

OFF THE PRESS

"Do you have a studio yet?" Rachel Maxi (BFA 1988) asked me barely a month after I arrived at Xavier in the autumn of '88. This very cool young woman befriended and guided me to getting quickly on my artistic wheels by carving out a space for me in her warehouse studio. My future husband, Chris Bedel (BFA 1985), would happen to have a studio apartment down the hall and as they say—"the rest is history." But it's a living, breathing, growing history that continues to surprise and delight. This summer, Bedel, Eli and I went to visit Rachel in Seattle. She is a full-time artist making paintings reflective of her own idiosyncratic observations of urban and suburban ephemera: dumpsters, old cars, golf courses, pre-fab houses, peonies and numerous other subjects. We visited the Gail Gibson Gallery where she was a featured artist, as well as saw her work hanging in a curated exhibit at the Seattle Art Museum. Her oil paintings captivate with their clear-eyed focus on subjects awash in evocative light and rich color. We enjoyed sharing meals of delicious fresh oysters and salmon and making music with her friends. Rachel is one of the *finest* artists I've met—her devotion to living the artist life despite the inevitable good/bad times roller coaster is simply inspirational and exceptional. Take a gander at her work at www.rachelmaxi.com.



Rachel Maxi (top) and Box, Oil on Canvas

Helm"—in my 5th year as chair I've come to realize that there's little time for musing and "at the helm" suggests a captain of a ship! When you chair a department of artist-captains, you are truly more like a deckhand! So "Off the Press" more accurately captures the reality that when I'm doing things such as this, I'm not on the printing press. A few highlights of our full-time faculty: Marsha Karagheusian's "Empty Nest" is showing in 2 national ceramic exhibits garnering her Honorable Mention in one; Kelly Phelps had solo exhibition, "God, Steel, and The Wasted Dream," in University of Dayton Art Gallery, Bruce Erikson joined faculty of the *Paris Study Abroad Honors* program, Jonathan Gibson received a national "Teacher of the Year" award from the *Electronic Document Scholarship Foundation* in Washington D.C., and Mr. Jim Dine selected my work for the *Boston Print Biennial*.

Finally this summer brought other special joys such as Terri Yontz's daughter Tori took my Art in Rome class. A bonus occurrence was that Terri joined us for the last 10 days of the class—read on as Terri chronicles highlights of her experientia!

Peace and joy!

— SUZANNE MICHELE CHOUTEAU

Passages & Personals

Brenda Babel, M. Ed, '03: Is the owner and teacher of My Little Red Haus <http://www.mylittleredhaus.com/> on Montgomery Road in Cincinnati. It's an art studio that holds classes, open studio, birthday parties, workshops, camps, events and art therapy.

Elissa Conte, BFA, 2011: Recently hired as the Coordinator of Family Learning at the Cincinnati Art Museum.

Ryan Hallman, BA, '11: Attending the Georgia Health Sciences University to study medical illustration.

Amanda Hogan Carlisle, BLA, '98: founded the Westwood Art Show three years ago. The annual event takes place in September.

Chrissy Jackson, BFA '08: Received an MFA from Ohio State in 2010. Chrissy can be seen these days in the art dept hallways at Xavier. She's teaching for us for the second semester. Glad to see you back Chrissy!

Abby King, BFA, '11: Began work on an MFA at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts where she'll be studying painting.

Natalie Lanese, BA, 2002: Selected artist to exhibit in Wall Works at deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum

from June 2011-Spring 2012. Other featured artists are Andy Goldsworthy and Ursula von Rydingsvard. She has an upcoming exhibition at Montserrat College of Art from Jan-Feb 2012. Natalie recently began working as the Assistant Director of Admission at PrattMWP.

Susan Mahan, M.Ed, '85: Susan can be spotted all over the area these days. She's been in several exhibitions, she's designed several street banners that are donning the poles in Springfield Township and of course you can always find her on Final Fridays in her studio at the Pendleton Art Center http://www.pendletonartcenter.com/cincinnati_oh.html

Raúl Miyar, BFA, 1983: Chair of the Fine Arts Department of the Altos de Chavon School of Design in the Dominican Republic. Chavon is an affiliate of the Parsons New School for Design in New York City. Chavon was recently ranked as one of the top 13 design schools in the world!

Katie Pfieman, BFA, '08: Director of Marketing at Cincinnati Parent Magazine.

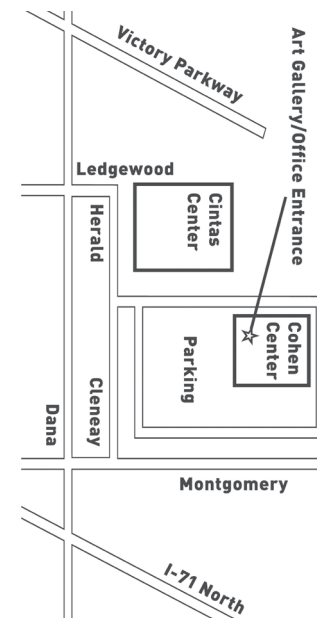
Kati Swieca-Brockman, BA, '99: is married and has two children, Jackson, 3 and Mira, 2. Kati received MA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She is currently the art chair at a high school in Michigan.

Xavier University Gallery News

October 5 – November 6, 2011
Saad Ghosn, Prints
Rome Experience Exhibition
Artists' Reception, Wednesday, October 5, 5-8 p.m.

November 9 - December 16, 2011
Ralph Larmann, Paintings, 2010
"Art at the X" Winner
Artists' Reception, Wednesday, November 9, 6-8 p.m.

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



It's a BOY!

Jonathan Gibson, assistant professor in graphic design/photography, and his wife Monica welcomed baby Levi Talmage Gibson on June 9. He was welcomed home by his big brothers, Pratt and Grant.

Scholarship Reminder

Alumni, friends and prospective students are reminded that candidates for the McAuley Scholarship must apply and be accepted for admission by the competition deadline February 1, 2012. Call 513.745.3811 or check out our website at www.xavier.edu/art for scholarship details.

Art Award

Senior **Abby King** was awarded the University Art Award during the April 16, 2011 All-Honors Day Program. Congratulations Abby!

Departmental Blog and Facebook

Check out the work our students are doing on our departmental blog at:
<http://xavierartdept.blogspot.com/>



Keep up on the "happenings" around the art department. Join the **Xavier University/Edgecliff College Art Alumni** group on Facebook.

reminder

Email your life and work updates to yontz@xavier.edu

HELP ARTifacts GO GREEN!

In our efforts to be more GREEN, We want to keep in touch with you via email and phase out printed material. To do this we need you to send us your email addresses! We are happy to keep sending you printed material if you prefer — but if possible we'd like to convert as many of our alums to email as possible! This way you can send us your life and work updates and we can send you exhibit notices, etc. in a timely and eco-friendly fashion!

Please send ASAP to yontz@xavier.edu.
THANK YOU!

KEEP IN TOUCH

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

Department of Art
Xavier University
3800 Victory Parkway
Cincinnati, OH 45207-7311
Address Correction Requested

Place Stamp Here

Artifacts

Fall 2011

Newsletter of the Xavier University Department of Art



BLUSTERY DESIGN EVERY DAY

Christina Blust, BA 2006, is part of a 3-sister partnership in the graphic design company Blustery Day Design as well as a musician and recording artist. She released a solo album *Sudden Amaryllis* in 2009 and now performs and records with her band, *Yearbook Committee*, whose album *Sing Till You Die* came out in 2011. She currently lives with her awesome husband David Goodier (also a member of *Yearbook Committee*) in Terre Haute, Indiana.

While at Xavier, Christina studied studio art with a concentration in graphic design (and a fondness for printmaking and fiber arts) and minored in Peace Studies and Spanish. She received the honor of a solo thesis exhibition, "Reviving Big Sky Within," of her digitally and manually (screen-printed) produced graphic arts, which focused on sustainably produced art and design. Upon graduation she spent a year as an Americorps volunteer at White Violet Center for Eco-Justice in Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind. After the year ended, she took on a position as graphic designer and digital media coordinator with the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, which she still holds as her day job. Christina took time out of her blustery, busy life to share her life's progress with us!

Tell us about your first job out of college working on the farm with the Sisters of the Woods.

At Xavier's Volunteer Fair my senior year, I stumbled upon the opportunity to be an Americorps volunteer at White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, a little non-profit ministry run by the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana. I knew I wanted to volunteer for a year after graduation, and the Sisters' brochure offered "creative arts ministry" as an option, which I didn't see anywhere else, so I said okay! I had no idea what I was getting into, but it turned out to be a great year working in White Violet Center's organic gardens, helping take care of their herd of alpacas (mostly shoveling lots and lots of poop), and creating wonderful knit and woven pieces from the alpaca fiber yarn. The provided lodging for myself and the other volunteers was in the sisters' residence — basically a nun dorm — and was an experience like none other.

Christina Blust, BA, 2006

BLUSTery, continues on the inside

BLUSTery, continued from front

What were the high points of living in the community? Any drawbacks?

Living with the nuns was certainly different than any other living arrangements I'd had. The other volunteers and I soon found that the [mainly elderly] nuns were charming, interesting people with a mind focused on ministry and purpose. I learned so much from them about focusing your life and doing things for a reason, which was an unexpected benefit of my year. At the same time, it was weird being a twenty-something in the middle of pastoral Indiana surrounded by elderly ladies, feeling a bit like everything typical of my age group was passing me by. It was quite a contrast to go from the hustle and bustle and youth of college to a peaceful, wooded motherhouse full of nuns. But the other volunteers were awesome and I learned a LOT about myself in the process.

How did your experiences at Xavier help prepare you for this work or inform your decisions since you've left?

Xavier made me realize that graphic design isn't just knowing the right programs or keyboard shortcuts — it's something you come to holistically, armed with a more global knowledge of your art. While at Xavier I loved my art classes but also learned applicable knowledge from my peace studies courses, other electives, and the groups I participated in, including VOS (Voices of Solidarity), Alternative Breaks, and concert choir. I got in the habit of volunteering my design services to these groups, designing logos and t-shirts for various clubs as well as concert programs for the music department. This pro bono work still means so much to me. My sisters and I in our business (Blustery Day Design) have a non-profit rate for organizations with great missions who just need some help to show the world how awesome they are. Two of my favorite clients are Terre Foods Cooperative Market (a local food co-op) and CANDLES Holocaust Museum, whom I design exhibits and marketing materials for. In these projects, my design isn't about me, it's about lifting up the organizations and using art to teach the public something new.

At Xavier I also learned how much waste our profession can generate. I was the one in the graphics lab collecting blank-on-one-side scrap paper from the garbage can to use again. In fact much of the material for my senior thesis came from the trash — I created hand-bound notebooks with folded scrap paper and screenprinted covers, used thrift store



t-shirts to screenprint on, and found bamboo paper and 100% PCW paper to print my digital art on. Because of my thesis work, I learned the value of choosing sustainable materials for projects and that the designer often does get the final say in papers and inks. As my husband's favorite superhero would say, with great power comes great



Wedding Invitation

responsibility. I try my best in all of my current work to be a well-informed decision maker and to design smart pieces that maximize the use of the materials. Simplify! Think creatively! Look at what you've always done and ask, "How can I do this better?"

In a broad way, things I learned at Xavier influence the jobs I choose. I could probably be making more money at a design firm dedicated to high-profile advertising or high-quantity publishing, but I want to spend my time using my powers for good. I really like that the work I get paid to do promotes community, social justice, awareness and creativity.

Tell us about Blustery Day Design and working with your sisters—how did the business get started and how do you manage it from different locales?

We're pretty close in age — all within three and a half years — and since I remember we've been making things together. When our family got a computer in the mid-90s my dad found a shareware program called Envision Publisher that we went crazy for, making family newsletters, designing cards for people, adding sidebars and captioned images to our grade school book reports... something about graphic design made all of us pretty excited! (Back then we called ourselves Blustery Day Productions and would put that on the back of all our cards, like Hallmark.) We each took a turn as yearbook editor in high school and each went on to study graphic design in some capacity in college: Jess has a graphic design minor with her computer programming degree, and Vanessa majored in graphic design like I did.

After we were all done with college, we started thinking seriously about starting up the family business for real. Jess began making invitations for her friends when they all started getting married at once, and then other people started wanting things, and soon we were all helping each other out with various projects. When Vanessa was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2007 (age 26), it kicked us into gear. We finalized all the paperwork in 2008 as an LLC, figured out a business plan, and planned out where we wanted to focus. It was really awesome to see it all come together. Now we focus on wedding invitations, materials for small businesses and creatives, and items for the ups and downs of everyday life. We also have an Etsy shop where we sell cards for people going through breast cancer treatments: when Vanessa got so many pink, flowery, mushy cards throughout her treatment, we saw a need for honest, holistic stationery with a sense of humor and dignity. We've gotten really positive responses to these cards.

Because we talk to each other all of the time anyway, it's never been too difficult to manage Blustery Day Design from our various home bases. We email back and forth constantly, have an online project tracking system that keeps us all in check, and have the occasional "conference call" on Skype (that usually involves Jess's one-year-old and three-year-old sitting on her lap, hollering in the background, or running through the frame.) We all laugh a lot. :)

What are your favorite design jobs?

Hmm. I really love the jobs where the copy comes as a challenge and I get a bit of freedom to figure out the best way to organize and design it. For instance, in the exhibits I've designed for CANDLES Holocaust Museum, the information comes as old photos, old documents, and random bits of text and quotes. I have a lot of fun creating sidebars, creating hierarchy of information through the images, creating maps and charts if need be, until the final exhibit panel has a flow that makes sense to the viewer. I really love creating individual pieces within an overall look or style — variety within consistency. I'm the type of person that geeks out over paragraph styles, ha.

I like the projects where I get to learn something new in the process too. I taught myself web design when Blustery Day Design needed a website, and over the years since college I've taught myself how to make e-books, work extensively with file metadata, shoot and edit video, and utilize smatterings of ActionScript and JQuery, just to name a few. Solving problems makes my brain cells happy.

What do you enjoy most about owning your own business?

I love that I can do work for clients while sitting on the couch in my jammies. I can adjust my work time to match the work that needs to be done instead of forcing the structure of a 40-hour work week. But my favorite part is working with Jessica and Vanessa and getting all of our synergy going.

You and your 2 sisters are very tight, do you ever fight?

We fight a lot less since Vanessa's diagnoses. The things that used to seem worth fighting about just aren't very important any more. When disagreements come up we handle them, and then move on. We divvy up our work based on who has time to do it, not just factoring in design work but also Jess's kids and Vanessa's treatments and my music gigs. We know it all evens out, so nobody ever feels like she's doing more than her fair share.

Is Blustery Day Design your main work now or do you have other employment?

My day job is still full-time with the Sisters of Providence. I'm really lucky that my employer encourages education and innovation, so I've had lots of opportunity to grow as a designer and to take on projects that interest me there. It's also been helpful to have a steady income underneath everything else. With Blustery Day Design it made sense for us to go about it sensibly and work really hard to build up our business without abandoning our more consistent incomes. It's a lot of work, but it's totally worth it.

Tell us about your band (Yearbook Committee) and being a recording artist/singer/songwriter?

I started recording my full-length album in early 2007 and finally released Sudden Amaryllis in October 2009. It was so cool to take these little songs that only I had been part of and add new parts and new ideas to them! (This is how I met my husband David, too, so I'm quite partial to the process.) I'm really proud of how people seem to relate to my songs, since the songwriting on that album came from a lot of my own experiences. It's humbling when people find inspiration

in something you create. I was very honored when several of my songs from Sudden Amaryllis were included in the documentary Baring It All, which aired on the Style Network in June. Baring It All followed The SCAR Project, where fashion photographer David Jay photographs the scars of young women dealing with breast cancer, and four of the projects subjects. (One of these four women is my sister Vanessa.)

We started Yearbook Committee in early 2009. I LOVE being in a band! It's like the team sport I never got to play. (I'm crap at sports.) Right now we're six singer/songwriters, so we all bring our songs to the table and take turns with the lead. It's wonderfully collaborative. I've learned so much about improvisation and how to be a back-up musician, just as I've gained confidence in my music and as a performer on stage. Since we switch around instruments so much, I've had to stretch myself musically as well. I played guitar, piano and accordion before I started with YbC, but now I get to play bass and drums occasionally too! I love our quiet little songs with harmonies I get to write (Thanks, Dr. Merrill!) just as much as I love how loud we can get for being a folk



Candles Exhibit

band. Again, I'm always amazed and grateful when people like our music. We've built up a really strong local fan base, had a good response to our album Sing Till You Die, this spring we got to head to Austin, Texas, as official showcasing artists at the South by Southwest Music Festival. I'd play with Yearbook even if nobody ever listened to us, so it's really great that people do!

What advice would you give to fledgling art majors?

My biggest advice is to stay open to possibility! Don't just complete assignments because you have to — listen to what the assignment is teaching you. Take charge of your own learning. Pay attention to which projects you lose yourself in and forget are homework, and then see if you can find a way to do that forever. But know that making art a part of your life forever takes real work and creative problem-solving: you can't just be a good artist (though of course that helps).

Also, take lots of electives, both in other concentrations and in other departments entirely. Don't spend your whole college career in Cohen. Go to speakers, get involved in things, look at the flyers on the bulletin boards and go learn about things you've never heard of before.

That's excellent advice Christina—we can never take all the electives we would like to but the thing is to take as many as we can in the time we have while we're at college and even after! Keep up the amazing work Christina and congratulations on your many achievements: THANK YOU!!!

Check out Christina and her sisters' work at www.blusterydaydesign.com and hear her sing at this link: www.christinablust.com



Tori (Left) and Terri in Rome on the roof of St. Peter's.

Terri da Roma com Amor (Terri from Rome with Love)

Terri "secreterri-extraordinary" Yontz joined Suzanne Chouteau's Art in Rome class for 10 days this June. Her daughter, junior Victoria (Tori) Yontz, was enrolled in Suzanne's class thus presenting an irresistible (or 'the perfect?') opportunity for Terri to venture across the ocean! Terri reminisces with us about the highlights:

I had never traveled abroad and the thought of flying to Italy by myself was a little daunting. Several people had warned me about the "gypsy taxi" and even though I wasn't quite sure how to spot one, I managed to find my way to the hotel. We were enjoying dinner at a sidewalk café on my first night when the Pope rode by in a car. That's when I realized this was going to be a fantastic trip!

The next day, six faculty members, myself and about 40 students hopped on a bus to Assisi. Assisi was one of the most beautiful places I think I've ever been. The buildings are obviously old and interesting. There were a lot of flowers and shops and the streets were extremely steep—like Mt. Adams (in Cincinnati) only on steroids! I was introduced to two tasty concoctions—Bellini's and Limoncello's. Some of us spent the weekend at a bed and breakfast just outside of Assisi. It was an amazing weekend and we rode a train back to Rome. I had never been on a train or a subway before. I rode more mass transit during my 10 days in Italy than I have in my entire life!

By the time Monday rolled around, the class took off for the Colosseum, the Forum and Palatine Hill. I couldn't believe that I was actually standing in the Colosseum. Even though it is largely in ruins, it is still easy to imagine the grandeur of it. I learned that most of the original marble had been pillaged to build such sights as St. Peter's Cathedral. The Roman Forum was interesting. You could see layers where buildings were built on top of buildings. Some made me wonder how they were even standing. There wasn't much left of some of the foundations. Palatine Hill was home to the palaces of Rome's emperors. What is left of the palaces is amazing. The size of the homes and the surrounding grounds must have been spectacular back in the day. We were able to see some original frescos that are still on the walls in the house of Augustus (Casa di Augusto).

I accompanied Suzanne and the class to the Borghese Villa/Gallery. The villa was stunning! It is hard to imagine it was actually their family home. There are so many rooms and the steps going up to each level are many. Seems too impractical to actually have lived there. The first room we went to was full of Caravaggio paintings. They were spectacular! Caravaggio quickly became my favorite artist! The entire collection of art in the museum is remarkable. Each room had something interesting to see. Their gardens are also impeccable. Woody Allen was shooting a movie in the Borghese. Some rooms were off limits due to the filming. Some students spotted Russell Crowe and Penelope

Cruz around town.

On Wednesday, we spent about 10 hours visiting the Vatican and the Vatican Museum. The Sistine Chapel was awe-inspiring. We spent about an hour and half in the chapel and still there was plenty to see. I was glad Suzanne suggested we bring binoculars. It was great being able to see everything up close and personal. We climbed to the top of St. Peter's Dome. We took an elevator to a rooftop deck, then proceeded to climb 323 spiral steps to the top of the roof. Once we were close to top of the roof, we had to hold on to a rope because the steps were so windy, steep and narrow. It was so worth the climb to see the breathtaking 360 degree view from the top, once I was able to catch my breath!



Terri and Tori at the Basilica di San Francesco in Assisi

Other highlights include throwing a penny into the Trevi Fountain, talking Suzanne into climbing the Spanish Steps, gelato at the famous Old Bridge, the Pantheon, and we took a day trip to the town of Orvieto. It reminded me of Assisi but not as hilly. We took another train and this time a funicular to the top of Orvieto (another mass transit first!).

Suzanne holds class Mon-Thur and usually meets the class at the bus stop around 7:30 am. The class lasts until 2:00 when the students leave to go to other classes. Suzanne, myself, my daughter Tori and art student, Erin Rust kept going with Suzanne. We were out until between 6:00 and 7:00pm each evening. There is just so much to see and having Suzanne with us was like having our own personal tour guide. She had so much information to share and I just couldn't imagine trying to see everything that we saw without having heard the background on the individual artists and art works. I'll never forget my trip and all of the experiences we shared. If you ever get the chance, I highly recommend it but make sure you bring Suzanne along as your guide!