light Opera Works). He has also worked as sound engineer at Black Ensemble Theater, Blue Man Group Chicago and Million Dollar Quartet Chicago.

Mary Brodbeck  
M.F.A. Art

Employing traditional Japanese woodblock printmaking methods to transfer ink to paper, Mary Brodbeck’s artwork has received critical acclaim in both Japan and the United States. With a portfolio of celebrated work, a series of prints housed in the Detroit Institute of Arts’ permanent collection, and an extensive career of teaching, visual storytelling and printmaking.
Congratulations to the Gold Company for placing first in the College Vocal Ensemble Division. In addition, Gold Company’s Hannah Truckenbrod received the Outstanding Soloist Award. The Next Generation Jazz Festival took place on March 11, 2018 and invited 1300 of the nation’s top student musicians to compete each spring. The festival welcomes performances by middle, high school and collegiate groups of every kind: big bands, combos, vocal ensembles, vocal soloists, as well as conglomerate bands.
More than 100,000 people visited Western Michigan University’s downtown Grand Rapids regional location during ArtPrize® Nine, WMU’s fifth consecutive year as an ArtPrize® Venue.

Curated by WMU instructor of art Don Desmett, the Cherry Street building featured the work of 19 artists, including WMU faculty, students and alumni of the Frostic School of Art. Desmett’s curating resulted in a gallery based on sensibilities and energy, featuring artwork of various themes, including identity, environmental issues and racism.

Rena Detrixhe and her “Red Dirt Rug Monument” received the most votes as the Time-Based Public Vote and Juried Category Award recipient. The 1,000-square-foot “Red Dirt Rug” was comprised of nearly 200 gallons of sifted dirt from Tulsa, Oklahoma, Detrixhe’s current place of residence. She worked eight hours a day for three weeks to complete the rug, which covered nearly one third of the WMU’s fifth floor.

During the awards ceremony, WMU presented the $12,500 Juried Two-Dimensional Award to Sofía Ramírez Hernández for her work, “Sofia Draws Every Day: Years 2, 3, and 4” at Cultura Collective at Rumsey Street.

The University also presented the Youth Collaboration Award to “You Be You” at DeVos Place Convention Center, by Hudsonville Public Schools. The $5,000 cash prize was awarded by public vote to the collaborative ArtPrize® entry.
Fall of 2017 was the first year that the Frostic School of Art offered a new undergraduate program that combines the disciplines of art, design, engineering and entrepreneurship called product design. This highly innovative program will meet the growing design and manufacturing needs of both southwest Michigan and the Midwest.

The WMU Trustees approved the creation of the Richmond Institute for Design + Innovation in June 2018, which will provide opportunities for product design students to direct transdisciplinary research, experience problem-based instruction, and engage in industry activities related to both design and innovation.

In the Richmond Institute, educators will continue to collaborate with local companies and organizations including Whirlpool, Tekna, Newell Brands, Stryker, Fabri-Kal, Landscape Forms, Eaton and several other southwest Michigan companies to ensure that the program will prepare students to excel in the field. Kalamazoo and the surrounding area is a hotbed of design and manufacturing activity. Local corporations are in constant need of professionals to contribute forward-thinking products, systems and solutions. These strategic corporate partnerships will provide students with on-the-job training and real-world application opportunities.

Central Kohrman Hall has just been reinvented on the first and third floors to house the Richmond Institute for Product Design + Innovation. The first floor includes administrative offices, presentation spaces and workshops outfitted with cutting-edge tools and equipment, while the third floor contains student studios, production areas and faculty offices.

The first cohort of product design students meeting together for the first time. During their gathering, they heard from associate professor of product design and director of the program Michael Elwell about the exciting projects and facilities they can expect in the years to come.
Welcoming the first cohort of product design students
5. Jazz students continue winning streak in DownBeat

Jazz studies students and their instructors are upbeat after again earning multiple wins in DownBeat magazine’s 41st annual Student Music Awards.

In what is regarded as the most comprehensive competition for collegiate jazz programs, WMU students earned two awards, placing among the top 10 finishers in the international music competition. No other Michigan university brought home an award.

BEST METRIC FOR JAZZ PROGRAMS

The DownBeat awards continue to be the most thorough and publicized metric for jazz programs across the globe, with the competition going international more than 10 years ago.

“WMU’s jazz studies program has been earning awards in DownBeat’s Student Music Awards for more than 25 consecutive years, and multiple awards for two decades,” says Tom Knific, WMU professor of music and director of the University’s jazz studies program. “Our institutional historic total is nearly 170. We’re especially proud of this year’s winners, as they were also among our four winners in last year’s competition.”

WMU AWARD WINNERS

- Lushh; Blues/Pop/Rock Group; Graduate College Winner; ensemble members Eddie Codrington, Matthew J. Epperson, Madison George, Grayson Nye and Andrew Saliba with Yakiv Tsvietinskyi; professor Keith Hall.
- Andrew Saliba—“Silent Minority”; Original Composition—Small Ensemble; Undergraduate College Outstanding Compositions; professor Andrew Rathbun.

6. Student artwork enhances Audiotree Music Festival

Through the medium of their choice, 18 Frostic School of Art students were tasked with exploring and representing the music of one of the emerging artists in Audiotree Music Festival’s 2017 lineup. From printmaking to cyanotype, abstract to illustrative, the work varied in technique, style and approach. Thousands of attendees had an opportunity to see the artwork in person during the festival.
State Rep. Jon Hoadley and partner Tara Charvat took home first place, while WMU President Edward Montgomery and partner Alyssa Boone showed off moves worthy of third place.
Despite the fact that the stinging fear of AIDS is a painful or even terrifying memory for many, a whole generation of Americans have been brought up with limited knowledge of its scope. HIV.gov estimates that a shocking 1.2 million Americans were living with HIV and AIDS in 2015. As such, The University Theatre took the opportunity provided by this production to teach students about the virus— from its history, to its contemporary presence, to the impact it has had on those it touches, both on a personal and communal level.

Angels in America takes place during the height of the AIDS epidemic in Reagan-era New York City, sharing both a political and a personal snapshot of its time and place.

Three sections of the AIDS Memorial Quilt were on display during performances of Angels in America.

It’s the summer of 1964 in Atlanta, Georgia and four middle-aged black women are traveling by city bus to a “whites only” establishment inside a downtown Atlanta department store to test their newly acquired civil rights handed down by the Supreme Court outlawing segregation in eating establishments. They are a few of the many ordinary people who did their small part to bring about the U.S. Civil Rights Movement.

Waiting to Be Invited featured faculty member Dwandra Lampkin as an ensemble member with WMU Theatre students. providing a tremendous Theatre faculty often design and direct productions, but it was a unique opportunity for our young actors to work alongside a professional actress with career experience.
Two CFA educators among 2017 Community Arts Award recipients

Nina Nelson, faculty member and former Dept. of Dance chair, was awarded the Community Medal of Arts, while Joan Herrington, Dept. of Theatre chair, earned the Arts Administrator Award. Since 1985, these awards are given out by the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo as a way to honor local arts supporters.

Dance emerita honored for advocacy

Wendy Cornish, an advocate and champion of dance for more than 50 years, including 37 years as professor and chair of dance at WMU, is the recipient of this year’s Partners in Dance Community Dance Advocacy Award. The award celebrates an individual who has demonstrated significant accomplishment in advancing and supporting dance in the greater Kalamazoo area through volunteerism, philanthropy, artistic achievement, teaching and administrative leadership.
Join us in celebrating a time for the arts at an upcoming College of Fine Arts performance or event:

**A TIME FOR THEATRE**

**Shakespeare in Love**  
Based on the screenplay by Marc Norman and Tom Stoppard  
Adapted for the stage by Lee Hall  
Oct. 5–4

**Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown**  
Book by Jeffrey Lane  
Music and lyrics by David Yazbek  
Oct. 2–Nov. 4

**The Lady in Question**  
By Charles Busch  
Featuring Sutton Lee Seymour  
Nov. 9–18

**Next Stop, Broadway!**  
Starring Broadway’s Brenda Braxton  
November 29 –December 1

wmich.edu/theatre

**A TIME FOR MUSIC**

**University Symphony Orchestra with 2018 Stulberg Silver Medalist Winner La Li, Cello**  
Sunday, Oct. 7, 3 p.m.  
Miller Auditorium

**Jazz Masters Series: Billy Hart, Drums**  
Thursday, Oct. 11, 7:30 p.m.  
Dalton Center Recital Hall

**University Symphonic Band**  
Monday, Oct. 15, 7:30 p.m.  
Miller Auditorium

**A Choral Christmas: University Chorale, Cantus Femina, Collegiate Singers**  
Saturday, Dec. 1, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.  
First Presbyterian Church, Kalamazoo

**University Symphony Orchestra: Moscow Ballet’s Great Russian Nutcracker**  
Wednesday, Dec. 5, 7 p.m.  
Miller Auditorium

**“Sounds of the Holiday Season” featuring the University Bands**  
Sunday, Dec. 9, 3 p.m.  
Miller Auditorium

**A Brass Celebration of Christmas**  
Sunday, Dec. 16, 3 p.m.  
Dalton Center Recital Hall

wmich.edu/music/events
A TIME FOR DANCE

Dancing with the WMU/Kazoo Stars
Oct. 27
Miller Auditorium

Orchesis Dance Concert
Nov. 7–11
Dalton Center, Studio B

Wisteria: A Student Collaboration
Nov. 30
Multimedia Room, WMU

In the Works with WMU Dance – Art Hop
Dec. 7
Wellspring Theatre

Fall Showcase
Dec. 8
Dalton Center, Studio B

A TIME FOR ART

On the Inside Out
Sept. 20 - Oct. 28
Albertine Monroe-Brown Gallery

Robyn O’Neil: WE, THE MASSES
Sept. 20 - Oct. 28
Netzorg and Kerr Gallery

Winter Gala Dance Concert
Jan. 25–27, 31 and Feb. 2
Williams Theatre, WMU

BFA Junior Jury Presentations
March 8
Dalton Center, Studio B

BFA Graduating Presentations
April 12–14
Dalton Center, Studio B

BA Capstones and WDP Wrap Up
April 15
Dalton Center, Studio B

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