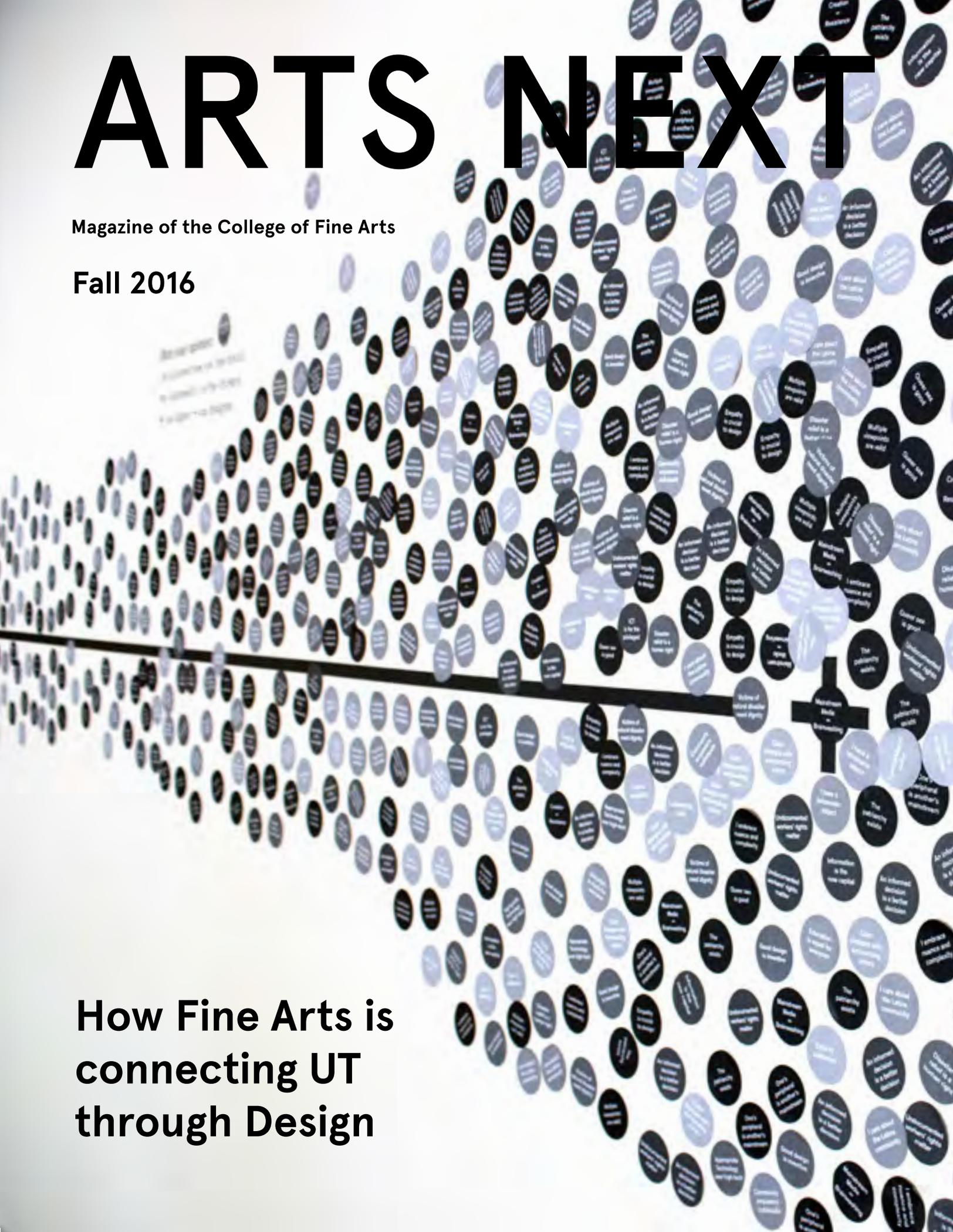


ARTS NEXT

Magazine of the College of Fine Arts

Fall 2016

How Fine Arts is
connecting UT
through Design



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ABOUT THE COVER: Installation view of *Stick Your Opinion*, a collaborative work displayed in the 2016 M.F.A. in Design thesis exhibition *Peripherals* at the Visual Arts Center, The University of Texas at Austin. Photo by Sandy Carson.

This interactive installation piece by M.F.A. in Design students Jesse Cline, Seo Joon Lee, Shrankhla Narya, Angelica Sibrian, and Diana Witcher (working under the supervision of Assistant Professor Jiwon Park) asked viewers to read a series of provocative assertions that were printed on stickers. Viewers could then place their stickers on a wall graph to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statements. Both the candidates' works and the statements on the stickers addressed issues that mainstream culture still deems peripheral or marginal, but that the candidates and many viewers found significant.

DEAN'S LETTER



**Doug
Dempster**

We are a college of "fine arts."

What does that include? Music, drama, dance, painting, sculpture. But not all dance, art or music. Western classical or "art music," but not Indian classical music. Modern "concert" dance, but not tap or hip-hop. Painting and sculpture, but not medical illustration or graphic novels. And not film, architecture or fashion design.

We're clearly straining against the boundaries of what was confidently accepted as a "fine art" when the college was founded 80 years ago. Jazz, modern dance and design, though still small programs, now have a well-established place in the college.

We're also as a college making a place for the commercial arts: gaming, design in all its many industry applications, integrated media and music and sound technologies.

We've forgotten that the concept of "fine art"—art as an elevated, aesthetic object—is an invention of 18th- and 19th-century Romantics. The concept forged a distinction between the visionary poet, painter and composer—"artists"—in contrast with orators, furniture makers, instrumentalists—artisans and entertainers.

Who are we today, and what should we be as a college? What art forms and activities should we include? What does it mean to be a "fine art" in the 21st century? Or is that now a distinction without a difference?

More importantly, what do our students need us to be for their benefit? What does our larger society and economy need from us as a public arts college? What can an arts college provide in a large, comprehensive university that other colleges won't?

The College of Fine Arts has been, and will continue to be, the college of what's great in the most refined tradition of Eurocentric "fine arts." We have a vital preservationist role in studying the canonical works and artists of our culture and transmitting them to the next generation. We do this extremely well.

But we also are and must be the college of what's next in both high and popular culture. What's next in the high culture firmament often appears first as a fleeting youthful fashion or a calculated commercial venture or an obscure technical innovation. Most of these brief cultural lights flicker out in due course, but some—opera, photography and film, for example—permanently change our collective cultural identity.

There are no crystal balls to predict our cultural future. But we know for a certainty that our students will live in world in which cultural progress is more globalized, faster paced and decentralized. It's our role as an arts college to remain engaged and relevant to that new culture and the future of our students, whether "fine" or not. We need to be, for the University of Texas, on the creative cutting edge of cultural invention, the experimental driver of creative making and not just an archive of celebrated accomplishments.

So please, enjoy this extended look into the college and explore some of the many ways we are "Designing the College of What's Next" and evolving and adapting to prepare and educate fine arts students for a modern world.

Excelsior!



College launches two new majors and two new minors

The College of Fine Arts has added two new undergraduate majors and two new minors to enhance educational opportunities for students at The University of Texas at Austin.

Bachelor of Science in Arts and Entertainment Technologies

Arts and Entertainment Technologies (AET) is the first Bachelor of Science degree offered by the College of Fine Arts. This interdisciplinary major merges creative expression with technological innovation. AET foundational courses deliver creative coding fundamentals, an introduction to a wide range of production software and a colloquium series of guest speakers. Students advance to projects-based coursework drawn from three emphasis areas: Music and Sound, Game and Mobile Media Applications (GAMMA) and New Performance Technologies.

Bachelor of Arts in Design

The new B.A. in Design, which complements the existing B.F.A. in Design, is an excellent choice for students who prefer the flexibility and breadth of a liberal arts degree or who are interested in pursuing a simultaneous major in a complementary area. It also is more accommodating for transfer students.

Minor in Arts Management and Administration

The new minor in Arts Management and Administration introduces students to careers in for-profit and nonprofit arts enterprises, helps them develop skills critical for arts management across all disciplines and enables them to build career contacts through internship experience. The minor combines coursework from the College of Fine Arts and the McCombs School of Business.

Minor in Art History

The minor in Art History gives students interested in this field more flexibility to pursue art history studies as an interdisciplinary interest while completing majors in other fields.

Austin elementary school named after professor who founded UT photography program

An elementary school in Central Austin was recently renamed Russell Lee Elementary School to honor the famed photographer and founding professor of the photography program in what was then the Art Department in 1965.

Lee (1903–1986) was a social documentarian and artist best known for his documentary photography for the U.S. Farm Security Administration between 1936 and 1942. He worked for the U.S. Army's Air Transport Command during World War II and later with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Survey of Health and Mine Safety in the mid-1940s.

Lee moved to Austin in 1947 and continued to work for such clients as Standard Oil of New Jersey and the Texas Observer. He captured photos of many Texas luminaries, including John Henry Faulk, Ralph Yarborough, Creekmore Fath, Maury Maverick Jr. and Hart Stilwell.

In 1961, Lee was offered an appointment to the faculty of the Art Department, and over the next eight years, he developed the first photography program and taught hundreds of students. Lee's archive resides at UT's Briscoe Center for American History.

In 2011, a group of Lee's students and friends started a scholarship fund named in honor of Russell Lee. The Creekmore and Adele Fath Foundation has contributed \$500,000 toward the Russell Lee Endowed Presidential Scholarship in Photography in honor of their long-standing friendship with Lee. Since its inception, the scholarship fund has supported more than 15 undergraduate and graduate students.

College working to implement strategic plan for diversity

The College of Fine Arts is in the process of implementing the goals and objectives laid out in the five-year strategic plan for diversity. College of Fine Arts Dean Doug Dempster formed a task force in 2012 to address issues of diversity in the college. After a two-year planning and research process, the committee shared its strategic plan for 2014–2019. As of spring 2016, the committee can report progress in the following areas:

- All departments and programs are being asked to set and work toward explicit goals for improving diversity in student admissions and enrollment.

- All faculty search committees now have one faculty member designated as a diversity advocate charged with ensuring a search surfaces a diverse pool of applicants.
- The college has partnered with the UT Division of Diversity and Community Engagement to offer workshops to all COFA teaching assistants on "Inclusive Classrooms." The college hopes to expand the opportunity to interested faculty in the future.
- The committee has launched a Guest Artist Initiative that provides supplementary funding for visiting artists and scholars who might expand our understanding as a college community of under-represented cultures and viewpoints.
- The college has surveyed the availability of all-gender restrooms in our facilities and has added an additional all-gender facility in the Doty Fine Arts Building.
- All departments are establishing internal working groups, intersecting with the Fine Arts Diversity Committee, to review and establish guidelines and principles for diversity and inclusion within core academic curriculum and creative programming.

VAC receives NEA grant to support fall exhibition

The Visual Arts Center (VAC) has been awarded a \$45,000 grant to support a multi-part exhibition by Mexico City-based artist Victor Pérez-Rul curated by Leslie Moody Castro (M.A., Art Education, 2010).

The VAC has partnered with UT's Center for Latin American Visual Studies (CLAVIS) and Energy Institute, as well as the Mexican American Cultural Center for a project that explores the human consciousness of energy systems. In early fall, Pérez-Rul collaborated with participants in art, physics, engineering, architecture and design to create an installation that recycles solar power into kinetic and sonic energy to power an immersive and interactive environment within the VAC. In addition to the VAC installation, maquettes of the artist's related work with solar-powered pods that emit sound and light at night are on exhibition on the outdoor plaza of Austin's Mexican American Cultural Center. Both installations are on view through Dec. 10, and Moody Castro will be documenting the exhibition's open lab and inventions with a catalog and website.

1. A student showcases her skills at the Center for Arts and Entertainment Technologies launch party. Photo by Lawrence Peart.
 2. Russell Lee. *Men bargaining at market, Catania, Sicily*, 1960. Image courtesy of Briscoe Center for American History.
 3. Charlotte Canning, Orni Osun Joni Jones, Gabrielle Randle, Rashida K. Braggs, visiting performing artist Stew, Mark Anthony Neal, and Lisa B. Thompson. Courtesy photo.
 4. Victor Pérez-Rul, *Cristal 04a*, 2014, unusual potassium sodium tartrate crystals, solar powered hardware, 10 x 12 cm

Thinking Design

Campus collaborations bring design to the forefront of college initiatives

By Rose L. Thayer



A 2014 study by the Design Management Institute reveals that over the last 10 years, design-led companies have maintained a significant stock market advantage, outperforming the S&P by an extraordinary 219 percent. Business leaders now recognize that designers can contribute a lot more than sharp graphics and aesthetically pleasing products. The research and creative methods that designers use, commonly called design thinking, offers a framework for teams from across many disciplines to solve complex, systematic problems.

As design claims a seat at the table in industries such as business, health care, computer science and customer service, the College of Fine Arts expects to double or triple enrollment in the Department of Art and Art History's undergraduate design programs over the next three to five years. The Design Division has also expanded its non-major course offerings to introduce more UT students to both design thinking methodology and the fundamentals of visual design.

The design program's expansion coincides with three new college initiatives that foster collaboration with partners across campus. The year-old Design Institute for Health, a joint venture with the Dell Medical School, is using design methodology to revolutionize the way health care is delivered. The newly launched Center for Integrated Design brings together faculty and administrators from seven colleges and programs at UT to foster opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning and collaboration through of design thinking. And a newly approved B.A. in design degree plan will allow more students to pursue a double-major in design to better prepare students for employment in a diverse and rapidly changing career field.

"Design to most people means an artifact," said Doreen Lorenzo, who joined the college to lead the new center. "Today design has taken on a larger meaning. We are moving more toward the methodology—sometimes referred to as design thinking—that's always been in the design world to create products, services and reinvent systems."

Formerly the president of global design firms of Frog and Quirky, Lorenzo is bringing her renowned leadership and industry connections into academia. She said the hallmark of the program is bringing in industry professionals to meet with and teach students. This fall's "Introduction to Design Thinking" course is taught by Frog's executive director of design research, Jon Freach.

"We are working across all schools in the university to work together and collaborate to solve the problems," she said, adding that the college is working to build a Bridging Disciplines Program certificate in integrated design open to all UT students. "Nobody is doing what we're doing here on this scale. I believe we can change the dynamics of the industry because we have so many talented students here."

DESIGN IS EVERYWHERE

To describe the changes in industry, Lorenzo's former colleague Mark Rolston, who founded Austin-based Argodesign, uses an example found in most households—a clock radio.

In the past, a designer would create an object with knobs and a sleek user interface. In today's design challenge, the clock radio is no longer a tabletop item, but a voice-controlled, invisible piece of technology, Rolston said.

"The design problem has evolved from creating beautiful things to defining behavior and social engagement within a computing framework," he said. "The problem is less about physical or visual design. It is now about engagement. It really complicates the challenge, but it's also terribly exciting."

Rolston spent years working with Lorenzo at Frog and said it is exciting to see someone so well-connected and respected in the industry join a university to help fill the gap between industry and higher education. When hiring designers fresh from graduation, he said he looks for people who can express their thinking through their work, as well as at least one useful talent that can be put to good use.

"For example, if a young designer can render beautiful screens or create smart wireframes, then they are more immediately useful. From that standpoint, they can learn to think strategically over time and begin to weigh in more deeply on the work. That's where work ethic and humility come in," he said. "Critical thinking and problem solving become priceless as they grow beyond those basic skills."

Campus partners for the Center for Integrated Design:

- College of Fine Arts
- Cockrell School of Engineering
- McCombs School of Business
- School of Architecture
- School of Information
- Computer Science



Alija Sule (right), Design graduate student, discusses coursework with Kate Catterall, associate professor in Design. Courtesy photo.

IMPROVING HEALTH CARE THROUGH DESIGN

The Design Institute for Health is taking design thinking into the complex realm of health care with the goal of designing each and every moment of patient-system interaction, said Lucas Artusi, a systems designer at the institute. The end goal is to apply human-centered design to every interaction from the moment a person makes an appointment through the duration of treatment.

“There are so many ways to create value and to make a patient feel seen and heard and taken care of,” he said. “Other industries do this already.”

The ambulatory surgical center set to open late next year in the UT Health Transformation Building will not have a waiting room. Instead, Artusi said patients will check in and go directly to their room, and that is their room for the entirety of their stay. Not only can family members stay in the room while the patient is in surgery, but all clinical and administrative staff come to the patient. Other systems they are currently redesigning include reimbursement, nursing staff organization and delivery of specialty care.

“There are so many ways to create value and for the patient to be seen and heard and taken care of,” Artusi said.

What excites him the most about this work is that the designers get to see it through. Typically, a design firm would present ideas and then a health care provider would determine what to implement of the plan and how. The Design Institute for Health will help the Dell Medical School execute on this new vision for healthcare at every step along the way.

“I like to think that whatever we create might not be the model, but it will be a model,” he said. “I’m also excited to see an institution the size of UT have the courage to invest heavily in all of this.”

MORE OPTIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATES

Undergraduates have the chance this semester to enroll in the new B.A. in design degree plan, which offers more flexibility in the curriculum than the existing B.F.A. in design. To encourage undergraduates to take full advantage of the wealth of business, computer science, engineering, architecture, advertising, textiles and apparel, and other design-related courses offered at UT, both the newly revamped B.F.A. degree and the new B.A. degree offer more flexibility than traditional design curricula do.

Students in both the B.F.A. and B.A. degree plans will now more easily be able to double major, study abroad and choose from a variety of design “supportive classes,” said Carma Gorman, head of the design division. Students who are interested in ethnographic research can take anthropology classes; those looking to improve their data visualization skills can take statistics; those interested in designing apps can take courses in computer science or from the School of Information.

“The new menu of supportive courses gives students the flexibility to take classes in other departments that overlap with their interests in design. What’s especially great is that taking those courses means students learn to see problems from new disciplinary perspectives. They also get used to interpreting and using the specialized lingo used by people in different fields, which is great practice for professional life,” Gorman said.

Gorman expects students to graduate from the undergraduate programs not only with excellent “making” skills, but also with traditional liberal arts skills such as thinking critically, writing clearly, making persuasive pitches, doing solid research and communicating effectively with others.

Gorman is particularly pleased that both degree programs now make it feasible for design majors to study abroad. “Living in another part of the world for a few months gives you a really different perspective on the world, and on design, too,” Gorman said. ■

New Director of Professional Programs helps prepare students for life after college



Karen Munnely

Karen Munnely joined the College of Fine Arts in May as the Director of Professional Programs. She worked most recently at the University of Kentucky, where she taught courses in arts administration. She received her B.M. in Flute Performance from the University of South Florida, an M.A. in Arts Administration from Florida State University and is on track to receive her Ph.D. in Arts Administration, Education and Policy from Ohio State University by the end of the year. Her research focuses on both the career and degree expectations of undergraduate music majors. She’s also worked at the Aspen Music Festival & School and the National Repertory Orchestra in Breckenridge, Colorado.

Your career has included an interesting mix of teaching and academic research alongside hands-on work in arts administration. Can you tell us more about your career path and how it led you to your new position as Director of Professional Programs in UT’s College of Fine Arts?

As an arts administrator, I worked primarily with classical music festivals, so I had a lot of interaction with students. While I was at the Aspen Music Festival & School, I was responsible for hiring and supervising a large seasonal staff. Many of the people I hired were students studying arts administration. I really enjoyed the mentoring role of working with students, and this led me to return to school for a Ph.D. with the goal of eventually teaching. Both my experience working with students in internship positions and also working with the music students enrolled in the festival inspired my interest in career development. When I saw this opportunity at UT, I was teaching in the Arts Administration Program at the University of Kentucky, and while I absolutely loved my job, I also missed some of the administrative aspects of arts administration. I was really excited to find a position that focused on career development and involved both teaching and administrative work.

Your position of Director of Professional Programs is a new one for the college. Can you talk about the scope of what you’ll be addressing in your new role?

Part of my position is overseeing Fine Arts Career Services (FACS), which has existed for many years. My hope with FACS is to grow the number of programs we offer, so we can reach more students. One of my other goals is to establish a larger internship program. I would love to see more fine arts students participating in internships. Austin has a really amazing creative economy and there are many out of the box opportunities here. Part of my role is to connect the college with entities on and off campus.

What do you see as the biggest challenges facing students coming out of fine arts programs today?

As artists, our identity is often very strongly tied to our art. Many of us started practicing our art discipline as young children and have identified as a trumpet player, painter or dancer, etc., since we were very young. For students, I think it can sometimes be a challenge to broaden this identity and to think bigger picture. Careers in the arts don’t always look like they do in school. Graduates suddenly have to find their own opportunities to create art and to perform, as opposed to having existing opportunities. This can be a difficult transition, which is one of the reasons Fine Arts Career Services offers support to both students and alumni.

What are the biggest benefits of an arts education? Do you see a competitive advantage that students with a fine arts background have over non-arts majors?

Fine arts students are passionate. I don’t think you can be an artist without a strong passion for what you do. The dedication of fine arts students is something I am constantly impressed by, and it is a trait that will serve students well. The arts also encourage creative thinking. When I hired people in Aspen, above anything else, I looked for people who had the ability to think creatively and solve problems. There will always be problems, so people who can think outside the box and be solution-oriented will always be needed. I believe the arts encourage this type of thinking. ■

All in the Family

Dance program provides support, opportunity to students

By Alicia Dietrich

When Johnny Chatman II visited UT as a high school student, he was struck by how Associate Professor of Dance David Justin treated him during a tour of the Department of Theatre and Dance.

“He just seemed more interested in me as a person than me as a dancer, and for me, at that time, that was important,” said Chatman (B.F.A., Dance, 2016). “One of the things I remember him saying was that ‘We’re a small program, but we’re a mighty program. We’re just a big family here.’”

The theme of family emerges often among members of the Dance program. It’s a relatively small program—about 75 students pursuing a B.F.A. in Dance—and an intimate place where everyone knows your name, classmates look out for one another and offer encouragement and professors nurture students into adulthood.

“I don’t know of another dance program that is as tight, as loving, as caring as we are. I believe that stems from the faculty’s love for us and the immense diversity of dancers we have here,” said Aminah Maddox (B.F.A., Dance, 2016).

Under the leadership of Associate Professor Charles O. Anderson, the Dance program has moved in new directions to attract more diverse students and guest artists and to expand the types of dance students are exposed to in their four years here. Anderson joined the faculty in 2011 as an associate professor of African Diasporic and Contemporary Dance and became head of the program in 2015.

Anderson oversees one of the most diverse programs in the College of Fine Arts—more than half of last year’s cohort were non-white students, and the faculty also has successfully worked to recruit more male dancers to the program by taking a page out of football’s playbook and heading out on the road to scout and recruit talent.

Johnny Chatman and Gianina Casale perform in “Eternalism,” choreographed by Gianina Casale, as part of *Bodies & Souls* in 2016. Photo by Lawrence Peart.

During Anderson’s time in the program, the faculty has worked to build on the classical traditions of ballet and contemporary dance by adding coursework in tap, jazz, hip-hop and even Gaga—an Israeli style of dance—alongside training in Gyrokenesis, release technique and yoga. Professor Andrea Beckham oversees a robust Pilates program as part of the Somatics section of the curriculum that trains students in body knowledge and kinesiology.

“The professional field itself is changing. It’s not enough for students to come out of college programs being good dancers,” said Tina Curran, clinical assistant professor. “They have to come out as good dancers, savvy about how to conduct themselves as entrepreneurs. And they have to come out savvy about how their art form is relevant and how they engage audiences.”

Curran, who joined the faculty the same year as Anderson, oversaw the launch of the Dance Studies Option in 2013 with Lyn Wiltshire, professor of Dance. Dance Studies students take the same classes as B.F.A. Dance majors—Performance Option, and they take additional courses in the College of Education to prepare them for teacher certification.

“To teach dance, one must first be skilled as a dancer,” Curran said. “At the undergraduate level, it’s important for students to fully develop themselves as dance artists. It’s really important both in our B.F.A. in Dance and for those students pursuing an education direction that first they’re artists, that they’re creators and that they’re artist citizens.”

“I want them to realize that dance is this vast and varied field with a deep and diverse history and they are now a part of it.”

— Charles O. Anderson, Head of Dance program

Guest artists supplement classroom curriculum on technique, choreography, dance history and pedagogy. A-list visitors such as Sidra Bell, Manuel Vignouille, Alex Ketley and Rennie Harris provide mentorship, set new work and offer guidance to students about how to succeed in the professional dance world. Anderson launched an emerging choreographer’s platform, the Vanguard Emerging Choreographer Residency, to attract this talent to UT.

“I think our professors really do try their hardest to make sure we’re getting all the experiences we need for post-grad life,” said Chatman. “Even in the college setting, I’ve had privilege to be in multiple works at UT, and I’ve been able to [participate in] many residencies to see how the real dance world works and how to transition my work while being a student at UT. The talent they’ve brought in past few years is astonishing, and I love seeing our program grow.”

Chatman took full advantage of the connections he made through the visiting guest artists, and he already had accepted invitations to join three dance companies when he graduated last spring—Johnnie Cruise Mercer and The RED ProjectNYC (run by Mercer), Christian Von Howard’s company, the Von Howard Project, and Charles Anderson’s own Austin-based company, dance theatre X. Chatman said he utilized his network through the program, and had time to digest and understand what it would take to support himself financially as a professional dancer. He modeled part-time while he was at UT to bring in extra income. And he took advantage of study abroad opportunities and traveled with Wiltshire to Austria, which he said gave him great perspective on what it’s like to live and work abroad as a dancer.



Back row, left to right, Morganne Mazeika, Kanami Nakabayashi, Summer Fiaschetti and Aminah Maddox. Front row: Professor Charles O. Anderson, Zach Khoo and D’Lonte K. Lawson. The students were selected to perform at the American College Dance Association’s national festival in the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. in June.



Dancers perform in "Threshold," choreographed by Lyn C. Wiltshire, as part of *Bodies & Souls* in 2016. Photo by Lawrence Peart.

"The program does a very good job of showing you what your life would be like in a contract company," Chatman said. "The rehearsal schedule is always intense. You have to learn to take care of your body physically and mentally—eating correctly, cross-training. It's very rigorous hours, with dancing throughout the entire day, having rehearsals at night and also being a part of the in-residence company at UT. You see what it's like to be in rehearsal process and show the product of that and perform. I think I was very prepared for that."

Thanks to Professor Yacov Sharir, the Dance program has a long history of integrating dance with technology in performance. Sharir has been experimenting with blending the two disciplines since the 1980s, and the Department of Theatre and Dance's strength in technology and design has been an invaluable asset to the Dance program. Students in the department are able to experiment with new ways to incorporate light, projection and movement into their choreography and performances.

"Before coming to UT, I did not have the experience of working and dancing alongside multimedia," Maddox said. "With multimedia, there is more than just one level of entertainment going on for the eye to catch. So, as a dancer, your senses are heightened to what's being projected, as well as what you are dancing."

At the end of every year, the full Dance faculty sits down with each student for a one-on-one meeting to reflect on the year and to provide perspective and guidance on what the student might focus on next in his or her trajectory. The faculty guides students toward the many avenues they can pursue after graduation, whether they want to continue dancing in the Austin area, work abroad, teach, choreograph, pursue graduate school or even launch their own performance company.

"At The University of Texas at Austin, what starts here changes the world and helping our students discover they can do this through dance, watching them grow from dancers to artist citizens—that is tremendously inspiring," Anderson said. "I want them to realize that dance is this vast and varied field with a deep and diverse history and they are now a part of it." ■

Music beyond the classroom

Students create opportunities through collaborative projects

By Rose L. Thayer



Within the walls of the Butler School of Music, students tuck themselves into practice rooms for hours perfecting their artistry, then come together for ensemble rehearsals and group performances. But somewhere amid all that hard work, communities form and ideas emerge. And while this traditional form of music education is valuable, something just as important is taking place — students are collaborating off campus to create, learn and perform in settings completely separate from their studies.

"They're surrounded by this," said Martha Hilley, 34-year faculty member of the music school. "And I think more and more of them are saying, 'Hey, I see these groups. I see Eighth Blackbird.' ... Then they see all these people who are out making a way for themselves. I think they start saying to themselves, 'Hey, if they can do it, why can't we do it?' Then you just have to have the guts to put yourself out there."

Over the years Hilley said she has watched as "her kids" meet up and form these outside projects. She attends as many performances as she can — even as some groups like Line Upon Line and the Fast Forward Music Festival play to sold out crowds.

In the past year, two new groups formed and launched waves for the creativity and excitement in their work. Tetractys, a mix of four alumni and current students, a new music concert series that commissions and performs new works by young and emerging composers. They planned to start their inaugural year with three performances, but closed their season in June after nine shows, said Chris Prosser, D.M.A. Composition student and co director of the group. Added performances included a show at South by Southwest Music Festival and two collaborations with the Blanton Museum of Art.

"We are trying to create a community of people who want to be a part of new music and premiere new music and submissions of work," he said. "I think we were more interested in contributing to the new music scene that already exists in Austin. Austin is a great town for doing what we want to do. It's not oversaturated with new music."

Many of the musicians and composers they hire are affiliated with the Butler school in some way.

Matthew Armbruster, graduate student in Music Performance, performs during a Tetractys concert in June. Photo by Lawrence Peart.



Hear No Evil performs in June at Austin's New Media Art & Sound Summit. Photo by Lawrence Peart.

"Enterprises like these are not even outside school work—they are beyond school work," said Yevgeniy Sharlat, composition associate professor at the Butler school. In the end, forming a professional group while a student will make the transition into the professional world much smoother, he added.

"Those first few years after school are the most crucial and riskiest, because they are up against many other exceptional musicians," Sharlat said. "They are waiting for that moment when everything will just snap into place and people will call and ask them to participate in this and that."

Hilley agreed that testing the professional waters as a student is a smart move.

"You've got a support system in the faculty that will be there and who've got your back no matter what. But they're also getting you ready for the world when you get out there where nobody knows you and nobody helps you up," she said.

New music ensemble Hear No Evil formed in April 2015 when Marley Eder (B.M., Music Performance, 2015) recruited a number of peers he collaborated with during his time at UT. One year later, co-directors Eder and James Burch (D.M.A., Music, 2016) put on several shows per season showcasing music by local composers in addition to mainstays of modern 'Pierrot' repertoire.

"UT was definitely the breeding ground of this," Eder said. "It was a really natural product of who we were at that time in that community. We wanted to actualize what we were doing in school."

Burch said the ensemble takes what they are doing in school, but takes them forward several steps.

Sharlat said much of this hands-on experience these groups find in the real world is just hard to recreate in an educational setting. He maintains a composition forum for his graduate and doctoral students where they hear from professionals and discuss career goals. Eight years ago he launched CLUTCH (Collected Labors of the UT Composition Hub), a student organization that runs a concert series. Prosser, of Tetractys, was Sharlat's "right hand man" with CLUTCH last year.

"It gives them a chance to work in a safe environment," Sharlat said. "It preps them for the kinds of tasks they need to do—publicity, how to attract audience to come, how to make the experience especially ravishing, the best way set up stage, how to add drama of concert with the way pieces are arranged. All these things, there isn't really a course in the school of music that teaches any of these things. They can't really be taught. They are learned by doing. Forming an organization like CLUTCH is the right step."

Hilley, aside from her piano courses, also teaches career goals and management for graduate-level students, where she brings in professionals to teach students about networking and using the knowledge and skills they may already have, but just don't realize it.

"It's so great to see all of this happening," Hilley said. "I think the students are really passionate about the possibilities of life beyond the hallowed halls." ■

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



Oct. 6
Anton Nel and Christopher Guzman
Bates Recital Hall



Oct. 21, 23, 28 and 30
Butler Opera Center presents two operas by Giacomo Puccini: *Suor Angelica* & *Gianni Schicchi*
McCullough Theatre



Nov. 2-20
Little Women
The Broadway Musical
Book by Allan Knee
Music by Jason Howland
Lyrics by Mindi Dickstein
Based on the novel by Louisa May Alcott



Nov. 9-20
Lost Girl
A new play by Kimberly Belflower (M.F.A., Playwriting candidate)

For more information visit finearts.utexas.edu/calendar



1



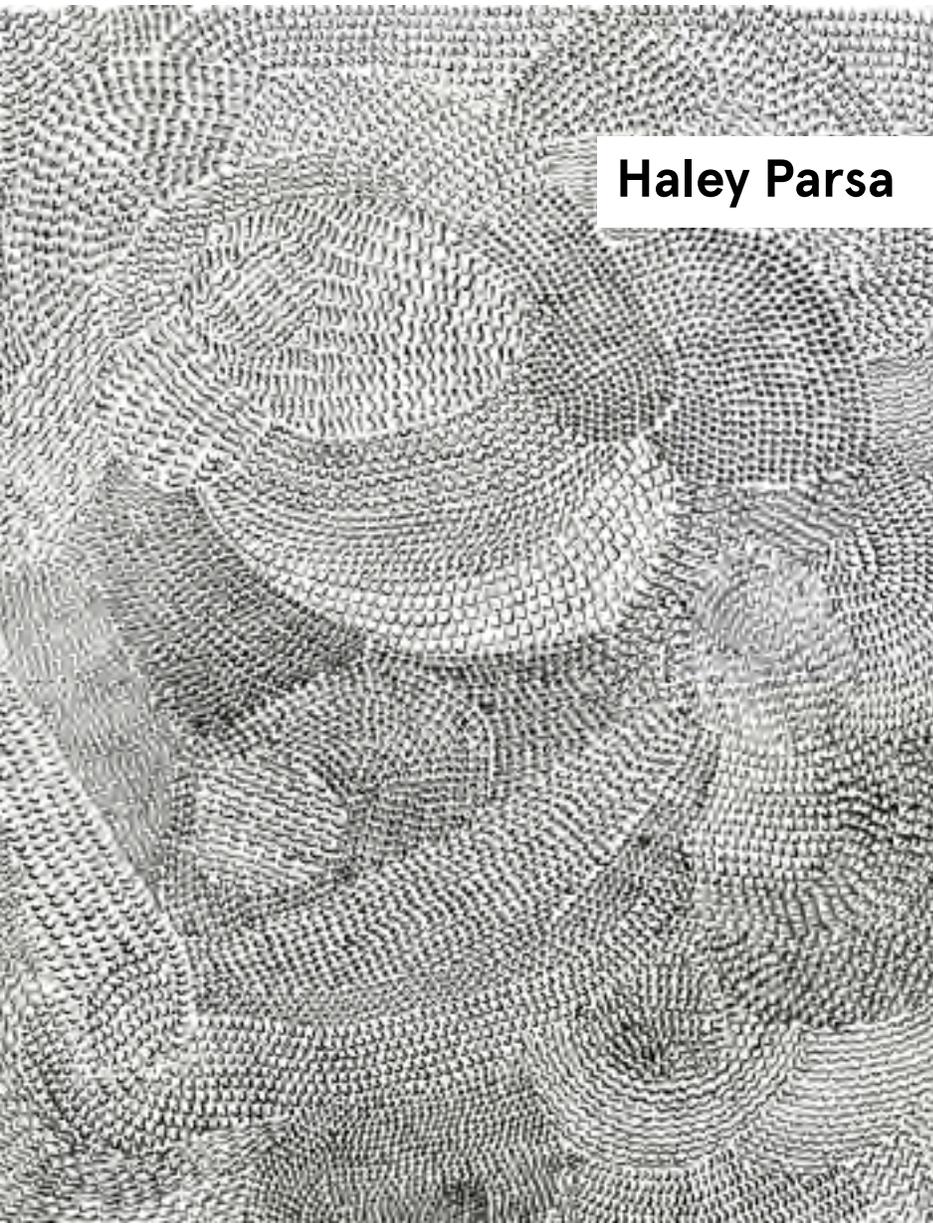
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1. Dance Reparatory Theater presents *Bodies and Souls*, Spring 2016 Photo by Lawrence Peart.
2. Spring 2016 M.F.A. in Thesis Exhibition at the Visual Arts Center Photo by Madison Brill.
3. Commencement Spring 2016 Photo by Sandy Carson.

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Haley Parsa

Haley Parsa, an undergraduate in Studio Art, received the 2016 Regents' Outstanding Student Awards in Arts and Humanities. Only two students were selected across The University of Texas System. Both students were recognized in May at the UT System Board of Regents' meeting.

You Are My Liver

"This originated from a reoccurring childhood memory of my grandmother that is carried out to this day. As she only speaks Farsi, almost everything she's ever said has had to be translated to me. She would always say "you are my liver," meaning "you are my life/I cannot live without you." Not only was this phrase funny to me but it was always funny to think I feel completely connected to her even though we've never "spoken" — that I can still be in touch with my family, roots, heritage on a very intimate level despite not knowing Farsi or being "fully" Persian or being Persian "enough." I have struggled to situate and understand my place in my family and myself as an Iranian American woman.

Aesthetically, the piece employs the same repeated letter technique used when learning a language on a fundamental, elementary level. Each letter of the Farsi alphabet is contained in an organic shape similar to bodily, liver like parts all composing one unit. The patterned rectangular shape and intricacy also remind me of the Persian rugs in my house I grew up around."