

MARSHAKARAGHEUSIAN

Well, Tony Blair and I both share the belief that a decade is simply long enough! It's hard to believe that my tenure as chair has spanned ten years, but I find myself eager to pass the baton. My children were young and in elementary school when I took charge, and now my daughter is entering her sophomore year in high school, and my son will be a freshman at Xavier this fall! Wow – all in a heartbeat! The Department of Art has grown as well, and I leave it in excellent shape.

When I began this position in 1997, the three senior members of the department consecutively began to retire, leaving me as the senior member-yikes! Consequently, this meant three national faculty searches had to be conducted. Unfortunately, the three searches turned into seven, due to a few mis-hires. As a small department with a tradition of excellence, we *had to get it right*, and we persevered until we did so. Ultimately our efforts paid off, resulting in the dynamic faculty we have today. I can proudly say we are now a *collaborating machine*, with only the good of the department at the core of

everyone's agenda. Our faculty consists not only of talented artists and excellent teachers, but we all enjoy breaking bread together as well! Students can feel the energy and the symbiosis has never been better.

This past year has been a time for mentoring junior faculty and rebuilding curriculum, and we're already witnessing the fruits of our efforts. We began to redesign our website, which is sure to be not only a unique work of art in itself, but it also should prove to be an excellent recruitment tool. Be sure to check it out as we begin to include video tutorials showcasing our ten areas of concentration.

This year, as Suzanne Chouteau returns from sabbatical and takes over the chairmanship, the core full-time faculty of five will be together for the first time. In a renewed spirit of camaraderie and collegiality, the stage is set to continue our tradition of excellence.

Thanks to everyone for an enlightening ten years, and as always,
Here's to another great year!

SUZANNE MICHELE CHOUTEAU

Having been at Xavier since 1988, I knew the day *might* arrive when I would chair the department. Somehow the nearly 20 years seems impossible to me when I still feel so young (!), but I am proud to receive the baton from Marsha Karagheusian who has ably and determinedly brought us to the **best** place we have ever been as a faculty, both as artists and teachers. Thank you Marsha for taking the risks and the reins of our department for these ten years. Welcome back to *more* time in the classroom with *more* students who will richly and gladly benefit from your expertise! Bravo!

During my time as Chair, my priorities are straightforward: to give our present students the best art education available anywhere; to increase enrollment in both the major and minor; to expand our foreign

study opportunities; to encourage more communication and opportunities for involvement with our alumni; and to mentor our junior faculty members Kelly Phelps, Bruce Erikson and Jonathan Gibson to successful tenure and promotion, but more importantly to joyful, hopeful and productive living and art-making in our community. Finally I will do everything in my power to celebrate and honor Terri Yontz, the *'secret-terri extraordinary'* and our wonderful adjunct faculty: Margaret Copfer, Fred Martens, Jenny Shives, Dana Tindall, Kitty Uetz (Gallery Director as well) and Jan Wiesner to whom I will always be indebted. In other words I believe our faculty, staff and students' personal bliss should come first, and to that end, well—*wish me luck!*

Peace and joy!

Art Award

Senior **Katherine Smith** was awarded the University Art Award during the April 21, 2007 All-Honors Day Program. Congratulations Kat!

Scholarship Reminder

Alumni, friends and prospective students are reminded that candidates for the **McAuley Scholarship** must apply and be accepted for Early Action. The Early Action deadline is December 1. Call (513) 745-3811 or check out our website at www.xavier.edu/art for scholarship details.

Xavier University Gallery News

July 7 – September 9, 2007

Ohio's Natural Landscapes – Photography (traveling exhibition)

September 21 – October 12, 2007

Natalie Lanese – Collages/Installation
John P. Stewart – Paintings/Prints
John Woolsey – Drawings/Paintings/Prints
Artists' Reception – Friday, September 21, 6-8p.m.

October 23 – November 30, 2007

Thomas R. Schiff – Photographs
Academic Day Reception, Tuesday, October 23, 4:30 -5:30 p.m.

December 7, 2007 – January 11, 2008

National Juried Exhibition
Artists' Reception – Friday, December 7, 6-8 p.m.
(Gallery closed December 24 – January 2)

January 25 – February 15, 2008

XU Art Faculty Exhibition
Artists' Reception – Friday, January 25, 6-8 p.m.

February 22 – March 7, 2008

XU Student Art Exhibition – All Mediums
Artists' Reception – Friday, February 22, 6-8 p.m.

March 14 – 28, 2008

Pattie Byron – Sculpture
Hannah Girman – Ceramics
Janina Laub – Graphic Design
Artists' Closing Reception – Friday, March 28, 6-8 p.m.

April 4 – 11, 2008

Olivia Hinds – Drawings
Danielle Tipler – Sculpture
Megan Whitt – Sculpture
Artists' Reception – Friday, April 4, 6-8 p.m.

April 18 – 25, 2008

Katrina Grome – Sculpture
Michael Lucas – Sculpture
Ephraim Noy Sasis – Fibers/Painting
Artists' Reception – Friday, April 18, 6-8 p.m.

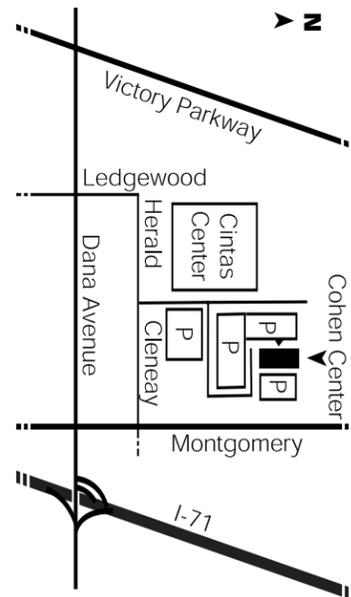
May 2 – 9, 2008

Christine Jackson – Prints
Artist Reception – Friday, May 2, 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

Send Info!

Artifacts strives to tell the truth! Thank you to all alumni who've recently sent us updates. Due to space constraints, we couldn't include Passages and Personals this time. However, please return the "Keep in Touch" form for upcoming issue. Send recent job info, location, accomplishments and awards. Photos are welcome! Thanks!



KEEP IN TOUCH

Address comments, suggestions, information and inquiries to:
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Artifacts

Newsletter of the Xavier University Department of Art



◆ Natalie Lanese, BA, 2002

NATALIE LANESE Crosses Countries With Her Art

Natalie Lanese, BA 2002, has had an amazing journey of artistic discovery in her five years since leaving XU. While at Xavier, Natalie studied studio art; minored in professional education and received an Ohio teaching license. Her senior thesis in art history focused on the contemporary artist, Anselm Kiefer. Natalie came to Xavier with an athletic scholarship and ran cross-country all four years. This might explain why her last five years have taken her a bit across the country!

Upon graduation, Natalie spent a year as an Americorps* VISTA Volunteer in inner city Denver Public Schools. She was accepted to the graduate program at Case Western Reserve University the following year where she earned her Masters in art education but as she says, "mostly studied painting in this program in order to build a portfolio for MFA applications." Her hard work, passion, and promising portfolio landed her in the MFA painting program at Pratt in 2005. (Here she happened to meet Jonathan Gibson who we would hire into

Crosses Countries With Her Art



Natalie Lanese, continued from front

↪ Natalie Lanese installation @ Jack the Pelican Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, May 2007

our program the following year—small world!!)

Natalie works in collage, combining techniques from painting, installation and printmaking. In March (2007), she exhibited her thesis work at Pratt, where Jack the Pelican Presents saw it and offered her a solo exhibition there the following week! Jack the Pelican Presents is the “it” gallery in Brooklyn and a much sought after venue for artists. The gallery has asked Natalie to install a piece for their booth at the Scope Art Fair in Basel, Switzerland in June. And Natalie will exhibit in our gallery this September. We caught up with this exceptional and exciting emerging artist to find out what life’s like in the NY art fast lane. Keeping up with Natalie requires stamina as her work covers a lot of ground, just like she did when she ran cross-country.

So Natalie, first the Brooklyn exhibit and now the art fair in Basel, do you feel like you’ve arrived?

I actually just feel extremely lucky—to have been offered a show immediately after my thesis exhibition is something that just doesn’t happen. The trick now will be keeping that momentum going—then maybe I’ll know if I’ve “arrived.” Now that I’ve finished school, it is a good feeling to be able to say I’m an artist and have something to back that up. I’ve always had a hard time calling myself an artist.

What’s made it difficult for you to call yourself an artist?

I think I’ve always felt like I’ve been in pursuit of being an artist...but with no exact definition of what “artist” means. Maybe it’s that I’ve had certain goals, so now that I’ve achieved a few of them it validates the title “artist.” I don’t know exactly—while in school it didn’t quite sound right, now it’s starting to sound more accurate as I’ve had more experience.

Describe your work and how you work. With the large installations such as the one at Jack the Pelican Presents, does the work cease to be intact in its physical form after the show’s taken down?

Working in installation is relatively new to me. The first large-scale piece like this I did was my thesis show, so I’m still in the process of learning what happens at each stage of its existence. I work in collage because it gives me the ability to physically lay out a composition and hold onto the pieces. Making an installation out of collage is a much more abstract process because I am practicing with all the parts in my studio, but I really won’t know how the piece will work until I am in the

space and making it—it’s a much more risky process than how I’m used to working. It challenges me to trust my instincts and draw upon prior experience. After the show comes down, the work is destroyed, although I’m careful about documenting it thoroughly. Part of the reason I like to make installations is because they are temporary—the fact that the work is only in existence for a short period of time gives the piece some sense of urgency, a quality that I hope emphasizes the content of the work.

I imagine the way you’re working draws comparisons to say Richard Hamilton of the Pop Art-era, but I also see relatedness to the great DADA artists Kurt Schwitters and Hannah Hoch. Who or what are some of your influences?

Hamilton, Hoch, and Schwitters are certainly influences—Hannah Hoch especially among these three since she was not only a master with collage but also a woman in a male-dominated era. Dada and Pop sensibilities both contribute to my work—these artists were like the rock stars of the art world, when so many artists were painting and using traditional materials and methods, these folks were cutting newspapers apart or painting Coca Cola bottles. I’ve always related to the more everyday art processes and I’ve always gotten some satisfaction out of inventing my own way of doing things, especially after so many years of formal training in school. As for specific artists, Warhol has had a major impact on my work since I was a child, so he is responsible for some of the intuitive choices I make, as well as my interest in critiquing American culture with my work. David Lynch has always amused me with his use of humor and randomness in his compositions. With the narrative quality of my work, I often think of it as frames or sets within a film, so I get a lot of ideas from watching movies. Lynch has way of juxtaposing elements within a frame that seem extraneous, but they contribute humor and truth to the overall meaning or feeling of his films. Lynch also draws much of his imagery from his upbringing in the Pacific Northwest; living on the east coast has made me realize how much my Midwestern background, especially my sense of humor, turns up in my work.

What have been high points of living and working in NY? What have been some of the low points?

I have learned more practical knowledge of the art world and having a career as an artist in New York than I have anywhere else. The city offers so many resources to supplement my studies—museums, galleries, the

opportunity to meet the people you read about—all of the artists and theories I’ve studied have become much more real since I’ve been here, partly because everything “art” is so accessible, and because there are so many people working in the field. There are also many more job opportunities here for artists—this summer I am making paintings for holiday window displays at Bergdorf Goodman, a store with a history of artists designing their windows.

The low points, well—it’s expensive—I’m still trying to figure out how I’ll afford a studio in addition to the rest of my living expenses now that I no longer have a studio at school. New York is also a crowded place, in general and in terms of artists. I often feel like such a small person in a very big world here—sometimes that can be overwhelming. When you hear people joke that New Yorkers believe that there is nothing west of Manhattan, it’s actually pretty true. A lot of dealers just expect that you went to Yale or Columbia and you’re from New York or Connecticut. It’s a very small world here in that sense, and and I love telling people I’m from Ohio.

You’ve mentioned your Midwestern background as having an influence on your work and as a strong part of your identity. What are some of the Midwestern traits that inform your work and give you a sense of cultural uniqueness in the East?

Wow, where do I start? I love Cleveland—that in itself gives me cultural uniqueness. Whenever I tell someone I’m from Cleveland, they almost always have one of two responses, one being, “I’ve never been there,” or the other: “People from Cleveland are so nice.” So it’s funny to me that Cleveland (only 400 miles from New York) remains somewhat of a mystery to the east coast, but it also has a reputation of producing some really great people. Culturally, it’s a mini version of New York, since many immigrants came to the states and continued inland to the Great Lakes (my grandparents included). So it gets the “Midwest” label, while it’s still not quite the cornfields of the deeper Midwest. Since it ranks with big cities according to size, Cleveland often falls to the bottom of a lot of lists, such as being named “the poorest big city in the country,” and “the fattest...” in recent years. Clevelanders have an enormous amount of pride (not to mention sense of humor) about being who we are—normal, which I think of as a good thing— but just like the Cavs making it to the finals or the Indians getting into the playoffs, every so often we really shine. You can’t have a big head being from Cleveland, it’s more an attitude of working hard and being a good person and believing that good things will come your way as a result. This has been a refreshing approach to the more cut-throat and oftentimes superficial ways in which I’ve seen people operate in New York. I enjoy seeing these qualities come out in my day to day life, as well as in my artwork.



↪ “Mirror”: collage by Natalie Lanese

You’ve spent a number of your college and post-graduate years devoted to professional education and teaching. Do you see balancing artmaking and a teaching position in your long-term future?

I’ve always wanted to be a teacher along with being an artist, so I hope to find a job teaching at a college where I can hopefully have the flexibility to maintain my studio practice. Teaching was actually a big part of my decision to get my MFA, because I knew with this degree I could teach at the college level. This summer I’m teaching a collage class for adults, so hopefully it will help lead to some other opportunities in education.

So tell us—how was the whole Art Basel experience?!

First I should clarify that I participated in a smaller fair in Basel called Scope, which focuses on younger and emerging artists. The big Art Basel fair features the big-name galleries and more famous artists. There were five fairs going on simultaneously in Basel that week, so it was quite an art extravaganza taking over the city. I went to Basel expecting to have two days to install my work, but as a result of a delayed flight, I ended up only having one day. I packed all of my supplies (with the exception of cans of paint) in my suitcase so luckily I was ready to go with everything I needed. I installed the work in about twelve hours, at the end of which I think I was actually out of breath, I was working so fast. But I finished the piece and it was ready for the opening on Monday morning. There was a lot of interest in my work, so it was nice to be around the fair for a few days and have the chance

to talk to people about it and see their reactions. I’m hoping to have a few studio visits set up as a result, since most of the interested parties were from New York. It was also a great opportunity to meet other artists and dealers. With all the fairs, there were openings and parties all week so I also had a chance to go out and have some fun. I stayed until the following Sunday to take down the work, and returned to New York on Monday. For the past few weeks, I’ve been trying to follow up with some of the connections I made, and I’ve been asked by the fair owner to do an installation for the Scope Hamptons fair at the end of July and he has also asked me to donate the work to his non-profit organization’s permanent collection.

What advice would you give to incoming freshman art majors?

The best I can do on this one is think about myself as a freshman in college. I guess I had no clue what being an artist actually entailed at that point—I just knew that I loved making art and so I took my work seriously, even if I didn’t always have a clear direction. What would I have changed about myself at that age? I often wish I would’ve taken the whole picture of art

more seriously, like devoting myself to studying more about how the art world works and learning a little more about what I was getting myself into. There have definitely been instances in grad school where everyone in the class seemed to know a certain artist, theory, or art historical event of which I knew nothing about. Not that you have to know everything, but there were times that I wished I had been more focused on the theoretical side of art in college. I think this is knowledge you gain from going to an art school, where all the coursework is centered around the art world. At Xavier, you’re getting a more well-rounded education—which has also set me apart from my colleagues—but at the same time, I was unaware of some of the specifics within the scope of the art world. In the end, however,

it’s hard work and a clear, honest idea that gets you anywhere with your work, and there’s always time to read and learn the rest as you go along.

It’s true that getting an art education at a liberal arts university can leave students wanting for a more art-focused experience and emphasis on contemporary issues. Our seminars attempt to tackle this, but your advice for students to take some initiative in this pursuit of knowledge is also imperative! Thank you so much Natalie for taking the time to share your life’s progress with us and your work in our gallery from September 21 – October 12, 2007! Congratulations on all your achievements thus far and continued success.

— SUZANNE CHOUTEAU

Art in Rome



↪ Students with Chouteau at the Capitoline Museum, Rome, Italy

For the past three summers, Suzanne Chouteau has taught a three-week art class in Rome for art and non-art majors. The class combines art history and on-site drawing in one of the most spectacular art cities in the world. Students are introduced to the significant monuments and artifacts of the Western world from the ancient through to the modern.

On a typical day the class sets out from the Residenza Monte Mario around 9 a.m., taking the bus or metro to the region of town where that day’s important works will be seen. For instance, one day they go to Santa Maria del Popolo where they see amazing paintings by Caravaggio, sculptures by Bernini and a chapel designed by Raphael. From there, they walk through part of the Borghese gardens to visit the Villa Giulia, home to arguably the most important collection of Etruscan pottery and sculpture, as well as Greek vases, in all of Europe. While there, students either draw or write critiques of particular works. By 2:30 p.m. the class makes ready to return to the residence for afternoon philosophy, literature, or Italian classes. Each day follows this basic pattern, the Roman Forum to the Coliseum; the

Vatican museums to St. Peter’s; the Campidoglio to the Capitoline Museums; the Pantheon to all the surrounding churches with paintings by Caravaggio, the architecture of Borromini and sculptures by Bernini; and so on and so on. Each year students see a special exhibit of a modern artist at the Risorgimento museum; this year it was Marc Chagall, last year it was Modigliani, and the year before, Edward Munch! The National Gallery of Modern Art is a favorite destination as well. Along with the great sites of Rome, students visit Florence where Chouteau takes them to see Michelangelo’s *David*, the Uffizi Gallery and as many other sites as possible, such as the Duomo, Bargello sculpture museum, or Santa Maria Novella. Students visit Siena and Assisi as well, two of Italy’s most beautifully preserved medieval towns. With the addition of a foreign study program to the Department of Art, Xavier students have an opportunity of a lifetime to see and draw from the great masters and monumental artworks firsthand, and for many, the first time.