

# MUSING@THEHELM

by Marsha Karagheusian, Chair

One would think that after 23 years in this position that the pace might slow down somewhat, or at the very least become predictable. Not so! The 2005-2006 school year once again moved rapidly through its two semesters. One minute it's fall and the leaves are turning, and before you know it, spring has sprung and all is in bloom again, as the school year comes to a close.

Undergraduates, recent grads and alumni alike continue to amaze us with their astounding accomplishments, as you'll discover while reading this issue of Artifacts. Featured is our alum, Matt Hyleck (BFA in Ceramics, 1997) who as a resident artist at Baltimore Clayworks had a unique 10-week opportunity for artistic study in Taiwan. Along with a new culture, new materials and a new working environment, he had the added challenge of a culminating exhibition of his artwork at a prestigious gallery. Talk about a little pressure! The entire experience was both culturally and aesthetically altering for Matt. A testament to the value of study abroad, there are numerous opportunities for both our undergrads and grads alike.

You'll read about three of our students who graduated this past May who also earned the distinct honor of a *solo* senior exhibition in our galleries. Scholarship recipient, university scholar and art activist hardly describe these three women. They're heading off to graduate school, a teaching career and volunteer work, all of which will take them into uncharted territory for further growth and development.

Our faculty, full-time and adjunct alike, continue to juggle teaching, scholarship and service. Professor Suzanne Chouteau again led a group of art majors to Rome for the second summer. Our students benefited from her remarkable expertise in combining drawing with art history, enriching their education with an aesthetic experience extending far beyond the classroom.

After a creative research excursion throughout juke joints and blues clubs in the southern United States, Professor Kelly Phelps (along with his twin, Kyle) made a connection with the son of actor Morgan Freeman. Since Kelly's relief sculptures deal with the

working class and the blue collar American, Morgan's documentary on blues preservation was of particular interest to him. Kelly and Kyle's immediate response to this moving experience resulted in a collaborative sculpture they entitled, "Morgan's Spot", which they gave to the actor, who in turn donated it to the Mississippi Delta Blues Museum.

Gallery Director and adjunct, Kitty Uetz, and Art History adjunct, Jenny Shives, are working on an exciting Xavier project. Along with Father Leo Klein, S. J., Vice President of Mission and Ministry, and Tom Barlow in Auxiliary Services, they are editing a long anticipated book about Xavier University's art collection. Their tireless efforts are remarkable!

Illustrious Department of Art graduate and recent painting adjunct, Holly Schapker, produced an unprecedented 5'x10' mural commemorating Xavier's 175th anniversary. You'll learn all about it here, but you must also make it a point to come see the mural as well!

We're introducing two new professors in the Department of Art this fall. Bruce Erikson from Pennsylvania will be teaching Drawing and Painting. Jonathan Gibson, originally from Utah, will be overseeing the Graphic Design and Photography areas. We are very excited about their addition to our team.

As the two senior members of the faculty, both Suzanne Chouteau and I produced massive dossiers and applied for the rank of full professor last fall, the highest honor and final ranking a professor can achieve at a university. In the spring, we were notified that we both indeed were granted this honor, a testament to years of dedication to Xavier.

Allow me to also express my excitement with the inclusion of my wheel-thrown Raku work and handbuilt pit-fired ware in two recent book publications.

These various types of activities that we, as university professors, engage in are what energize us as artists and teachers. In turn, we return to the classroom each fall renewed and refreshed. We're ready to take on a new group of freshmen with additional challenges, in this two-way street called *teaching*.

*Here's to another great year!*

## Passages & Personals

**Betsy Geiser Allaire**, BA, 1994: Received MA in Art History with Certificate of Advanced Study in Art Conservation from Buffalo State College, New York. Betsy is a conservator in the Department of Anthropology at The Field Museum in Chicago.

**Maureen (Mo) Buri**, BA, 1999: Taught at Mount Notre Dame in Reading for 4 years and is currently pursuing a Masters in Art History at the University of Cincinnati.

**Amanda Hogan Carlisle**, BLA, 1998: Director of Public Art Projects for Artworks from 2000-2004. Amanda makes handmade greeting cards that are sold locally and she curates art exhibits at Alchemize — a bar owned by her husband, Kevin.

**Brian Faust**, BFAU, 2002: After working for Xavier's Department of Web Resources & Services for several years, now is employed at the University of Louisville as a Computer Communications Specialist (Web Designer). Brian lives in Louisville with his wife Katie.

**Kelly Cahill Roberts**, BA, 2000: Received MA in Art Therapy from the University of Louisville. She is employed as an Art Therapist and Child Advocate at The Center for New Beginnings in Newark, OH. Kelly is married to Dr. J. Andrew Roberts who is an assistant professor at Ohio State University.

**Andrea Saladino**, BLA, 1994: Logistics Manager for Perfume at Coty Inc. Andrea lives in North Carolina with her husband, Jason. She recently participated in her second marathon through Team in Training.

**Peg Schwartz**, BA, 1987: Self-Employed in a private psychotherapy practice in University City, MO. Peg lives in St. Louis, MO with her husband James and daughter Jane.

**Lauren GROSSER Victory**, BFA, 1996: Works as a custom framing consultant at Frame Concepts and Gallery 22. Lauren lives in Cincinnati with husband Christopher and their three children.

## Xavier University Gallery News

**August 25 – September 22, 2006**

Arturo Sandoval, Fiber  
Artist Reception – Wednesday, September 13, 4:00-7:00 pm, Gallery Talk 6:00 pm

**September 29 – October 27, 2006**

Xavier University 175 Anniversary Exhibition  
Selection From University Art Collection  
Academic Day Reception – Tuesday, October 3, 4:00-6:00 p.m.

**November 3 – December 1, 2006**

Sixth Regional High School Junior and Senior Juried Exhibition  
Artists' Reception and Awards – Friday, November 3, 5:00-8:00 p.m.

**December 8 – 15, 2006**

Lauren Jarrold – Photography  
Cecille LeFan-Rodriguez – Sculpture  
Artist Reception – Friday, December 8, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

**January 26 – February 16, 2007**

Kelly Frigard, Feltmaker  
Bette Uscott-Woolsey, Mixed-Media Fibers  
Artists' Reception – January 26, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

**February 23 – March 23, 2007**

XU Student Exhibition – All Mediums  
Artists' Reception – Friday, February 23, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

**March 30 – April 13, 2007**

Molly Gordon, Fibers  
Hilary Leeman, Photography  
Erica Weitzel, Painting/Photography  
Artists' Reception – Friday, March 30, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

**April 20 – 27, 2007**

Andrea Cynova, Graphic Design/Photography  
Elizabeth Lechleiter, Fibers  
Erin Murphy, Paintings/Graphic Design  
Artists' Reception – Friday, April 20, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

**May 4 – 11, 2007**

Megan Dexter, Graphic Design  
Margaret O'Brien, Prints/Graphic Design  
Catherine Ryan, Fibers  
Kathryn Smith, Fibers  
Artists' Reception – Friday, May 4, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

**July 7 – September 9, 2007**

Ohio's Natural Landscapes, Photography  
(traveling exhibition)

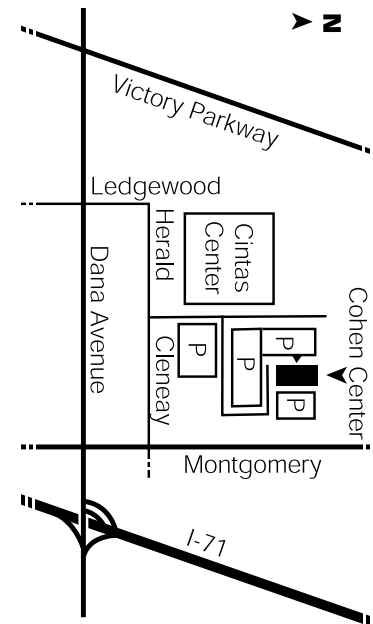
M. Katherine Uetz, Director for the University Art Gallery  
**Hours: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday**  
Closed during university holidays  
For more information call: 513.745.3811

## Send Info!

*Artifacts* strives to tell the truth!

With the advent of this issue all of our updated vita on you, our alumni, have been depleted. Without a prolific return of the "Keep in Touch" form, Passages and Personals could be blank next time! Send your recent job info, location, accomplishments or awards.

Photos are welcome, and may be used as space permits. Include your year and degree. Thanks!



## KEEP IN TOUCH

Address comments, suggestions, information and inquiries to:  
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Department of Art Newsletter  
3800 Victory Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45207-7311  
(513) 745-3811  
[www.xu.edu/art](http://www.xu.edu/art)

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# Artifacts

Newsletter of the Xavier University Department of Art

**MATT & MARY'S  
MOST EXCELLENT  
ADVENTURE  
IN TAIWAN**

BY MATT HYLECK



**Matt Hyleck, BFA 1997 (left) enjoys the Fugui reception**

"How would you like to go to Taiwan?" That was the innocent question posed to me by Deborah Bedwell and Ching-Yuan Chang over a simple dinner in August of 2004. Deb, the executive director and founder of Baltimore Clayworks (BC) where I'm a resident artist, was hosting a farewell dinner for Ching-Yuan who was completing a tile mural on Baltimore Clayworks' new classroom expansion. The invitation was for two current resident artists from Clayworks, myself and Mary Cloonan, to take part in the new Clayworks-TNNUA exchange program beginning in 2005. We were invited to be the first residents from Clayworks to travel to Taiwan for artistic studies, and in return, Clayworks was to begin hosting students from Ching-Yuan's Masters Degree program in Taiwan. Tainan National University of the Arts (TNNUA) is situated in the south of the island, approximately 30 minutes east of downtown Tainan in Kuantian Province, on the outskirts of Tachi Village, surrounded by hundreds of acres of mango orchards and rice fields. The university was opened by the Taiwan national government in 1996 and houses more than 1,200 students completing Master's level courses in all visual and performing arts. The three-year long Masters in Ceramics program currently hosts a maximum of 15 students. A large part of the programs' philosophy is to create study-abroad opportunities for the students in an effort to encourage cultural and creative diversity within the program. Most students elect to spend a portion of their second year participating in various international artist-in-residence programs.

Excellent Adventure, continues on the inside



## Excellent Adventure



One of the many East coast rice planting fields

### Excellent Adventure, continued from front

How did it come about that a small nonprofit clay center like Clayworks would partner with a university half way around the world? Ching-Yuan Chang was a resident artist with BC between 1990 and 1993. Following his residency, Ching-Yuan returned to Taiwan to teach in the National University system. The Clayworks-TNNUA exchange program began in earnest in January 2005 when BC hosted a young potter named Chun-Lan Li for a six-month residency culminating with an exhibition. Clayworks then hosted Shin-Yu Wang, a TNNUA graduate and terrific sculptor, for a five-month residency beginning in October 2005. Our residency at TNNUA was programmed to fit nicely in between for the summer of 2005.

Preparations for my residency slowly took shape in the months following the invitation. TNNUA agreed to provide housing, studio space, materials and firings. Baltimore Clayworks sought funding through Foundation grants, from their student community, and the Board of Directors, which ultimately provided us with money for vaccinations and airfare. We were responsible for our food, personal items and other travel expenses.

We arrived in Taiwan the evening of June 14 and were met at Chiang Kai-shek International Airport by our friend Chun-Lan. It was 11pm local time and we had a four-hour drive south before we would see our home for the next 10 weeks. In a country that is less than 250 miles long and 87 miles wide, the physical landscape is remarkably diverse. The center of the island is interrupted by a long chain of mountains running North to South and which reaches more than 12,000 feet from sea level; picture a skinny Colorado surrounded by an ocean. The highest peak, Jade Mountain, is capped in snow year-round while the tropical low-lands reach a steamy 95 degrees in the summer.

The TNNUA campus, a blend of Asian charm and modern architecture, provides housing for both students and faculty to live and work year round; students have both the luxury and expectation that they may work year round in the studio with 24-hour access to the facilities. The studio doors were never locked, much less closed, during our ten weeks at the university. The unique modern architecture on the campus is also a large tourist attraction, and it was not uncommon to find yourself surrounded by tour buses and travelers at the studio on weekends.

The ceramic facility consists of two separate buildings

with a loading dock and clay yard situated between the studios and the kiln shed. The studio building is divided into 14 individual 12'x15'. studio spaces, complete with potter's wheels, shelving and a ware cart. The exterior walls of the studio are a combination of sliding glass doors and windows providing ample work light and fresh air. The kiln shed houses two pugmills, seven programmable electric kilns and four propane reduction kilns, with an extensive chemical mixing facility.

We spent our first week getting our bearings on campus and producing clay tests in the studio. Arrangements were also made for Mary and me to travel north to Taipei in order to view Fugui Gallery where our exhibition would take place. Fugui, which means "fortune and wealth", occupies two separate buildings within a one block area. It is one of the most prestigious galleries in Taiwan and is also home to a five-star restaurant. Fugui is situated in the middle of Yingge, the clay center of Taiwan. Every shop on every tiny street displays handmade and manufactured pottery from Taiwan and mainland China.

The gallery owner, Mr. Lin, had a truly amazing perspective on the responsibilities which accompany owning a gallery — to use the gallery not as a source of profit, but as a mechanism through which the public is educated on current trends in art. Every dish and service piece used in his restaurant is hand-made by one of his exhibiting artists. The restaurant was an attraction which he utilized to draw people into contact with hand-crafted ceramic and wearable art. It is because of this philosophy that Mr. Lin was not afraid to host exhibitions from artists, such as myself, who are in the emerging stage of their careers.

Upon returning to TNNUA, we took a collective deep breath and tackled the next six weeks of studio work with intensity. A host of challenges, some expected and others unforeseen, appeared along the way. A seemingly benign question such as "What color is this clay at cone 10?" had no immediate answer because most students present fired no higher than cone 8. To compound the challenge, raw materials such as kaolin and china clay were local chemicals which resulted in, at times, dramatic melt and surface characteristic changes in my glaze recipes. The fact that no current students were firing cone 10 kilns meant that in order to run tests, I needed to fill one entire gas kiln with work, which created a really harsh learning curve.

During my travels around Taiwan or while simply taking an afternoon break at the studio, I became much more sensitive to the proper brewing process for loose-leaf

Chinese tea. The individual components which make up a Taiwanese tea service are: a water kettle, teapot, pitcher, teacaddy, tea bowl and a tea tray. The traditional Chinese teapot holds less than 12 ounces of liquid, which is drained completely into the pitcher in a succession of brews. If your tea leaves are a good quality, you will find that each subsequent steep creates subtle flavor and odor variations. A good quality loose leaf tea carried a dollar value on par with a single-malt bourbon or scotch. Once I began to understand the preparation and service of tea, I was better able to appreciate the various components involved with the Taiwanese tea service.

I did not change the pieces I create, but I did respond to cultural influences and modify the scale of my work. I have always enjoyed making two primary forms, teapots and storage jars. With my teapots and jars I experimented with a reduction in scale, which would accommodate the Chinese tradition of tea. As an American, I was constantly reminded that it is not so much the quantity as it is about the quality of any product. I became much more aware of my craftsmanship and construction methods.

I learned to appreciate the clay materials' impact on the aesthetic quality of my pieces. In the end, I simplified my glaze palette and expanded my clay palette, allowing the inherent nature of the clay to control the surface of the glaze. Ultimately, I fired four full gas kilns in preparation for the exhibition, with only small interruptions by typhoons and, did I mention, a three-day public workshop.

## Welcome Bruce Erikson

Bruce Erikson started college at the age of twenty-three after playing in a rock band and working for five years. We quickly learned why he's such an interesting and entertaining guy, as he has worked in a variety of positions which have shaped who he is. Such jobs included a pruner and grafter in a commercial orchard, forklift driver in a window factory and several



consolidation companies, a water truck driver for a paving crew, ice cream delivery driver, illustrator and as a straightener setup mechanic in a steel mill with his father. He graduated magna cum laude from the University Honor's Program with a BFA degree in Drawing and with minors in Art History and Classical Guitar performance from

Edinboro University of Pennsylvania in 1996. While at Edinboro he studied at the Illustration Academy in Kansas City, MO, and worked doing magazine and trial illustration for such clients as Cleveland Magazine, Andrews McMeel Publishing and others.

In 1996 he took a year off and worked in a hospital

Following our opening at Fugui, we had four days in which to see all of Taiwan that we had not seen in the previous 61 days. What better way to experience the country than to board a train and travel the entire perimeter of the small island. Beginning in Taipei, we traveled south

along the eastern coast to Hualien, where we took a shuttle bus into the breathtaking Taroko Gorge National Park. From there, we traveled to the southern most tip of Taiwan to Kenting National Park for two nights at a coastal Bed and Breakfast. At each stop we had the good fortune to meet helpful strangers and friends of Ching-Yuan, who introduced us to beautiful regional attractions. Taiwan is a beautiful country,

populated by some of the kindest and most generous people I have had the good fortune to work alongside. And just like that, our magical summer in Taiwan was at its end and it was time to pack, say goodbye, and board an airplane for the long journey back to Baltimore.

I will not pretend to be an expert on Taiwan's culture, history or art. Taiwan is a country with a complex history of foreign occupation, searching for its own unique identity, and I feel I only brushed the surface in my brief stay. The Taiwanese artists worked tirelessly to create unique, provocative and relevant work which will be identified as being distinctly "Taiwanese". My summer residency at TNNUA allowed me to reinvest myself in my artwork full-time, and to rediscover both my passion and purpose for making my work.

answering phones and moving bodies in a morgue before enrolling at Indiana University-Bloomington, where he pursued an MFA degree in Painting. While at Indiana University, he received a fellowship to study in Florence, Italy. Since graduation he has taught at numerous universities including Kendall College of Art and Design, Grand Rapids, MI; University of Illinois at Champaign Urbana, IL; and Washington University in St. Louis, MO, where he was the drawing coordinator of the foundation program, and also taught painting and drawing at Santa Reparata in Florence, Italy. For two years he was a visiting assistant professor at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA, where he taught drawing, anatomy and painting. He comes from Juniata College in Huntingdon, PA, where he taught drawing, painting and design.

Last summer Bruce won "Best of Show" at Fraser Gallery's Georgetown International in Washington, DC, and took second place in painting at the State Museum of Pennsylvania's "Art of the State 2005" in Harrisburg. He has had numerous solo and juried exhibitions including Urban Institute for Contemporary Art, Grand Rapids, MI, Brad Cooper Gallery, Tampa, FL, Fraser Gallery, Washington, D.C., Afif Gallery, Philadelphia, PA, SUNY-Geneseo, Geneseo, NY, and Studio 4 West, Piermont, NY.

Bruce and his wife, Jennifer, a nurse now employed at Bethesda North, arrived in Cincinnati in May, along with their cairn terrier, Emma. He's been settling in, rearranging his office and classrooms, and is anxious to begin the school year. When he's not painting and teaching, he writes, records and produces music for his band, Sweet Logical Regina. Welcome to Xavier, Bruce and Jennifer!

Shino Teapot



## Xavier's 175th Anniversary Mural



Department of Art adjunct in painting, Holly Schapker (BA, 1992) was commissioned by the 175th Anniversary Committee to create a permanent work commemorating Xavier's 175 years of excellence.

The mural was conceived by Ms. Schapker as a five by ten foot curved structure incorporating historical as well as contemporary themes. Research on the project started in 2005 with interviews of Xavier's most knowledgeable faculty, administrators, and alumni, including Fr. Graham, Dr. Roger Fortin, Dr. Ron Slepitz, Fr. Leo Klein, alumnus Norman Murdoch, and many others. Significant speeches, addresses and publications by faculty and administrators were also considered. Informal interviews were conducted in the Fall of 2005. Each interviewee was asked for spiritual impressions as well as factual information about Xavier.

Archival research was primarily done through Xavier photographer, Greg Rust, but also included walking tours, photos, and books.

Conceptual diagrams and drawings were reviewed with senior Xavier Faculty and Administration until a consensus of content was reached. The artistic elements of the work were then created incorporating the content that had been developed. Artistic input was obtained from faculty members Suzanne Chouteau, Marsha Karagheusian and Kitty Uetz, artistic grand dame Phyllis Weston, and the many students who modeled and participated in the process. Art faculty members are depicted (almost microscopically) in a small section of the work in homage to their considerable contributions. Materials were selected and obtained. The work was produced entirely on rigid, closed cell polystyrene board, gesso applied, and painted exclusively with Old Holland Oils. The mounting structure is a custom welded curved steel frame created and constructed by Robert Dyehouse, sculptor, from the Ted Gantz Sycamore St. Studio. Painting began on a special studio easel in the Cohen Center over the Winter break and continued nonstop until the dedication in April, 2006.

"The piece reflects the *spirit* of Xavier, rather than the historic," says Schapker. "I'm so proud to be a part of the Xavier community and grateful for all the people who have

## Art Award

Senior **Ai-ling Chang** was awarded the University Art Award during the April 22, 2006 All-Honors Day Program. Congratulations Ai-ling!

given so much to make Xavier a great university." Schapker explains: "The curved panel gives the viewer the sense of being embraced by Xavier's glorious spirit. The power of X is in each of us who attended here, but Xavier's spirit is also felt in the community and the world the University serves."

The mural is composed in layers with a multitude of images including a portrait of Xavier's first president and a basketball player. There are also images reflecting community service, promotion of justice, campus buildings and an historic visit with the late Pope John Paul II. The color palette includes various shades of green (symbolizing life) and blue. Many images are also shaded in gray to intertwine Xavier's past, present and future. In the center of the mural four

## Holly Schapker

Holly Schapker has distinguished herself with a host of scholastic and professional achievements including private and public commissions, scholarships and grants. Holly graduated Magna Cum Laude from Xavier University's Department of Art where she just completed a two year adjunct position in painting. Holly studied under nationally famous artists Michael Scott and Cole Carothers for approximately ten years. She taught art at the Baker-Hunt Foundation for three years. She has been commissioned by the Cincinnati Art Museum, Xavier University, the Ronald McDonald House, as well as The Over-the-Rhine Chamber of Commerce. Her paintings and drawings can be found in several corporate collections. This is not the first painting Holly has created for the University. Her portrait of former Xavier president, the late Father James Hoff, hangs in the Cintas Center concourse, and several of her montages also hang on campus.

students are seen crossing Cincinnati's John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge as they enter the University and as they graduate. Near one top corner is a sun containing the seal of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). The seal holds the name of Jesus, the Word of God, in the midst of a flaming sunburst. "The sun is the source of Christ's light shining on Xavier," says Schapker.

The mural is located at the bottom of the stairs from the Schiff Family Conference Center Entrance to the Cintas Center. A slideshow of the painting process can be found at: <http://www.xu.edu/175/schapker.cfm>

## Scholarship Reminder

Candidates for the **McAuley Scholarship** must be admitted to the University before February 2, 2007. Call (513) 745-3811 or check out our website at [www.xu.edu/art](http://www.xu.edu/art) for scholarship details.



# RISEING STARS

Our hats go off to **Christina Blust**, **Ai-ling Chang** and **Mercedes Tryba**, who maintained a better than 3.77 GPA in the major while producing the depth and breadth of work worthy to be recognized with a *solo* thesis exhibition—an honor which is not automatically given to the student but must be applied for and conferred by the entire faculty. These three artists produced stunning exhibits in our galleries that were visually and conceptually profound, and of an undeniably exceptional professional quality.

**CHRISTINA BLUST**, from Dayton, Kentucky, earned her BA degree this May in Art with a concentration in Graphic Design. She finished her senior year with a solo thesis exhibition entitled, *Reviving Big Sky Within*. Featuring digital prints and screen-printed products, the exhibition explored how to live simply and honestly through creative means. "If we step back and ask ourselves what we truly want as human beings," she explains, "is the answer really war, insignificant relationships, or a Hummer?" Striving to practice what she preaches, both the conceptualization and the pieces themselves related to this theme. The digital works displayed photos of often-neglected parts of nature, such as a blade of grass, and combined them with text and glyphs in a large-scale format to give this beauty in the small things the attention it deserves. These pieces were then printed on 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper or a blend of recycled and bamboo fibers. The screen-printed products were often constructed out of reclaimed materials, such as t-shirts from thrift stores and notebooks constructed with materials from local cardboard-only dumpsters. Scrap paper from campus computer labs provided the pages for journals. All of her pieces contained an underlying theme of sustainability and simplicity. This connection of the arts to a broader global



community has been a theme of Christina's education at Xavier. Academically, Christina is the recipient of the St. Francis Xavier scholarship and is graduating summa cum laude in the University Scholars honors program, with minors in Peace Studies and Spanish. Within this curriculum, she has devoted time to researching the role of art as a political tool, as well as its implications in parts of Latin America. She has repeatedly volunteered her graphic design skills to various organizations on Xavier's campus, from the Concert Choir to Peace and Justice Programs, and Christina is herself involved in many of these extracurriculars. She has served as the co-president of Voices of Solidarity, a student club dealing with Latin American issues, for the past two years. Christina also received the "Ray of Hope" award from the Xavier Players for her performance of two original songs in *Voices for Change*, a student-written and directed production. Christina hopes to continue on this path as she heads away from Xavier. Next year she will be doing a year of volunteer work for the White Violet Center for Eco-Justice in St. Mary of the Woods, Indiana. She will be spending her time designing their publications as well as doing more hands-on work at the Center. Good luck Christina!

**MERCEDES TRYBA**, a recipient of the McAuley Scholarship and a recent addition to the Xavier alumni community, graduated with honors, receiving a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Minor in Professional Education. She is well versed in various media, concentrating in ceramics, fiber arts and graphic design, as evidenced in her solo thesis exhibition this past April. The show depicted communities, intricate support networks of unique individuals, sharing their talents, knowledge, skills and persona with one another, forming groups that share a common interest. Constantly in a state of flux, communities vary in size and tend to grow in number, often linking with other communities. In four years at Xavier, Tryba has had the opportunity to take part in a number of roles as a college student, resident assistant, gallery student assistant, Mortar Board Honor Society member, Vice President of Xavier's Society of Visual Arts (SVA), presenter at the 19th National Conference for Undergraduate Research in Lexington, Virginia and the Celebration of Student Research and Creative Activity, as well as participating in half a dozen art shows. These roles have provided her experiences which have shaped her thoughts and perceptions of "community". Tryba's thesis is thus a result of past work depicting this theme, representing techniques learned and



experiences while at Xavier, and is devoted primarily to two media, silk and clay. The silk work was created with procion, acid and silk dyes, utilizing water resist and painting techniques. The circle imagery depicted throughout reflects that of a community: circles are found in nature, they are represented in the life cycle, food chain and in spiritual beliefs. Circles have a quality of continuous movement, connection and fluidity, creating the energy that is found in a community. The ceramic work results from the combination of stoneware clay and Mason Stains, fired at cone six (2200°F) utilizing pinch, coil, slab and carving techniques. These works explore the expressive potential of manipulating clay to mimic in three-dimensional form the imagery and movement found in the series of two-dimensional silk works. Created and arranged in groups, the pieces fit together and have their place, like members of a community. Tryba plans to student teach in the fall at both the high school and elementary levels. Come December, she will attend a program through Cambridge University in which she will earn her Teaching English as Second Language (TESL) License. With this license she plans to travel, and who knows where she will go from there. Send us a postcard, Mercedes!

**AI-LING CHANG** was born in Louisville, Kentucky in 1984. She graduated from Xavier University this past Spring with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree as a University Scholar. Chang was a recipient of the McAuley Arts Scholarship, a Trustee Scholarship, and a 2005 and 2006 Three Arts Scholarship sponsored by the Cincinnati Women's Art Club. Although she originally pursued a concentration in Painting, she eventually began to seriously study Sculpture and Photography as well. In the end, she declared Photography as her area of concentration, however, she continues to use her skills as a painter and sculptor in the way she sees through the photographic lens. Chang's undergraduate studies in fine art culminated in a thesis exhibition last March entitled: *Perception • Dis • Assembled*. The exhibit included a series of twenty photographic prints exploring the human form and our perception of it. Chang uses the human form because she sees it as the "primary conduit" through which we experience, and it is the human experience that most interests her. "How do we comprehend and interpret our perceptions, and what conclusions do we draw from them?" This is a question that always lay in the back of her mind throughout the development of her work. Chang sees her series, *Perception • Dis • Assembled*, as a result of the process of deconstructing and reconstructing the vehicle of the human body. In her artist statement, she writes, "It manifests from a process of close investigations, that in



turn inspired a desire to reorganize a limited selection of visual forms. While the variable of the subject matter remains constant throughout the work (the torso of the human body), the variables of light, color, composition, and balance, etc. do not. Given these self-created guidelines, what I am truly interested in is the act of perceiving, of seeing again for the first time, and experiencing the process of perception." Chang approaches her work as an experimental process, setting up variables in order to explore all the possibility within one strict set of guidelines. Inevitably, Chang sees it as the artist's responsibility to see. She believes that artists are trained to see with a level of sensitivity that most people have not developed in their own lives. As such, the artist naturally takes on the important responsibility, if they so choose, of bringing their observations, insights, and conclusions to the forefront for others to see and experience. With the completion of her Bachelor of Fine Arts, Chang plans to continue her photographic series and ideas. In September of 2006 she will attend the Savannah College of Art and Design where she will obtain a Master of Fine Arts with a concentration in Photography. Although at some point in time she seeks to work as a photographer, it is her eventual goal to teach photography at the college-level. It is here that Chang finds the exchange of ideas most inspiring. We agree, Ai-ling!

## Welcome Jonathan Gibson

It's pretty presumptuous to think that you can learn almost everything. Jonathan Gibson, our new hire in Graphic Design and Photography, thinks that he can, or at least tries anyway. Since he was a young child, Jonathan remembers wanting to be an artist. He recalls his first drawing at the start of his kindergarten year, "I remember the challenge of trying to get as many details into my drawing, like both ears, five fingers and eyelashes, all to impress the teacher." From that point on, Jonathan has not stopped at being proficient in drawing or even painting, but has also picked up Ceramics, Graphic Design, Photography and even Dance. "My only fear is that I will run out of things to learn," states Jonathan. And it is his hope that this can-do attitude rubs off on his students. During his undergraduate schooling, Jonathan found a job as a Graphic Designer to pay the bills. He says, "At first I didn't like it – trying to satisfy the clients all the time made me frustrated as an artist. Later I came to enjoy the challenge of collaboration and seeing things from another perspective." Partly out of necessity, he picked up Photography along the way to provide images for his design work. "I think it was mostly that I didn't want to pay a photographer for something I thought I could learn to do," he admits. Jonathan has worked for seven years now designing posters, brochures, t-shirts, corporate identities, websites, and everything in between that deals with design. Having recently finished his MFA at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY, Jonathan has developed an artistic style that blends his traditional background in the Fine Arts with the more innovative technologies of Graphic Design.



"This is exactly what we were searching for in this new position," stated Marsha Karagehusian. His collages of hand made elements and sharp edged graphic forms combine to form figures as a sort of metaphor for identity. He states, "What we identify with, identifies us. Identity then, is a complex filtering of signs that we defy, integrate, discard and accumulate." Jonathan does about 50% of the work on the computer and then prints the large figures out on paper which he then attaches to panel, along with the other painted and drawn elements, all in a barrage of competing mediums. Jonathan's deferential approach to life also influences his work. His modesty borders on self-deprecation. He jokes, "My wife sometimes thinks I don't stand up for myself enough, that I apologize too much. Perhaps she's right, but I believe the ability to admit you're wrong is a fundamental attribute that our society is missing." Another reason why we love this guy! It is not a resolution between these two impulses of fine art and design, but a continued tension between them that drives his work. Jonathan tries to maintain a critical distance from merely celebrating pop-culture or supporting one side, and is interested in viewing problems and methods from multiple perspectives. He states, "I believe in the scary possibility that we all might be part of the problem and in turn feel a greater responsibility to be engaged in the solution." Jonathan is accompanied by his wife, Monica, who is now employed as an ESL instructor for Norwood City Schools. The Department of Art welcomes Jonathan and Monica to the Xavier community.