

RIS x y z

spring/summer 2019
rhode island school of design

// freedom



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Finding Freedom

With questions about freedom swirling all around us every day, it's tough not to be concerned. Escalating threats to freedom of choice and freedom of the press, along with questions about the parameters of free speech in the age of social media, all point to a reevaluation of values many people have come to take for granted in a democratic society.

Working on this issue of the magazine, I've also been reflecting on what freedom means to me personally—what it takes to really feel it and why it's such a driving force in our lives.

Everyone wants to feel free—to have a sense of free will and self-determination. But as James Baldwin once wrote, freedom isn't something you're given, it's something you need to claim and own.

This issue is packed with stories of alumni who do just that—who show through their work and lives the variety of ways in which creative people stake their own claim to freedom.

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see more to the right

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NO RULES



I have long had the pleasure of sharing a sketchbook with illustrator **Scott Bakal**. We take turns drawing and painting whatever comes into our heads and subtly (or not so subtly) “altering” what the other person has done.

The only rule is that there are no rules. We each take as long as we want to start and/or finish a few pages, which could

take weeks or months. Then we hand it off (we live fairly close to each other, so we hand-deliver it).

We’ve been working on this book for years and it may never be finished. But I really enjoy the artistic challenge of feeding off of what Scott does—and the anticipation and surprise when I see what he has done with my stuff. I’m learning as I go.

Alan Witschonke 75 IL
Natick, MA

THOUGHTS ON FALL/WINTER



My mother, **Mary Alice Barnhouse** 49 TX, died recently. She took a tumble while walking, and quite suddenly her earth and her sky traded places. Perhaps somebody spoke, and she went into a dream. She left no known forwarding physical address, and she will no longer be able to read the beautiful *RISD XYZ* magazine, so please remove her name from your mailing list.

Stephen Barnhouse
Santa Barbara, CA

@Superchew showing the latest issue on Instagram
This is the recent copy of the mag. I’m horrible with updates with myself, but I actually did it for the recent issue. It’s so fun to see what other creative people are doing in #RISD community. I’m very proud of being a part of it and what a special place RISD and Providence, RI truly is....

Eddie Chu 98 PT
Brooklyn, NY

Thank you for the fine magazine that arrives at my doorstep. It is great to be able to see what is happening in the past and present RISD world and to keep track of the affairs of professors, current students and fellow graduates!

Richard Kattman BLA 73
Holliston, MA

For a long time I have felt that I should tell you how impressed I have been over time with the design and content of the XYZ publication. I always read it and look at it cover to cover. It never disappoints. (And I never find any mistakes in the spelling or grammar!)

Norma Anderson MAT 79
Providence, RI

Thank you for my inclusion on page 62, fall/winter *RISD XYZ*. I have been invited to exhibit my sculpture in the 2019 *Venice Biennale* at Palazzo Mora Pavilion. All of RISD’s reports on me *do not* represent Palazzo Mora Pavilion as part of the *Venice Biennale*. They all say I am exhibiting at Palazzo Mora “during the run of the *Venice Biennale*,” not that I have been invited to exhibit in the *Venice Biennale*.

Please do not downgrade my prestigious invitation to exhibit in the *Venice Biennale* 2018 and 2019. Sculptors participate by invitation only, not application. In 2018 I was one of 30 sculptors worldwide invited.

Judith Unger 69 SC/MAT 70
St. Johnsbury, VT

Editor’s note: Apologies that our attempts to differentiate the various exhibitions that comprise the Biennale downplayed the importance of your invitation. That was never the intention.

Love the new magazine on collaboration. The cover image is brilliant as is all the content. C for collaboration and not C for conflict should be the motto for our nation’s new year!

Ana Flores 79 PT
Wood River Junction, RI

Thank you again for a great magazine that I look forward to. I really enjoy reading about the school that did so much for me and my career, as well as catching up on old friends and what they are doing.

Ric Murray 74 PH
North Kingstown, RI

A Funny Thing Happened...

Rob Hugel 75 GD (left) and **Jiayi (Matt) Li** 15 IL (right) met on the Hong Kong-Shekou ferry. Matt currently works at Tencent, an internet company in Shenzhen, China. Rob has been teaching *Typography* and *Graphic Design History* at California College of the Arts for 19 years and also runs his own design studio, Littlehill Design, in San Francisco, CA. He was in Shenzhen press-checking his latest project – *Gordon Onslow Ford: A Man on a Green Island*, an artist’s monograph about the less-than-universally-known surrealist painter, being released this summer by the Lucid Art Foundation in Inverness, CA.



cover image ©Martine Gutierrez | courtesy of the artist and RYAN LEE gallery, New York



INTERESTING JOURNEYS IN FAV

After working on their films since last fall, in mid May graduating seniors in Film/Animation/Video presented a mix of animated shorts and live-action pieces during the department's four-night film festival in the RISD Auditorium. Students in the department's open media track simultaneously

held a pop-up show inside containers on Market Square. "The year was full of learning, progress, inevitable setbacks, occasional joys and moments of clarity," says FAV Department Head **Sheri Wills** (see also page 50), "and every work in the show bears the imprint of that journey."



Helpful Diagrams

In his ongoing thinking about and play with the practice of design and his own approach to pedagogy, **Mitch Goldstein** 06 GD, an assistant professor of Design at Rochester Institute of Technology, recently published a series of Venn diagrams (with phrase-length commentary) online. See the full series at ahelpfuldiagram.com.



As I receive this star alongside Donald Trump, Kevin Spacey, Bill Cosby and Michael Jackson, I have to ask: 'Do I deserve this – the highest sidewalk-related honor a person can achieve?'

Seth MacFarlane 95 FAV as he accepts a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame (4.23.19)

I do feel we have been living in apocalyptic times. I am aware of the dark side.

Huma Bhabha 85 PR speaking on WBUR radio in conjunction with *They Live*, her spring retrospective at the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston

Ultimately it's about content – and artists who come out of RISD have a lot to say.

Sarah Russin 84 PR, executive director of Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, speaking about her participation in RISD's Fine Arts Portfolio Review in April

I want to see both raw creativity and a high level of craft, as well as thoughtfulness and rationale.

Seth Snyder 08 ID, head of UX at Universal Robots, speaking about what he hoped to see in student work at the spring Design Portfolio Review organized by RISD Careers

Educate yourself if you don't have personal experience with pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion. Choose tolerance over intolerance.

professor and designer
Mary Banas MFA 09 GD (see also page 16) on Twitter (5.18.19)

BENSON REVISITED



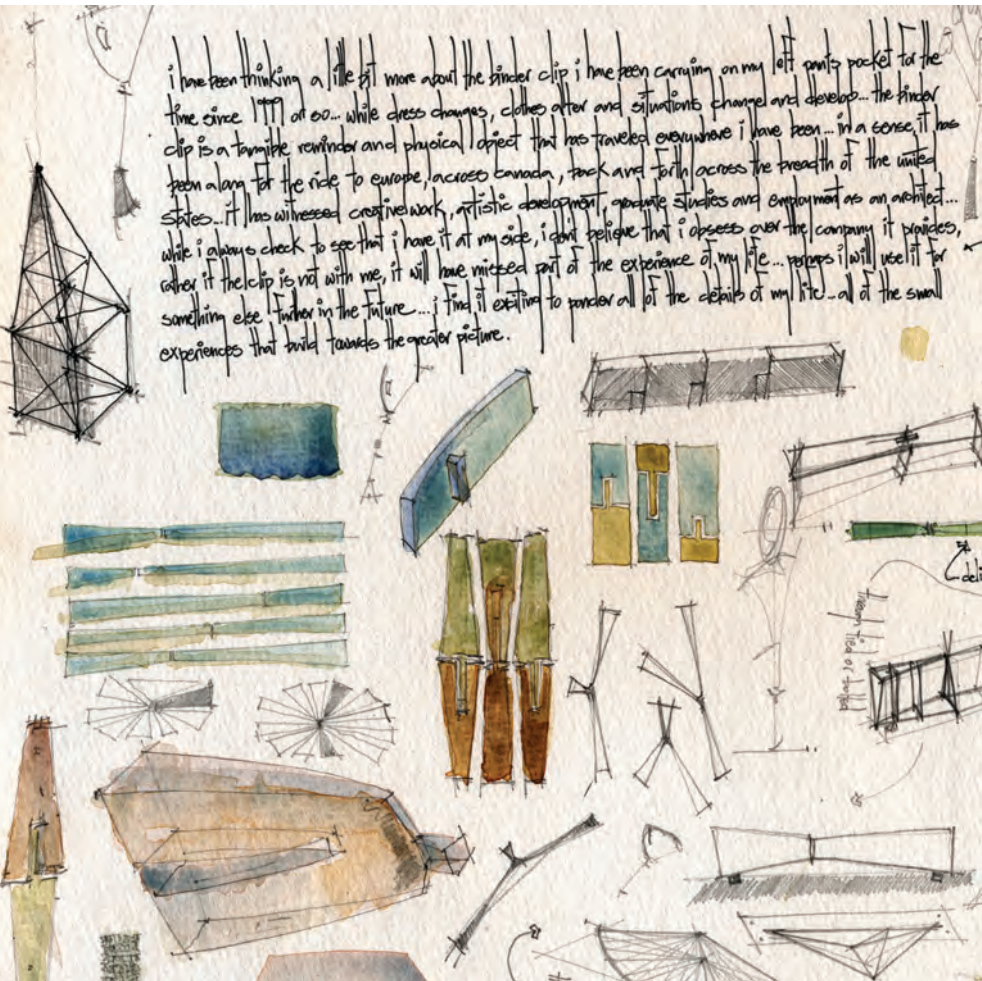
Riffing on the classic Benson seal (created in the mid 20th-century by the late Professor of Sculpture and Calligraphy **John Howard Benson**), members of the student-run Design Guild created a series of stickers that were given out this spring to new students accepted to the Class of 2023. Follow them at [@risddesignguild](https://twitter.com/risddesignguild) to see what else they're up to.

#JayDriving

Before graduating this spring, **Micah Epstein** 19 GD placed several *JayDriving* signs he made as part of a class project at the brick crosswalk on College Street that's part of Canal Walk. He left markers attached to the signs to invite pedestrians to share their own thoughts on pedestrian safety. That particular crosswalk is a spot where there's notorious "ambiguity about who has the right of way"—cars or pedestrians—he told the local news channel WPRI. Believing that "we should be able to walk safely and experience the city," Epstein is continuing to drive the message home using **#JayDriving**.



FULBRIGHT IN INDIA



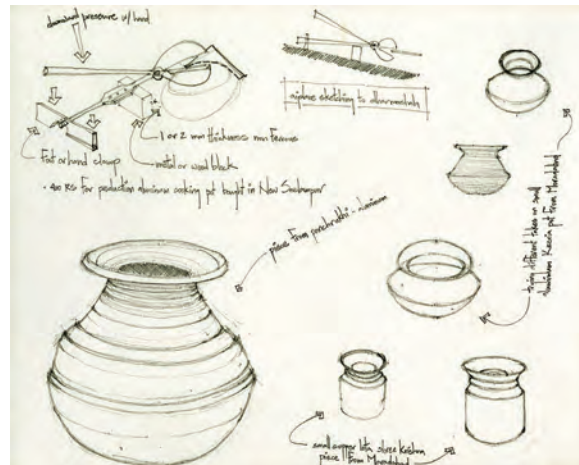
Last fall, after landing a Fulbright-Nehru Fellowship, **Joshua Enck** MFA 03 FD was able to take a break from his teaching at the University of Rochester [NY] to travel to Delhi, India with his wife and young children. For five months he studied traditional metalworking techniques and taught at the Sushant School of Design at Ansal University/Gurgaon.

“I’m fascinated by utilitarian objects like *lotas* – brass vessels used to bring water into the home,” says Enck, “and I was delighted to meet and learn from the artisans who are still making them.”

When Enck wasn’t teaching in Gurgaon, he scoured nearby villages and craft centers, using his limited Hindi and working with translators to speak with metal-smiths in their workshops. He took copious visual notes, filling his sketchbooks with ideas and questions for future reference.

“People were so generous with their time and knowledge,” Enck says. “It was amazing to watch them involve their whole body in making. One of the craftsmen I met in Old Delhi showed me how to use my feet to balance the metal, which is super hard.”

Now that he’s back home, Enck is excited to apply his Fulbright experience in his teaching as well as his studio work. “It’s so important to keep learning,” he notes. “And the Fulbright grant provided me the opportunity to become a student again. That kind of cultural exposure opens up new dialogues and new possibilities.”



During a five-month Fulbright fellowship in India, sculptor **Joshua Enck** MFA 03 FD made copious visual notes and soaked up everything he could from local metal-smiths, including how to use his feet to help balance the metal.

NEW FULBRIGHT WINNERS

Six new and recent graduates have made it through the rigorous process to earn Fulbright US Student Program grants for the 2019/20 academic year.

Ashton Agbomenou 14 FAV will retrace his ancestral heritage in Benin and make paintings that recreate a visual history of the precolonial Dahomey Kingdom

Aleksandra (Sasha) Azbel MArch 14 will synthesize scientific and poetic explorations of local plants and dance traditions in Sri Lanka

Ying Bonny Cai BRDD 18 AP (Economics/East Asian Studies at Brown) will research costume symbolism, explore Korean sewing techniques and curate a collection of traditional *hanbok* clothing through study in Seoul

Sara Khan BRDD 16 FD (Computer Science at Brown) will study zero-waste techniques practiced in traditional garment construction and pattern cutting at the Indian Institute for Crafts and Design in Jaipur, India

Allison Morgan BRDD 16 AP (Art History/French at Brown) will study operatic costume design and costume history in Venice, Italy

Anrui Aaren Zhu BRDD 19 AP (International Relations/Political Economy at Brown) will study film regulation in Nanjing University in China



RISD SUMMER PROGRAMS

Art and design courses for credit and professional advancement

6-week and 2-week sessions
June 24–August 2

RISD alumni tuition discounts

summer.risd.edu

RISD PRE-COLLEGE

Art school before art school

6-week summer program for high school juniors and seniors
June 22–August 3

precollege.risd.edu



HIGH TIME FOR EXPOSURE THERAPY

by Emma Shapiro 10 PT

IN MY WORK I use a fluidity of media to discuss memory, empathy and ancestry with and within the body. Using my own body as my primary tool, I seek to represent the human and female form as timeless—ephemeral yet fixed through genealogical and physical memory.

I see my body as a vessel for ancestral history—a link to family lost to antisemitism and the Irish Famine—and thus both a primal act of resistance against injustice and a representation of hope.

Because of my use of nudity, my work has at times forced me to engage with the objectification and censorship still often associated with depictions of the nude. Many of these images have led to misunderstanding, body shaming and sexualization, all of which often pulls the work into a contemporary dialogue on why we approach the nude skeptically and with embarrassment.

My ongoing frustration with this has fueled an activism project called *Exposure Therapy*. I'm now living in Valencia, Spain and recently received a grant from Awesome Without Borders and The Harnisch Foundation to expand the project, which has already reached the US, Canada, Bolivia, France, Ireland, Norway, Spain and other countries around the world.

Here's what I'm doing—and why. As a body part, a nipple is not even gendered, so I've always wondered why seeing nipples on kids is OK, nipples on male teens and men are OK, but somehow nipples on a pubescent girl or a grown woman are... not OK.



“Men, women and kids all have them, but why do we only freak out at the sight of female nipples?”

In fact, my experience as an artists' model has shown me how crazy common it is for a woman's nipples to be labeled obscene or pornographic even if the context is far from sexual—as in another common scenario: when they're serving as part of an all-natural food delivery system.

To challenge the ridiculous taboo and show how silly it is to freak out at the sight of a female nipple, I have created nipple stickers that people are putting on everything and anything they want to. (Don't worry, they're waterproof, don't damage surfaces and are removable.)

Thanks to the Awesome grant, I recently produced a fresh round of stickers that are a fleshtone rainbow of women's nipples. The project is spread by word-of-mouth and Instagram @NIPeOPLE,

so if you want to get involved—as a model or a poster of stickers or both—just message me.

My hope is that if enough nipple images show up everywhere you look around the world, people just might begin to question the ever-shifting line of what we consider “normal.” For instance:

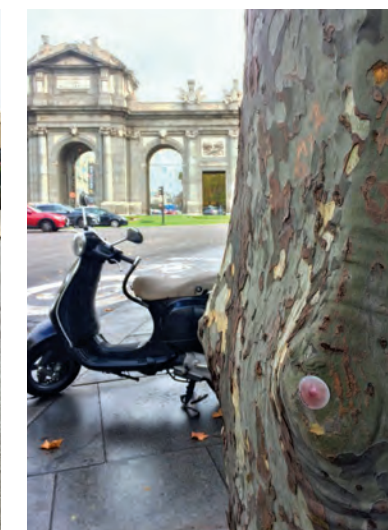
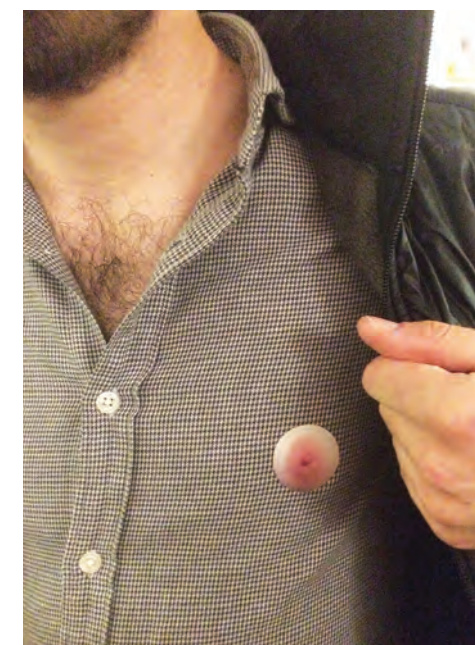
Is a car with nipples sexy?

Could a sidewalk with a nipple be pornographic?

If my laptop sports nipples, is it suddenly inappropriate?

Can a telephone pole be seen as obscene?

Is a tree with a nipple provocative? ■



BETWEEN + BEYOND AT THE BIENNIALS

Alumni **Korakrit Arunanondchai** 09 PR and **Nicole Eisenman** 87 PT are the only two artists in the world invited to show in both the 2019 *Whitney Biennial* and Italy's 58th *Venice Biennale*. Widely known for its ability to take "the pulse of the contemporary artistic moment," the *Whitney Biennial* also includes work by RISD faculty members **Tomashi Jackson** (Sculpture) and **Jennifer Packer** (Painting).

May You Live in Interesting Times, this year's *Venice Biennale*, also features work by three other artists at the forefront of contemporary culture: **Martine Gutierrez** 12 PR (see pages 22–29), **Julle Mehretu** MFA 97 PT/PR and **Tavares Strachan** 03 GL (a RISD trustee). As the RISD artists invited to participate reaffirm, the lineup for both major survey exhibitions skewed even younger and more diverse than ever this year.

Eisenman, a 2015 MacArthur Award-winner, is best known for remarkable paintings in which she patches together "a world from every possible art-historical mode of figuration, bending styles and techniques easily—and often comically—to her will," as **Johanna Fateman** writes in a recent piece in *Artforum*. "In her wildly varied body of work, a sensitively observed queer morphology surfaces."

Although the Whitney owns a number of Eisenman paintings, for the biennial she created *Procession*, a 53-foot-long sculptural installation for the museum's sixth-floor balcony. One of the central pieces, *Museum Piece con Gas*, shows a figure on its hands and knees—partially covered in brown wax and puffy raw sheep's wool—with a gaping butthole expelling clouds of smoke.



"It's base, juvenile," Eisenman explains. "Farting is like... blowing air; it's like speech." However, she adds: "We live in a political moment that is pornographic. And pornographic politics deserves a pornographic response."

Arunanondchai, a 33-year-old born in Bangkok and now based in NYC, is gaining increasing attention for his multicultural multimedia experiments. At the Whitney, he's showing *with history in a room filled with people with funny names 4*, a 2017 film that weaves together personal narratives, found footage and political musings about the messed-up state of the world.

"I was documenting the moment Trump became president, the Women's March and the last king of Thailand [who] passed away," he recently told *ArtNews* in describing the hypnotic film, which combines sequences showing his dementia-prone grandmother with documentary-style clips infused with spiritual comments voiced in French by his mother. It's "a metaphor for our species and the relationships we build," he says.

"We have been thinking about how we can expand the definition of an American artist to include artists navigating between cultures, and Krit really fits into that interest perfectly," notes **Jane Panetta**, cocurator (with **Rujeko Hockley**) of this year's *Whitney Biennial*. "He's going back to Thailand regularly, thinking about what's happening there culturally... and splicing that with... American political questions." Like the most interesting artists at the forefront of contemporary culture, Arunanondchai works in a "third space," she says—between and beyond.

The Whitney Biennial continues through September 22, while the Venice show runs through November 24.

Facing page: A still from Korakrit Arunanondchai's film *with history in a room filled with people with funny names 4* (2017).

This page: One of the central pieces in *Procession*, Nicole Eisenman's Bruegelesque installation at the Whitney, wears bright socks and expels puffs of smoke out of its butt while others creep forward or trail gooey gum in their wake.



above: photos by Jaime Mariland | right: photo by Tue Tran

WITH EYES FULLY OPEN

After debuting a bold and beyond-the-real-world spring/summer 19 collection at New York Fashion Week last fall, **Jamall Osterholm** 17 AP welcomed another unusual opportunity this year: competing on *Project Runway*, which returned to Bravo in March for its 17th season. As one of 16 young designers from throughout the world vying for the \$250,000 grand prize—among other career perks—the Providence-based designer is continuing to look both forward and back in articulating his personal experience as a queer black man.

“My first real collection—my RISD thesis collection—came from a realization that everything I found beautiful was everything that I am not,” Osterholm told *Mic* last fall. “I felt like my eyes were open for the first time, and that’s when I truly found meaning in my art.”

Given who he is and how he expresses that, Osterholm often gets asked if he thinks the fashion industry is inclusive enough—a question he finds ironic. “Inclusivity is kind of a funny word to me because it presumes that POC haven’t been the driving force behind art, design and culture this whole time,” he says. “The idea that we are now being ‘included’ is a farce. I think we are now being credited.... [and] are coming into a time where we can credit ourselves and [create] the world that we want to see.”

Hoping that he can transform his brand into a business—which is partly where *Project Runway* comes in—Osterholm ultimately wants to “continue making art.” In other words, he says, “I never want the business side of my brand to consume the real reason why I do fashion.”

@jamallosterholm



Seeming Liberty

Lowell Boyers 88 PT calls the outbursts of color that activate 6.5-foot-tall paintings like *Untitled (a seeming liberty)* “big bangs”—spontaneous eruptions of feeling expressed through acrylic, resin, watercolor and ink on canvas. “Each time you have a sensation it’s like a mini big bang,” the NYC-based artist says, “where everything is unfolding for a split second. It’s so fast, then—boom! It all dissolves.”

Inscapes, a solo exhibition on view through June 15 at Deborah Colton Gallery in Dallas, presents work deeply informed by Buddhist philosophy—both visually and in terms of process.

“I begin to spill paint,” Boyers says, “taking my hand’s expertise just a little out of the picture, allowing the tiniest bit of chaos.” But it’s not a random act, he’s quick to point out: “I am interested in how images take shape and evolve as I allow the ink and the paint to flow, spill, move, mix, coagulate and gel.”

lowellboyers.com

Weirdly Comforting

Artsy called out the recent **Jessi Reaves** 10 PT exhibition at Bridget Donahue (the gallery in lower Manhattan that represents her) as among the standout shows in NYC this spring. Now her work is on view (through June 29) in *Perverse Furniture*, a group show at Artspace in New Haven, CT. In pieces like *Cock Ottoman with Parked Chair*—a vinyl-upholstered piece of sculpture masquerading as furniture or vice versa—Reaves reckons with the rawness and dysfunction of everyday life. And she continues to push “her trash-chic aesthetic into weird and welcome new directions,” as *Artsy* notes, adding: “There’s also beauty in all of Reaves’ wreckage.”

bridgetdonahue.nyc





RITUAL REJUVENATION

For **Daisy Hook** 14 IA and **Amanda Swain** 14 IA “light itself became a medium” for making *Gathering*, a short-lived ritual space activated by the light of the morning sun on a California beach. It’s the first piece the close friends have created together since graduating five years ago.

Based in NYC, Hook has stayed in constant contact with Swain in Berkeley, CA, hoping to create “a space where people could come together for an otherworldly meeting.” Last year the two interior architects finally carved out the time and space to meet for a month of further planning and making.

Swain and Hook designed their beach seating to match the contours of mountains depicted in the installation’s diptych screen enclosure—an element they say blurs the line between the actual horizon and something more ethereal and impressionistic. They also encouraged users to activate the space by moving the furniture around and lighting candles meant to enhance the after-dark serenity.

“This project [drew upon] all the skills we formed while at RISD,” says Hook, who sees *Gathering* as the first in an ongoing series of collaborative work between the two of them. “We regularly check in with each other to continue ideas and designs that originated at RISD,” she adds. “My relationship with Amanda... is my deepest creative friendship.”

daisy-hook.com/gathering



Revisiting the Heartland

A major move from LA to the Ohio Appalachians several years ago energized **Lizzie Fitch** 04 SC and **Ryan Trecartin** 04 FAV, inspiring their latest multimedia project: an installation and film cycle called *Whether Line*. Set on a wildly fabricated pastiche of familiar pastoral landmarks—“a 32-acre queer playground in Middle America,” as *W* magazine describes it—the work provided the longtime collaborators with the perfect lens through which to examine the country(side)’s post-2016 psyche.

Whether Line continues through August 5 at Fondazione Prada in Milan and once again shows why Trecartin and Fitch are, as *Artforum* observes, “the poet-oracles and court videographers of our confused, intemperate times.”

fondazioneprada.org

Gut Reaction

When her mom resisted taking the probiotics her doctors prescribed, food enthusiast **Ruby Schechter** 18 ID figured she could help by exploring alternatives to digestive health. So, “playing around in her kitchen” she invented a fruit popsicle packed with kombucha, the fermented tea known for its probiotic benefits. With support from Practico Innovation, Schechter has made 3D-printed molds and launched The Better Pop, a tasty line of treats using whole fruit—strawberries, blueberries, mangoes—for added fiber in every bite. The pops are a hit at the Brooklyn food festival Smorgasburg, which runs every Saturday through June 29, and are also available online at The Better Pop site.

thebetterpop.co



CHANNELING MITSKI

Two alumni have helped singer-songwriter **Mitski** cement her reputation as “the 21st century’s poet laureate of young adulthood.” Working independently of each other, they each created visuals to match the rave reviews (and ongoing tour excitement) of her latest album *Be the Cowboy*.

San Francisco-based designer **Mary Banas** MFA 09 GD earned a 2018 Grammy nomination in the Best Recording Package category for *Be the Cowboy*. Her inspired designs feature cinematic portraits of the artist in a format that feels both mysterious and fresh – much like Mitski’s music. Subtle nods to a devoted fan base – like spot-glossed lyrics on the interior gatefold that are only visible in the “right light” – add to her multifaceted approach to conveying Mitski’s signature style.

In NYC **Saad Moosajee** 16 GD collaborated with **Danae Gosset** and Spotify by Art Camp to produce the official music video for *A Pearl*, a single from *Be the Cowboy*. As director, designer and animator on the 3D piece, he knit together more than 1,480 individual frames illustrated and painted by hand. “I think it’s beautiful,” Mitski tweeted once the video was released in January.

Both designers responded well to the creative latitude they were given to enhance Mitski’s already strong reputation. “There’s a lovely sequence [in the video] that finds our protagonist in total free fall only to find herself back at the beginning,” an NPR Music critic observes. “It’s a visual delight that matches the song’s circuitous tension.”

yesismore.us // moosajee.co



Pleasure Persists

Illustrators who won in the past selected **Victo Ngai** 10 IL for the Society of Illustrators’ 2019 Hamilton King Award, which is presented each year for the best work in its annual exhibition in New York. She earned recognition for the sumptuous illustrations created for a limited edition of *The Kama Sutra of Vatsyayana* (The Folio Society, 2018), the 2,000-year-old book known as a Hindu manual of “virtuous living, courtship and pleasure” – or in Western popular culture as a guide to having interesting sex. After working with the translation so closely, the LA-based artist values the *Kama Sutra* as “a rich and multifaceted book” offering advice on sexual relationships – one that’s “still surprisingly relevant today.” victo-ngai.com

Planetary Repercussions

Linda Leslie Brown MAE 87 describes sculptures like *Vernal* (2018, mixed media, 13x17x11”) as intimately scaled and “emphatically handmade” symbols of our collective impact on a vulnerable planet. “These works are half created and half destroyed,” she says of the arresting assemblages of broken and discarded objects she showed last fall in *Plastiglomerate*, a solo show at Boston’s Kingston Gallery (which represents her). Named for a new form of composite rock, the exhibition invited viewers to join the Boston-based artist in facing inconvenient truths about the things we leave behind. lindalesliebrown.com





Weaving a Home

Architect **Abeer Seikaly** BArch 02, a native of Jordan now living in Canada, continues to try to help displaced communities through *Weaving a Home*, the temporary shelter for which she won a Lexus Design Award in 2013. Mobile, waterproof and versatile to protect against cold and heat, the shelter design has been widely praised for its innovative approach to a crisis that now affects almost 70 million homeless people worldwide. "Momentum continues to grow," Seikaly says about the ongoing project, "but unfortunately, so does the need for alternative housing solutions... with each

passing natural disaster [and] migration wave, and the ever-intensifying density of urban centers." While pursuing collaborative opportunities to refine her shelter design, Seikaly has also helped initiate timely dialogues about design-centered problem solving. In 2017 she cofounded *Amman [Jordan] Design Week* and last July she spoke about home and displacement at *TEDxKlagenfurt [Austria]*. "I have long believed in the power of sharing," says the designer, especially when it comes to "knowledge, skills, ambitions and intentions." abeerseikaly.com

REFRESHING TRADITION

With her latest collection, **Nada Debs 87 IA** is advancing yet another contemporary interpretation of traditional Middle Eastern craft. Striking juxtapositions of form and materials that clearly reflect regional traditions make *Marquetry Mania* "playful and powerful," as she puts it, with bold colors and reflective surfaces accentuating the "mania."

Building on the Lebanese designer's interest in the tension between historical and contemporary modes of expression, *Marquetry Mania* is

deeply informed by traditional approaches to making, while offering a forward-feeling collection of tables, mirrors, lighting, bowls and more. All pieces are handmade at her studio in Beirut, where she leads a team of 20 makers in realizing a seamless merger of old and new.

To support this, in 2018 Debs combined her studio and gallery showroom into the *Nada Debs Boutique*, "a sensory and social experience" on Beirut's Gemmayzeh Street. She invites "people to see, touch, talk, share and experience our world," as she put it in speaking to the Dubai-based magazine *Commercial Interior Design*.

As socially engaged practice becomes increasingly more integral to the business of design, Debs hopes to continue exploring how to bring her values to life through her work. "Today," she says, "our focus is on using our experience to raise awareness of what design can do and how it can effect positive change." nadadebs.com



Passive Resistance

During a Fulbright year abroad in 2018, **Kim Dupont-Madinier** BArch 15 lived in the ultra-brutal environment of Mongolia and learned a lot about the challenges of daily life in Ulaanbaatar. There she designed *Passive Ger*, an energy-efficient home in the region's traditional yurt style meant to offer a shield to the catastrophic levels of pollution produced in the city.

A researcher at Saint-Gobain's R+D center in Northboro, MA, Dupont-Madinier worked to modify the ger structure to reduce the impact of ubiquitous coal-burning stoves on the city's air, water and soil while preserving the cultural character of these traditional homes. This year she's returning to Mongolia to move her innovative and cost-effective proposal for the passive solar home forward. weavingwonderswithmongolia.com

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR
CONSTITUTING MEANING

As a current retrospective at the Guggenheim Bilbao makes clear, the words **Jenny Holzer** MFA 77 PT highlights in her work have long focused on issues of freedom and justice. The alumni highlighted in the following three stories also respond to their own inner sense of what freedom means to them.



©Martine Gutierrez | courtesy of the artist and RYAN LEE gallery, New York

Body En Thrall, p120 from *Indigenous Woman*, a 2018 exhibition and magazine spoof in which the artist takes center stage in every photograph.

INDIGENOUS WOMAN

“Indigenous Woman is... a vision, an overture, a provocation.

The word ‘indigenous’ here is used to refer to native cultures from a particular region, but also as a synonym for the natural and innate. It signifies a real, authentic, native-born woman.

There was a time when... I was driven to question how identity is formed, expressed, valued and weighed as a woman, as a transwoman, as a latinx woman, as a woman of indigenous descent, as a femme artist and maker. It is nearly impossible to arrive at any finite answers, but for me this process of exploration is exquisitely life-affirming.”

SO WRITES EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Martine Gutierrez 12 PR in introducing *Indigenous Woman*, the alternative fashion magazine she created to mark her fall 2018 show by the same name at RYAN LEE gallery in Chelsea. The exhibition sent just about everyone who saw it—and thanks to effusive reviews, even those who didn’t—over the moon with excitement.

“Gutierrez does more than challenge the ways in which the mainstream misrepresents and colonizes the brown femme body,” writes **Don Christian** in *Artforum*. “She charts a whole new way forward.”

“Her work is fresh, inventive, smart and funny,” adds **Lisa Austin** in *artnet news*. “And her full-on re-creation of a 146-page fashion magazine in the style of *Interview* was jaw-dropping in detail and style. Expect to see much of her in the public eye in 2019.” With Gutierrez making a splash in May at *Frieze New York*, her inclusion in this year’s *Venice Biennale* and major media attention continuing to mount, that prediction has already been born out in the first half of the year.

“When you hear the term ‘indigenous woman,’ you probably don’t think of a transgender fashionista posing with designer

sunglasses and that opaque expression called resting bitch face,” writes art critic **Martha Schwendener** in *The New York Times*. “But that’s the image Martine Gutierrez presents, among others, in her clever and provocative exhibition at RYAN LEE.”

“Among others” is an understatement when it comes to Gutierrez’s breathtaking ability to present radically different representations of herself. With this most recent body of work and those leading up to it, the artist assumes so many disparate roles in both making her work and taking center stage in it that she morphs into her own creative team, production studio and celebrity model wrapped into one.

“I am the creator, founder, editor in chief, grant writer,” Gutierrez laughs in explaining to *Vice* how the satirical and satisfyingly acerbic content of the magazine and show took shape over the course of three years. In addition, as with the eye-opening 2013 *Real Dolls* show that launched her career at RYAN LEE, she does her own hair, makeup, styling, modeling, location scouting, lighting, photography, graphic design—and coffee runs. “What’s less glamorous is that I’m also the crew,” she concedes. “I’m the schlepping person.”



“We’re living in an era where my existence is political whether I want it to be or not, [which is] really hard and emotionally taxing. So humor is my savior.”

PLAYING WITH PERCEPTION

Schlepping aside, it’s all part of the deal—and her chosen process, Gutierrez explains. In fact, since she was very young, the artist has preferred to take full control of how people perceive her—and has been intrigued, confused and fascinated with what they “see.”

Growing up—for the first decade-plus in a mixed-race neighborhood in Oakland, CA with a Guatemalan father and an American mother, and then in the woods of rural Vermont—Gutierrez was free to feed her imagination with plenty of dress-up and other fantasy play. Born a boy, Martín (her given name) was naturally drawn to toys, games and tchotchkes generally associated with girls: dolls, glitter, barrettes, wigs, plastic chokers, My Little Pony.

“I was really into making Barbie clothes for a while,” she told *RISD XYZ* when we covered her *Real Dolls* debut. “And I was obsessed with mermaids—so obsessed I’m pretty sure I drove everyone around me crazy.” Much of that obsession had to do with “this idea that you have a certain amount of time to transform into something else before you return to your original ‘you’ state,” she explains—“which is still such a big part of how I feel about what I do.”

Given all the making, drawing and play that fed her childhood imagination, Gutierrez began pursuing art more seriously as a teenager, attending a summer art school in Vermont and then the pre-college programs at both RISD and MICA. By the time she applied to college, her impressive portfolio got her

into every art school on her list—with RISD rising to the top because of the level of focus and drive she observed in students.

“I wasn’t going to school just to have a good time,” Gutierrez says. “Right off the bat from RISD Pre-College, I knew the work I’d made there was my strongest.” When asked to select a major at RISD, she chose Printmaking for much the same reason: to expand her growing skills and gain more technical proficiency while also having maximum freedom to cross into other disciplines. And by the time she was a junior, she was taking full advantage of that flexibility by working in video, photography and music.

“With printmaking it’s much more about your technique and what it is that makes a good print, regardless of the imagery,”

Gutierrez says. “Before that, patience wasn’t really in my vocabulary in terms of making something. But [majoring in] Printmaking gave me this level of discipline that, when I got to making video, forced me to think more about the initial decisions I had to make before I started filming.”

Printmaker **Brian Shure**, one of her teachers at RISD, sees that level of precision and discipline playing out in everything Gutierrez has made since graduation. “She would do an incredible amount of reworking to get her plates the way she wanted them,” he says. “And with her videos it was the same, with constant editing and critiquing of the sequences, pushing her own understanding... and with such a clear vision of what she wanted to do.”

Four images from the *Masking* series in *Indigenous Woman*, Gutierrez’s 2018 faux fashion magazine and exhibition: *Cocoa Mask*, p50, *Green-Grape Mask*, p51, *Watermelon Mask*, p57, *24k Gold Mask*, p46. In all her work, she is the sole model, stylist and photographer all wrapped into one.

images: ©Martine Gutierrez | courtesy of the artist and RYAN LEE gallery, New York

Those who got to see Gutierrez's fall 2018 solo show at RYAN LEE gallery in Chelsea were awed by both the finesse and humor of the work and the provocative message behind it. The piece on the facing page is titled *Queer Rage, Growing Up Bites*, p64.

GREY AREA

Clear vision *and* incredible drive have since served Gutierrez well, though after moving to New York and gaining increasing recognition as a cultural figure worth watching, she has struggled with how to talk about her work and the intention behind it.

The art world notion that “all your ideas are coming from this place that’s completely thought out in advance” just isn’t how Gutierrez grew up making things—or wants to work now. “Even coming from RISD’s crit environment,” she says—and even with the level of thought, rigor and precision she invests in her work—she still prefers a “heart-to-hand” approach that’s open and broad enough to provoke, entice, disturb *and* elicit smiles.

“I think there’s an air of intellectualism [and rhetoric] that art needs [in order] to function,” she noted in a *Vice* interview.

“I don’t know if I’m trying to change that. I just know I don’t like to play that way.”

Instead, Gutierrez wants the freedom to make work that’s meaningful to her and of interest to what she hopes will be a growing audience. Given heightened political tensions in the US around issues of race and gender, with her latest body of work she thought long and hard about whether she has a right to comment from an “indigenous” perspective.

Probably not, she concedes, but then adds: “I have an Amerindigenous perspective... of both my parents’ cultures and yet neither, because it’s my own mess. I’ve been called every iteration of a ‘half breed,’ and it’s no doubt the origin of my questioning. I’m asking: What signifies a real, authentic, native-born woman? It’s a critique and a simultaneous investigation of what claim over these labels, stereotypes and iconographies I have.”

“While it is my desire... to provide some sustenance for my fellow millennial nonbinary transwomen of color, I sincerely hope that *all* audiences will find the work compelling.”



©Martine Gutierrez | courtesy of the artist and RYAN LEE gallery, New York



“We look at things as black and white when there’s so much grey. Even people who think they’re in the black or in the white—they have a foot in the grey. We all do.”



“My authenticity has never been to exist singularly, whether in regard to my gender, my ethnicity or my sexual orientation,” Gutierrez continues. “My truth thrives in the grey area, but society doesn’t yet allow an open consciousness to celebrate ambiguity.... We look at things as black and white when there’s so much grey. Even people who think they’re in the black or in the white—they have a foot in the grey. We all do. It’s impossible not to.”

As for the humor in her work, Gutierrez says: “We’re living in an era where my existence is political whether I want to be or not, [which is] really hard and emotionally taxing. So humor is my savior.” It’s also a way to reach viewers who may not immediately recognize or empathize with what she’s trying to convey.

“By digging my pretty, painted nails deeply into the dirt of my own image I am also probing the depths for some understanding of identity as a social construction,” the one-time editor in chief writes in her message. “It is also my ambition to forge a connection between the art world and my community. While it is my desire for *Indigenous Woman* to provide some sustenance for my fellow millennial nonbinary transwomen of color, I sincerely hope that all audiences will find the work compelling and captivating.”

Given the response so far, Gutierrez seems to be opening the conversation as hoped. “I believe it is possible to create an empathetic and supportive society,” her message concludes, “but it requires that we all educate ourselves—that we learn to be allies and activists who understand our own privilege. Mutual understanding has the power to change the world.”

The brilliance of the fashion magazine at the heart of Gutierrez’s exhibition extends to the ads, which include *White Wash Ad*, p13 and *Covertgirl Ad*, p43. In another poignant series she draws on her Guatemalan roots for images like *Neo-Indeo*, *Legendary Cakchiquel*, p20 (right).

Images: ©Martine Gutierrez | courtesy of the artist and RYAN LEE gallery, New York



GOOD THINGS



GET BETTER

After running a successful startup for five years, Jamie Wolfond welcomes the newfound freedom to design his own work again.

IT'S A STORY many alumni know well—from personal experience. Looking for the freedom to define the terms, set their own hours and be their own boss, creative people often choose an entrepreneurial route, either as they're starting out or as a way to transition to something new.

Yet often the dream of pursuing pure artistic freedom gets clouded by the realities of running a business, especially when it involves clients and/or investors. Between bookkeeping, management, logistics, manufacturing, shipping and more, the details are endless, the decisions difficult and the compromises inevitable.

For Canadian designer **Jamie Wolfond** 13 FD, Good Thing—the business he started just a year after graduation—essentially emerged out of his senior degree project in Furniture Design, which he titled *Why Not?*

In the spring of 2013 as he was about to graduate, Wolfond felt invincible and figured he'd take a gamble on the annual furniture fair in Milan, where he might pick up enough commissions to set up shop as an independent designer. But newbie that he was, he neither packed nor insured his prototypes quite right, so once he arrived in Milan he discovered that the shipment hadn't yet cleared customs. He also realized that the off-site location he had booked was so small and far off site that it didn't really matter that his work never made it in time for his opening.

Although Wolfond's post-RISD education by fire has come with a healthy dose of humility, things have brightened up in the past six years. Earlier this year he struck a significant new deal with West Elm, the trendy furniture and accessories company that has become something of an incubator for independent designers. As the exclusive retailer of Good Thing products, West Elm is now responsible for marketing and manufacturing, too, which gives him the freedom to get back to his own studio work again for the first time since graduation.

STARTING OUT

After that false start in Milan, Wolfond followed the well-worn design path to New York. But for him that "actually felt sort of depressing," he admits, since as a student he had interned in the Netherlands with two of his idols—Dutch designers who have the advantage of creating for a more progressive European market.

During his second summer—interning with the renowned designer **Bertjan Pot**—Wolfond says he also took to heart a design process in which "you don't really know where you're going until you get there. [Bertjan] will sit and experiment with a material," he explains, "and let that experimentation digress for anywhere from a couple months to a couple years—until it turns into something he feels is worth making. And if it doesn't, he puts it on a shelf and moves on."





Starting out in NYC, Wolfond quickly realized that the process he so valued didn't meet the realities of the US marketplace. In fact, he spent his first year after RISD "trying to get licensing projects through, and feeling frustrated with the opacity of the whole production and manufacturing process." After one of his designs (for a computer desk) got altered beyond recognition during production and others were dropped for logistical reasons, sheer exasperation forced him to take more control himself.

Figuring that he could produce limited quantities of two of his smaller designs and post them for sale on his website, Wolfond registered to debut them at *NY NOW*, a semi-annual trade show for home accessories and gifts. "The idea of beginning with smaller items and accessories was that there was an opening there that might not readily be there with furniture," he says. "There were

fewer companies doing everyday objects with a level of thought, and the brands that did were ready to be disrupted."

Within a few months Wolfond rounded up enough well-conceived products designed by friends that he officially incorporated Good Thing in 2014. Offered at reasonably affordable prices, the collection quickly gained a reputation for its playful take on a wide range of home accessories—from hooks and mirrors to bowls and coffee presses.

Less than five years later, Good Thing has established a strong following and Wolfond has learned a lot about himself, the industry and manufacturing—but not "how to make money," he admits. As creative director of a scaled-back version of the brand, he'll continue to work with three designers at Good Thing to develop new products, but West Elm will handle all aspects of manufacturing, including marketing, sales and distribution.

Now that Wolfond is no longer handling all the business aspects of running Good Thing, he's focused on designing his own work again. Earlier this year he debuted the collection of furniture and lighting shown on these pages at the *Stockholm Furniture Fair* in Sweden and *Salone Satellite* in Milan.

"Trying things that will probably fail is the only way to get better."



FREEDOM TO EXPERIMENT

In February when Wolfond debuted his own studio's first seven prototypes at the *Stockholm Furniture Fair*, design writers immediately recognized his collection of streamlined furniture and lighting (plus a mug and a vase) as "more varied, adventurous and experimental" than what he has been able to do through Good Thing. And the Toronto-based designer clearly welcomes the freedom to experiment again.

"After years of making products by the thousands," Wolfond says, "being able to make just one or two of something is a real luxury and gives me the ability to try things that may not work. When you're designing for industrial production, you have to be relatively conservative, but when you're making one prototype, the level of risk associated with doing something more ambitious is a lot less. Trying things that will probably fail is the only way to get better."

Consider his *Owl Lamp*, for instance, which is inspired by his obsession with bendable straws. Its flexible hose allows the shade to rotate 360 degrees around the bulb simply by moving the stem of the lamp.

A similar simple elegance is at work in his aluminum *Frog Vase*, which offers sharp spikes to support stems, along with a shallow dish for water. The intersection of its two func-

tional aspects make "patterns and shapes more beautiful than either part on its own," he says.

While Wolfond found a warm reception for his aesthetic among design-savvy Europeans who saw the work in Stockholm and a couple of months later at *Salone Satellite* in Milan, he's still unsure how his new studio venture will fare over the long run. By continuing to explore the interplay of manufacturing and the design process, he hopes to surface new applications for "common industrial crafts" that are "efficient or poetic or peculiar"—or ideally, a combination of all three. But for now, he says, "I'm just excited to keep designing. At the end of the day, the most important thing is the work." ■



A bit about Maurice Burns: born in Alabama in 1937 • mixed race (Native American–African–Scottish) • graduated from high school in Indiana in 1955 • served in the US Army from 1960 – 63 • earned a BFA in Painting from RISD in 1972 (with help from the GI Bill) • earned an MFA from the Royal College of Art/London in 1974 • helped launch a new program at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe in 1976 • living and painting in and around Santa Fe ever since • solo show Various Forms of Association on view from December 2018 – March 2019 at Gerald Peters Projects in Santa Fe

free

ASSOCIATION

by Maurice Burns 72 PT

I WAS BORN IN THE DEEP SOUTH—Talladega, AL. Hardcore Jim Crow/KKK country... had to sit in the back of the bus and all that bullshit.

When I was 13 my family moved to Gary, IN. Inner-city black environment. The first place I'd ever seen in my life with black bus drivers, postmen, firemen, policemen—and the high school was like the white high schools in the South: brick, two stories... Coming from the South it was amazing to see that.

I graduated from Gary Roosevelt High in '55 and had a high IQ in math so I went to Purdue University extension to take engineering courses while working as a bricklayer. After two years I decided I didn't want to be an engineer so I dropped out. Got drafted and was in the army from 1960–63.





previous page: photo by Peter Ogilvie | this spread: all images courtesy of the artist and Gerald Peters Projects, Santa Fe, NM

After I got out of the army I took a few menial jobs, went back to bricklaying for a minute and then got hired to be a telephone man. First telephone installer repairman in Gary, IN.

Later I got sent to IBM to learn programming and then was put in charge of a data processing center—the biggest one in the country at the time.

At Chicago City College I developed some computer systems and took over their payroll system and had it working like it never had before. So they put me in charge of the whole department but said I had to get a college degree first.

I was trying to figure out how to apply designing computer systems to art because I was taking drawing classes and drawing a lot at that time, and I decided ‘This is what I want to do.’ I was secure money-wise, driving a Porsche 911, living on the 28th floor of an exclusive high-rise on the North Side of Chicago, doing very well.

I used to walk to an old artists’ bar near where I lived in an area that was being redeveloped—buildings torn down, you know? But there was one building standing nearby with a storefront for local artists, and they had a sign in the window that read: *Money doesn’t mean much to me. Freedom is my security.*

I thought, ‘Man, these artists... have the freedom to create and live the life they dream of.’ I got to the point where I thought, ‘I’ve got money—but I don’t have the freedom to do what I want.’

So one night while I was standing out on North Avenue beach—the gleaming, high-rent area of Chicago—and looking toward Lake Michigan, there was this blinking buoy and I just got hypnotized by it—like it was beckoning to me, ‘Come this way.’ Like, you could go back and be trapped in those golden towers or you could go out into the unknown—into freedom—where you don’t know how it’s going to end. You’re leaping into the void so you’ve got to trust your beliefs and believe in yourself.

“I got to the point where I thought, ‘I’ve got money—but I don’t have the freedom to do what I want.’”



Although he lost most of his work in a studio fire in the 1970s, Maurice Burns has been making up for the loss ever since.

facing page: *Blues for Linda* (1989–93, oil on canvas, 56 1/4 x 76 x 1 1/2")
above: *Galisteo Fantasy* (diptych, 1989–93, oil on canvas, 56 x 119 1/4 x 1 1/2")

“Those were crazy, great days [at RISD in the late '60s]. I loved the school. A lot of fun—total freedom. It was all about painting.”

I was an older student when I got to RISD at the end of the '60s. [Painting Professor] **Richard Merkin** MFA 63 PT was the star at the time. Those were crazy, great days. I loved the school. A lot of fun—total freedom. It was all about painting. That was all I wanted to do. Still is.

There was no going back after RISD. I just took off and stretched my wings and never looked back.

I moved to London to study at the Royal College of Art and then got an offer to start a program at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, so I moved out there in the '70s and taught at College of Santa Fe. I bought five acres of land out in the boonies and spent two years building a house out there. Me and my wife had three kids in two years—and I helped deliver them all at home, including the twins.

I moved to Taos and painted for two years after we split up, but I didn't sell *enough* paintings so I moved back to Santa Fe and ended up living on a movie set for a few years—painting sets, aging stuff, making the paint peel and crack, making leather saddles, all kinds of shit.

Worked on a lot of Westerns and sci-fi stuff, but then I just got tired of the movie business. It was taking up too much of my time and they wanted me full-time and I said, 'I can't give it, man!' I was making \$2,000 a week on movie sets but I just thought, 'Fuck this. It isn't giving me time to paint!'

I was not committed... to the business just because there was good money in it and I got to walk around with movie stars. It just wasn't my world. I always wanted to be painting.

Burns sees his paintings as “about freedom” and the free associations he makes in his own mind as he works on each piece. The title of his recent solo show came from this painting, *Various Forms of Association* (1989, oil on canvas, 55 3/4 x 75 3/4 x 1 1/2"). Another work from the same period, *Notes to Myself* (1989–93, oil on canvas, 56 x 68 x 1 1/2"), on the facing page also shows the dreamlike approach in his compositions.



all images courtesy of the artist and Gerald Peters Projects, Santa Fe, NM

My paintings are about freedom—free association of imagery that I put on canvas. It might look arbitrary and random but it's held together tightly by the compositional positioning and framework.

I don't consciously choose to paint 'black' images or say I'm a black artist. It's better to just be myself and what comes out will come out. I just draw from my experiences—from the Deep South to inner-city black life to that rich, white, 28th-floor high-rise world.

When I'm painting I'm thinking about color, rhythm and randomness as well. I'll jump scale so that not everything is lined up to scale. It's about making order out of disorder. Each painting of mine I imbue with a new feeling. I'm creating a new world and inventing something new.



One thing I discovered at RISD is about how painting and music tie into one another. You use the same language to describe music that you do painting: rhythm, harmony, color, composition—all that. And each period of art had music that reflected that period, so I thought, 'Where are we at now?' and about what I like—jazz—and how improvisational it is.

Before RISD I took a course in advanced mathematics called *Theory of Complex Variables*. And that's the name of one of my new paintings (above) that features **Albert Einstein** and **Miles Davis** pictured together. I loved that title. To me that's life: a series of complex variables, and we don't have control of all of them.

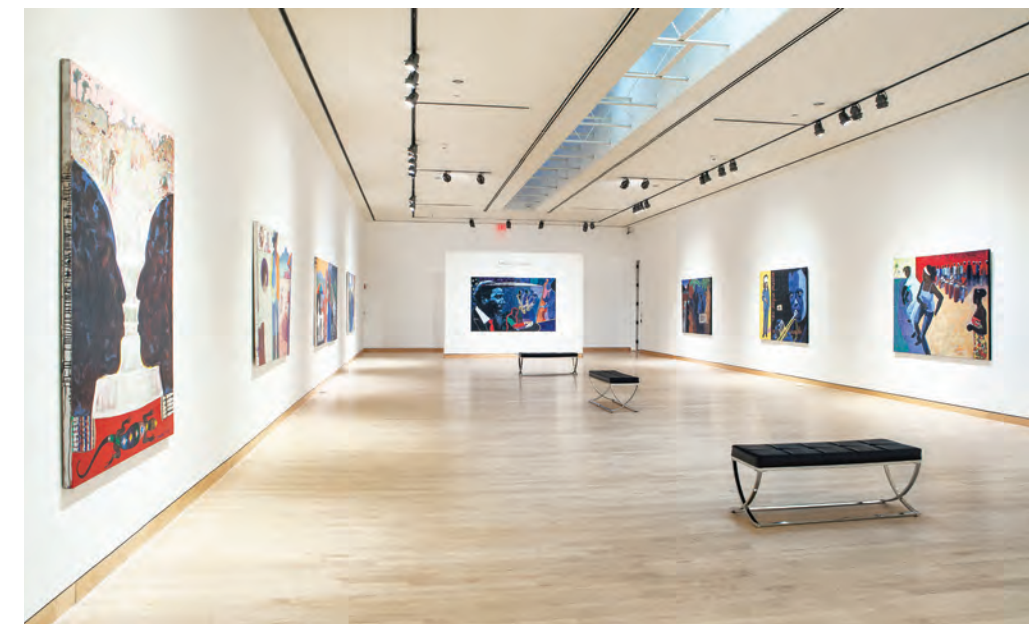
I've always been fascinated by Einstein because I have a mind for mathematical theories and all that shit. So he pops up in a lot of my images... Einstein represents theory to me, and music is made up of complex variables.

I still get excited about creating a good painting. I'm 82 years old and I feel like there's a lot of good painting left to do—like I'm just getting started, you know. I can't wait to get started on the next one. It's looking at me right now. And I'm still free. ■

all images courtesy of the artist and Gerald Peters Projects, Santa Fe, NM



"I still get excited about creating a good painting. I'm 82 years old and I feel like there's a lot of good painting left to do."



In *Theory of Complex Variables (Blue Miles)* (2018, oil on canvas, 56 x 76 x 1½") Burns merges his lifelong love of math and music and his ongoing fascination with Einstein and Miles Davis. Words also continue to surface

in recent paintings like *Illegal* (2018, oil on canvas, 56 x 76 x 1½"). These were among the large-scale paintings on view in his winter solo show at Gerald Peters Projects in Santa Fe, where the artist has lived for almost half a century.



“Creative freedom is precious because it is what expands us as individuals and drives us forward as a culture.”

compromises when one embarks on an adult working life. Yet those graduates who are without college debt begin their professional lives with far more freedom to pursue their dreams than do their peers, who must now balance their creative aspirations with the harsh financial reality of paying off student loans. RISD educates its graduates to be nimble, resourceful and tough, so that they may overcome all sorts of obstacles, but being weighed down by substantial debt at the start of one’s adult life is particularly onerous, especially for those in creative fields.

Knowing as we do that all RISD graduates have the talent and skills to not just envision, but actually forge a better world, having a sizable percentage of them limited for financial reasons in what career paths they pursue is not only self-defeating, but also compromises our deeply felt

commitment to social equity and inclusion. That’s why we are currently doing all we can to boost scholarship funding to low- and middle-income students by galvanizing our fundraising efforts and developing fresh revenue streams congruent with our educational mission, so that we will be proportionately less dependent on tuition income in the future.

We are also doubling down on our efforts to expand the demographic composition of our student body and faculty, and rethink the Eurocentric or colonialized bias embedded in traditional curricula and pedagogies. This might not at first seem related to creative freedom, but in fact it is. If you are limited in your vision—if your perspective is narrowly preconceived—you can have all the creative freedom possible, yet not be able to engender artistic expressions that will have true relevance to this complex global world of ours or conceive ingenious solutions to its problems.

That’s why by broadening the range of cultural traditions and bodies of knowledge taught at RISD, we hope to enlarge the creative lens of our entire community. And so, in the coming years, we expect RISD and all its graduates to help chart the future with a liberating confidence and global outlook.

—Rosanne Somerson

FREEDOM TO MOVE FORWARD

WHEN I THINK OF FREEDOM in regard to RISD, what immediately comes to mind is, of course, creative freedom. There is nothing so precious to emerging artists and designers because it is the wellspring of discovery. Without it, they cannot conceive the new and startling; transform the old into the revelatory; or, with a sudden inspired stroke, solve problems of long standing. Creative freedom is precious because it is what expands us as individuals and drives us forward as a culture.

At RISD we pride ourselves in offering students a safe and supportive space for unbounded exploration of their imaginative selves, while providing the rigorous instruction necessary to graduate as both skilled makers and engaged thinkers. That’s what makes a RISD degree so respected worldwide.

RISD graduates are more than virtuosi talents, they are vital doers and positive changemakers, able to take on all kinds of challenges, including those well beyond traditional understandings of art and design. In fact,

never before have so many RISD students expressed a desire to employ their skills in addressing societal, cultural and humanitarian concerns or in tackling issues of environmental restoration and sustainability. Their ardent commitment, not to mention the urgency of these matters, has caused us to plan ways to reconfigure our institution to meet their evolving educational needs and demands.

“...graduates who are without college debt begin their professional lives with far more freedom...”

Because the immersive learning we offer is so arduous, graduates often talk about having “survived RISD.” Students are regularly pushed beyond their seeming creative limits, so that they might discover

unknown depths, dimensions and abilities within themselves. During these days of physical toil and imaginative struggle, when students learn what it truly means to harness and negotiate creative freedom, a wonderful and rare camaraderie often develops among classmates, with students from entirely different backgrounds and experiences forging lasting friendships. That’s why for all the long nights and artistic travails, a graduate’s RISD years are almost always remembered as a creative idyll, another kind of freedom.

That idyll—along with the social parity it fosters—too often ends at Commencement. Of course, there are always professional



President Somerson (center) poses with several current scholarship students at a spring event that brings donors to campus

to meet the recipients of their support. facing page: Students at this spring’s Graduate Open Studios event.

Find ongoing stories about students, faculty and alumni at risd.edu/news. Use the search icon in the top right nav bar on the page to find the following stories by title:



Breaking Glass Boundaries

Pioneering glass artist **Therman Statom** 74 SC returns to RISD to speak with students about the value of building community.

Standing Up to Gun Violence

A multidisciplinary initiative at RISD draws attention to the thousands of lives lost in mass shootings since the massacre at Columbine High School 20 years ago.



Backing for Local Designers

Manan Narang MFA 18 FD, **Urvi Sharma** 17 FD and **Justin Kerr** 90 GD win 2019 Providence Design Catalyst awards in support of their practices.

Lifetime Achievement on Screen

Acclaimed cinematographer **Robert Richardson** 79 FAV earns new accolades for his work on Hollywood’s most memorable films.



On Being Old in Art School

Noted historian and author **Nell Irvin Painter** MFA 11 PT returned to RISD for a conversation about aging, ambivalence, ambition and starting over in art school.

two college street

// campus community newsbits



Concrete Comedy

Students clearly let loose during the production of *The Concrete Jungle Book*, an original post-apocalyptic musical comedy written and directed by Literary Arts + Studies faculty member **Fred Sullivan**.

Since 2008 the longtime Trinity Rep actor and resident director at Gamm Theater has led a *Wintersession Theater Production Workshop* in which students flex their acting abilities and also contribute to at least one behind-the-scenes aspect of live theater: costumes, makeup, set design, music and more. Built from the ground up in five intense weeks, this year's show was as colorful, crazy and original as ever.

CONSIDERING CHAIRS

This spring *The Chair Show*, a student-curated exhibition at the Gelman Gallery, filled the space with an incredible mix of work by 70 students from almost every major and invited viewers to reflect on chairs not just as utilitarian objects, but as symbols of domestic life, home and identity.

"As a senior in Furniture Design, I was thinking a lot about ergonomic chairs and good design," says co-curator **Hannah Bartlett** 19 FD (right), "but I

realized that students across RISD are painting chairs, drawing chairs, making ceramic chairs... and I thought it would be cool to see them all in one room."

Co-curator **Raina Wellman** 19 GD adds: "I love the innovative ways that people used materials and process and played with space and form to tell stories."



left: photo by David O'Connor



"I love the innovative ways that people used materials and process and played with space and form to tell stories."

Raina Wellman 19 GD

SOCIAL JUSTICE MESSAGE AT COMMENCEMENT



Honorary degree recipients and speakers at this year's Commencement ceremony include Pussy Riot cofounder **Nadya Tolokonnikova**, civil rights activist **Bryan Stevenson**, artist **Theaster Gates** and writer **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**.



Public interest lawyer and civil rights leader **Bryan Stevenson** is accepting an honorary degree and delivering the keynote address at RISD's 2019 Commencement ceremony on June 1. He joins writer **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**, artist **Theaster Gates** and activist **Nadya Tolokonnikova** as among the honored guests celebrating the 700-plus undergraduate and graduate students excited to collect their hard-earned degrees this spring.

This year's honorary degree recipients are also sharing the stage with Dr. **Joseph A. Chazan**, who will accept the RISD President's Medal of Honor in recognition of his lifelong generosity and enduring impact on the arts in Rhode Island.

As founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, AL, Stevenson has dedicated his career to helping people dealing with poverty and imprisonment—winning challenges opposing unfair sentencing practices, institutional abuse of inmates, youth incarceration and other major legal issues.

Gates, the keynote speaker at the Graduate Hooding Ceremony on May 31, creates sculptural



and performance-based work focusing on space theory, land development and the productive possibilities discoverable in the "life within things."

Through her writing, thought and activism, Adichie—who was born and raised in Nigeria—has helped shape some of the most pressing discussions of our time. Her award-winning novels include *Purple Hibiscus*, *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Americanah*.

A cofounder of the Russian art punk collective Pussy Riot, Tolokonnikova is a powerful voice in the fight against tyranny. After a 2012 public performance protesting the Putin-led Russian government, her two-year imprisonment brought wider awareness to state-sponsored injustices in her homeland.



Cross-cultural Partnership

Students in Furniture Design had the opportunity to show their work on the world stage in an exhibition called *RISD x Mabeo 2019*—on view first at *Ventura Future* in Milan during Milan Design Week in April and again at the *International Contemporary Furniture Fair* in NYC in May.

In a partnered research elective taught by Assistant Professor **Patty Johnson**, 13 juniors, seniors and graduate students worked with designer **Peter Mabeo** to unpack notions of cultural identity within the realm of contemporary art and design. The pieces they designed were then prototyped by Mabeo Furniture in Botswana.

INIMITABLE STYLE ON THE RUNWAY

Collection 19, Apparel Design's mid-May runway show in Providence, highlighted the unique design perspective of each of the department's 24 graduating seniors while also reflecting their shared vision and commitment to meticulous craft.

"Many of this year's seniors are motivated to change the industry from a 'more and faster' mindset

and are working to make a difference—either through their process or production methods," says Department Head **Lisa Z. Morgan**. "But there's also a visible joy in their approaches and a wonderful sense of camaraderie within the group. And their fusion of radical design thinking and irreverence makes for a potent mix."



Jono Cheong 19 AP takes a walk down the runway with one of his models. **Elizabeth Sheveley** 19 AP created a dramatic series made of red chiffon, and colorful space boots by **Danielle Simpkin** 19 AP rounded out her playful collection.

Facing page: Tolokonnikova photo by Jonas Akerlund | Ngozi Adichie photo by Wani Olatunde | Stevenson photo by Beth Perkins

PRAISE FOR NOBLE DISCONTENT



Assistant Dean **Tony Johnson** 93 SC and Assistant Provost for Social Equity & Inclusion **Matthew Shenoda** share a laugh with visiting scholar **Cornel West**, RISD's 2019 Martin Luther King, Jr. keynote speaker.

On January 23 visiting scholar and social activist **Cornel West** addressed a packed house in the RISD Auditorium when he delivered the annual keynote address honoring the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Harvard professor and author of 20 important books about race and democracy spoke with contagious energy and humor, describing King as neither a saint nor a celebrity but rather an earnest man pushing back against centuries of racial divide.

West repeatedly made the point that for people of color in the US the path to truth and beauty is paved with long-term resilience and a refusal “to allow despair to have the last word.” He reflected on King’s “noble discontent” and his lifelong calling, asserting that “indifference to evil is more insidious than evil itself.”

“Brother King was a love warrior and a spiritual giant,” West proclaimed, “but he didn’t get here by himself. His people were chronically and systemically hated for 400 years... and yet he chose to teach the world what love is.”

“Indifference to evil is more insidious than evil itself.”

visiting scholar **Cornel West** delivering RISD’s 2019 MLK keynote

NEW PROVOST JOINS COMMUNITY



Since arriving at RISD in March, new provost **Kent Kleinman** has already learned a lot through immersion in day-to-day life on campus.

A seasoned professor and dean, he brings broad teaching and administrative experience to RISD from positions at Cornell, Parsons, the State University of New York (SUNY)/Buffalo and the University of Michigan (U-M)/Ann Arbor, among others. For the past decade, he served as Gale and Ira Drukier Dean of the College of Architecture, Art, and Planning at Cornell, where he was actively engaged in overseeing curricular innovation, art initiatives and building projects.

As Kleinman has learned more about faculty, students and the 21 degree programs he oversees, he sees “an astonishing, intense and wildly creative community” at RISD. He also considers it “a tremendous privilege to be invited to join this remarkable institution. In this time of profound cultural, environmental and technological shifts, RISD’s well-established leadership in art and design education is in demand as rarely before.”

top: photo by David O'Connor | left: photo by Jo Sittenfeld MFA 08 PH

right: photo by Riley McCreaghnan 20 FW



Designing Brilliance

Gorham Silver: Designing Brilliance 1850–1970—the most comprehensive exhibition about Rhode Island’s historic manufacturing company ever mounted—showcases 600 pieces of silver created during the company’s heyday, along with original tools and design drawings. “We wanted to reach beyond the end product itself—the silver—to also focus on the people who made

Gorham what it was within the contexts of social history, design history, industrial history, manufacturing and advertising,” says **Elizabeth A. Williams**, who curated the 6,000-sf exhibition at the RISD Museum. After opening in May, it will remain on view there through December 1 before traveling to the Cincinnati [OH] Art Museum and the Mint Museum in Charlotte, NC.



REFRAMING AFRICAN IDENTITIES

Assistant Professor of Architecture **Emanuel Admassu** is conducting pioneering research exploring how evolving notions of global art and design play out in Africa and across the African diaspora. As the inaugural recipient of the department’s Design Research Seed Fund (supported by the Cannon Foundation) he is working with fellow architect **Jen Wood**—his partner at AD-WO—and a group of RISD Architecture students to examine the constructed spatial and sociopolitical identities of urban marketplaces in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where he was born.

This spring the *Two Markets* team shared their research to date through an exhibition and presentation in the BEB Gallery, where they invited viewers to crowd into the space in an attempt to simulate the press and intensity of an African market. They then made their way through the crowd discussing the drawings they had suspended from the ceiling.



Tapping into Intuition

In *Everything All At Once*, Assistant Professor of Sculpture **Taylor Baldwin** '05 SC exhibited multimedia sculptures and videos created while working under a set of self-imposed constraints—including limited interaction with other people and minimal exposure to language—as a way of developing a more intuitive approach. The solo show at Wayfarers in March was his first in NYC.



FIRST ENDOWED CHAIR IN TEXTILES



Longtime Professor **Anais Missakian** '84 TX has been appointed RISD's first Pevaroff-Cohn Family Endowed Chair in Textiles. In her ongoing efforts to give back and support current students and faculty, RISD trustee **Lisa Pevaroff** '83 TX has generously funded the endowed chair position in Textiles—the major she and Missakian share. “This gift is in honor of Anais,” she says. “No one embodies the RISD mission of excellence in teaching and making the way she does.”

Missakian began teaching at RISD nearly 30 years ago and has since served as department head and graduate program director in Textiles as well as interim dean of Fine Arts. Her lifelong love of textiles—which she says is “in my DNA” given that fiber and fabric are so central to Armenian culture—is serving her well as she looks to the future of the discipline.

Missakian is engaged in advanced textiles research through Advanced Functional Fabrics of America (AFFOA) in Cambridge, MA, where she's working with a team of designers, scientists and engineers to develop groundbreaking textiles. She also continues to lead the Salama bint Hamdan Emerging Artists Fellowship (SEAF) program in Abu Dhabi, a RISD partnership to develop the UAE's burgeoning fine arts scene by supporting its most promising emerging artists.

And closer to home Missakian continues to find great joy in working with RISD students. “This place is such an important part of my life,” she says. “I'm truly honored to serve as the department's first endowed chair.”

Faculty Newsbits

Experimental and Foundation Studies faculty members **Yevgeniya Baras** and **Deborah Zlotsky** have each earned 2019 Guggenheim Fellowships, which will enable both painters to take a break from teaching and focus on making new work for solo exhibitions slated for September–Zlotsky's at Kathryn Markel Fine Arts in NYC and Baras' at Reyes Projects in Detroit, MI.

Nikki Juen '90 GD, a longtime faculty member in Experimental and Foundation Studies, has earned RISD's John R. Frazier Award for Excellence in Teaching for, as students write, her “outstanding organizational and communication skills, exemplary syllabi, crystal-clear assignments, holistic studio practices, critical feedback, radiant energy and her loving attention to the individual and community.”

Professor **Sheri Wills**, a film/video expert, has also earned a 2019 John R. Frazier Award for Excellence in Teaching for her extraordinary ability to inspire and guide students. Passionate and organized, she's known for her open, flexible and exciting learning environments, skills as a communicator and ability to build community.

above left: photo by Jo Sittenfeld MFA '08 PH

right: photo courtesy of Peirogi Gallery

Last winter the RISD community mourned the loss of three influential professors who made a lasting impact here.

ALICE MARCOUX | 1930–2019



Alice Marcoux, a longtime professor of Textiles who first started teaching at RISD in 1971, died at home in Providence on January 11, 2019. She was 88.

Alice led a full life as an artist and craftsperson who was always painting, sewing, knitting, weaving and

crocheting—and teaching others. She studied at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, where she met her husband of 66 years, furniture designer **John Marcoux** (who passed away in 2016). In the late 1950s—while raising four children—she designed puppets and cloth toys for D/R International and went on to work as the lead designer at Rosen Shoe Company in Cambridge, MA. In the late 1960s she launched a career in weaving (which she learned from a friend) and continued to do a range of consulting work in fabrics and interiors.

At RISD Alice taught weaving and served as department head in Textiles for for many years before she retired.

DAWN CLEMENTS | 1958–2018

Dawn Clements, an assistant professor in Experimental and Foundation Studies, died on December 4, 2018 at age 60 from cancer. Her works on paper transported viewers via massive, intricate pieces in sumi ink, ballpoint pen and watercolor that art critic **Jillian Steinhauer** aptly describes as “still lifes that refuse to be still.”

“I make my drawings by sort of crawling across the page,” Dawn said in a 2018 interview published in *The Paris Review*. “What I draw depends on what I find or what I have. I hate drawing nature because I get lost,” she added. “I always try to create boundaries for myself.”

Long based in Brooklyn, Dawn earned a BA from Brown University and an MFA from SUNY/



Albany and taught at Yale, MICA and CalArts, among others, before coming to RISD in 2011. She earned support from the Guggenheim Foundation, the American Academy in Rome and the Joan Mitchell Foundation and has work in the permanent collections of MoMA, the Whitney and the Tang Museum, among others.

SETH STEM | 1947–2018



Professor Emeritus **Seth Stem**, who taught at RISD for 37 years, died at home in Pawtucket, RI on December 25, 2018 due to complications from Parkinson's Disease. He was 71.

A lifelong fixer, maker and builder, Seth worked out of his woodshop in a mill loft by the Blackstone River that he and his wife **Pamela Hughes** converted as their home. When Parkinson's left him unable to use his shop equipment, he donated it all to The Steel Yard, a community industrial arts center in Providence.

Seth earned a BA in Landscape Architecture from Penn State and an MFA in Furniture Design from Virginia Commonwealth University and at RISD taught courses in furniture design, woodworking and composites. He was best known for his popular *Chair Studio* in Industrial Design, where he led the Furniture Program and served as graduate program director for many years.

Whenever Seth traveled, he sought out craftspeople to watch them work and always carried with him reading glasses of various strengths that he would offer to those who were struggling to see their work with clarity. Those moments epitomized his essence: travel with purpose, respect for handcrafts and a quiet joy in helping.



“When I got to RISD I had nothing more than my drawing hand, but by the time I graduated I had vision, inspiring friends and the means to build a creative life.”

designer/illustrator **Bree Westphal** 11 IL

TIME TO PLAN AHEAD

It was a nudge from her employer that gave **Bree Westphal** 11 IL the perfect opportunity to give back to RISD. Although the illustrator and UX designer had always thought she'd “need to be wealthy in order to make a meaningful gift” to her alma mater, she was pleasantly surprised to learn that by naming the college as the beneficiary of her retirement accounts, she doesn't “need to have a whole lot now to give a lot back later.”

Now based in Madison, WI, Westphal says that naming RISD as her beneficiary made total sense. “When I got to RISD I had nothing more than my drawing hand,” she says, “but by the time I graduated I had vision, inspiring friends and the means to build a creative life.” After initially working in the gaming industry, Westphal now helps children learn at Curriculum Associates. “I am a designer and illustrator for reading comprehension software that helps to improve children's literacy across the US,” she says. “I'm driven by the possibility that I might help lift a kid out of a dead-end situation

through education—the way I was lifted out of mine.” Given the scholarship support she received at RISD, Westphal says, “I was able to graduate with a considerable—but manageable—amount of debt that I could pay off on time, even as I took positions with lower pay overseas.”

As for the gesture she recently made in return, Westphal says, “I'm excited that I will help RISD students in the future.” And she's now one of the youngest members of the Metcalf Society, which recognizes those who have included RISD in their estate plans.

Please contact **Joanne Ferchland-Parella** at jferchla@risd.edu or 401 454-6431 for more information about planned giving opportunities.



Westphal says she's been lucky to work with great clients (including Disney Imagineering) since graduation and sees giving to RISD as a way of sharing in that success.



Supporting RISD's Greatest Needs

No one involved in founding RISD in 1877 could have imagined the art and design world of today. Nor can anyone now predict the world our graduates will enter in the coming decades. But with support from our community, RISD will maintain the flexibility to meet challenges and opportunities as they arise and educate our students to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

“Giving without restriction is a vote of confidence in RISD.”

trustee and TV producer/director **Ilene Chaiken** 79 GD

Contributors who choose to support RISD's greatest needs through the RISD Fund have made it possible for the college to increase support for students, provide research funding for faculty, bring visiting artists to campus, build new concentrations and launch an impactful Social Equity and Inclusion program.

“Giving without restriction is a vote of confidence in RISD,” says Trustee **Ilene Chaiken** 79 GD, a producer, director and writer best known for *The L Word* and her recent work as the showrunner of *Empire*. “I have great faith in and respect for President Somerson,” she adds, “and I want her to have the opportunity to invest my support in a way that has the greatest impact and benefit for RISD students.”

Tax-deductible contributions to the RISD Fund are welcomed at risd.edu/giving.

LEARNING FROM EVERY STITCH



For **Masha Kurguzkina** 19 AP, RISD has provided the perfect creative space to experiment with color and shape—something she has loved since she was very young. “Studying at such an intense institution with incredible talent from all over the world has made me curious about things I never would have thought about before,” says the senior, who grew up in Kazakhstan. “Being here has challenged my conservative thinking and my strict beliefs. It has also inspired me to look

deeper, research the unexpected, read different literature and talk to new people.”

Thanks to a Parents' Council Internship Award, Kurguzkina was able to spend last summer working at Atelier Caraco in Paris. There she and classmate **Alex Riddle** 19 AP learned from designers working with clients, fashion houses and museums to reconstruct historic garments and create costumes for films and performances.

“Haute-couture work is extremely delicate and requires a lot of time,

focus and the right skill set,” Kurguzkina says. “Learning the craft of making these pieces by hand—to evoke a sense of true beauty and restore historical value—while enjoying every stitch and developing a bond with the garments made the experience invaluable.”

In providing for paid internships, the Parents' Council “helps students access opportunities that would not have been affordable otherwise,” Kurguzkina says. “And that allows us to focus more on our art than our finances.”

During an internship in Paris last summer, Apparel Design senior **Masha Kurguzkina** 19 AP made a red underlayer skirt and painstakingly cut out and hand-sewed details onto the delicate fine tulle of this Schiaparelli dress. The experience at Atelier Caraco gave her the confidence to create her own striking collection this spring.

Show your support for student internships with a gift to the RISD Fund at risd.edu/giving.



In response to the call to honor RISD's Founders Day with community service activities, alumni groups in (from far left to right) Los Angeles, Beijing and Hong Kong did volunteer work with victims of California's forest fires, China's migrant workers' children and Hong Kong's elderly population.



HONORING RISD'S SPIRIT

In March RISD introduced a new spring tradition around Founders Day, celebrating the official incorporation of the school on March 22, 1877. Since a group of visionary women first got the idea off the ground—40 years before women even had the right to vote in the US—successive members of the RISD community have challenged expectations and pushed the boundaries of creative learning.

To honor this spirit, alumni groups around the world joined students, faculty and staff in celebrating Founders Day through Day of Service activities in their local communities.

On the West Coast, **Liz MH Lanphear** 04 FAV and **Marisa Murrow** 00 PT partnered with Help California to assist residents of Malibu with cleanup efforts

after the recent forest fires. “We helped a woman fill an entire dumpster with metal objects that were barely recognizable,” Murrow says. “She and her boyfriend are living in a trailer on the property along with about seven dirty (yet friendly) foster cats.... They kept thanking us, and we realized that just having people there was giving them energy to press forward.”

In Beijing, seven alumni spent an afternoon working at Cold Spring Community, an after-school program dedicated to teaching arts, science, sports and urban farming to the children of migrant workers. “These workers cannot legally live in large cities and as such have no access to basic social services such as housing, healthcare or public education for their families,” notes club leader **Catherine McMahon**

BArch 03. “Because the kids have little access to arts education in school, we decided to do a fun, messy, arts-based workshop with a group of 5–9-year-olds.”

In Hong Kong the ever-enthusiastic group led by **Donald Choi** BArch 82, **Frank Chow** BLA 92 and **Rex Wong** BArch 03 contributed to the shared spirit of service by visiting with the elderly at Yan Chai Hospital Chinachem Care and Attention Home.

FIRST DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI COMMUNITIES



Alumni responding to last summer's survey (*see next page*) made it clear that they're eager to remain involved with RISD and with one another. In fact, 79% of respondents said they want to participate more via educational, cultural and professional networking events.

That's music to the ears of newly hired Director of Alumni Communities **Tue Tran**, who came to RISD this spring after working in similar positions at Pratt and the NYU Stern School of Business. He and **Katrina Ellis**, assistant director of Alumni Communities, are working to introduce a series of affinity groups

(*see below*) and expand the existing network of geographically based alumni clubs around the country and the world.

“Tue brings the ideal knowledge and expertise to this new role and will help expand programming in interesting new ways,” notes Executive Director of Alumni Relations **Christina Hartley** 74 IL.

“Our goal is to build a cohesive program that offers everything from behind-the-scenes museum tours and artist talks to webinar trainings and professional recruiting events,” Tran explains. “We can't do that without alumni volunteers who give of their time and energy, so we're also planning to support them through leadership development training.”

“I've always loved working with creative people,” says Tran, who holds a bachelor's degree from Boston College and an MBA from NYU Stern. “I'm looking forward to collaborating on alumni programming with our partners in RISD Careers, Student Affairs and across campus, and meeting the alumni I'll be working with face-to-face when they come here for RISD Weekend in October.”

NATURAL AFFINITY FOR NETWORKING

Based on interest identified through the alumni survey (*see next page*), this spring the Office of Alumni Relations launched its inaugural affinity groups to help alumni connect through shared professional interests. These new groups offer alumni and students the opportunity to network across geographic areas, class years and majors through cultural and social events, service projects, webinars and other learning opportunities.

Affinity groups formed so far include:

RISD Architects brings together alumni engaged with architecture, interior architecture and landscape architecture | group leaders: **Bob Schaeffner** BArch 81, **Will McLoughlin** BArch 09

RISD Alumni in Film + Television serves as a network of artists and designers working in film and television | group leaders: **Ilene Chaiken** 79 GD, **Ryan Cunningham** 02 FAV

RISD Alumni in Tech links creative professionals interested in the technology sector | group leaders: **Jonathan Arena** 09 GD, **Michael Neff** 04 PH

RISD Chinese Professionals serves Chinese alumni working—or hoping to work—in the US | group leader: **Xinye Lin** MArch 18

RISD Founders and Entrepreneurs builds connections among the 45% of alumni who have founded organizations or businesses

To join one of these groups or to start your own, please email alumni@risd.edu or call toll-free: 844 454-1877 to get started.

here's what you said

Last summer we contacted approximately 26,000 alumni to survey perspectives about your experiences with RISD since graduation, how you value your education and how you'd like to stay connected. Nearly 2,500 of you – a 10% response rate – offered thoughtful responses.

"RISD is thankful that so many alumni shared their thoughts and perspectives with us," says **Christina Hartley** 74 IL, executive director of Alumni Relations. "Our alumni are extraordinary and we are excited to build programs that respond to your input to make our global community even stronger."

New programs are being created to support networking, volunteering and learning so that RISD remains relevant to alumni

long after graduation. These include:

- ▶ **new alumni clubs**
- ▶ **new affinity groups** (see previous page)
- ▶ **discounts on courses** (20% on RISD Summer Studies, 10% on Continuing Education courses)
- ▶ **new lifelong learning opportunities** focusing on business skills and other areas of interest

"These are just a few programs RISD has implemented in response to alumni feedback," says **O'Neil Outar**, vice president of Institutional Engagement. "RISD is at an exciting moment in its history. We are deepening ties with alumni as we launch our new strategic plan, which will set the course for the college and museum for the next decade."

For more information about alumni programs, please contact alumni@risd.edu or call (toll free) 1 844 454-1877.

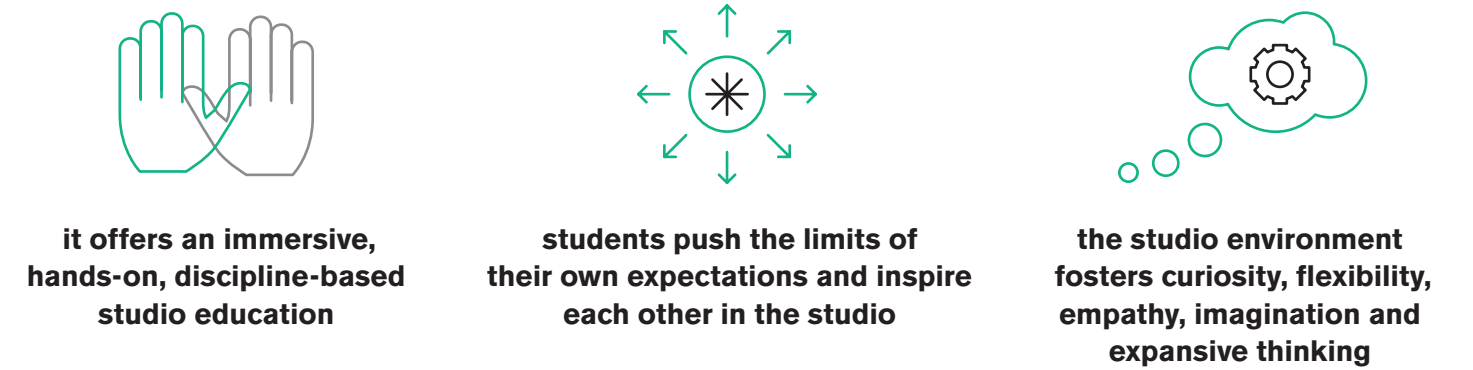
"Alumni are crucial partners who will help build RISD's future."

O'Neil Outar, vice president of Institutional Engagement

the RISD experience makes an impact



the most valued qualities about the RISD experience



alumni feel positive about RISD



9 of 10

rate their academic experience at RISD as good or excellent



97%

are proud to have attended RISD

RISD fuels passion



2/3

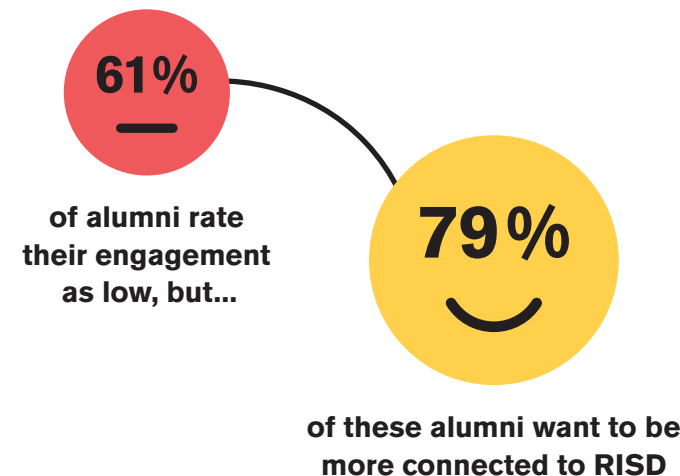
of respondents knew they wanted to become artists or designers by age 14



45%

of alumni respondents have started a business or organization

alumni want to connect



Look for new ways to connect: join affinity groups and regional clubs, come back to campus for RISD Weekend and volunteer for RISD Serves projects.

looking back //changes over time



In the 1960s, when the student body was much smaller, Commencement used to be held outdoors – on the lawn behind Woods-Gerry. From the late 1970s to the mid 1990s, the ceremony took place downtown at the Providence Performing Arts Center. In 1996 the event shifted to Brown's Meehan Auditorium skating rink, followed by various outdoor sites on campus before landing at the Rhode Island Convention Center, where it's now held.



That Time of Year Again

Historically, Commencement at RISD has been joyous, irreverent, sweet, sad and crazily exuberant. For decades graduates have been given free reign to transform their standard-issue caps and gowns any way they wish – which, RISD being RISD, opens up possibilities for plenty of visual surprise on the big day.

“Continue to color the world with your own vision [and] look with big eyes at all the largeness of human possibility.”

Tom Albrecht 91 IL delivering the student speech at RISD's 1991 ceremony

moving forward //undergraduate class notes



“The challenge for me in studio is usually deciding on which colors to mix [and how to add] as many glazes as possible until I can’t fire anymore.”

Brian Rochefort 07 CR (see also page 79)

1958

The DePaul Art Museum in Chicago recently acquired *Pow* (2007), a paper collage by NYC-based artist **Merle Temkin TX**, for its permanent collection. Six of her paintings were also included in *Prime Time*, a spring show at the Islip Art Museum in East Islip, NY.

1960

Last fall artist and art therapist **Jean Winslow IL*** offered a collaging workshop called *SoulMapping* that introduced participants seeking inner wisdom to the language of symbols, dreams and archetypes. She lives in Lowell, MA.

1963

Last December Long Island-based painter **Dinah Maxwell Smith PT** showed work in a group exhibition at

the Cultural Arts Playhouse in Syosset, NY. Sponsored by the Huntington Arts Council, it featured works in every medium by artists over 50.

Earlier this year **Wayne Thompson GD** exhibited 3D work from his *Red, Yellow & Blue* series in an annual show at Artistree Gallery in South Pomfret, VT that focuses on local artists who work on their art every day of the year.

1964

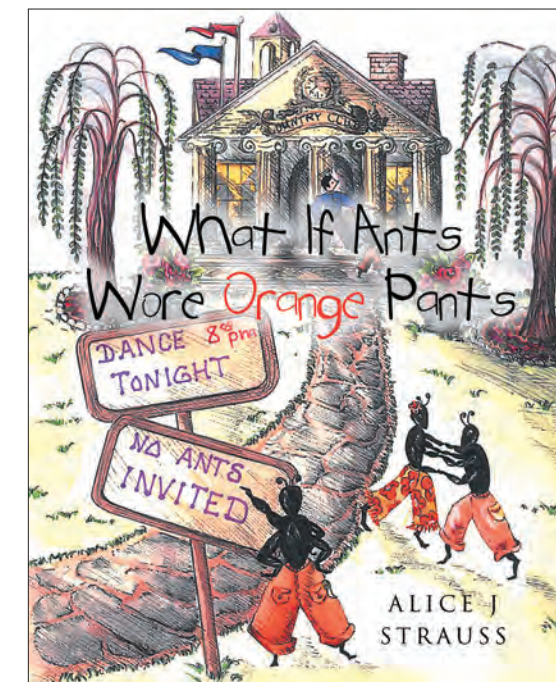
Nancy Crasco AE and **Ken Crasco 65 LA** showed fiber art and pottery, respectively, in *Wedded to Art*, a two-person winter exhibition at the Faneuil Branch of the Boston Public Library. Married for more than 50 years and now retired, the artists enjoy working together in their home studios in Boston’s Oak Square neighborhood.

Alice Johanson Strauss

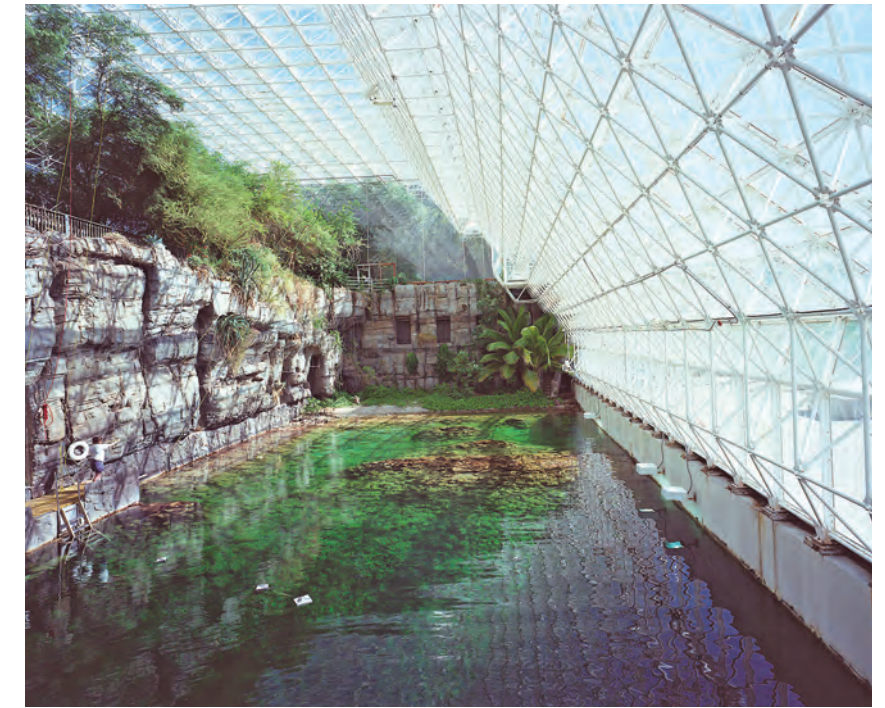
64 TX
What If Ants Wore Orange Pants (2018), an ABC book originally made for her grandsons, has inspired two new books in progress. “A RISD education really never wears out or fades away,” says Alice, who is retired from her career as a textiles artist. Her original plates from the children’s book were on view in a winter solo show at the Wyoming County Courthouse in Tunkhannock, PA, where she lives.

Earlier this spring work by **Elizabeth Ginsberg TX** (West Orange, NJ) was on view in *Divergent Evolution*, a group show at the SMI Gallery in Montclair, NJ. Last December her mixed media works were included in the *Invitational Holiday Exhibition* at Viridian Gallery in NYC.

In a profile in the summer 2018 issue of *Venü* magazine, **Sterett-Gittings Kelsey SC** (Roxbury, CT) reflected on



Please email class notes submissions to: risdxyz@risd.edu.



Jim Breukelman 66 PH

above: *Altered States*, a spring solo show at the West Vancouver [Canada] Art Museum, featured work from several of Jim’s well-known series, including *Mesocosm* (2003), which focused on a failed biosphere experiment, and wonderfully atmospheric photos shot at Sanson’s Diner in Pawtucket, RI, when he was still at RISD. Jim founded the photography program at Emily Carr University of Art + Design and is among Vancouver’s best-known photographers.

Gillian Pederson-Craig

61 PT
below: Last September Gillian and Victoria Romanoff 61 PT—both of whom earned MFAs at Cornell—exhibited together in a two-person show at ArtSpace in Ithaca, NY, where they both live. A local reviewer notes the wonderful “emotional and narrative resonances” between Gillian’s still lives and Victoria’s assemblages.

her career-long practice of making dance-inspired bronze sculpture. “Just as a photographer tries to catch his subject

and hold it still,” she told readers, “the sculptor takes something that is standing still and tries to make it move.”





JOIE DE VIVRE

Living alone in South Philadelphia, **Alden Cole** 66 AP happily professes to having: “No mortgage. No partner. No kids. No pets.” But he does have a good life and good friends, along with a growing collection of self-generated artwork.

Over the past three decades Cole has filled his home—floor to ceiling—with his own eclectic output, from transcendental paintings to drawings, photographs and luminous lamps. He works in the studio every day and, just after midnight, sends out a daily email to a couple hundred readers that he considers “a slow-motion memoir” of his life as an artist.

At 75 Cole says he’s “almost ready to make an artist’s statement,” but what interests him more these days is how much he relates to the idea of “impostor syndrome,” which we mentioned in this magazine a year ago. That’s when he ripped out the page with the provocative cartoon by **Alison Blackwell** 07 IL in which she admits to feeling less *accomplished* than a lot of fellow alums yet is “genuinely happy... and satisfied” with her life and creative path.

So, too, with Cole, who has spent the half century-plus since graduation hellbent on carving out the creative freedom he

needs to thrive. After graduation he had no real plan but served in the US Air Force for two years before moving to New York, where he worked for 11 years as a fashion designer and illustrator for trade publications and later as a cover designer for books about religion, mysticism and the occult. In his late 20s, he began painting in earnest. “It was necessary for my own sanity at that time,” he says.

In 1986, after a series of personal misadventures “became a nightmare,” Cole moved to Philadelphia to study with a spiritual guide—and has lived there ever since. “I never found the key to vast riches and/or widespread fame,” he says of his post-RISD path, “but it’s been an interesting ride nevertheless.”

Now, Cole senses that the humble house of art he has made over the decades will likely play a big role in his ultimate goal: to wake up laughing one day. When you enter, a hand-painted message invites you to leave your “inhibitions” behind with your shoes. It’s just a hint that, as he puts it, “you’re really walking into a pre-made environment designed to try to bring out some level of joyous understanding of life.”

photo by Michael Bryant/Philadelphia Inquirer

1967

Textiles artist **Deidre Scherer** AE showed woven tributes to senior citizens in a winter group exhibition at Mitchell-Giddings Fine Arts in Brattleboro, VT. She’s now exhibiting 11 new collaborative works in the two-person show *Jackie Abrams & Deidre Scherer: Connections*, which is on view through June 16 at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, near her home in Williamsville, VT.

1968

After graduation **Susan Rebecca (McGunigle) Gibbons Linnell** IA relocated from Boston to London, where she worked for Milton Keynes and then a regional health authority in Oxford. She earned an MBA at the London Business School and directed a graphic design firm for several years before moving back to the US and becoming a property

investor in Vermont. To correct a bio that ran in last fall’s 50th reunion booklet, Susan says she’s proud of the two now-grown children (Elliot and Laura) she co-parented with **Jon Gibbons** BArch.

1969

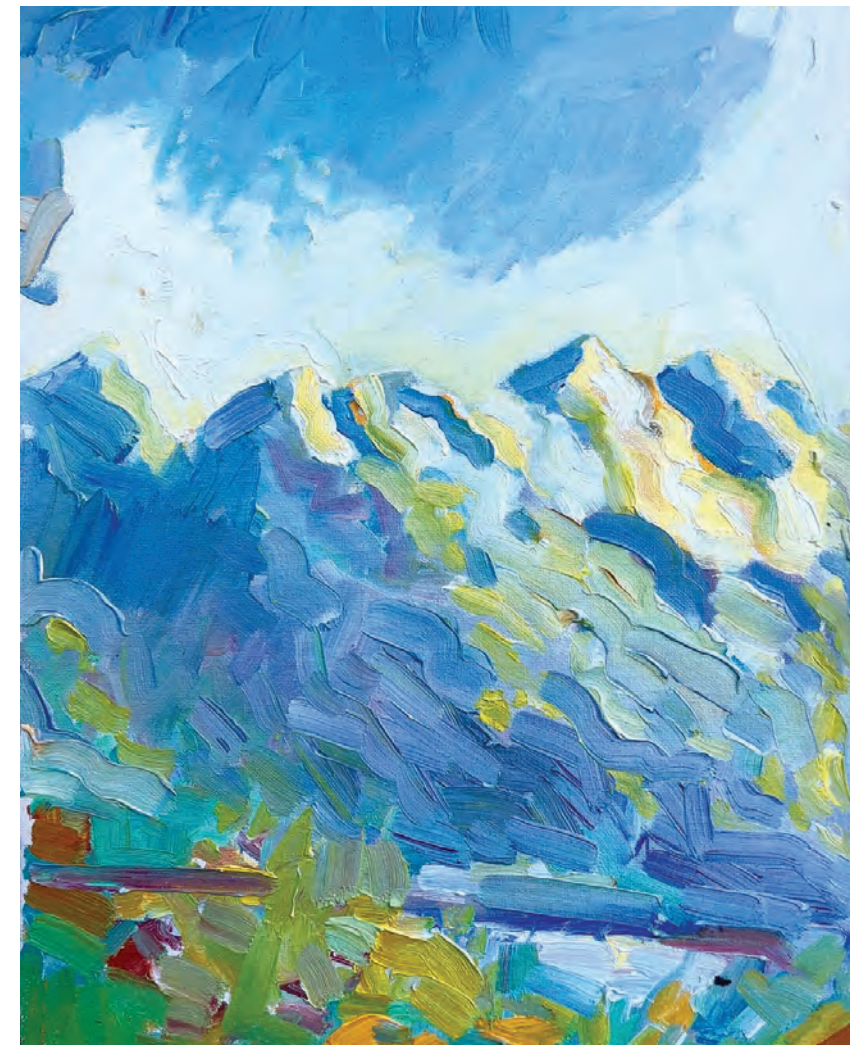
50th Reunion October 11–13
Kate Frank Cohen PH showed prints in *PAIRS*, a group photography exhibition on view from March 9–April 8 at the Photo/Graphic Gallery SMA in San Miguel de Allende, México, where she lives.

Eclipse/Phase—an evocative installation **Deborah Cornell** PT created with her husband, composer Richard Cornell, for the *Krakow Print Triennial*—was on view again in March for one night only at Tarrant County College in Fort Worth, TX. Deborah serves as head of Printmaking at

Marjorie Hellman 71 PT *Somnambulant 5* (acrylic on panel, 12 x 12”) was among the paintings and recent works on paper on view in *Night into Day*, a solo exhibition (November–January) at ArtProv Gallery in Providence. Since relocating to a live/work space in RI several years ago, Marjorie says that memories and experiences from her “formative years” at RISD are resurfacing and influencing her studio work.

Boston University’s College of Fine Arts.

Multidisciplinary artist **George Delany** GD (Rehoboth, MA) showed a painting called *Love... Search* at the Newport [RI] Art Museum’s *Annual Members’ Juried Exhibition*. Work by **Meris Barreto** 70 AE (Providence) was also included in the show, which was on view from February 2–March 17.



1970

Working with Heartland Hospice and Five Points Center for Active Adults in Raleigh, NC, local artist **Christy Colebank** IL recently conducted a series of workshops focused on expressing loss through art.

The Social Design Reader (Bloomsbury Visual Arts), a new book edited by **Elizabeth Resnick** GD/MFA 96 (Chestnut Hill, MA), presents key writings tracing the evolution of socially responsible design and demonstrates how to use design as a catalyst for change.

The Wen Long Cultural Foundation in Taiwan recently acquired two paintings by Massachusetts-based artist **Andrew Stevovich** PT depicting (in his inimitable style) expressionless riders of mass transit. One of them, *Local/Switch*, is also featured on the cover of *The Collective Journey*, a new book by Chilean writers Tomás Errázuriz and Guillermo Giucci.

Henry Isaacs

73 PT Earlier this spring Henry and his wife traveled to the Himalayas to do on-site sketching (like this view of the eastern Himalayas) for the most monumental commission he has received to date: to paint an 8x8-foot painting of Mount Everest. In March he exhibited new work in *Travel Notes*, a solo show at Greenhut Galleries in Portland, ME, where he lives.

1971

Last October NYC-based artist **Michael Louis Johnson** SC exhibited recent quasi-abstract oil-on-canvas paintings in a two-person show at the Bowery Gallery (which represents him) in Manhattan.

In response to the hurricanes, floods and tornados **Lawrence Philip** PT has experienced in Florida and Georgia in recent years, he created a series of mixed media paintings that were on view earlier this spring. His solo show *Works on Paper from the Series 16 Times 8 Equals One* ran for a month at Lockhart Gallery in Geneseo, NY.

1972

Maurice Burns PT (see pages 34–41)

In January painter **Carlton Fletcher** PT (Washington, DC) showed work in *Still Happenings*, a group exhibition celebrating the genre of still-life at Kaplan Gallery in Rockville, MD.

Printmaker **Lynn Kortenhuis** PR/MFA 75 showed new works on paper inspired by the sea in a solo show (October–January) at CambridgeSeven’s Paul Dietrich Gallery in Cambridge, MA. “I love process,” the Massachusetts-based artist says, “and feel comfortable enough in the technical skill sets of the medium to let go and allow the materials to play into my imagery.”



Dennis Hlynsky 74 FAV
While on sabbatical from RISD this year, Dennis shot extensive footage of the seasonal crow roost in Lawrence, MA, capturing the magic of birds in flight. His video and still images from the project were on view in *Murders and Other Flying Things*, a winter solo exhibition at Essex Art Center in Lawrence.

1975

Artist/educator **Eva Kwong** CR (Kent, OH) showed her organic ceramic sculpture as part of the MacRostie Art Center's annual exhibition showcasing the work of McKnight fellows and residents. The show was up throughout the month of April in Grand Rapids, MI. Eva is looking forward to leading a workshop in August at the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg, TN.

Rory Marcaccio AE/MAE 79 (Vienna, VA) contributed work to the 11th annual *Fairfax County Artist Teacher Exhibition*, on view last fall at the Workhouse Arts Center in Reston, VA.

Work by Providence-based painter **Ida Schmulowitz** PT was included in the 2019 *Wheaton Biennial*, which ran from February 14–March 8 at Wheaton College in Norton, MA.

Therman Statom SC (see page 43)

1973 continued

The *New Bedford Standard Times* named **Robert Raymond** BArch as the 2018 Man of the Year in Marion, MA, where he and his wife designed and built their home. Bob earned the honor after 22 years of serving as a senior architect/planner at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston and volunteering on multiple local construction projects.

Architects **Jo Ann Secor** BArch and **Scott Briggs** BArch 87 of Skolnick Architecture + Design in NYC are working together to transform a historic steel mill in Luxembourg into a hands-on, state-of-the-art science and education center. Among many other fascinating projects, they're renovating the Port Washington [NY] Children's Library and creating an activity room for pediatric patients at the Hospital for Special Surgery in NYC.

1974 45th Reunion October 11–13

A documentary **Joseph Brin** PH (maileditfilm.com) made about Shivtei Yeshuron—the last standing orthodox rowhouse synagogue in South Philadelphia—debuted at the synagogue on February 24. *Shivtei: Lost &*

Found presents an oral history of what was once one of approximately 150 synagogues in the southern part of the city, where the filmmaker lives.

Thirty years after her masterful direction of the film adaptation of Stephen King's horror story *Pet Sematary*, **Mary Lambert** IL (Los Angeles) is busy working on a number of projects featuring extraordinary characters. She recently completed an episode of the TV show *Step Up* and is excited about her work on films about killer mermaids and two warring covens of witches, along with a documentary about Yulia Tymoshenko, who's running for president of the Ukraine.

Providence-based filmmaker **Ric Murray** PH, who produced

Jappie King Black 74 TX *Lace Fetish* won best in show at the 2018 *Brockport [NY] Artists Guild Exhibit* in the town where Jappie and **Rick Black** 71 GD continue to enjoy life together. This summer her work is included in the 66th *Rochester [NY] Finger Lakes Exhibition* (June 16–September 15) at the University of Rochester's Memorial Art Gallery. In 2018 Jappie also showed several new works in *Interwoven* at Marta Hewett Gallery in Cincinnati.

the independent comedy *The Wrong Todd*, is pleased that the film won the audience award for Best Feature at the Other Worlds Austin sci-fi/fantasy film festival in December. In March it was also screened at the Cinequest Film Festival in San Jose, CA.



Deborah Berke BArch 77
The new 42,000-sf dorm Deborah Berke Partners completed last September for Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA sits well with the historic Federal-style buildings around it and uses a limestone masonry and paneled-zinc facade split by mahogany to create a bright and confident presence on campus.



Yorker humorist Patricia Marx on the newly released book *Why Don't You Write My Obituary Now So I Can Correct It?*—about the joys and absurdities of aged, outspoken mothers.

Last November **Younghee Choi Martin** PT (NYC) showed vibrant narrative paintings in a solo exhibition at the Bowery Gallery in NYC, which represents her. The work on view continues to explore her longtime interest in Greek mythology, focusing on Aeschylus' *Oresteia* trilogy.

Laurie Rosenwald PT showed bright encaustic paintings in a two-artist show at ChaShaMa in NYC appropriately titled *Color Pop!* The exuberant illustrator/writer/painter, who lives in NYC but spends a lot of time in Sweden, notes in her bio that she "speaks Swedish like a native New Yorker and appeared as Woman on *The Sopranos*, a role she was born to play."

Paula Martiesian PT + **Ken Carpenter** 75 Arch (see next page)

1977

New Yorker cartoonist **Roz Chast** PT took part in NYC's *Reimagine End of Life Festival* last fall, speaking with Rabbi David Ingber about her award-winning 2014 memoir *Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?*. She also collaborated with fellow *New*

to lead a community project at the La Quinta Arts Festival. Held in early March, the project encouraged participants to connect with their inner child and finger-paint a large-scale figurative mural.

Alan Witschonke IL (see back cover and page 2)

1976

Rosanne Somerson ID, RISD's president, is being honored with the 2019 Pell Award for Outstanding Leadership in the Arts at a gala ceremony in Providence on June 3. In addition, this year she served as a juror for the Furniture Design Society's Award of Distinction (which she won in 2012), helping to select designer and former RISD faculty member Thomas Loeser as the winner of the 2019 award.

Laurie Harden 76 IL

Last fall *In a Moorish Café* (oil on canvas, 28 x 22") earned the Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Art Club Award from the American Artists Professional League (AAPL) as part of its *Grand National Exhibition* in NYC. Laurie also showed work from her *Urban Gritty* series in a February solo exhibition at the Morris County [NJ] Library near where she lives in Boonton, NJ.



Emily Cheng 75 PT

Two Worlds, One Tower (2017) was among Emily's recent large-scale paintings on view earlier this year in group shows at Hanart Gallery in Hong Kong and SoLA Gallery in Los Angeles. New work will be featured in her solo show *Surface*, which will run from July 6–August 17 at the Johannerkirche exhibition space in Feldkirch, Austria. The NYC-based artist completed a two-month residency there last summer.

Last fall prints by Providence-based artist **Arthur Moore** PR were included in *Kunstfest*, a group exhibition at Van Der Plas Gallery in NYC.

The California Desert Arts Council in Palm Springs awarded one of its two inaugural grants to painter **Peter Tigler** PT (Santa Monica)



FREEDOM OF CHOICE

Paula Martiesian 76 PT + Ken Carpenter 75 Arch

In May Ken and I celebrated the beginning of our 46 years together. We are older, creakier and decidedly more opinionated, but we are also—against long odds—still together.

It's difficult to imagine how we got here—a black man from Harlem and a white girl from Pawtucket, RI. Today interracial relationships are as ubiquitous as peanut butter and jelly, but when Ken and I first got together racism swirled around us against the backdrop of tumultuous times: Roe v. Wade, the Vietnam War, Watergate.

Our commitment to each other started when I was 18 and he was 20 and we met at RISD. He was skinny and cute. We didn't really date; we fell into each other. He was a musician and I drove him to a gig he was playing at—and quickly realized he was really talented, hard-working and very secure.

Ken: Paula is very exotic looking. She has a giant mane of hair and great, big eyes. She has a definite personality, a strong sense of aesthetics and a defined path. I like that.

She's also independent and opinionated. We were in an interracial relationship and it didn't matter to her if her parents liked me or not. That was amazing.

Paula: Friends from RISD helped us through the worst of it when my father—the man who taught me by example that racism is beyond wrong, it's evil—was unable to comprehend that his only daughter could be in a relationship with a black man. He believed that I would be setting myself up for a lifetime of pain. He didn't understand that his reaction was the only true source of pain I ever experienced.

Ken: She has a great sense of humor and laughs at my stupid jokes. We like to watch cartoons at the theater. It doesn't have to be serious, relevant movies. We nurture the childlike enthusiasm in us.

Paula: I'm not an easy person. I'm straightforward. I say what I feel. Ken is also straightforward, so we have that in common. We also have the same values: beauty, curiosity, creativity, hard work, close friendships.

Paula and Ken when they first met at RISD in the early 1970s (above)—and almost half a century later (facing page) near their home in Providence.

above right: Two recent oil-on-linen paintings by Paula: *The Wire* (36x50") and *Where Shadows Meet* (36x54")

photo by Courtney Frisoe '75 PH



Ken: I'm more precise; she's more loosey-goosey. I've learned to become more tolerant. I'm interested in her journey and am open to seeing her point of view. I wasn't like that in the beginning. I was linear; now I'm three-dimensional. She's shown me a wider scope.

Paula: I've never met anyone else I've ever wanted to be with. He's the whole package. I'm attracted to his brain and creativity, to his ability to make something beautiful. I find him attractive on every level.

Ken: We enjoy the world around us on an abstract level and through a different prism. We can find interest in looking at shadows and clouds. The ability to do that connects me to her on a deeper level than anyone else.

“We're interested in going toward the artistic horizon together.”

Ken Carpenter 75 Arch

Paula: When we first got together, all I saw were our differences. I've always sought out people who think differently than I do—which seems to me the only way to learn. Over time, what I discovered with Ken were the commonalities.

Our respective work ethics are strong. Our studios are not even 20 steps apart but a whole day can go by without us ever catching a glimpse of each other until it's time to walk the dog.

“He's the whole package. I'm attracted to his brain and creativity, to his ability to make something beautiful.”

Paula Martiesian 76 PT

We work at all hours and on all days. Weekends are pretty meaningless to us—vacations rare. There's not much we'd rather be doing than painting and making music.

Ken: We respect each other and each other's art. I rely on her for a second set of ears the same way I am a second set of eyes for her.

Paula: After 46 years of being together, we still talk about anything and everything. To find someone who loves and understands the time, effort and commitment you put into art is a miracle—the idea that someone supports you and pushes you to be a better person and artist.

Ken: I don't know if I'm easy to live with, but we are easy to live with each other. We're still attracted to and fascinated by each other. We're interested in going toward the artistic horizon together. ■





Peter Sutton 78 FAV
For more than 30 years, Peter has turned cedar shingling into an art form, using top-quality products and smart production techniques to make houses in the San Francisco Bay area both beautiful and water-tight.

1978

Industrial designer **Stuart Karten ID**, president of the medical device firm Karten Design in Marina del Ray, CA, has joined the steering committee of ScaleLA,

a community of healthcare and life science startups focused on the burgeoning healthcare tech scene in Los Angeles.

From February–March type designer and former RISD faculty member **Ilse Nesbitt GD** presented a retrospective exhibition of her work called *Persistence of Vision* at Third & Elm Press, the print shop she owns in Newport, RI.

Prints by artist **Susan Osgood PT** (Brattleboro, VT) are featured in a collection

of poems they inspired called *A Ghost of Water* by writer GennaRose Nethercott.

Described as “part erotic road map, part liturgical farce,” *The Baba Kama Sutra* by Los Angeles-based writer **David Schoffman PT** is now available on Amazon. “And just in case your weekend isn’t an endless bacchanal of conga lines and pub crawls,” he writes, he recently released episode 50 of his podcast *Timmy Black Presents: The Lives of Contemporary Artists*. His latest



“contribution to our collective cultural trash bin” is available on Soundcloud, iTunes, Spotify and half a dozen other platforms.

1979 40th Reunion October 11–13

Last December the Chazan Gallery in Providence presented *Tribes*, an exhibition of new work in glass, textiles, painting and video by multitalented RI-based artist **Deborah Baronas TX**.

Stylist and designer **Leslie Grant AP** (Lincoln, RI) collaborated with artists from a wide range of disciplines to create *UNRAVEL*, an exhibition on view last November–December at Coastal Contemporary Gallery in Newport, RI.

Robert Richardson FAV (see page 43)

1980
Lloyd Martin PT exhibited his wonderfully expressive geometrical paintings in *Emotional Structure*, a two-person show on view earlier this year at Bristol

Fred Lisaius 81 IL
Tango (2018, acrylic on panel, 20 x 24”) is among the new paintings on view in *Flourish*, an April solo show at Patricia Rovzar Gallery (which represents him) in Seattle. “The deeper I go into the forest, the closer I feel to the truth,” says Fred, who lives in the verdant Pacific Northwest.

Lesley Heathcote 80 PH
Eastern Bluebird (9 x 10”) and other pastels inspired by Lesley’s lifelong love of the natural world were on view in an April solo show at Dorset Public Library in Manchester, VT. Based in Brattleboro, VT, she paints wildlife in its natural habitat using her own reference photographs.

Community College’s Grimshaw-Gudewicz Gallery in Fall River, MA. The RI-based painter is also exhibiting recent paintings in a solo show this year at William Campbell Contemporary Art (which represents him) in Fort Worth, TX.

In March painter **Greg Sampl GD** (New Bedford, MA) took home a Juror’s Choice Award at this year’s *All Media Juried Exhibition* at Grimshaw-Gudewicz Gallery in Fall River, MA. Greg says his aesthetic—which relies heavily on color, shape and line—was formed through his study of lettering and graphic design, an early exposure to Baroque music and many years of living as a Christian monk.

1981
Last November **Anna Boothe SC** (Zieglerville, PA) showed cast glass and *pâte de verre* sculptural works in the 42nd annual *Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show* and in *Colloquy*, a two-person exhibition with Nancy Cohen on view last fall at the Arts Council of Princeton’s Taplin Gallery in NJ.



Marybeth (Farrell) Rothman 81 IL
Last fall the NJ-based artist’s mixed-media painting *Augusta* was included in a public art exhibition mounted by The Billboard Collective, a nonprofit responsible for artistic takeovers of ad space throughout Los Angeles. In May Marybeth had a solo show at Mark Gallery in NYC.

Painter **Trine Bumiller PR** took her home state of Colorado by storm over the winter, showing work in Boulder at both the University of Colorado Art Museum and Naropa University; in Arvado at the Arvado Center; and in Denver at Regis University. Her recent work “alludes to the emotional nature of history and the current state of the environmentment....”

After years of research and editing, **Susan Doyle IL/MFA 98**

Michael Kautter BArch 81
In November Kautter & Kelley (Wyomissing, PA) won a Bronze Award for Architectural Excellence from the Pennsylvania chapter of the American Institute of Architects for its restoration of two barns on Ha’ Penny Farm in Oley, PA. The designers emphasized the original aesthetics of the barns while also adding another 50 years of life to the historic structures.



PT/PR was pleased to accept the Popular Culture Association’s Ray and Pat Browne Award this spring for her monumental book *The History of Illustration* (2018), which earned recognition as Best Edited Collection in Popular and American Culture. An associate professor at RISD,

she also heads the Illustration department.

In the winter **Fotini Vurgaropoulou SC** contributed a kiln-formed glass and mixed media piece to *Let’s try listening again*, the 13th biennial exhibition of A.I.R. Gallery in Brooklyn, where she lives.

1982
Last winter jewelry artist **Donald Friedlich JM** showed striking glass miniatures in a group exhibition at Bilk Gallery in Brisbane, Australia. He lives in Madison, WI, but has visited and exhibited in Australia since doing residencies at the Canberra School of Art in 2004.

Painter **Linda Zigman Kosoff PT** showed work in *Full Bodied*, a group exhibition on view in March at Gallery 825 in Los Angeles (her home turf). Presented by the Los Angeles Art Association, the show offered an exploration of figurative artwork in a wide range of media.



Top: images courtesy of The Billboard Creative

MAJORS ACRONYMS

AP	Apparel Design
BArch	Architecture
CR	Ceramics
DM	Digital + Media
FAV	Film/Animation/Video
FD	Furniture Design
GD	Graphic Design
GL	Glass
IA	Interior Architecture
ID	Industrial Design
IL	Illustration
JM	Jewelry + Metalsmithing
PH	Photography
PT	Painting
PR	Printmaking
SC	Sculpture
TX	Textiles

MASTER'S DEGREES

MA	Adaptive Reuse Art Education
MArch	Architecture
MAT	Teaching
MDes	Design in Interior Studies
MFA	Fine Arts
MID	Industrial Design
MLA	Landscape Architecture

FORMER MAJORS

AD	Advertising Design
AE	Art Education
MD	Machine Design
MIA	Interior Architecture
TC	Textile Chemistry
TE	Textile Engineering

FORMER 5TH-YEAR DEGREES

BGD	Graphic Design
BID	Industrial Design
BIA	Interior Architecture
BLA	Landscape Architecture

OTHER

BRDD	Brown/RISD Dual Degree
CEC	Continuing Education Certificate
*	attended RISD, but no degree awarded

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1982 continued

Based in Rhode Island and Rome, **Frances Middendorf** IL draws inspiration from mythology, history and the beauty of Italy to create paintings and drawings like the ones she showed in *Sleepless Nights*, a fall solo show at Denise Bibro Fine Art in NYC.

T. Barton Thurber BArch is looking forward to his new position as director of the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, NY. Now the associate director for Collections and Exhibitions at Princeton [NJ] University Art Museum, he will begin his new job in August and will also teach at Vassar.

1983

Lisa Pevaroff TX (*see page 50*)

1984

35th Reunion
October 11–13

Ilana Manolson 82 PR *Wind Teaser* (acrylic on yupo paper on board, 12x14") was among the paintings in *Chance Encounters*, Ilana's spring solo exhibition at Cadogan Contemporary Gallery in London. In addition to Cadogan, the Massachusetts-based artist is represented by Jason McCoy Gallery in NYC and Nicola Rukaj Gallery in Toronto and works from her home base in Concord, MA.

Nancy Ceo AP recently designed costumes for two TV series focused on inner-city life: *The Chi*, Showtime's series about Southside Chicago, and *On My Block*, the Netflix dramedy set in Los Angeles (where the designer lives). She also worked on the pilot episode of *Roswell*, a CW/Warner Brothers reboot of the 1999–2002 sci-fi series.

Last fall milliner **Juliane Gorman** TX showed an evocative headdress called *Fragile Earth* in a group exhibition at the Seton Hill University Arts Center in Greensburg, PA. She lives in Gibsonia, PA.



Deirdre Tanton 83 GD *View from MoMA* (27x20") is among the work Deirdre exhibited in a solo show last fall at her alma mater, Roland Park Country School in Baltimore, MD. "I like to make positive images that lift up the spirit—especially through the use of color," says the artist, who lives and works in Annapolis, MD.

a lot of interest during its March 23–May 27 run at the ICA Boston. Her work draws on influences ranging from horror movies to science fiction to religious reliquary.

This year work by **Stephanie Roberts-Camello** PT (Pembroke, MA) has been included in multiple exhibitions across Massachusetts, including *Illumination* at Gallery Twist in Lexington, 11:11 *The Depth of Perception* at Fountain Street Fine Art in Boston, the women-only *A Woman's Work* at the Brush Art Gallery in Lowell and *FUSION: Encaustic Works* at Higgins Art Gallery in West Barnstable.

Painter **Jeanne Steers** IL (Roxbury, CT) showed circular works in *Point Collection*, a solo exhibition on view in March at the Woodbury [CT] Public Library. Known for her dynamic and colorful paintings, Jeanne works mainly in acrylic or wax oil crayon on shaped Masonite board.

Earlier this spring **Colleen Kiely** PT showed three paintings from her *Women on the Verge* series in the group exhibition *AVATARS//ghosts* at Nave Gallery in Somerville, MA, where she lives. She was also a finalist for the Hopper Prize and contributed to *Who Saved Who?* at the New Bedford [MA] Art Museum.

Anais Missakian TX (*see page 50*)

1985

They Live, a solo retrospective of sculptures, drawings and photographs by **Huma Bhabha** PR (Poughkeepsie, NY), attracted



KNITTING COMMUNITY

by **Douglas Morris** 85 GD

I recently moved with my husband to Palm Springs, CA after 30 years of running a design practice (Poulin + Morris) in New York City. As a graphic designer, my day-to-day world is made up of grids, columns of type and measuring in points and picas. My eye has been trained to recognize interruptions and inconsistencies in the minutest details. With graphic design, I hand my projects off to a programmer, printer or sign fabricator for production, passing control to someone else.

For me, the most interesting thing about knitting is that my mind can still live in a world of columns and grids while recognizing interruptions or inconsistencies in pattern. I am fascinated with the fact that I can take two sticks and some yarn, and make clothes. But I am also fascinated with the math of knitting patterns, which makes sense to me as a graphic designer. While I do not get to finish a project with my own two hands at work, knitting allows me to create and control a project from start to finish.

Three years ago I first got introduced to knitting when friends of ours were visiting to go to the Sheep and Wool Festival at the Dutchess County [NY] Fairgrounds. There was something so tactile and beautiful about the materials they brought with them that I knew I wanted to learn. So I bought some yarn and a pair of needles and then watched YouTube videos at home. After a few test swatches, I decided I wanted to make something useful. Hats, cowls and scarves quickly led to sweaters and socks.

When we relocated to California I started a Men's Knit Night at a local coffee shop (and art gallery) and now about 20 men ranging in age from 40–75 get together weekly. I also teach knitting at the Desert AIDS Project and in June am starting a new class and a knit-along at the LGBT Community Center of the Desert in Palm Springs.

Before the move I opened an online store called The Perfect Purl, which sells yarn, patterns and kits. Working with national yarn organizations and

manufacturers, I am able to give away free yarn, needles, knitting books and patterns to anyone who comes to my classes and wants to learn.

Why is this important? Knitting is not just a way to relax, it is the ultimate exercise in mindfulness. Studies have shown that people who knit frequently are happier, less depressed and less anxious than non-knitters. And knitting in a group exercises one's social skills and leads to an enhanced sense of well-being.

Now, I'm working to create a healthier community—one knitter at a time.



After discovering the many joys and benefits of knitting just a few years ago, graphic designer **Doug Morris** 85 GD (*third from left in the group photo above*) now teaches knitting, runs an online store and leads a men's knitting group that meets weekly.



Fred Lynch 86 IL
 Selections from the evocative street scenes Fred paints during his annual summer visits to Viterbo, Italy were on view earlier this spring in a solo exhibition at Museo Colle del Duomo in the medieval Italian city. Last fall work from the same series was included in a two-person show at Salem [MA] State University's Winifsky Gallery. Fred is a longtime RISD Illustration faculty member.



Suzanne Laura Kammin 87 PT
 Paintings like *Annica* (2017, oil on panel 12 x 12") helped earn Suzanne a 2019 New Jersey Arts Council Individual Artist Fellowship. The \$8,000 grant is providing the Newark-based artist with the latitude to create new work and advance other creative ambitions.

1986
 Freelance illustrator **Peter Brown IL** (thetoonist.com) recently completed a series of cartoons for the book *Driving a Smart Bargain* by JC Robertson. He also recently contributed voice and pre-production work to a number of short films and

web projects, including the motion comic *Omega 1: The Hacker Wars* and *Cozmos*.

William Hudders PT (Easton, PA) recently reaped the rewards of a vibrant Instagram presence when Suzanne Randolph Fine Arts came across his account and offered to install his work

defined Providence's south side since the 1860s.

1987
Nada Debs IA (see page 18)

Nicole Eisenman PT
 (see page 10)

Last fall **Eileen Ferara IL** exhibited work in *Radunarsi*, a two-woman show with Linda Streicher at Casa Colombo gallery in Jersey City, NJ (where she lives). In December she offered affordable prints depicting the Chinese zodiac and provided a public demo of her block print carving process at The Creativity Caravan in Montclair, NJ. Earlier this year she participated in the *Winter Print Show*, a group exhibition at Eonta in Jersey City.

One of the hottest holiday gifts on the market in December was

an Alexa-compatible version of the 1990s novelty gadget *Big Mouth Billy Bass* that **Brian Kane PT** developed in 2016 while teaching at RISD. *Fast Company* went way out on a limb, calling the animatronic talking fish "the only holiday gift that matters." Brian currently lives in Petaluma, CA.

In *Watertown Square Through Time* (Arcadia Publishing, 2018), **Cara (Cohen) Marcus GD** tells the story of Watertown Square, MA from 1630 through the present day. The book also

Barbara Pollak-Lewis 89 FAV

Surrina is one of two paintings from Barbara's *Screams* series on view last fall in *Liberty*, a juried exhibition at Arc Gallery in San Francisco, where she lives. Given ongoing "gender and racial inequality, environmental calamity and a lack of faith in our future," she explains, the series presents "reactions to an uncertain and dark future."



in public spaces throughout NYC. Three of his paintings were on view over the winter at the CRG Building on West 125th Street in Manhattan.

Robin Tagliaferri IL/MA 01 is proud to serve as project manager for the team establishing the new Heritage Harbor Foundation Museum of South Providence History, which will open this fall at Saint Michael's Catholic Church. Planned exhibits will chronicle the great cultural, ethnic and religious diversity that has

includes more than 60 of her photographs, along with an illustration.

1988
Lowell Boyers PT (see page 13)

NYC-based creative consultant **Yvonne Force PT** and her team at Culture Corps are drawing attention to the work of 13 remarkable local artists via *Off the Wall*, a series of large-scale, site-specific installations on view through November at historic Hudson Yards in Chelsea.

1989
30th Reunion
October 11-13

Island Universe, the visually and conceptually brilliant installation **Josiah McElheny GL** first created in 2008, continues to captivate audiences at Stanford [CA] University's Cantor Arts Center, where it's on view through August 18. The Seattle-based artist collaborated with astronomer David Weinberg to build the hanging chandeliers according to precise mappings of the history of time.

1990
 Professor, artist and author **Stephen Gardner IL** recently published *Gateways to Drawing: A Complete Guide* (Thames & Hudson), a comprehensive text that includes more than 500 images and drawings. He and his wife, **Sabrina DeBiase Gardner AP**, have taught at Savannah [GA] College of Art and Design for more than 25 years (she in Fashion and he in Foundation Studies) and have three kids: Isabella, Peter and Max.

Justin Kerr GD has earned a 2019 Providence Design Catalyst award from DESIGNxRI to help advance the eponymous design business he started in 2016. His focus to date has been on identity development, art direction and web and UX design.

Since its release in January, a new picture book by **J.R. Krause IL** has been getting a warm reception from parents, kids and reviewers alike. *Dragon Night* (G.P. Putnam's



Sons) offers an intimate story about empathy and facing fears—sweetly conveyed by the Los Angeles-based illustrator and animator, who worked on *The Simpsons* and *Futurama* for many years.

In January **David Weeks PT** (Brooklyn) launched *Treble*, a lighting collection featuring new materials and finishes. These and other David Weeks Studio designs are now available on the West Coast at The Future Perfect galleries in Los Angeles and San Francisco. This spring he also showed new furniture at the Moroso Showroom as part of April's big Design Week in Milan, Italy.

1991
 Artists **Carolina Arentsen IL** and **Patricia Figueroa PR**—of Providence and Madrid, respectively—both took part in *LatinXpression: The Absorbing*

Kimberly Becker 90 TX
 Ever since Brett Kavanaugh was confirmed on the Supreme Court, Kim has been creating "a doll a day" to protest ongoing inequality and the lip service given to victims of sexual assault and misconduct. This spring she curated *Keep Counting*, a month-long, three-woman show at Cambridge [MA] Art Association that addressed threats to women's rights in the Trump era.

Nature of Line, a group exhibition on view from February through April at Brown University's Watson Institute in Providence.

Kelly Booth GD recently began a new position as creative director at the acclaimed West Coast publishing house Ten Speed Press in Berkeley, CA. In her previous role as creative director at Weldon Owen Publishing, she guided the concept development and design of more than 400 titles.

Eric White 90 IL
 Rich with cinematic and pop culture references, oil paintings like *East [1973 Plymouth Fury]* (2018, 84 x 144", oil on canvas) were on view in *Triage*, a solo show that ran from late November—mid January at GRIMM in NYC. It was Eric's second solo exhibition at the gallery that now represents him—in a city he calls home when he's not in LA.

A lobby installation called *Rays* featuring wallpaper designed by **Liz Collins TX/MFA 99** and the Swiss textile company 4Spaces was on view through March at the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) in NYC (where she lives). She also

showed work in the *BRIC Biennial* (Brooklyn) in February and at the Dorsky Gallery (Queens) in May, and curated *The Other is You: Brooklyn Queer Portraiture*, a group exhibition on view during the April–May *BRIC Open* festival.





Melissa McGill 91 SC
above: Melissa is spearheading a public art project called *Red Regatta* on the waters of Venice to coincide with the May–November run of the Venice Biennale. Learn more at redregatta.org.

1991 continued

Art photographer **Leah Oates** IL continues to make an impact in her new home city of Toronto, Canada, showing work earlier this year in *Transitory Space #9*, a solo show at Black Cat Artspace, and in groups exhibitions at the Black Cat Showroom, Connections Gallery, Propeller Gallery, Arta Gallery and Papermill Gallery.

San Francisco-based artist **Mel Prest** PT curated *Look at Me Hungry*, a group show (April 13–May 25) at the Berkeley [CA] Art Center. Featuring a cadre of international artists, the cross-disciplinary exhibition evolved from “an obsessiveness and immersion in the process of making.” Mel’s own installation, *Rainbow Weather*, was on view at Chandra Cerrito Contemporary in Oakland at roughly the same time.

1992

Sandy Steen Bartholomew IL, who works out of her Beez



Mónica Rivera BArch 94

Last fall Mónica was named chair of graduate architecture at Washington University’s Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts in St. Louis, where she’s also teaching as a professor of practice. She and her partner run Emiliano López Mónica Rivera Arquitectos, a Barcelona-based firm she cofounded in 2001.

Ink Studio in Warner, NH, had fun illustrating *Ready, Set, GORILLA* (Clear Fork Publishing, November 2018). The children’s book by Melissa Stoller tells the story of a gorilla too bent on winning to play fair—until things change as the sweet story unfolds and he learns the value of friendship and teamwork.

Brooklyn-based communications specialist **Sarah Durham** IL has been named chair of the board of the National Brain

Tumor Society, the largest nonprofit dedicated to conquering brain tumors in the US. Sarah lost both of her parents to brain tumors and has been volunteering with the organization since 1996.

Los Angeles-based artist **Shepard Fairey** IL has been offering interesting insights about his work and how it relates to social and political unrest, giving a candid interview published in January in *Inked* magazine and speaking

Aaron Meshon 95 IL

In January Aaron celebrated the release of his sixth children’s book, *Tomorrow is Waiting* (Dial Books), written by Kiley Frank. It’s a tender expression of our collective hope that children will find their place in the world and help make it better. “I painted landscapes for it and loved the process so much,” the Brooklyn-based artist says.



Dan Borelli 95 PR

Chasing Color, a recent solo exhibition at UMass/ Dartmouth in New Bedford, MA, featured works like this one, *Ashland Streetlights*, about the history of Dan’s hometown of Ashland, MA as a longtime EPA-designated “superfund” site. He’s now doing a residency at the New Bedford Whaling Historical National Park, where his solo show *Superfund Sightings* runs through June 30.

in February at an event called *Artists, Activism, Agency* that also included fellow alum **Tavares Strachan** 03 GL (see also page 10).

Work by **Bo Joseph** PT was included in *Under the Night Sky*, a two-part exhibition combining art, design and tribal rugs that ran late last year at albertz benda and Friedman Benda in NYC, where he lives. He also participated in *re:construction*, a winter group show at McClain Gallery in Houston.

1993

Following her 2018 residency at the Visual Arts Center of Richmond [VA], **Elissa Levy** GL returned to Virginia in April as a spring artist in residence at the Oak Spring Garden Foundation in Upperville, VA. The New Yorker is one of 12 artists selected to participate in the inaugural year of the residency program.

Designer/educator **Lois Weinthal** BArch was recently named an honorary professor at the Glasgow School of Art in Scotland, where she’ll present keynote lectures and conduct seminars across design disciplines. She also continues to serve as chair and professor at Ryerson University’s School of Interior Design in Toronto.

1994

25th Reunion
October 11–13

Providence-based painter **Jennifer Hrabota-Lesser** IL showed work in *Little Big IV*, a group exhibition at Haven Gallery in Northport, NY that ran from December–January. Her paintings are influenced by mythology and fables and



frequently portray subjects in transitional, “untethered” moments.

Last November the global engineering firm Emerson presented architect and educator **Sung Ho Kim** BArch with an Excellence in Teaching award. Now in its 29th year, the Emerson awards pay tribute to the dedication of educators—from kindergarten teachers to college professors—who work in metro St. Louis, MO, where Sung Ho is a professor of architecture at Washington University.

Ethereal installations by **Do Ho Suh** PT evoking a longing for home were on view in three recent solo exhibitions: *Korridor* at ARO Aarhus Kunstmuseum in Denmark,

Heather Henson 95 IL

Heather stopped in Providence earlier this year during a national tour of *Ajijaak on Turtle Island*, her latest production featuring puppetry from Jim Henson’s Creature Shop, and spoke at RISD about how she got into puppetry, too, after her father’s death. Full of Native American performers, the new show honors contemporary indigenous cultures as part of an eco-focused story.

One at the Brooklyn Museum in NYC and *The Spaces in Between* at Stanford [CA] University’s Cantor Arts Center. The native of Seoul has long lived abroad and is now based in London.

In March **Dan Wood** PR started *The Linotype Daily*, a wonderful series of linotype prints featuring personal updates and other bits of news and information. Follow updates to the Providence-based printmaker’s series on Instagram (@thelinotypedaily), Twitter (@TLinotypist) and on thelinotypedaily.com.

1995

Karim Chaya ID contributed to *In Retrospect*, a group exhibition on view this spring at Joy Mardini Design Gallery in Beirut, Lebanon that explored the evolving ways in which Lebanese designers are responding to local cultural norms.

Both Whole Foods Markets and Nature’s Bakery have selected fruit- and vegetable-themed prints by NYC-based artist and designer **Christopher Dina** GD for display in their corporate headquarters. The minimalist, boldly colored

designs have also been featured recently on the cover and inside pages of *HGTV* and *House & Home* magazines.

Building on recent recognition from the UCDA, **Dean Welshman** GD, lead graphic designer for *Providence College Magazine*, earned a Gold Award from CASE—the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education—for his work on the fall 2017 and spring 2018 issues and a Silver Award for a suite of admissions-related materials he helped create for the college.





Cheryl Molnar 00 GD
With support from NY's Percent for Art program, Cheryl installed a 43 x 10' ceramic tile mural at PS19Q in Corona, Queens earlier this year. Since the school looks out on the site of the 1964 World's Fair, the imagery references its historic exhibits.



Jessica Hess 03 IL
In March Jessica's painting *Succulent II* (acrylic and oil on canvas, 24 x 30") was included in *Femme*, a group exhibition at Juxtapoz Projects in Jersey City, NJ. In May her solo exhibition *The Chaos Aesthetic* ran at Hashimoto Contemporary in San Francisco. She lives in Oakland.

1996
Art New England included RI-based sculptor and jewelry artist **Susan Freda** SC in its recent *Emerging Artists Issue*, which describes the work shown in *Alchemical Reactions* as harmonious and complementary. The winter exhibition

at the Chazan Gallery in Providence featured her work along with that of Allison Paschke.

In January **Grace Lin** IL was thrilled to learn that *A Big Mooncake for Little Star* (Little, Brown), her recent picture book about the phases of the moon,

earned a 2019 Caldecott Honor. Based in Florence, MA, she also hosts a podcast series called *Kidlit Women*.

Los Angeles-based set decorator **Christine McIrwine** IL was psyched to see her work on the big screen in *Mid90s*, a film released last fall and written and directed by Jonah Hill. She got an assist on the skateboarding graphics from **Alex Aranovich** 98 FAV.

In April **Lindsay Packer** TX presented her first commissioned piece as a 2019 artist in residence at ISSUE Project Room in Brooklyn, where she lives. *Call and Response: DEPTH OF FIELD*, a collaboration with dancer and choreographer Melanie Maar, uses light, color, repetition and movement to redefine physical space and investigate the relationships between the seen and the unseen. In December her 16mm film *Motion at a Distance* premiered at the MONO NO AWARE XI Festival of Cinema Arts in Brooklyn.

California-based artist **Phillip K. Smith III** BArch (whose work was featured on the cover and in the spring/summer 2018 issue of XYZ) showed a series of three-dimensional canvases painted with light in *Portals*, a solo exhibition on view at the Sonoma Valley [CA] Museum of Art from January-April.

1997
For the past two years, **Ryan Richard-Scro** GD has run *Say It Out Proud*, a greeting card line and Etsy store offering the LGBTQ+ community a simple graphic approach to celebrating milestones like coming out, same-sex parent adoption, gender reassignment surgery and other life events. The writer/designer lives in Central Massachusetts with his husband and family of pets.

Kirsten Sims ID and her husband Rick are having fun hosting stand-up comedians at The Comedy Studio, the club they reopened last fall in a new space at Bow Market in Somerville, MA, where they live. The new venue includes a 100-person theater and stage, along with an in-house bar they call Variety.



1998
Two 4 x 3-foot oil on canvas paintings by Los Angeles-based artist **Mara Safransky** FAV now grace the lobby of the Graduate Providence hotel (formerly the Providence Biltmore) in downtown Providence. The interior designer for the space was drawn to Mara's work on RISDmade, the online hub of alumni-run retail shops.

Pennsylvania-based fiber artist **Evian Zukas-Oguz** TX is currently showing work in *Focus: Fiber 2019*, a group exhibition on view through July 28 at Kent [OH] State University Museum.

1999
20th Reunion
October 11-13
Teresita Cochran PH addressed the global climate crisis in *Boston 2070*, a piece on view last fall in *Illuminus*, a two-day public art event in

Caitlin Keegan 02 IL
In April **Clarkson Potter** (Penguin Random House) released two of Caitlin's projects: *Dreamer's Journal*, a fully illustrated guide to interpreting dreams, and *Illuminated Playing Cards*, an expanded adaptation of her 2017 card deck and guidebook *The Illuminated Tarot*.

Boston's Downtown Crossing. Drawing on nightmares of tsunamis flooding her home, she used motion-triggered heat lamps, steel and ice to create a scale model of Boston's skyline as it's likely to look in half a century—with six feet of the city under water.

Rachel Doriss TX (see page 82)

As half of the acclaimed duo Gibson + Recoder, filmmaker **Sandra Gibson** FAV returned to the University of Wisconsin/Madison in March to showcase *The Changeover System: A Projection Performance Installation*. The ambitious multi-projection work was originally commissioned in 2017 by the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Antoine Revoy FAV, a longtime member of RISD's Illustration faculty, continues to win accolades for his debut graphic novel *ANIMUS*, earning spots on the American Library Association's 2019 list of Great Graphic Novels for Teens and *Paste Magazine's* 2018 list of Best Comics for Kids. He's now working on a follow-up tentatively titled *GHOST NOTES* (First Second Books).

2000
This spring Tellart, the advanced tech design studio founded by **Matt Cottam** BID and **Nick Scappaticci** ID, held a launch party at MU in Eindhoven, the Netherlands for a new video series exploring "transformations in design practice between the Dotcom Crash and the rise of machine intelligence." Called *Design Nonfiction*, the series features in-depth interviews with key players and educators in this space, including RISD's president **Rosanne Somerson** 76 ID.

2001
This spring Brooklyn-based painter **Matt Kenny** PT showed new work in two group exhibitions organized by Halsey McKay Gallery in East Hampton, NY: *The Armory Show* at Pier 94 in NYC and *Smile* at Halsey McKay.

Work by **Yoon Kramer** ID (Madeira, OH) was on view in a winter solo exhibition at



Redtree Art Gallery and Coffeeshop in Cincinnati, OH, as part of the *New City Art Show & Music Series*.

Under the auspices of the Austrian Federal Chancellery's Kulturkontakt program, Chicago-based publishing consultant **Alta L. Price** PR completed a residency in Vienna last fall, working on literary translation with emerging Austrian artists and writers.

2002
In early March sculptor **Daniel A. Bruce** SC teamed up with textiles artist Kevin Lustik to present *Homemade*, a two-day exhibition at Leslie-Lohman Museum Project Space in NYC, where he lives. The short show paid homage to the value and authenticity of folk art.

As a 2018-19 artist in residence at Waaw in Saint-Louis, Senegal, **Helen Hawley** PR collaborated with artisans and craftspeople on an array of pieces. "So much is still made by hand," she says, "and often from salvaged parts and materials." A solo show of work she made in Senegal was on view in the winter at Arts + Literature Laboratory in Madison, WI, where she lives.

In January Lowell Ryan Projects, a new contemporary art gallery in Los Angeles, inaugurated its first season with *Mind Body Soul*, a three-artist show featuring abstract paintings by LA-based artist **Spencer Lewis** PT.

After working as an architectural lighting designer for 15 years, **Kate (Hickcox) Sweater** FD launched her own line of custom fixtures in May as part of Wanted Design's

David Wiseman 03 FD
David exhibited an impressive body of new work in *Plants, Minerals and Animals*, an early spring solo show at Kasmin Gallery in NYC. He and his brother Ari established Wiseman Studio in 2017 and recently relocated to a 30,000-sf former factory complex in Los Angeles that serves as both a working studio and exhibition space.

LaunchPad incubation program at NYCxDESIGN.

2003
Princess Azula of The Red Castle and the Blue (Marloee Press) is less than thrilled to start a new life in service to the prince. Released last November, the feminist fairytale by Wendy Marech features classic illustrations by Providence-based artist **Alayna Paquette** CEC.

RISD risdweekend.com
SAVE THE DATE
WEEK—END 20
October 9-11



Alex Rosenberg 06 GL

On May 2 Alex scaled the wall of Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia (where he lives) for the opening reception of the 2019 series of installations at the prison, which closed in 1971. Titled *A Climber's Guide to Eastern State Penitentiary or, Eastern State's Architecture and How to Escape It*, the project includes a display of climbing gear made from materials available inside the prison and green pieces centered around "clean climbing."

2003 continued

A photo from the *Monuments* series of color-washed landscapes by **David Benjamin Sherry PH** makes for a compelling cover of the Spring 19 issue of *Aperture*, which focuses on artists whose work addresses environmental issues. This fall the Los Angeles-based artist's work will be featured in an exhibition (and an accompanying book) at Salon 94 in NYC.

In February glass artist **Tavares Strachan GL** participated in *Artists, Activism, Agency*, a panel discussion in Los Angeles that also featured activist/artist **Shepard Fairey 92 IL** and Pussy Riot founder Nadya Tolokonnikova, who's accepting an honorary degree

from RISD at this year's Commencement ceremony (see page 46).

2004 15th Reunion October 11-13

Rabbit, a richly detailed ceramic piece by **Kimberly Batti IL**, won first place in the sculpture category in the St. Catherine of Bolgna 20th Annual Festival of the Arts, a juried exhibition that ran for three days in March in Ringwood, NJ. The artist lives nearby in Wyckoff, NJ.

Christian Breed PT has been selected to do a residency as part of the Bronx Museum of Art's Artists in the Marketplace (AIM) program. Later this year his work will

be included in a group show at the museum.

As of November **Daisy Cameron AP** is the new director of design at ALDO in Montreal, where she now oversees all women's footwear design.

Diana Corvelle IL showed a series of cut-paper "eye portraits" inspired by the #metoo movement in *Yes All Women*, a solo exhibition on view in April at Dacia Gallery in NYC. She's based in Petaluma, CA.

Lizzie Fitch SC (see page 15)

Although interior designer **Lauren Geremia PT** of Geremia Design in San Francisco has largely focused on residential spaces, she's enjoying new work with the local retailer Jenny Chung Seeger and with AutoCamp on its new location at Yosemite.

Chelsea Gibson 06 PT In January Chelsea showed introspective portraits of domestic spaces in *My Kitchen Table*, a solo exhibition at Lyons Wier Gallery in NYC. She's based in Gilbertville, NY.



Natalia Nakazawa 04 PT

The Epic of Fire Palace (Jacquard textiles, paper collage and acrylic on wood panel, 40x30x2") is among the work Natalia exhibited in *The Wall that Went for a Walk*, a two-person show last fall at Transmitter in Brooklyn. She works for The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts in NYC and visited RISD and several other art and educational nonprofits this spring to speak about finding work/life balance in creative practice.

Robby Rose PT curated *Capturing Time*, a winter group exhibition at Java Project in Brooklyn, where he lives. Featuring his own paintings along with work by fellow alums **Ryan Coleman 03 PT**, **Jordanne Renner 03 PH** and **Nathalie Shepherd PT**, the show "documented ways in which people express themselves through the preservation of time," as he puts it.

Ryan Trecartin FAV (see page 15)

2005 Taylor Baldwin SC (see page 50)

Novelist **Rachel Glaser PT** (Northampton, MA) is excited to have earned a 2019 MacDowell Fellowship, which gives her the latitude to work

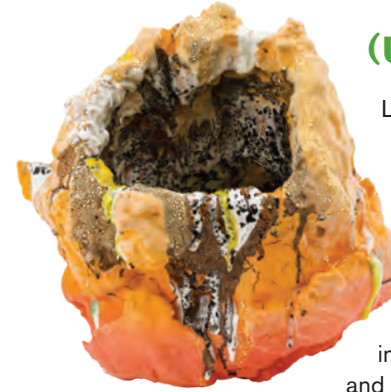


on new ideas at the arts retreat in Peterborough, NH.

Earlier this year Los Angeles-based artist **Conor Thompson PT** curated *Screenings*, a group exhibition of artworks made for the screen and exploring issues such as scale, reproduction and projection. The work by painters, printmakers, sculptors and other fine artists was screened last winter at several movie theaters in North Hollywood.

2006

Last December team members of the Kansas City Chiefs took to the field wearing football cleats hand-painted by **John Sebelius IL** (Lawrence, KS) to raise awareness of needs such as cancer research and support for military veterans. The NFL team then auctioned off the shoes to raise funds for these causes.



images courtesy of the artist and Van Doren Waxter

After a year of travel in the Amazonian rainforest (among other places in Latin America), **Brian Rochefort 07 CR** is exhibiting heavily glazed ceramic and glass fragment pieces like these in major shows in the US, Venice and London.

(UN)NATURAL LOOK AT THINGS TO COME

Los Angeles-based ceramist **Brian Rochefort 07 CR** is clear-eyed about uncertainty—whether in the art world or the planet as a whole. For an artist, he told *Young Space* last year, "when you couple something based on emotion with value and social capital, it makes for a chaotic profession to navigate."

Despite the chaos, Rochefort is managing to cut through in creating glazed stoneware and glass sculptures that seem to bubble and ooze with color and texture—even as they ominously allude to the worsening climate crisis.

After more than a year of intense research in the Amazon rainforest and elsewhere in Latin America (including a January residency at The Mistake Room in Guadalajara, Mexico), Rochefort is having an equally intense year exhibiting the results. In early May his work went on view at Caterina Tognon in Venice just as the 2019 *Venice Biennale* was getting underway. On view through July 27, *Collapse* features sculptural "craters" that erupt "with the energy of a volcanic explosion," as the gallery describes it.

Co-hosted by Van Doren Waxter, the NYC-based gallery that represents him, *Collapse* offers a prelude to the artist's first solo museum show—from August to early September at the Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara in California. That will be followed by another solo show in November at Massimo De Carlo in London.

Through a process that pushes beyond accepted bounds of the medium, Rochefort experiments with multiple firings, maximum coats of glaze and reconstructions of broken-down vessels—all of which allude to both the lush beauty he discovered in the rainforest and the precarious plight of the planet.

This focus was eminently clear in 2030, Rochefort's winter solo show at Van Doren Waxter in NYC. Named for the final year that the United Nations expects humans can effectively combat the effects of climate change, the show provided a glimpse of what audiences are now discovering in Venice: works of (un)natural beauty, pulled from wreckages yet to come.

brianrochefort.net // @energygloop





Amanda Sweet 07 PT
Backrush (2018, acrylic on three canvases, 30 x 72") is among the new abstract works in *Fugue in Blue*, a solo exhibition that runs from June 6–29 at Shift Gallery in Seattle, where Amanda lives. In her paintings, childhood memories of "dry, eroding red clay hills in South Carolina [collide] with her present adventures in the lush... Pacific Northwest"

2007

Matthew Borgatti ID built on his early experience in special effects robotics—making animatronic monsters for films such as *Snakes on a Plane* and *Alien vs Predator 2: Requiem*—to found Super-Releaser, an innovation acceleration company in Brooklyn. "Over the years we've helped develop a spacesuit glove for NASA that acts like a second skin, inflatable drone shells for Google Wing and a real-life Tamagotchi where users peer

into a microscopic water bear biome living inside their cell phone," he explains.

The *Colorado Springs Independent* highlighted Ladyfingers Letterpress—an independent print and stationery design shop in Colorado Springs, CO—as among the best attractions in the Pikes Peak region. Owners **Morgan Calderini** PR and Arley-Rose Torsone started the business in Rhode Island and relocated to the Rockies several years ago.

This spring paper artist **Jessica (Auclair) Smith** JM completed a 12-week artist residency at the Society of Arts + Crafts in Boston (where she lives) inspired by the history of paper flower making across cultures.

2008

In March Image Comics released the first issue of *Assassin Nation*, a comic book miniseries co-created by writer Kyle Starks and illustrator **Erica Henderson** FAV (Somerville, MA). The story of a one-time hitman hiring 20 of his former peers as bodyguards represents a real departure from the more family-friendly *Unbeatable Squirrel Girl* series for which Erica is best known.

Earlier this year **Lindy McDonough** ID, the creative

director at Lotuff Leather in Providence, joined the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA), a select group of leading designers in the US that recognizes her growing impact on the accessories industry.

In *Writ In Water*, a solo show on view earlier this spring at Rosewood Gallery in Kettering, OH, **Kasey Ramirez** IL presented prints of dark, brooding landscapes that explore issues of climate change. She teaches as an assistant professor of Studio Art at the University of Arkansas School of Art in Fayetteville, AR.

Los Angeles-based artist **Nicolas Shake** IL has been immersed in a two-month artist residency at the Chinati Foundation in Marfa, TX that ends in June.

A portrait **Laura Worrick** IL made of Willie Nelson was one of 40 on view in the AIGA

Ben Nadler 13 IL

The White Snake (TOON Books), Ben's new graphic novel for younger audiences, updates classic Grimm fairy tales by elevating the theme of kindness to animals and giving the story a more diverse cast of characters. Prior to its publication in May, the Chicago-based illustrator visited RISD and spoke to current students about the challenges and rewards of establishing a career as an author/illustrator.

Austin Afterhours Poster Show, which ran for two weeks last November at Wright Bros. Brew and Brew. She's based in Austin, where she cofounded the creative studio WE Design.

2009 10th Reunion October 11–13

Korakrit Arunanondchai PR (see page 10)

In early April illustrator **Jennifer Hom** IL spoke about her career trajectory at the AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts) Design Conference in Pasadena, CA. She worked as a Google Doodler for six years before helping to develop a visual brand for Uber and moving on to a position as head of illustration at Airbnb, the company led by fellow alums **Brian Chesky** 04 ID and **Joe Gebbia** 05 GD/ID in San Francisco.

Elise McMahon FD, who runs LikeMindedObjects in Hudson, NY, has been getting a lot of press this year, landing pieces in the *New York Times*' Sunday style section, *Architectural Digest* and *Bon Appetit Magazine*. The latter two stories covered a project she has been pursuing in Ghana to repurpose trash for making products and her recent design of the lounge at Lil Deb's Oasis, the Hudson restaurant run by her friend **Hannah Black** 09 PT, who has been attracting

a lot of media attention in her own right.

Independent filmmaker **Leah Shore** FAV (Brooklyn) continues to win recognition for her work. This spring the Criterion Collection added her seven-minute short *Old Man* (about Charles Manson) to its Criterion Channel streaming library. She also recently produced episodes of *How It Went Down*, a *Billboard* web series featuring interviews with high-profile musicians like Cardi B along with her own "sparkly" animations.

2010

Victo Ngai IL (see page 17)

Emma Shapiro PT (see page 8)

2011

Hillel O'Leary IL is showing work in the group exhibition *Concrete & Adrift: On the Poverty Line*, which continues through June 22 at Alexandria [LA] Museum of Art. Several of his new works were included in *Into the Void*, a winter exhibition that inaugurated the new gallery and studio space Neon Void, founded by siblings Nicholas and **Megan Tamas** MFA 15 SC in Adams, MA. Hillel lives in Lake Ronkonkoma, NY.

Providence-based jewelry artist **Kellie Riggs** JM curated a group exhibition that's on view through July 21 at the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) in



NYC. Called *Non-Stick Nostalgia: Y2K Retrofuturism in Contemporary Jewelry*, the show includes work by fellow alumna **MJ Tyson** 08 JM/MFA 17 and RISD faculty member Timothy Veske-McMahon.

After working in advertising and for a few tech startups, **Pablo Rochat** GD started creating his own content on Instagram two years ago and now has more than 174,000 followers. In addition to posting daily, he runs his own

studio, producing work for clients like Nike, Warby Parker, Apple, Netflix and *The New York Times*, among others. "Designing for an audience that has a one-second attention span is one of the greatest challenges of creating for digital," Pablo admits, adding that he's "learned how valuable people's time and attention is."

Earlier this spring Mercer County Community College in Trenton, NJ showed photographs by **Rachel Stern** PH in

Anne Beal 12 FAV

In *Tonal Conversations*, a performance piece presented last fall at 150 Media Stream in Chicago, Anne hand-painted and animated images in response to composer Christopher Zuar's piano improvisations. The related installation was on view through January 31 and the piece is being developed into a concert-length program slated to premiere in NYC.

Orpheus Looked. Curator Michael Chovan-Dalton describes the work featured in the solo show as "both garish and luxurious" in its contemporary interpretation of classical narratives and images. The artist teaches photography at Columbia in NYC, where she earned an MFA in Visual Arts in 2016.

2012

Martine Gutierrez PR (see cover and pages 22–29)

Artist/educator **Tamara Johnson** 12 SC, who teaches at Southern Methodist University

Misha Kahn 11 FD

Clad in colorful cashmere, this *American Gothic* chair was among the personality-rich pieces Misha exhibited earlier this year in *Just Around the Bend* at M+B gallery in Los Angeles. It was his first solo show in LA but one brimming with the same absurdist humor as his extravaganzas at Friedman Benda in NYC, his home turf.

in Dallas, recently launched the outdoor Sweet Pass Sculpture Park with her partner, Trey Burns. *Outdoor Cat*, a spring exhibition at the new venue, featured projects by a wide range of sculptors, including fellow alum **Kate Wignall** SC.

2013

The new book *Artificial Intelligence for Fashion* (Apress) by **Leanne Luce** AP covers AI topics from virtual try-on to AI style assistants and robotic garment manufacturing—synthesizing much of what the author has learned in recent years. After working as an apparel designer, Leanne is now a product manager at Google. "The education I received at RISD was valuable to me in ways I didn't expect," she says. "It taught me how to think differently about challenging problems and how to be curious about things that I don't yet know or understand."

Jamie Wolfond FD (see pages 30–33)





DRAWN FROM NATURE'S LAB

For textile designers **Rachel Doriss** 99 TX and **Molly Haynes** 14 TX, fruitful hours spent absorbed in RISD's Nature Lab continue to resonate years later. Both embraced the freedom to explore the lab's esoteric mix of eco-bits – crystals, spores, seeds, shells – before selecting, say, a scrawny skeleton or delicate fan of coral to further observe through drawing.

When the two Textiles graduates began thinking about designing the spring 2019 collection for Pollack – the NYC-based textiles studio where they both now work – they initially gravitated towards botanical drawings but didn't like the idea of basing their designs on preexisting work by other artists.

As Pollack's vice president and design director, Doriss is responsible for overseeing the development of each new collection. So she suggested that Haynes revisit their old stomping ground to refamiliarize herself with the 80,000+ specimens in the collection.

Having worked at the Nature Lab as a student, Haynes jumped at the opportunity to spend a day in the Waterman Building

pulling out specimens and making preliminary drawings. Back in the Pollack studio, she developed a series of detailed gouache studies that could be translated into embroidered images on a natural linen ground. Together, the two designers played around with the layout, simplifying the composition with each iteration.

Once Doriss learned that the size of the repeat would need to be limited due to the capacity of the embroidery machines, she wasn't fazed. After all, she says, that's what's "so cool about design as opposed to art."

Called *Nature Lab*, the light upholstery and drapery fabric Pollack produced captures the intricate detail and colors of Haynes' original artwork and forms the core of the company's new collection. Five other designs – *Botany*, *Breezy Point*, *Current*, *Songbird* and *True Horizon* – round out the collection, which focuses on the extraordinary beauty in nature's own laboratory – from water and air to flowers, leaves and feathers.



Designer **Molly Haynes** 14 TX returned to RISD to make sketches in the Nature Lab and then worked with **Rachel Doriss** 99 TX to develop Pollack's new spring collection.



Danny Glass BRDD 15 PT
Last fall *Cohort B* (2017, oil on canvas, 60 x 44") won first prize at the Colour and Form Society's juried exhibition in Toronto. Danny also earned a Blick Art Materials Award at the American Artists Professional League's open exhibit in NYC and best in show in a fall exhibition at Greenpoint Gallery in Brooklyn, where he lives. In addition, he participated in recent group shows on Long Island and in St. Louis.

2014

In February Adult Swim Smalls released a dark, one-minute animated comedy called *Gummo* (available on YouTube) by **Simeon Kondev** FAV and **Felipe Di Poi Tamargo** 17 FAV. Simeon works as an independent animator and filmmaker in Minneapolis, while Felipe is based in Brooklyn.

Before the last US Congressional elections in November, Brooklyn-based designer **Susan Merriam** AP helped to create the website for The Center for American Politics and Design (politicsanddesign.com), which features campaign logos and offers "a visual landscape of American politics." The design team also included **Lukas Bentel** BRDD 15 FD and **Kevin Wiesner** BRDD 15 ID.



2015

Work by **Farah Abdelhamid** JM (Cairo) is getting international attention of late, appearing at Milan Design Week (April) and in the *Venice Biennale* (May–November). In a feature article published by *ahramonline* in April, the Egyptian

jewelry maker says she likes to "experiment with taking the traditional into a contemporary spot."

In March Los Angeles-based artist **Luna Ikuta** ID showed a solo installation called *Oneness* at SOHO House in West Hollywood. Made of 64 black resin *darumas* (Japanese

talismans for luck), the piece is meant to "translate the lyricism of our senses through form and pattern, inviting a meditative focus," as she puts it.

Ms. Proboscis, an endearing character **Sarina Mitchel** 15 IL has been drawing for years, was the star of *Proboscis*, a solo

exhibition of paintings that ran last fall at BankRI's Turks Head Gallery in Providence, where she lives and did a recent residency at the community arts space AS220.

2016

Earlier this spring **Heather Benjamin** PR exhibited paintings and related ceramic sculptures in *Cowgirl Dental Floss*, a solo exhibition at These Days in Los Angeles.

Author/illustrator **Oge Mora** IL based her first picture book, *Thank You, Omu!* (see page 84 of XYZ, Fall/Winter 18/19), on the warmth and generosity of her own Nigerian grandmother. Beautifully told through hand-cut paper collages, it earned her a 2019 Caldecott Honor award, along with the Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe New Talent Illustrator Award.

Stella Zhong 15 GL

In March Stella showed large-scale sculptural works, videos and paintings in *Empty City*, a solo exhibition that ran in conjunction with NYC's annual *SPRING/BREAK Art Show*. The multidisciplinary artist is based in both Brooklyn and Shenzhen, China.





Now that she has won a Windgate Fellowship, **Elizabeth Schweizer** 19 TX plans to continue work with Lakota youth this summer while further connecting her own explorations in textiles with social practice.



RETURNING TO THE RESERVATION

For **Elizabeth Schweizer** 19 TX art education and studio practice both nurture self-expression and help build strong communities. As a Textiles major, she has explored these connections through ongoing social engagement and is in a good position to build on this experience now that she has earned a 2019 Windgate Fellowship from The Center for Craft, Creativity & Design in Asheville, NC.

As one of 10 graduating seniors throughout the US to win the \$15,000 award, Schweizer will focus on developing the La Plant Art Camp, a visual and performing arts program for Lakota youth living on the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota. The native New Yorker first volunteered to work with this indigenous community while in high school, an experience that helped her uncover an innate passion for teaching children.



@squiggle_schweiz

A knitter since early childhood, Schweizer describes her work as being “about bringing childhood mystery back to life through the accessibility of textile craft.” While at RISD she continued to work on the reservation in South Dakota every summer and in 2017 took advantage of a Social Innovation Fellowship (supported by RISD Careers and Brown University’s Swearer Center) to design a curriculum that connects Lakota of all ages with artists, cultural experts and other members of the community.

“I saw my role as creating a space where the kids I taught could develop local connections and relationships,” says Schweizer, who will use Windgate support to refine the La Plant Art Camp curriculum for teens and families. The fellowship will also open up several opportunities to advance her own work, including a fall artist residency at the Icelandic Textile Center in Blönduós, Iceland.

Although she admits that combining her passions for education and creative practice isn’t always easy, Schweizer is excited to keep exploring the possibilities as she makes the big transition from being a student to finding her place in the world.



Zenzele Ojore 18 PH After her fourth attempt, **Zenzele** was thrilled to be one of two young filmmakers to earn the 2019 Horizon Award, an international competition for college women or recent graduates to submit super short films to be screened at the Sundance Film Festival in January. She earned an all-expenses-paid trip to Sundance, where she screened an evocative film called *The South is My Sister’s Skin*.

of bonds inseparable by land, sea and sky.” Her work was on view last fall in *An Anemone Smiles at Me*, a two-person exhibition (with Evan Galbicka) at Ed. Varie in NYC. Phyllis’ work was also included in *Uncanny Tales*, a winter group show at Agency in Brooklyn

Olivia Stephens 19 IL Having won a \$20,000 Tulsa [OK] Arts Fellowship, comic artist and illustrator **Olivia** is pleased to be working on *Artie*, her debut graphic novel. The story focuses on a fiercely independent, 12-year-old photographer and is due to be published by Lerner Graphic Universe in 2021.

2016 continued

In her paintings **Phyllis Yao** PT combines celestial and spiritual iconography to create metaphorical scenes of love and connectedness — “the truth



responding to both the surreal and fascist feel of the times.

2017
Urvi Sharma FD (see page 43)

2018
The online arts collective Portal (portalartgroup.com) features the surreal work of **Nita Miller** PR, **Kilian Goltra** GD and **Hadi Debs** PT, who exhibited collectively as part of *Satellite Art Show* at Miami Art Week in early December.

Francesca Rosati 19 PT **Francesca’s** original ink drawings enliven *Artist’s Loft*, a new collection of ceramics from **Rosanna**, the Seattle-based tableware company founded by her mother, **Rosanna Bowles**. The collection has already been picked up by museum shops at the Guggenheim, the National Gallery and the Detroit Institute of Arts Museum, among others.

Last fall Drawn Down Books, headed by RISD faculty members **Christopher** and **Kathleen Sleboda**, exhibited a new zine by graphic designer **Can Yang** GD at Offprint Paris (in France). The work was inspired by a trip to Chile in 2018 and her encounters with commercial culture. She’s based in Shenzhen, China.



2019
During an internship outside of Florence last summer, **Martha Nowak** TX worked with Italian textiles designer **Eva Di Franco** to create a knitted, ripple-rich beachwear collection inspired by underwater creatures, windblown sand and the sea itself.

Deaths

Helen Lucille Johnson 44 AD of Fort Myers, FL on 4.15.19

Jean Menetrey Edwards 45 TX of Fairfield, CT on 1.22.19

Margaret Priestly John 48 AE of East Providence, RI on 12.30.18

Mary (Young) Barnhouse 49 TX of Santa Barbara, CA on 2.14.19

Norman McNerney 49 MD of Kensington, NH on 2.4.19

Emil Ferencik 50 IA of Foxboro, MA on 2.5.19

Robert Doherty 51 GD of Cambridge, MA on 1.6.19

Ernest Kirwan 51 IA of Cambridge, MA on 1.17.19

George Maver 51 AE of Hanson, MA on 3.2.19

Luther Davis 52 TX of Greenville, SC on 2.21.19

George Jezierny 52 Arch of Delray Beach, FL on 12.10.18

Helena Slaugh Freeburg 53 IL of Mt. Pleasant, SC on 3.10.19

Lorraine Erskine Garland 53 LA of Sarasota, FL on 12.28.18

Robert Jones 53 PT of Seattle, WA on 12.23.18

Patricia Barrett Maggio 53 PT of New York, NY on 2.27.19

Charles Wiener 54 TX of Toms River, NJ on 12.25.18

Elayne Schwartzman Canter 56 GD of Hamden, CT on 11.25.18

Joseph Nagle 57 ID of Dover, NH on 12.5.18

William Cole 58 MD of Naples, FL on 11.30.18

Joseph Kuszai 59 GD of East Lansing, MI on 2.12.19

Sally Nixon Weir 59 IA of Naples, FL on 3.25.19

Philippa Smith Brown 60 AP of Waterville, NY on 2.15.19

Donald Berg 63 GD of Holland, MA on 12.11.18

Guy Frost 63 Arch of Port Washington, NY on 3.14.19

Richard Kuehl BArch 64 of Warwick, RI on 3.16.19

Susan Meyerhoff Stapleford 64 PT of Haddonfield, NJ on 1.7.19

Lloyd Dyson 65 BArch of Jamaica Plain, MA on 12.11.18

Marvin Simmons 67 GD of Easton, PA on 2.13.19

Charles Matter 71 PH of New York, NY on 3.28.19

William Prindle 74 ID/MID 78 of Ames, IA on 2.14.19

Michael Heroux 77 GD of Meriden, CT on 1.29.19

Robert Theodore (Ted) Stearn 83 PT of Warrenton, VA on 2.1.19

Donna Palumbo O’Neill 85 GD of Jamestown, RI on 3.8.19

Norman Longhauser BArch 90 of Newark, DE on 2.1.19

Marie Doucette 93 IL of Lockney, TX on 3.16.19

Diana Dunn 97 IL of Newport, RI on 1.14.19

Curtis McGadden 99 IL of Windham, NH on 3.10.19

Miia Carita D’Agostino BIA 01 of Steelville, MO on 8.11.18

Madeline (Maddy) Parrasch 19 PT of Hillsdale, NY on 12.13.18

moving forward //graduate class notes



Maureen O'Neill MFA 92 PT
below: Maureen's new pastel works were on view earlier this year in *Imprints of Experience*, a solo show at North Carolina Wesleyan College in Rocky Mount, NC. She's an assistant professor and director of exhibitions and educational programming at Barton College in Wilson, NC.



1963
Martha Armstrong MAE of Hatfield, MA exhibited her colorful abstract landscape paintings in a number of solo shows this spring: at Bowery

Gallery in NYC (March–April), Gross McCleaf Gallery in Philadelphia (April) and the Oxbow Gallery in Northampton, MA (May).

1969
From February–May, the San Francisco Public Library presented a poignant exhibition of photographs by Minneapolis-based artist **Perci Chester** MFA PT called *In Search of the Glass Slipper*. Curated from a series of roughly 400



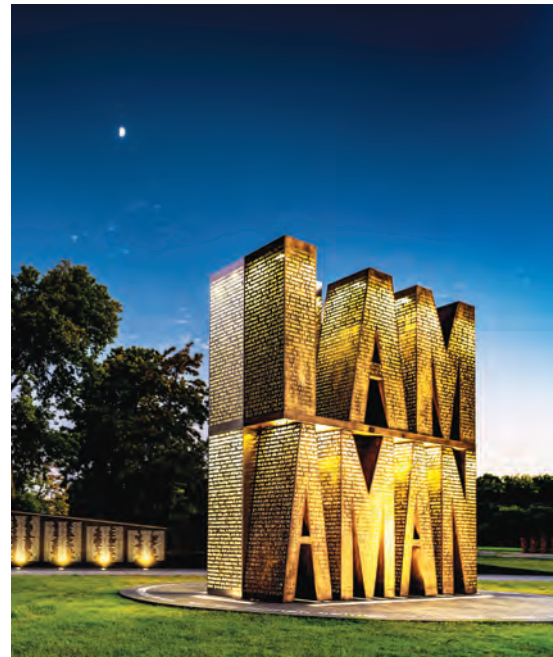
Alan Metnick MFA 73 PH
Projects and Selections, a spring solo show at Candita Clayton Gallery in Pawtucket, RI, featured Alan's textiles, stained glass pieces, works on paper and paintings like *Manny's Furniture* (1990, acrylic on canvas, 18 x 24"). This spring the Providence Art Club hosted *Silence and Stones*, a second solo show featuring his photography.

photographs taken over the course of eight months in 1974, the show offered a glimpse of the city's flamboyant gay community in the pre-AIDS era.

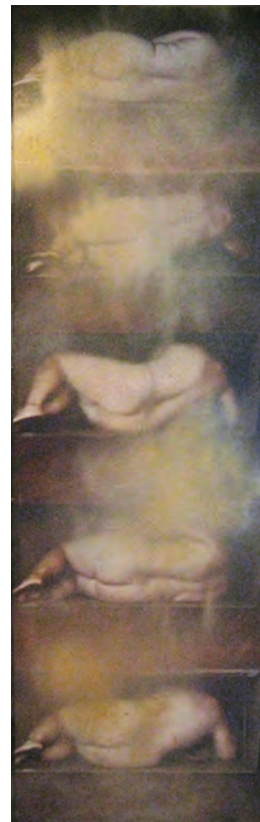
1976
Last December **Alfred De Angelo** MFA PT won a contest to design the 140th anniversary logo for the Copley Society of Art (CoSo) in Boston, where he has been an exhibiting member since 2004. His work is being featured on all CoSo materials throughout 2019.

1977
Thing Indescribable, a major retrospective of work by **Jenny Holzer** MFA PT (see page 20), opened in late March and continues to draw crowds through September 9 at the Guggenheim Bilbao in Spain.

Jim Kociuba MAE 84
For one month last fall Jim showed *Maple Breeze* (2018, acrylic on canvas, 36 x 48") in *Red 2018*, the biennial exhibition of the Cambridge [MA] Art Association.



1978
Ceramist **Arlene Shechet** MFA SC (Woodstock, NY) showed a series of Buddha figures in *Listening Closely*, a group exhibition that ran from January–March at Lora Reynolds Gallery in Austin, TX. Her contributions to the show were precipitated by the untimely death of a close friend, which inspired her



to “stay awake” and re-embrace the wonder of life.

1980
Nancy Hubbard MAE showed work in *Winter Selects 2019*, a group exhibition that ran in January and February at Susan Eley Fine Art in NYC. The artist is based in Angier, NC.

1982
The wall painting *War & Peace after Leo Tolstoy*, the latest installation in *The Slaughterhouse Project* series by **Brad Buckley** MFA SC, was on view from March 6–May 31 at The Reflex Wall on Russell Street in the Australian city of Toowoomba, Queensland. Based in Sydney, the artist describes the project as “a conceptual device of cauterization... for investigating political anomalies, for venting dissatisfaction with social justice.”

1983
Longtime friends **Dale Emmart** MFA PT and **Karen Bell** MFA PH are looking forward to their seventh summer adventure together

Linda DiFrenna MAE 83
Linda's photography and mixed-media piece *Nude in a Box* was among the works on view from November through early March in the *New Bedford [MA] Art Museum's juried 2018 Members Exhibition*. The artist lives in Swansea, MA.

Cliff Garten MFA 78 CR
left: The American Society of Landscape Architects presented the Venice, CA-based artist with its 2018 Quality of Life Honor Award for his role in designing the *I AM A MAN Plaza*, a site-specific installation in Memphis honoring the 1968 Sanitation Workers Strike and subsequent quote made famously by Martin Luther King, Jr. *Gravity and Grace*, another of Cliff's public art projects, was unveiled at the Central Place Plaza in Arlington, VA.

in Portugal, where they'll direct their popular plein air workshop from July 15–26.

Comic book artist **Peter Grimshaw** MAT was delighted to sign prints of his work at Silver Moon Comics in Salem, MA last October. For more than a decade, he has also worked as a gallery guard at the Peabody [MA] Essex Museum, where he enjoys interacting with visitors.

1989
NYC-based sculptor and performance artist **Janine Antoni** MFA SC partnered once again with pioneering choreographer Anna Halprin last winter for a performance piece called *Paper Dance* presented at The Contemporary Austin in Texas. She also presented an artist talk at the museum on February 5.

Recently created installations by **Spencer Finch** MFA SC (Brooklyn) posing probing questions about memory, time and perception are on view through June 30 in a group exhibition called *New to the Cantor* at the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford [CA] University.

1990
As founder and CEO of the NYC-based studio 360 Design, **Ronnie Peters** MFA GD is the creative director for Hyperloop, a global firm specializing in high-speed transportation technologies. At the drivenxdesign New York Design Awards in December, he and his team were named the 2018 NYC Small Agency of the Year for their work with Hyperloop and on the Harvard/MIT-led citizen science initiative Darwin's Ark.



Muriel Angelil MAE 72
Muriel showed paintings like *Kaleidoscope* last fall during *Amesbury [MA] Open Studios 2018* and in the spring at the nearby Merrimac [MA] Public Library. She also recently published a book of poetry and paintings called *justsaying* that's available on Amazon.

1991
Los Angeles-based glass artist **Katherine Gray** MFA GL showed an immersive collection of work in *(Being) in a Hotshop*, a solo exhibition on view at the Toledo [OH] Museum of Art from February–May.

The first female member of the Xbox team, she's now having fun hanging out with her teenage daughter and working for a Boston-based technology company focused on senior living.

1992
Denise (Love) Chaudhari MID was pleased to finally bask in her own “15 minutes of fame” last year when Microsoft re-released *Duke*, the original Xbox controller she helped to design nearly 20 years ago.

This spring versatile artist **Dana Matthews** MFA PH showed oil paintings, cactus scanographs, cyanotypes and photographic tuxedo shirts at a range of local venues near her home in Hudson Valley, NY, including the Farm Salon at Greig Farm in Red Hook.



Amy Genser MFA 01 GD
left: Fluid Terrain, a three-woman exhibition on view over the winter at Flinn Gallery in Greenwich, CT, featured pieces such as this one, Neptune (2018, paper and acrylic on canvas, 90 x 60 x 4"). Based in West Hartford, CT, Amy spends summers on the beach in Rhode Island and is inspired by the intricacies of natural organisms and environments.

Work by **Susan Matthews** MAT was on view in several exhibitions last year, including a solo show at Paper Nautilus Books in Providence and a group exhibition at the Jamestown [RI] Arts Center. She lives on the island of Jamestown in Narragansett Bay.

2003

Since 2016 **Donald Tarallo** MFA GD has been exploring typeface design in his creative practice in Worcester, MA, a shift that has led to the development of bold alphanumeric and symbol fonts. An associate professor at Fitchburg [MA] State University, he's teaching a summer course in font design at the Siena [Italy] Art Institute.

2004

Mixed-media sculpture by **Colby Bird** MFA PH was included in Halsey McKay's *NADA Miami* exhibition in December and in a recent long-running group exhibition called *Night Shade* at Blender Workspace in NYC, where he lives.

In the winter **Ben Blanc** MFA FD and **Aja Blanc** MA 06 showed a new series of mirrors exploring form, texture and transparency at the Salon in Boston. Ben teaches at RISD and the couple lives in Providence with their two children.

Amanda Lechner

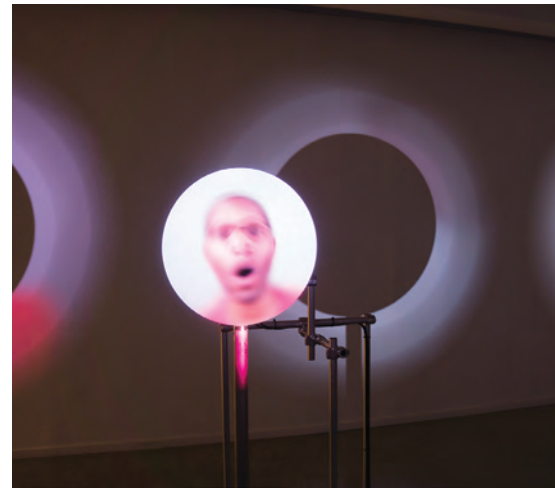
MFA 05 PT
left: Earlier this year Amanda showed recent works like Mica Basal Cleavage in Future Present Tense, a solo show at Standard Space in Sharon, CT. The artist divides her time between her home state of New Mexico and Indiana, where she's a visiting assistant professor at the University of Indiana/Bloomington.

1994

As a 2019 Rhode Island State Council on the Arts fellow, RISD faculty member **Noam Elyashiv** MFA JM showed clean contemporary jewelry exploring line, plane and volume in a group exhibition on view at the Warwick [RI] Center for the Arts from February–March.

1998

Graphic designer **Steve Jones** MFA GD and his wife Mamie welcomed Bennett Everest Wong Jones to their family on October 3, 2018. The family lives in Oakland, CA and also includes Bennett's older sister Harlem Eloise.



Robin Mandel MFA 05 SC
Exploring the interplay of time, light, sound and images in various ways, Robin showed sculptural works and installations in Hold Still, a fall 2018 solo exhibition at Swarthmore [PA] College (his undergraduate alma mater) and gave a talk about his work during the run of the show.

2005

In April jewelry designer **Melissa Borrell** MFA JM (Athens, GA) took the stage with British artist Naho Matsuda as part of a SXSW 2019 artist conversation in

Austin, TX. Melissa notes that Naho's recent work, like her own, encourages the viewer to "slow down and notice the beauty in the small moments happening around us all the time."

John DeHoog

MFA 00 FD
Householdments, a solo exhibition on view earlier this year at the University of Michigan's RC Center Art Gallery in Ann Arbor, made use of an outdated word for home furnishings and related objects that John—a professor at Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, MI—found fitting for his current collection of work.



In addition to its many other services for displaced Syrians, the Karam Foundation has begun launching design-based schools to help young refugees reach their full potential.

“When I see students at Karam House working in their studios having the same experience that I did, that’s a huge victory. To be able to change the way they think is a powerful thing.”

INNOVATIVE HUMANITARIANISM



Syrian-American activist **Lina Sergie Attar** MArch 01 believes in helping the nearly 12 million Syrians forced to flee their home country build a better future. In 2007 she founded Karam Foundation, a Chicago-based nonprofit named after the Arabic word for “generosity,” and has since devoted her time and energy to the effort full time.

As the war in Syria escalated, the organization grew by responding to needs from the community—for everything from family resettlement to education. Born in Brooklyn, Sergie Attar moved to the ancient city of Aleppo, where her parents are from, when she was 12 and stayed on through her undergraduate college years at the University of Aleppo.

“Growing up there was amazing,” she says. But eager for “the opportunity to look at architecture through a much more open lens,” Sergie Attar chose RISD for grad school. She had graduated at the top of her class in one of Syria’s leading architecture programs, yet her first day at RISD she was bewildered by being asked to transform the 25-lb bag of clay on her studio table into a building joint.



“I stood there not knowing what to do with the clay,” she admits. “More importantly, I didn’t know how to *think*.” Years later, she says: “I tell people that I went into RISD as one person and came out another—like my brain had been rewired.”

Since 2012 Sergie Attar has been leaning in to her RISD experience by helping to launch a series of design schools meant to unlock the full potential of Syrian youth. The organization opened its first Karam House in Reyhanli, a small border town in southern Turkey, and then scaled the program up for another in Istanbul. In 2020 they’re aiming to add Karam Houses in Lebanon and Jordan.

“I appreciate what I learned at RISD more and more as time passes,” Sergie Attar says. “When I see students at Karam House working in their studios having the same experience that I did, that’s a huge victory. To be able to change the way they think is a powerful thing.”

Karam’s focus now is on educating “a future generation of thinkers, innovators, creators and designers who know how to solve problems,” Sergie Attar says. “If this group continues to grow with a sense of responsibility for the next generation, we can create a sustainable movement that uses design and innovation and creativity to combat the bad in the world.”



Ben Wright MFA 09 GL
 In May Ben started working as artistic director at Pilchuck Glass School, the renowned educational center in Seattle founded in 1971 by Dale Chihuly MFA 68 CR. The former director of education at Urban Glass in Brooklyn, he's now leading Pilchuck's education programs and exhibitions and deepening its commitment to new youth and outreach programs.

up by literary agents Wernick & Pratt. Adriana lives on Merritt Island, FL.

Last fall work by **Jonas Criscoe** MFA PT was included in *Mixed Media*, a group show at Site:Brooklyn Gallery in NYC. He also contributed to *When Everything's Been Said*, a two-person exhibition (with Mark Johnson) at ICOSA in Austin, the artist-run gallery he cofounded in 2015.

Los Angeles-based filmmaker and media artist **Jeanne Jo** MFA DM was one of six directors selected in late 2018 for Powderkeg: Fuse, an incubator program supporting women of color working in film. With the support, she co-wrote and directed a short called *Rachel from New York*.

2009
 In April Providence-based ceramist **Kelli Rae Adams** MFA CR brought attention to the student debt crisis crippling many college grads in the US through *work/study*, a solo show at Rhode Island College



Amanda E. Gross MAT 10
 left: Amanda started the year with *I Quit My Job to Draw*, a liberating solo show at Catalyst Gallery in Beacon, NY, where she lives.

in Teaching grant. As part of the Semester Research Program, she will visit universities in England and Scotland to explore place-based art and design education in rural communities.

Ayumi Ishii MFA SC is showing work in the Green Space Gallery at T.F. Green Airport in Warwick, RI this fall. "I work primarily with experimental mold making and casting in resin," says the RI-based sculptor. "These techniques encapsulate and petrify memory and the ephemerality of everyday nature."

The Metropolitan Museum of Art has added *A Volcano Pilgrim in Exchange for Fire*, a series of 20 prints **Serena Perrone** MFA PT created using intaglio plates printed with gouache monotype on a Takach etching

Rory Lucey MAE 09
 right: Rory's first graphic novel *Jonesy: Nine Lives on the Nostromo* (Titan Books, October 2018) reimagines the classic 1979 sci-fi/horror film *Alien* from the point of view of its scene-stealing feline costar, Jonesy. Rory is based in New Jersey, where he teaches at the Haddonfield [NJ] Friends School.

2006
Kari Giordano MAT, who teaches in Sheffield, MA, is one of approximately 25 educators nationwide to earn a 2019/20 Fulbright Distinguished Awards

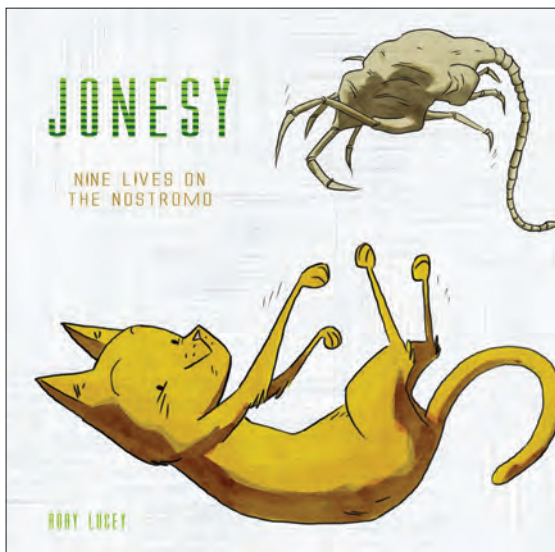
Emily Fleisher MFA 06 SC
 In 2018 Emily completed work on *First Fruits*, a permanent installation at Travis Park in San Antonio, TX, where she lives. Since the park was once a peach orchard of historic significance, her piece pays tribute to the 1918 Peach Stones Campaign, which urged Americans to gather peach pits for making gas masks to protect US soldiers during WWI.



press. She silkscreened on top and then hand-set the type using a Vandercook letterpress.

In March **Eduardo Terranova** MArch showed eye-catching, reflective work at the *Architectural Digest Design Show* in NYC, where he lives.

2008
 Last November Cuban-American author/illustrator **Adriana Hernandez-Bergstrom** MID received a Walter Dean Myers Grant from We Need Diverse Books (WNDB) as part of the nonprofit's mission to further the careers of unpublished children's book authors from diverse backgrounds. In January she won the WNDB Illustrator Mentorship and was picked



Debra Folz MFA 10 FD
 Earlier this year Debra released this new bedroom collection created in collaboration with the home furnishings company West Elm. "This collection is inspired by simple and unexpected details," says the Providence-based designer, who teaches in RISD's Furniture Design department.

that featured hundreds of handmade bowls filled with coins. The exhibition marked the beginning of a long-term project called *Forever in Your Debt*.

Kevin Hughes MFA 08 JM
 Kevin (Providence) was one of 12 artists chosen to represent the US and Canada with pieces like this pendant *Center Line* at the 4th Triple Parade Biennale for Contemporary Jewellery (October-early January) at the HOW Art Museum Design Center in Shanghai. Fellow grads **Yong Joo Kim** MFA 09 JM (Seoul and Chicago) and **Lauren Tickle** MFA 09 JM (New Orleans) were also selected.

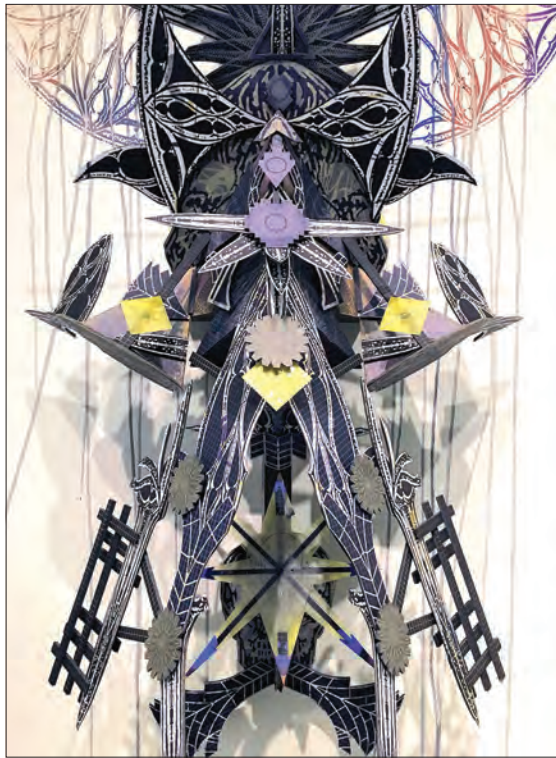


Anchal, is excited to announce that the organization's artisan-made quilts are now on display at Madewell stores across the US. She lives and works in Louisville, KY.

Glass artist and educator **Charlotte Potter Kasic** MFA GL has been named executive director of the Yestermorrow Design/Build School in Waitsfield, VT, near where she lives in neighboring Fayston. The school integrates design and craft as a creative, interactive process that fosters deep hands-on learning.

2011
 Last November **Salem Al-Qassimi** MFA GD organized an exhibition called *Ministry of Graphic Design*, the first biennial meant to show the medium as an integral component of contemporary civic life and central to nearly every mode of expression, message and communication

Topher Paterno MFA 06 FD
 right: Topher has been named Teacher of the Year by Gunston Middle School in Arlington, VA, where he is an instructor in technical education and robotics. As leader of the school's design and engineering club and coach of its after-school robotics program, he advocates for diversity in tech education and creates learning experiences that are equitable and inclusive of all students.



Johnny Adimando MFA 09 PR
 The *Valkyrie* (2018, mixed media, 25.5 x 48 x 22") was among the works in *The Devil of Unapologetic Mirrors*, Johnny's winter solo exhibition at Gibbs Street Gallery in Rockville, MD. The mix of animalistic and occult imagery prompted a reviewer for *The Washington Post* to speculate that the work might be "a form of spiritual autobiography." Based in NYC, Johnny teaches in RISD's Printmaking department.

we encounter every day. Based in the UAE, she runs a multidisciplinary design studio called Fikra that specializes in providing bilingual graphic design solutions in Arabic and English.
 Earlier this year Brooklyn-based multimedia artist **Anna Plesset** MFA PT exhibited work in the winter group show *Place/Image/Object* at Jack Barrett in NYC and in a solo show called *Various Records* on view at Hunter Harrison (February-March) in London and at PATRON (March-May) in Chicago.





CLEAR VISION

For artist and educator **Nitashia Johnson** MAT 15, art and design education has always been a force for good. Growing up in Dallas, she dealt with poverty and transience in her home life, but received invaluable support from a handful of mentors—first in middle and high school and later in college.

“My parents were not in the picture,” Johnson says, “so growing up, my teachers were the parents I needed.” Now living in Dallas again, the graphic designer, photographer and educator has received another wave of support: a six-month residency funded by Sony.

As one of five Alpha Female Creators-in-Residence, Johnson has been taking advantage of a \$25,000 grant—plus \$5,000 in Sony Alpha photo equipment—to help advance two ongoing projects.

With *The Self Publication*, she’s working to counter negative media portrayals of people of color with “new representations” of black culture. “I see *The Self Publication* as a healing

Now that she has won a grant and residency from Sony, **Nitashia Johnson** MAT 15 (with camera in hand above right) is able to move forward with ongoing work on both *The Self Publication* and *The Smart Project*.



mechanism” that helps participants “understand their own worth,” she explains. Through the Sony residency, she’s partnering with mentor **Me Ra Koh** to sharpen her skills as a portrait photographer.

Since earning her Master of Arts in Teaching, Johnson has been working as a graphic designer and photographer at the University of Texas/Dallas and teaching digital design classes on weekends to middle- and high-school students. In addition, she has been busy building an arts education nonprofit called The Smart Project. Thanks to the Alpha Female residency, she’s expecting to launch a pilot for that later this year at North Dallas High School (in partnership with the Dallas/Fort Worth chapter of the AIGA). The mission of the after-school program is to build students’ creative and critical thinking skills and provide valuable professional development experiences.

“I’m doing a *lot* of stuff,” Johnson acknowledges, “but my vision is clear. I know it takes time to create something that will leave a mark on the world. These projects are my babies and I want to work on them for as long as possible.”

“I know it takes time to create something that will leave a mark on the world. These projects are my babies and I want to work on them for as long as possible.”

2012

Photographer **Jennifer Garza-Cuen** MFA PH, an assistant professor at Texas A&M University, has been awarded a 2019 Guggenheim Fellowship, which will allow her to create a “narrative of multigenerational migration” based on her own family’s immigration to the US to settle in El Paso, TX and Juneau, AK.

A sound work by **Tamara Johnson** MFA SC was included in *Away Message*, a winter exhibition at Sweet Pass Sculpture Park in Dallas, where she lives.

Thanks to a fellowship from the Somerville [MA] Arts Council

RaMell Ross MFA 14 PH

After earning a Special Jury Award at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival, RaMell’s poetic film *Hale County This Morning, This Evening* was nominated for a 2019 Academy Award for Best Feature Documentary and aired on the PBS show *Independent Lens*. In February he spoke about the film on *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*.

and support from the New England Foundation for the Arts, **Catherine Siller** MFA DM continues to build on her theatrical dance piece *Are You Buying?* In February she performed in *Mind the Gap* at Green Street Studios in Cambridge, MA. Through this multimedia exploration of “selfie culture,” the Boston-based artist confronts gender

stereotypes and inequalities in advertising and media.

2013

Liat Berdugo MFA DM teamed up with artist Emily Martinez for *Eternal Boy Playground*, a winter exhibition at Telematic Gallery in San Francisco. “The show explored cultural tropes surrounding cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin,” the Oakland-based artist/writer/curator explains. In February her work was included in two group exhibitions with a new media focus: *Entanglement* in Chicago and the College Art Association’s annual conference in NYC.

Last winter Brooklyn-based photographer **Rob MacInnis** MFA PH showed a new series of images focused on his personality-filled farmyard friends at *PhotoLA* in Santa Monica, CA.

2014

The University of Nevada/Reno opened its new Lilley Museum of Art with an exhibition called

Cole Swavely MFA 13 PR

right: In January Cole showed prints like *Keep Moving* (2018, silkscreen collage, 12 x 12”) in *What I Tell Myself*, a solo exhibition at the Washington [DC] Printmakers Gallery. Recently promoted to the rank of lieutenant in the US Navy, he’s currently based in the DC area, striving “to do his best”

F. Taylor Colantonio MFA 14 FD

Though his fabric vessels, rugs and lighting are still fabricated in factories in Rhode Island, Taylor has been living in Rome since completing an artist’s residency in Puglia in 2017. “As someone making things, it’s really nice to live in a cosmopolitan setting like Rome, but to be free of the present—to avoid all those trends and influences,” he noted in a wonderful *New York Times* feature earlier this year.



Odette England MFA 12 PH

Punched #80 is among the photographs from three recent series, *The Outskirts*, *Exposed* and *Punched*, on view earlier this spring in a solo exhibition at Klompching Gallery in Brooklyn. Odette is an assistant professor at RISD and currently serves as graduate program director in Photography.

Terma, Images from the Ear or Groin or Somewhere featuring work by Toronto-based artist **Sameer Farooq** MFA GD. A collaborative effort with poet Jared Stanley, the show questioned the mission and legacy of institutional collection and display practices and was on view from January–March.

Throughout the month of March, photographer **Julie Gautier-Downes** MFA PH exhibited new works created independently and in collaboration with her twin sister in *Forged by Fire: Natural Disasters in Painting and Sculpture* at Saranac Art Projects in Spokane, WA.





Luci Jockel MFA 16 JM
The American Craft Council (ACC) has recognized Luci with its 2019 Emerging Voices Awards, which includes a monetary prize, a feature in *American Craft* magazine and an invitation to the ACC's national conference this fall. She lives in Philadelphia, where she works as the metals shop supervisor at University of the Arts (UArts) and makes extraordinary work from wings, bones and other bits of flora and fauna.

histories in *Altered Coral*, a solo exhibition on view at the Oyster Bay [NY] Historical Society from October–early January. The artist considers herself an explorer, seeking new ways of “layering, swirling, forcing, bending, breaking and reusing surfaces.”

A grant from the National Association of Latino Arts and Culture (NALAC) enabled

Michael Menchaca MFA PR to create a series of works on paper exploring the impact of Silicon Valley tech giants on the social fabric of Latinx communities. Based in San Antonio, TX, he was one of only 26 social justice advocates nationwide to be funded by the organization.

2015

Using clay renderings of litter found on the beach, **Lauren Skelly Bailey** MFA CR (East Meadow, NY) explored surface, form and the layering of

Gabriela O'Connor MA 16 IA + **Jason Van Yperen** MA 16 IA

Gabriela and Jason made *(POP)UP*, a site-specific installation of more than 400 balloons, for last summer's Eau Claires Music Festival in Eau Claire, WI. The playful piece invited attendees to explore the festival site and be open and curious about the performers. After dark the balloons glowed (thanks to LEDs inside them) and “further heightened the forest's ephemeral and evolving character,” the designers explain.



Yixin Ren MArch 17 + **Xinye Lin** MArch 18
RIPPLE, an experimental art installation first presented at a RISD faculty exhibition at Woods-Gerry Gallery, was on view last summer at Brooklyn's Grange Rooftop Garden and has been selected for inclusion on the Chinese site Today Art Museum.

opened Manhattan restaurant and retail space. Find out more at risd.edu/tim-miller.

2016

Brooklyn-based sculptor and video artist **Devra Freeland** MFA SC was among four artists invited to create site-specific outdoor sculptures that blur reality and fantasy for *Spring/Break*, a public art show on view at the Times Square Broadway plazas from March 5–31.

2017

A little over a year after founding the arts-based nonprofit Harbor Voices, **Stephanie Benenson** MA coordinated a weeklong public art festival in May celebrating ancestral and current immigrant communities in the El Punto neighborhood of Salem, MA.

Test Pattern (Drawn Down Books), a collection of mathematically rendered forms by **Cem Eskinazi** MFA GD, was on display last November at *Offprint Paris* in France. Last fall the Providence-based type and graphic designer also showed a softcover volume of the work at *High Point [NC] Market Week*, an international design fair.



2018

Manan Narang MFA FD (see page 43)

2019

A project **Tim Miller** MFA FD posted online after his first semester at RISD led to a commission from Lexus, the luxury car brand, to create furnishings for its recently

Anina Major MFA 17 CR
Stacked (18x20x26") is among the ceramic pieces Anina created during recent residencies in North Adams, MA—at Mass MOCA Studios and 36 Chase & Barns—and is now exhibiting in a solo show (May 23–June 22) at the town's MCLA Gallery 51. Earlier this year she showed mixed-media sculptures, video and prints in a solo exhibition at Foster Art Gallery in New Wilmington, PA.



Steph Foster MFA 19 PH addressed disproportionate rates of incarceration among black Americans when presenting at the 2019 *Design Indaba* conference in South Africa.

REVERSE-ENGINEERING RACISM

“Flat-out amazing” is the way new graduate **Steph Foster** MFA 19 PH describes his experience representing RISD at *Design Indaba*, the annual conference of international creatives in Cape Town, South Africa. “My talk went really well,” he says, “but the best part was hanging out with all these super-creative architects and filmmakers from around the world and just getting *infected* with their brilliant ideas.”

Foster says he's equally inspired by the RISD community and happy to have furthered his studies in the same field he chose as an undergrad at Michigan State. “In the photo department I had the opportunity to work with an amazing group of thesis advisors,” he says, “including the best educator ever: **Odette England** MFA 12 PH (see also page 93), who has had a huge impact on all of us.”



“I’m trying to make links between slavery, mass incarceration and the commodification of black bodies.”

Glory, an annual prison rodeo in which inmates can earn commissary dollars by risking their lives in the ring. “I’m trying to make links between slavery, mass incarceration and the commodification of black bodies,” he explains.

Now that he has graduated, Foster hopes to find a teaching position and maybe return to Cape Town as a Fulbright Fellow. But regardless of what's next, he's committed to using his boundless creative energy to draw attention to complicated problems like racial inequality. “Systemic racism is a man-made construct,” he points out. “And anything that has been engineered can also be reverse-engineered.”



ESSENTIAL SPIRITUALITY

by **Ricker Winsor** 77 PH/MFA 78 PT

WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE ANYWAY? For a lot of people, a six pack of beer and a football game answer that question very nicely. For others it's family, grandchildren and community. To be an artist is to not be satisfied by that—to be an outsider looking in.

Artists have to find their own way, driven to respond to life's experiences in the best way they can—or as my teacher and friend the late **Harry Callahan** put it: to share “what you feel and have always known.” That is the motivation—to do something, say something, make something that is a deep expression of who you are and how you feel about this mysterious life.

In the best work there's a sense of passionate intention—the desire to capture a feeling in whatever medium. When I started, I was a photographer and my heroes were **Henri Cartier-Bresson**, **Danny Lyon** and **Callahan**. But for me, the simple, direct approach of

a reed pen drawing in India ink on paper and oil paint on canvas provided a more satisfying experience. So that's what I have been doing now for over 40 years.

How did this all happen? Why did it happen? The ancient oracle of Apollo proclaimed: *gnothi seauton* (know thyself). It's a difficult directive—easier said than done.

The affluent world I was a part of after WWII was not satisfying to me, and I noticed that it didn't seem to make the adults I knew very happy either. What did make sense were my father's clever and skillful cartoons, his writing; my mother's excellent painting; the painting of my sister Mary; and the good reproductions of Van Gogh paintings on the walls of our home.

For me art seemed to make sense as an antidote to the materialism surrounding me. It seemed closer to religion than to business. The idea of it in my mind

“For me art seemed to make sense as an antidote to the materialism surrounding me.”

was quite pure. That said, I think most of us start out wanting the élan, the fame, the *honour* and glory we associate with our art heroes. It's easy to forget that Van Gogh shot himself in the stomach and took three days to die, that he



“Art is beyond the glitz and noise of our grinding world—an oasis of purity in the middle of all that.”

sold only one painting in his life and that his mother used his paintings to plug holes in her chicken coop. We only remember those things later—when the artist's path gets bumpy.

I became a photographer and studied painting in New York museums to understand art principles: light, composition, contrast, value and other things that were also applicable to photography. With a Magnum Photos connection, I worked in photojournalism in my early 20s but felt that it wasn't enough—not what I was looking for exactly.

The beautiful idea of art was what I was seeking and if I didn't know what that was, I did have a sense of what it *wasn't*. So I packed my bags and took my small R-18 1965 Renault across America to Yosemite to meet **Ansel Adams** at a big workshop and learn about photography as art.

Once I got there his wonderful pictures—so controlled and technically beautiful—somehow seemed dead and less personal to me than the street photography I knew so well. At an introductory meeting of the whole group, I was very surprised to see that he had made slides of several of my photographs (one of **Janis Joplin** I remember and a couple of others) and without having met me, talked about how good they were. This was very confusing since I was there to learn to be more like him and less like me—or so I thought.

This gets to the essence of the oracle's message “know thyself.” Art is all about that—about being comfortable in your own skin, about showing who you are through your work. I now know I was better than I thought back then. But lack of confidence was blocking my path.



Recent oil on canvas paintings include *Mertasari Beach, Sanur, Bali* (28x42”), *St. Johnsbury from Prospect Street* (30x38”) and *Rear Window* (23x27”). Ink drawings such as *Distant Rain* and *Pray to the Sea* still come easier.

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