

University of St. Thomas  
College of Arts and Sciences

# IN CONTEXT

The Programs of the Art History Department

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# Looking Ahead

This issue of the newsletter for the Art History Department, now titled *In Context*, is a shift in format that catches up with the many changes that have taken place in the department during the last couple of years and will, we hope, serve our students and the community better in the future. While we will still list events and achievements by our students, staff and faculty as before, we want to focus more on telling the stories behind their activities.

When I was an undergraduate, more years ago than I care to admit, art history classes consisted of lectures in dark halls and long slide lists that students were expected to memorize for the slide tests. When I began teaching at St. Thomas, also more years ago than I care to admit, I replicated this standard approach. Curiously, this type of art history did not match my own scholarship that focused upon context and narrative; my students memorized but did not learn the stories of the artifacts that they studied.

Over the years our curriculum has caught up with this more contextual approach. Now there is more of an emphasis on research, investigation and presentation in the form of exhibits, writing, conferences and oral reports. This more active and engaged type of learning is true not only in the upper-level courses but is now more of a feature in our revised introductory art history courses. In interviewing candidates for a tenure-track position during the College Art Association conference this February,

just how different and innovative is our introductory course became clear in the engagement of candidates with describing how they would approach teaching this course.

The opportunities for a more hands-on type of teaching have been enhanced by two large changes in the department recently. First was the creation of a chief curator position held by Shelly Nordtorp-Madson, which has now been converted into a clinical faculty position. Shelly's work provides an opportunity for majors and graduate students to work on exhibits and with curatorial duties regarding the permanent collection, and we have been able to make more use of art in the classroom as a result. The second change is the arrival of the American Museum of Asmat Art at the University of St. Thomas and the hiring of a new director, Julia Risser, who also is a clinical faculty member. Even as we figure out how to set up this collection on campus and look toward a permanent home for it in the new student center, a number of students are already involved with Julia in creating mini-exhibits of Asmat art for the campus, and it will be the focal point of two classes next year.

Overall, our students continue to be ambitious and energetic researchers, and the articles in this issue highlight some examples of their activities and stories as art historians.

This leads me to point out the importance of the new Opening Doors capital campaign for St. Thomas. Some of the proposed goals, such as endowed

faculty chairs, would provide leadership both for St. Thomas and various academic disciplines in research and publication. In particular, the School of the Arts has a great potential impact on us by providing an endowment that would support the development of the department's programs and bring them to the next level. As our students have discovered, art is a tangible connection to the people of our world and of our past, and understanding art contextually helps to bridge differences of language, religion and social systems. Some of the potential benefits from the School of the Arts would be support for student and faculty research and publication, giving them an opportunity to discover new and original material and to develop insights. An endowment also could support the development of the Asmat and permanent collection programming, including working with the community and local schools on looking at art as an expression of cultural and personal identity. The School of the Arts would provide concrete resources that would help to raise the visibility of St. Thomas, and particularly the College of Art and Sciences, in the Twin Cities and nationally. It is an exciting prospect, and one whose realization would make the kind of stories and features found in this newsletter even more commonplace. ■

Mark Stansbury-O'Donnell, Chair  
Department of Art History

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OPENING DOORS

A CAMPAIGN FOR ST. THOMAS

# “In the Beginning...” an Idea Was Created

By Justa Heinen

For those who have taken the journey across the St. Paul campus to the science hub known as south campus, the four steel women sculptures are a familiar, comforting sight that accompanies and guides people on their way to the academic buildings. This series of sculptures by Steve Jensen titled “In the Beginning... Was the Word” was first unveiled to St. Thomas in 1997, the same time as the grand opening of the monumental Owens Science Hall and O’Shaughnessy Science Hall, collectively known as the Frey Science and Engineering Center, and were first available for the growing number of science students flooding UST. This multidimensional work of art not only expresses personal development but also the progression of life over the course of many spans of time. The major underlying concept of Jensen’s piece is creation – an abstract idea expressed and, thereby, given form, or a physical state in which to mature.

As one walks along the pathway commencing at the intersection of Summit and Cretin Avenues toward the academic buildings, the first piece of sculpture encountered is a two-dimensional, flat, steel square with the abstracted image of a woman cut out of the center. The piece’s flatness and negative space implies the idea of the figure and its raw potential for development.

The subsequent three pieces are three-dimensional figures evenly spaced along the middle of the walkway, the last of which is near the entrance of the buildings. All three of the formed figures originate from the same shape as the cutout in the first piece, but they are bent and folded to form a progressively less abstract, more recognizable figure moving from the initial cutout to the final, most fully developed figure. The transition from the cutout to the first of the three-dimensional sculptures articulates the expression and manifestation of an idea; something abstract and formless transforms into a physical, recognizable form.

The two transitional figures appear rather awkward and are sometimes illogical. One foot of the second figure is directed backwards toward the cut-out, and her arms flail wildly out from her body. She may not necessarily object to the development, but



rather, may not recognize what is happening, or perhaps is hesitant of the unknown. The third figure is clearly more mature, with both feet facing forward toward her future self, and one arm is extended in front of her, palm up, in a receiving fashion. Each figure uses the form of the previous figure as a template, but is more intricately shaped with increasingly complex bends and folds in the steel to give the figure a more developed, full shape. At each step in the series, the figure is learning, growing and becoming progressively more comfortable as herself, as well as more receptive to learning.

In the final piece of the series, the woman is in a relaxed, comfortable stance reading a book, demonstrating how she has developed both physically and intellectually. Her book is open to an image of herself – the original, two-dimensional cut-out figure – exhibiting her ability to step back and reflect on her own progression.

The evolution of this woman represents the maturation and development that ensues over a period of time, both physically and intellectually. The aim of a university is to give its students the tools they need to develop into fuller human beings. The series of these four sculptures represents not only

the students on their four-year journey, but also every person’s lifelong journey of self-discovery, self-awareness, and self-reflection, which education inspires.

This concept of development expressed in Jensen’s work also can be extrapolated to a larger and less human-focused scale. Biologically speaking, the earliest life on earth was abstract and seemingly simplistic, yet it set the stage for everything that ever has and ever will be realized on earth. This initial ghost of a form provided the potential for the many diverse forms that evolved from it, while inevitably limiting the future. Everything in existence today and every life that ever existed developed from the same original life-form, the original cutout. And now we are in the modern age, the fourth figure, able to study not only the history and progression of our own humankind but also the history of life itself and its evolution since the beginning.

The progression of the woman takes the viewer on a journey through time, literally, in the process of viewing whole series and, metaphorically, through the figure’s developmental stages. In this, Jensen created a truly four-dimensional piece of art that not only expresses the progression of time but also its cyclic nature and the oscillations that take place through time. In the beginning was an idea, an abstract imprint for something physical to come. Over time it metamorphoses and in the end is the physical manifestation of that original idea – a woman in the process of creating herself, who brings the viewer back to the beginning. The figure reflects on the very idea that was the foundation for her own existence and is able to step back and consider her own development.

“In the Beginning...” is a wonderfully appropriate piece of art for a college campus where growth, development, learning and ideas brought to fruition are at the forefront of all activities. This is significant not only for the students of the university but also for every person who has grown over time and has expressed an idea. ■

Justa Heinen is a biology major with a studio arts minor.

# Worth a Closer Look:

## The Conrad Pickel Stained-Glass Collection in O'Shaughnessy-Frey Library Center

By Nicole Sirek Watson

Among the most overlooked pieces of art at St. Thomas, the stained-glass medallions adorning the windows of O'Shaughnessy-Frey Library Center are some of the finest and most unique pieces in the university's permanent art collection.

Designed and produced by the Conrad Pickel Studio of Waukesha, Wis., the medallions were commissioned by I.A. O'Shaughnessy as part of the library's \$1.6 million construction between 1958 and 1959. In his remarks during the dedication of the library, O'Shaughnessy proclaimed that students must witness everyday beauty and know how to appreciate it. He desired the medallions to be both uplifting and educational – thus, the colorful stained-glass images, made more brilliant by the passage of light, display themes of knowledge, religion, literature and history.

Great authors and characters, philosophers, Minnesota explorers, women saints, sons of St. Thomas, doctors and defenders of the church, as well as symbols of Catholicism and intellectual study, are displayed in medallions on three floors and across three sides of the building. While the medallions are plentiful in the library, their comparative size to the building, as well as their placement within larger window spans, give the images a quiet and dignified presence. As Rosemary Martin aptly explained in the earliest self-guided art tour written for the library in 1973, “the medallions have been placed with the restraint that belongs to precious things.”

The library's medallions are distinctive in their visual blend of traditional and modern styling. In the early stages of the library's architectural design, O'Shaughnessy himself insisted that the building match the neo-

Gothic style of buildings already on campus, namely Aquinas Hall and Albertus Magnus Hall (now the John R. Roach Center for the Liberal Arts). As a result, the inclusion of stained-glass medallions preserved a medieval tradition of architectural ornamentation, specifically as it was presented in churches. Many of the medallions include medieval subject matter: nature, legends, history, the church and heresies. Also, medieval stained-glass imagery is recalled in the use of bold colors, crisp outlines, and simplified, often geometric forms. For the same reasons, the medallions appear contemporary as well – an aspect that is reinforced by the sometimes overtly abstract and highly stylized forms of the images. The inclusion of modern typefaces in several of the medallions also lends a continuously contemporary feel.

*Pickel continued on Page 5*



## EXHIBITIONS AND COLLECTIONS

The Exhibition Program at UST continues to grow and expand its collaborative efforts in the arts, neighborhood and university communities. The fall exhibit and multicollege art tour set a record of over 340 attendees for “Landscapes of the Mind,” showcasing the work of four artists working in very different media and interpreting the landscape in very different ways. The winter exhibition was a joint effort with the Internationalization of Campus Committee and International Education Center, and a celebration of the 25th anniversary of study abroad programs at UST. Since 1989, the center has awarded prizes for photographs taken by students studying abroad, and these photographs were on display, chosen by art history graduate assistants, who also were crucial in mounting the show. The spring exhibition was even more dependent on graduate student participation. “Life Through the Magic Lantern: The Victorian Home” was developed in conjunction with the English

Department, which co-sponsored with art history, a symposium on this topic. Graduate assistant curators Eva Quigley and Laura Thayer worked with a guest curator, Kate McCreight, to bring the period to life in an interpretive exhibition borrowing from private and local museum collections. At the same time, collaboration with the O’Shaughnessy-Frey Library Center has resulted in a graduate assistant producing four bookmarks celebrating the library’s stained glass permanent exhibit. Summer will be the first time we will formally use our exhibition space with Dr. Julie Risser, Asmat curator, to show objects from the permanent collections, and we are looking forward to fall, when we will present “A Bridge of Sand and Clay,” a group exhibit featuring seven artists’ interpretations of stone, ceramics and glass. ■

Shelly Nordtorp-Madson, chief curator and clinical faculty

### Exhibition Calendar

- The Class of 2008: Art from the UST Child Development Center  
May 19 – June 20  
O’Shaughnessy Educational Center Lobby Gallery
- A Sense of St. Thomas: Objects from the Permanent Collection  
June 23 – Aug. 29
- Bridge of Sand and Clay  
Sept. 18 – Oct. 31
- Annual Fall Art Tour and Bridge of Sand and Clay artist reception  
Saturday, Oct. 4

All exhibitions are in the O’Shaughnessy Educational Center Lobby Gallery and are free and open to the public. For more information on exhibitions, call (651) 962-5560.

*Pickel continued from Page 4*

While written, self-guided walking tours of the medallions have been available for several years, the Art History Department, in collaboration with the library, hopes to draw more attention to this unique aspect of the building’s architecture by creating virtual and in-person tours. There are more than 95 medallions throughout O’Shaughnessy-Frey Library Center, and during National Library

Week April 13-19, the literary-themed medallions of the O’Shaughnessy Room were featured on bookmarks distributed by the library.

The O’Shaughnessy Room displays 16 medallions representing well-known characters such as Paul Bunyan, Sherlock Holmes and Alice in Wonderland, along with Shakespeare’s Falstaff and Sinclair Lewis’ Babbitt. Each medallion is a visual narrative of the story it describes, calling attention to specific symbols that illustrate

each character; for instance, King Arthur is seen with his Knights of the Roundtable and his sword, Excalibur. The medallions of the O’Shaughnessy Room pay homage to and give a lesson in literary history. You are invited to view these and all of the medallions the next time you are in the library. Their history, design and beauty are worth a closer look. ■

Nicole Sirek Watson is an ’01 graduate and current art history graduate student.

## Upcoming Exhibition Offers Training Opportunities

When three people position a fragile 20-foot-long canoe at an acute angle so they can maneuver it down a not-so-wide hall and into a classroom, one thing becomes clear: hands-on experience with works of art is exciting. Over January Term, Museum Services came to campus to move 70 Asmat art pieces from St. Thomas storage facilities to a classroom in Brady Educational Center. Room 101 in Brady provided art photographer Bob Fogt and objects handler Susan Wood with the space necessary to position and light the works properly.

The photo shoot took over three weeks to set up and complete. Images from the shoot will be used in a catalog produced by the Minneapolis Institute of Arts for the exhibition "Time and Tide: Asmat Art from New Guinea." The exhibition opens Feb. 14, 2009 and runs through the middle of June.

During the shoot, art history graduate students Barbara Manthey and Jenny Maki learned about organic material present on many of the carved pieces from the objects conservator, Kristin Cheronis. With magnifying optivisors it became clear that what appears to be ordinary dust actually consists of a wide variety of unusual debris, such as insect webbing, egg sacks, frass (insect excrement), dermestid beetle larvae and dermestid beetle casings. This organic matter will need to be removed before the MIA will let objects in the door.

At the end of March, Cheronis was on campus to train interested art history graduate students and majors on organic debris removal. Care is vital as the objects are wooden, and many are quite fragile. Complicating the situation is the fact that Asmat artists do not traditionally use a binder when applying pigments; instead, they rub the pigment onto the object's surface. This means pigment can flake off easily. Volunteers will start cleaning the objects this spring.

In addition to working on the MIA exhibition, students and staff have been busy with more routine activities. These include cataloging and inventorying all of the objects, creating a tracking system and designing exhibitions for display cases in Brady Education Center, O'Shaughnessy Educational Center and John R. Roach Center for the Liberal Arts. We also are



Barbara Manthey and Kristin Cheronis examine the base of an Asmat carving from the village of Per.

working with Information Resources and Technology specialist John Kinsella to compile the data needed to put images of the collection on our Web site and to make the collection more easily accessible to the public ([www.stthomas.edu/asmat](http://www.stthomas.edu/asmat)).

Our efforts to enhance the short-term and long-term preservation needs of the collection received a boost in February. The AMAA@UST was accepted for the Midwest Art Conservation Center's 2008 Subsidized Survey Program. Elisa Redman, who trained in the areas of disaster response and detection and safe handling of pesticides in museum collections, will be on campus for two days during the first week of June. She will evaluate storage areas, display areas and office spaces. The resulting report will help the AMAA@UST pursue future grants successfully.

As we move forward with programming and exhibitions on campus, we will be working closely with Crosier Fathers and Brothers who served in Asmat. Still in its beginning stages, the Crosier Interview Project is taking form. Once the AMAA@UST receives approval from the Internal Review Board, we will be able to conduct and record interviews with members of the Crosier order who lived and worked with the Asmat for many years. Eight Crosiers who served in Agats are now living in Onamia at the Crosier Priory. The oldest, Father Joe, turns 94 this year. We want to document as many memories as possible during 2008 and 2009. ■

Dr. Julia Risser, curator of the American Museum of Asmat Art at the University of St. Thomas

# In Search of a Sense of Place

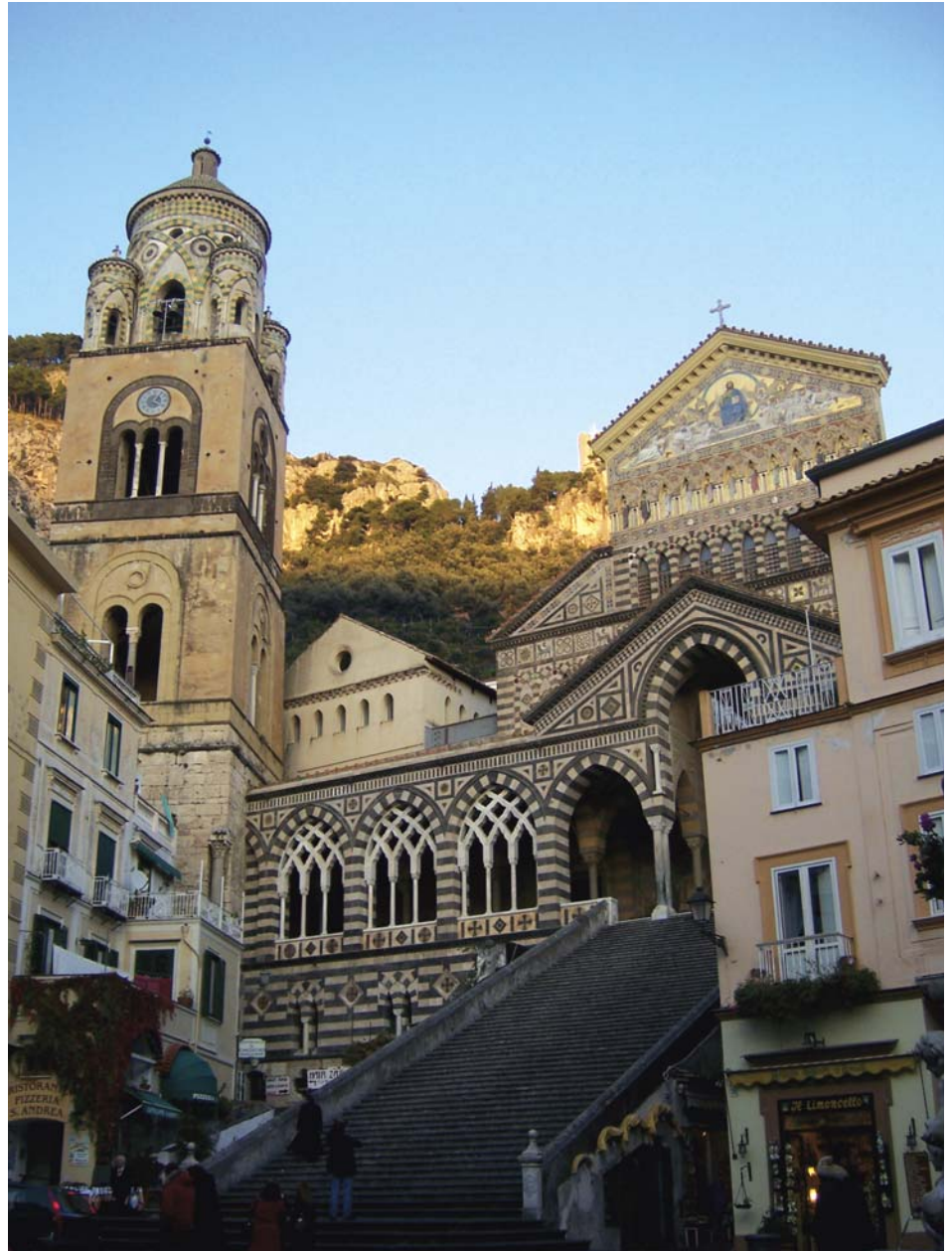
## Research and Writing in Amalfi, Italy

Laura Thayer, art history graduate student

During my first semester as a graduate student at St. Thomas in fall 2005, the Art History Department organized an exhibition titled “A Sense of Place.” The ideas explored in the exhibition – the concept of “place,” its many meanings and its importance – struck a chord in me as I struggled to understand my own place and my voice as a writer and as an art historian. I carried these questions with me as I approached each new course at St. Thomas. Slowly I began to realize that no matter what the topic, whether pilgrimage in Buddhist art or Prairie School architecture, my research questions and focus often brought me back to the idea of exploring and understanding a sense of place – that is, how art and architecture can be used to define, display or represent place.

Two years later, during a vacation with my mother on the Amalfi Coast in southern Italy, I fell in love with a place. Never before had I been so struck by an environment. As soon as I arrived in Amalfi, the namesake city of the coast, I knew at once I would return. I have been fortunate enough to visit Amalfi several times over the past year, and each time my interest in the rich cultural and artistic heritage of the area has intensified. Although I did not realize it at the time, it was during this first visit to Amalfi in spring 2007 that I had met face to face what would later become the focus of my masters qualifying paper – the Duomo, or Cathedral, of Amalfi. With its eclectic façade dating from the 19th century, beautiful bell tower from the 12th century and stunning location high above the main square of Amalfi, the Duomo makes a striking impression.

This strong first impression stuck with me, and later that year it began to develop into research questions and different approaches I could take to explore my interest in the Duomo of Amalfi. I realized that the architecture of the church, in particular the 19th-century façade, provided a perfect opportunity to explore the architectural and cultural history of Amalfi, from its beginning as a thriving maritime republic in the middle ages to its struggles during the late 19th century after the unification Italy. I



With its eclectic façade dating from the 19th century, beautiful bell tower from the 12th century and stunning location high above the main square of Amalfi, the Duomo makes a striking impression.

could see in my questions an underlying interest in understanding the city of Amalfi and how it chose to represent itself in the design of its new church façade in the 19th century. Through looking at the architecture, I hoped to catch a glimpse of Amalfi at

a significant moment in its history and understand something more about this place with which I had fallen in love.

When I first considered the Duomo of

*Place continued on Page 8*

## Research in the Canyons: Learning Native America

Miranda Enfield, art history undergraduate

In the heart of Whiteriver, Ariz., lies a gem of a building filled with artistic and cultural riches – the Catholic mission church of St. Francis on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. Four years ago I attended the church on a mission trip with twenty other youth from my home parish. I was impressed by the way Father Eddie Fronske, the church's current pastor, has taken aspects of Apache religious tradition and interwoven them with the rituals of Roman Catholicism. It was this artistic and ritual history that I decided to explore in my senior paper research.

I knew that a site visit was essential to uncover information on the building. So in early March I traveled to Arizona. I spent my first day sifting through material at the Labriola Center for Native American Studies at the Arizona State University Library. The center had two boxes of photographs taken by the church's builders, Fathers Justin Deutsch and Augustine Schwarz, several of which included their personal captions. The following day I made the four and a half hour drive from ASU to Whiteriver, where I was welcomed with open arms by Father Eddie. We talked forever, and then on a random whim he suggested that I speak with Mel and Mary, a married couple who

he assured me would be “perfect informants for your project.”

I don't even think he knew how right he was! To my surprise, Mel and Mary store the original correspondence between Father Justin Deutsch and the architect he asked to design the church, Mr. Genaro Acosta. Then, Mel surprised me with the ultimate treat: tucked away in a safe, secret location are the private journal entries written by Father Justin as he underwent the mission to build St. Francis Church. Mel allowed me to read them and take notes, but when I finished, he tucked them back into their safe. After spending nearly three hours of my day with them, I was so thankful that the Lord had directed me to this happy and wonderful couple. Their knowledge, Father Eddie's knowledge, as well as the first-hand experience I have had of this church are all leading me down an exciting path of discovery and intrigue.

My day culminated with Mass, where traditional Apache drums provided the music, and where a respected Apache mother blessed the congregation by using an eagle's wing to waft or “smudge” them with incense. As I sat in the presence of a church filled with faithful believers brought together by a very rich blending of traditional Native Apache and Christian art, my respect and appreciation for Native American culture was brought to another entirely new level. ■

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*Place continued from Page 7*

Amalfi as my qualifying paper topic, the challenges of researching a topic overseas seemed daunting. Whether it was thinking about the distance, expenses, language barrier (or the not so simple task of packing and traveling with books and research materials!), I knew this project would present challenges that working on a local site would not. Yet, I also knew the experience would both challenge and inspire me as a researcher and writer, which were two features I was looking for in my qualifying paper topic.

Yet the simple joy of climbing the stairs and placing my hands on the Duomo of Amalfi provided the inspiration I needed to overcome any of the challenges I have encountered along the way. My time researching and writing in Amalfi has resulted in new friendships, new experiences and new discoveries, all of which have become interwoven into the writing of my qualifying paper. The time I spent on site in Amalfi proved to be an invaluable opportunity for those big and little discoveries, those chance conversations, and the joy of having the time and ability to discover new build-

ings and resources to enhance my argument.

Over the last year, I have experienced how there is nothing that compares to the time spent close to or in the place you are researching and writing. This is same for a site located around the corner or around the world. Throughout the adventures of the past year, the faculty and staff of the Art History Department have been enthusiastic and supportive of my research in Amalfi. This encouragement gave me the confidence to tackle the Duomo of Amalfi as my qualifying paper topic, and the ability to pursue researching a topic and a place that truly inspires me.

## Life Through the Victorian Symposium

I knew next to nothing about planning a symposium or Victorian domestic architecture when I arrived at St. Thomas in the fall of 2007. Yet I was very excited when I learned that my art history graduate assistantship would be to plan such an event for spring 2008. “The Victorian Home” would be an interesting partnership for two programs – art history and English – that had not worked together on such an event in the past. Although I was still new to the area, having just moved from Nebraska, I was a bit leery about taking on such a big task. This all changed when I first met with the planning committee (Alexis Easley, Sue Focke, Kate McCreight, Shelly Nordtorp-Madson and Victoria Young) and the other student co-organizer, Rachel MacDonald of the English Department. Ever since our first gathering at the local campus eatery, I feel as though I’ve been on a rollercoaster ... and I’ve loved every minute of it.

The first thing I did to prepare for my position was to probe the world of Victorian

life. I surrounded myself with books about corsets, etiquette and 19th-century architecture in England and America. Little did I know how much I would be using this newfound knowledge, both in creating a tutorial CD to share with local schools as well as centering my research topic for a graduate seminar on this era.

Research wasn’t the only task to be completed. Rachel and I dealt with promotional materials, getting a call for papers out to colleagues and students catering needs, organizing a schedule and securing rooms, designing promotional materials and contacting local institutions about getting involved. Because I didn’t see everyone involved on a daily basis, correspondence was central in the development of this symposium. I wouldn’t be surprised to find out that at least half of the e-mails in my mailbox concern “The Victorian Home.” My favorite task was working on the promotional materials. I felt as though I put my undergraduate studio art major to use by drawing the logo for both the symposium and



the corresponding Victorian exhibition, “Life through the Magic Lantern.”

For anyone planning a symposium, I have one bit of advice – stay organized. Also, whatever time that you thought you would spend on this type of event, double it; there are always twists and turns that will take you by surprise. It was a memorable rollercoaster ride ... it helps to work and be guided by some amazing people. I can’t wait to ride another. ■

Mary Springer, art history graduate student

## Artistic Domesticity – Frank Gehry’s Winton Guest House is Coming to St. Thomas!

By Victoria Young, associate professor of modern architecture and the allied arts

Did you ever receive an entire house as a gift? Well, if you are in anyway associated with St. Thomas, consider changing your answer to ‘yes’! This past February, developer Kirt Woodhouse donated the Frank Gehry-designed Winton guest house to the University of St. Thomas. Gehry, one of the world’s most notable architects, completed the structure in 1987 for Mike and Peggy Winton to supplement a Philip Johnson-designed main house on their estate in Wayzata. This new structure would provide space when their growing family visited. It was the grandchildren they had in mind with this design. This is immediately apparent in the building from the kid-height light switches to the tree-house-like sleeping loft. Each room of the house is a unique shape, from the pyramidal living room tower to the wedge-shaped bedroom. It must have been a fun place for the Winton children. And now many, including myself and my students, will get to enjoy this special place.

The house has received lots of attention from the architectural community and beyond. In March Jim Winterer from University Relations and I met KSTP-TV reporter Joe Mazan at the house to discuss its significance and how it will be moved from Wayzata to the Gainey Center in Owatonna. Each room will be broken into separate pieces (and the towers will come off, too) and shipped to

Gainey. It will be a sight to see! (You can check out the segment at: <http://kstp.com/article/stories/S368593.shtml>).

Getting a “Gehry” is a real architectural feather in our cap! Back when the house was completed, Gehry was not yet the household name he is today, recognized for designing the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain (1997) and the Weisman Art Museum in Minneapolis (1993, and by the way, he’ll be back doing an addition at the Weisman in the coming year). In a March 20, 2008 article in USA Today, Gehry said about the house “I still think it’s great. I’m very proud of it.” Woodhouse shares this pride with his philosophy that modern art should be viewed in many different ways – from the canvas to the building. The donation of this house will provide students with the opportunity to think about the artistic nature of domestic architecture. Is it livable? Should it be? ■



## DEPARTMENT NEWS

**CRAIG ELIASON** was granted tenure by the university in February and will be promoted to associate professor, effective Sept. 1.

St. Thomas hosted the sixth annual ACTC Art History Faculty Symposium on March 1. **CRAIG ELIASON** presented his research, "Equivocally Modern Letters: Gill Sans and the Origins of the Humanist Sans Serif."

Our dear friend **JIM DUFFEY** passed away in January. He and his lovely wife, Maureen, have generously shared many of their works of art collected over years of travel with our department. He was a true patron of the arts and will be deeply missed.

**TREDEN WAGONER**, coordinator of education technology programs at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, facilitated the February Résumé and CV Workshop for art history graduate students and alumni. Sponsored by the Art History Department, the well-received workshop focused on résumé and CV formats – custom tailoring each – references, cover letters, job finding strategies, networking, informational interviews and more.

Independent objects conservator **KRISTIN CHERONIS** facilitated a conservation workshop in late March, teaching graduate students how to remove organic debris from Asmat sculpture. The objects have been selected for an exhibition, which opens Feb. 2009 at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and must be cleaned prior to entering the MIA. The workshop provided students with the opportunity to get actual experience handling art as well as learn about conservation issues.

The New Approaches to Vase Painting Lecture Series finished up this spring semester with two talks on campus. In February, **ANN STEINER**, Shirley Watkins Steinman Professor of Classics and provost at Franklin and Marshall College, presented "How to Read a Vase." **SUSAN LANGDON**, associate professor and director of graduate studies in the Department of Art History and Archaeology, University of Missouri, lectured in April on "The Telltale Hearth: Geometric Pottery and the Greek Family." The Art History Department at St. Thomas

and the Department of Classical and Near Eastern Studies at the University of Minnesota sponsored this four-part series. **ALAN SHAPIRO**, W.H. Collins Vickers Professor of Archaeology, The Johns Hopkins University, and **MARK STANSBURY-O'DONNELL**, professor and chair of our department, gave the two fall lectures.

## FACULTY

**CRAIG ELIASON** continues preparations for the exhibition he is curating, "Face the Nation: How National Identity Shaped Modern Typeface Design, 1900-1960." The exhibition, which grew out of a spring 2007 graduate seminar he led, will run from July 12 to Sept. 20 at the Minnesota Center for Books Arts in Minneapolis. In March, he led a discussion on an art exhibition at Olivet Congregational Church in St. Paul.

**HEATHER SHIREY** traveled to Dallas in February, where she co-chaired a session at CAA for the Arts Council of the African Studies Association, an affiliated group. She presented a paper titled "Defining the Diaspora in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil" on this panel. Heather is on the parent advisory board at the Walker Art Center.

**MARK STANSBURY-O'DONNELL** presented a paper, "Structural Analysis and Semiotics as Approaches to Defining the Comic Image," at Bildkonzepte in der Hermeneutik griechischer Vasenmalerei, a colloquium held April 9-11 in Munich and organized by the Bavarian Academy of Sciences. He taught two classes at the MIA in January: "Big Ideas in Greek Art" and "Big Ideas in Practice."

## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

A record number of graduates (nine) presented their research papers at the 2008 Art History Undergraduate Senior Research Symposium on May 2. A reception for family and friends followed the presentations. Congratulations and good luck to the class of 2008.

## JADE C. CREPPS

*Graffiti: From Anonymous to YouTube. Comparative Study*

Shelly Nordtorp-Madson, faculty advisor

## MIRANDA R. ENFIELD

*Apache Religious and Christian Art: A Study of the Cultural Blending of Native America and Traditional Catholicism*  
Victoria Young, faculty advisor

## RACHEL E. HOFFMAN

*When is a Buddha not a Buddha?: Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain Devotional Sculptures in India*  
Mark Stansbury-O'Donnell, faculty advisor

## AMIE E. KIEFFER

*Graeme Base: Harmonizing Image and Text*  
Mark Stansbury-O'Donnell, faculty advisor

## DOMINIQUE M. PIRON

*British Architecture in India: Legitimizing Rule*  
Victoria Young, faculty advisor

## SUSANNAH Q. PIPER

*"Whoa!" Why the Art of Doug Fishbone is So Shocking*  
Craig Eliason, faculty advisor

## ALEXANDER O. SCHUSTER

*Asmat Shields: Issues in Collection and Display*  
Julia Risser, faculty advisor

## ANGELA R. TAFFE

*St. Gabriel's Passionist Parish: The Manifestation of Eco-Theology*  
Victoria Young, faculty advisor

## JI-YUE ZHANG

*The New Age Museums: A Comparative Look at the Efforts of the MIA and the Musée d'Orsay to Become More Visitor Friendly*  
Craig Eliason, faculty advisor

Congratulations to our students who graduated with honors. **MIRANDA ENFIELD**, **JOSHUA HAINY** and **SUSANNAH PIPER** received magna cum laude honors, and **AMIE KIEFFER**, **DOMINIQUE PIRON** and **CATHERINE ROHRMAN** received cum laude honors.

Double major (art history and studio arts) **AMIE KIEFFER'S** senior show, Get to the HeART at the College of St. Catherine, included her portfolio of two-dimensional paintings and drawings.

We welcome the following students to our undergraduate program: majors **MARISSA ELLINGSON**, **AMANDA LAYER** and **HEATHER NOLDEN**; minors **JENNIFER DELLWO** and **CAITLIN DOLAN**; fashion merchandising majors **JUSTINE VATH** and **LAURA FREDERICK**; apparel design major **LAURA WIERING**; and fashion design/merchandising major **ARIEL BOCK**.

Studying abroad this semester are **ANASTASIA ALBERT** (Barcelona, Spain) and **LAURA EATON** (Tanzania). **AMANDA GRIFFITH** (Seville) is spending one year abroad. **SUZY PIPER** spent J-Term in South Africa taking Culture and Communication in Post-Apartheid South Africa.

Art Attack, the student art club, had another great year under the leadership of co-chairs **SUZY PIPER** and **RACHEL HOFFMAN**. This semester the students attended the Arts of Japan exhibit at the MIA and went out for sushi afterwards. With funds raised from a bake sale, the group purchased and delivered art supplies for Free Arts Minnesota.

**NATHANIEL WUNROW** interned with the Yinghau Academy Library in St. Paul and cataloged, processed and organized materials for its K-4 patrons. Nathan works in Media Resources in the O'Shaughnessy-Frey Library Center along with **DOMINIQUE PIRON**.

**RACHEL HOFFMAN** attended the Harvard Model UN Conference held in Boston.

Our fabulous work-study students **SUZY PIPER** and **JOSH HAINY** will be heading off to graduate school next fall. We thank them for all their help (and laughs) and wish them all the best. Suzy will be working on a M.A. in cultural production at Brandeis University. Josh will be studying the classics at either the University of Colorado at Boulder or the University of Oregon.

## UNDERGRADUATE ALUMNI

**JILL DEEDRICK KEENAN '01** is living with her husband in Bristol and works for the Arts and Humanities Research Council (similar to the National Endowment for the Arts).

**LINDSEY KING '04** is living in Brooklyn, N.Y., taking art history courses and working for an art appraisal firm.

**EMILY DOWD '06** has been accepted into the Arts Journalism Program at the University of Chicago. After an August wedding to Ryan Reichenbach '06, they will relocate to Chicago. We wish them both the best.

**INGA HAKANSON '06** is the assistant curator in the College of Design Digital Collections and Archives at the University of Minnesota.

## GRADUATE STUDENTS

### GRAD REP COLUMN

#### TIME OUT

By all accounts it has been a busy year in the Art History Department. We all know how the pace of life and the demands of a busy academic schedule can so easily become overwhelming.

As this semester marks the end of my time here as a graduate student in the Art History Department, I am reminded of all the good times over the past two and a half years – those great class discussions, the challenging readings and deadlines, the excitement and tension of working on new research projects each semester. But I also remember all of the rewarding time spent outside of class, and I am reminded during this busy semester of the value of stopping, reflecting and appreciating this sometimes chaotic moment of our lives. I see now the value of not only the time I have spent in classes but also the relationships that have developed. While I will take all that I have learned at St. Thomas with me, it is my relationships with fellow classmates and the faculty of the department that will continue to grow.

Although the pace of life here may be demanding, don't forget to take time out to socialize and enjoy all of the opportunities the Art History Department offers. I look forward to seeing everyone at the events this semester, especially the Graduate Forum in May. A hearty thank you to everyone in the department and to all of my colleagues for making my time here such an incredible learning experience!

Your Grad Rep,  
Laura Thayer  
llthayer@stthomas.edu

### GRADUATE STUDENT NOTES

The **ART HISTORY GRADUATE STUDENT FORUM** and reception will be held at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 8, in O'Shaughnessy Educational Center auditorium. Spring 2008 graduates presenting their research:

#### NATALIE STANTON

*Colum Cille and the National Identity in the Irish Free State*

Craig Eliason, faculty advisor

#### LAURA THAYER

*Rebuilding Identity: The Nineteenth-Century Façade of the Duomo of Amalfi*

Victoria Young, faculty advisor

#### NICOLE WATSON

*Marion Alice Parker: Pioneering Woman Architect and the Progressive Prairie School*

Jennifer Komar Olivarez, faculty advisor

**LAURA THAYER** chaired the panel, Victorian Designs: The Visual Arts at Home, at the April Victorian Home Symposium at UST. Panel presentations included **MARY SPRINGER**, "Pulling Back the Covers: A Study of the Middle-Class Master Bedroom in Victorian England," **JOANNA REILING LINDLELL**, "Walter Crane and the Victorian Home: Progressivism and Design in 'Toy-Books,' Calling Cards, Wallpapers, and Home Décor," and **MELISSA AHO**, "Hill Stations to Houseboats: Victorian House Hunting in India."

**LORI TALCOTT** has been teaching as a guest lecturer over the winter and spring quarters at the University of Washington while back home in Seattle. She also gave a guest lecture, "Medieval Jewelry as Ritual Object and Social Signifier," in late February at the University of Oregon.

**MELISSA AHO** had her book review of Shelagh Vainker's "Chinese Silk: A Cultural History," published in the February issue of Art History.

**EVA QUIGLEY** is interning with curator Jennifer Komar Olivarez in the Department of Architecture, Design, Decorative Arts, Craft and Sculpture at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. She assisted with the show "Multiple Personalities: Figural Sculpture and

## DEPARTMENT NEWS

Contemporary Craft,” on view now in galleries 277 and 278. Throughout the summer, she will be working on the exhibition “Eero Saarinen: Shaping the Future,” a joint venture between the MIA and the Walker Art Center that opens at both venues in September.

**JAMES WEHN** is currently working as an intern with the Thrivent Financial Collection of Religious Art. Projects include the development of a collection management database, research for a catalog of the collection and partnering with collection curator **JOANNA REILING LINDELL** to curate an exhibition this summer.

**PAIGE DANSINGER** served as co-curator (along with Cori Wegener of the MIA) for “Hiddur Mitzvah: Aesthetics in Jewish Ritual Art,” an exhibition on display through May 11 at the Harold and Mickey Smith Gallery for Arts and Culture at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts.

In January, **KENDALL LARSON** traveled to Harrisonburg, Va., to interview Maynard Weber, son of American artist Max Weber (1881-1961). This oral history is a project to both explore and document the histories of Winona State University (Weber is a WSU alumnus) and his perceptions of his father, Max Weber.

**BARBARA MANTHEY** is a spring intern with the Art is Bloom annual fundraiser, an event

sponsored by the Friends of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and dedicated to helping all children gain access to art.

### GRADUATE ALUMNI

#### ALUMNI REP COLUMN

##### HELLO ALUMNI!

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Kelly will take over as coordinator of the alumni group beginning fall 2008. This means that we are now looking for a new vice coordinator! The vice-coordinator position is for one year and then rolls over into the coordinator position for an additional year. If you are interested or have any questions, please send us an email.

Following our alumni dinner in April, we are planning a walking architectural tour of downtown Minneapolis in May. Watch your email for more information.

We look forward to seeing you this spring!  
Robin Walser and Kelly Denzer  
ustarthistorymasters@gmail.com

*Our group provides support for current students and serves as a personalized community for graduates of the Masters Program in Art History.*

#### GRADUATE ALUMNI NOTES

Congratulations to **JENNIFER ADAM '06** and husband Wally Swanson on the birth of their son, Jorgen Alrik Adam Swanson, born Jan. 21.

Congratulations to **SARAH CAMPBELL '06** and husband Chris on the birth of their daughter, Samantha Elizabeth Campbell, born March 2.

**KATE MCCREIGHT '07** is teaching Intro to Art History at UST and Modern Art at Augsburg College this spring. She also was the guest curator for the Victorian Home exhibit and a respondent for one of the symposium panels.

**BEVERLY HEDIN '04** has been promoted to associate designer at Gabbert's.

**EMILY KOLLER '07** has had her proposal “Chasing the Mystique: Neon on Route 66” accepted for the fall 2008 National Preservation Conference in Tulsa, Okla. She is teaching art history this spring at the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University.

**KELLY DENZER '02** is teaching an art history survey course at St. Kate's this spring. Her review of George Everett Shaw's Art of the Ancestors: Antique North American Indian Art will be published in the summer 2008 Pioneer American Society: Transactions.

**MOLLY SKJEI '06** has been appointed unlimited full-time professor of art history and gallery director at Normandale Community College.



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