Our Semana Santa

As a culmination of our April trip to Antigua, Guatemala for Semana Santa, the traditional celebration of Holy Week, a group of art education students and faculty compiled original works in an exhibition titled Our Semana Santa. The UT Visual Art Center provides a gallery space for a weekly rotation of student and faculty work, which was the perfect venue to share our artwork reflecting on our experiences in Antigua.

Our Semana Santa debuted on October 7 in the Visual Art Center's Fieldwork Gallery, to a reception of current and former students, faculty, and their loved ones. Nestled in the second floor of the VAC, the Fieldwork Gallery was temporarily transformed into an Antiguan street. The traditional songs played during processions rang out throughout the space, as videos of several of these processions played on the far wall. Photographs lined the walls, depicting the ancient architecture so common in Antiguan streets, the bursting colors of the floral markets, the ephemeral, artistic alfombras, and the detailed door knockers found throughout the streets of this ancient city. Acrylic paintings and handwoven huipils reflected the impressions we felt from the trip. Faculty member Dr. Paul Bolin also contributed a carefully curated list of words he uses to describe the experience, which were laser cut onto masonite and posted throughout the exhibition. A collection of personal photos from each member of the trip was compiled into a photobook, printed and placed on display. A censer, traditionally holding incense preceeding the processions, accompanied the show, although without its signature floral scent. The show served as a way for us to commemorate our trip, to share our journey, and entice others to make the jump and visit Casa Herrera in the heart of Antigua, Guatemala.

-Kim Varela
Allison Clark graduated this past May from Rice University with a BA in art history and anthropology. A Houston native, Allison has spent the last few years interning at local museums, exploring various departments until she found her passion: education. As a self-proclaimed history buff and decorative arts enthusiast, she is eager to examine the intersections of art education and historic homes.

Elizabeth Williams is a native Texan, but left to get her BFA in Studio Arts from Lipscomb University in Nashville, TN. Now with a new focus on museums, she is back in the greatest state! The similarities between Austin and Nashville are incredible, the only exception being Austin has better Mexican food and she is lovin it!

Ellen Murray’s focus is on Community-Based Programs in her pursuit of the Art Education Master of Arts Degree. Through her time at UT, she hopes to broaden the work that she has already begun in Austin as an arts instructor in workshops and community centers. She received a BFA in Illustration from Ringling College of Art and Design.

Madeleine LePere hails from Boston, MA and graduated from Simmons College with a BA in Arts Administration. She enters the Art Education graduate program in the Museum focus. Madeleine spent the last two years working at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum as the Public Programs/Marketing Assistant. At the Gardner, she honed her interest in early childhood education in art museums. She wants to investigate methods of exhibition and programming that cater to a variety of preferred learning styles - without ostracising adult audiences. In her free time, Madeleine enjoys rock climbing, playing with kids, and listening to records.

Stephanie Nordlund is from the Dallas area and attended Texas Tech where she earned her BFA in Art Education with teacher certification. She spent most of her time as an undergrad in art classrooms and teaching at an art studio. Stephanie is pursing the museum focus and loves family and community programs.
Margaret Bridges is entering the art education program with a community focus. She grew up in Milwaukee, WI and holds a BFA from the John Wells Directing program from the Carnegie Mellon School of Drama in Pittsburgh, PA. She is a returned Peace Corps volunteer, having served for over 2 years in southwestern Morocco. She is an expert shower singer, Netflix watcher, and pumpkin pie maker.

Stephanie Sandoval hails from Dallas, TX and graduated with a B.A. in Art History from UT Austin. Throughout high school and college she pursued a studio art career outside of school, focusing on mostly two-dimensional areas such as painting and drawing. Today, she continues to create by participating in various art projects around the Austin community. Stephanie enters the art education graduate program with a focus in schools and hopes to one day teach in a high school where she can expose students to the power of visual art.

Marie Petersen is originally from Saint Paul, Minnesota, but has experienced life all over the country, living briefly in Seattle, WA, Savannah, GA, and most recently, Denver, CO. She graduated in 2013 from Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA with an undergraduate degree in Art History. Marie is in the museum focus and enjoys working with families of all varieties in art museums. Some of her favorite things are cats, babies, wine, hikes, and exploring new restaurants around Austin.

Michelle Voss is a graduate of the University of Texas Radio, Television, Film program and the founder of the Film Camp for Girls. With a strong interest in cause-related marketing and fundraising, Michelle currently works in Development at the University of Texas. Passionate about the arts, education and shoes, Michelle lives in Central Austin with her daughter, Scarlett, and their puppy, Cherry.

Beth Link is returning to the role of student after 7 years teaching elementary art in Austin and Denver, Colorado. She is trying to balance being a teacher during the day and going to grad school at night. She is interested in using art education to empower and inspire young women. Beth loves breakfast tacos, cooking and watching movies with friends. She looks forward to what the coming year will bring.
Elise Chevalier graduated with a BFA in Fine Arts from the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. While living in New York, she taught and researched in art museums, and since moving to Austin in 2012, Elise has been teaching at independent schools and the Dougherty Arts School. She’s thrilled to be a student again at UT. In her free time, Elise paints, creates music, and takes her cat on walks.

Hillary Vincent graduated from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette with a BFA in Graphic Design. She is a Lafayette native entering the Schools focus at UT. Excited to call Austin her new home, her goal is to teach K-12 art courses while encouraging her students to find joy in creative expression.

Dr. Christina Bain has been collaborating with Dr. Debbie Kuster and Dr. Jeff Young, both from the University of Central Arkansas, on a longitudinal study focusing on art teachers’ development. One article, “Fifth year art teachers: Constructing a professional identity” will appear soon in Visual Arts Research. They also co-presented The Artistic Act of Teaching: Constructing a Professional Identity at the Tenth International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry in Champagne-Urbana in May 2014. Dr. Heidi Powell and Dr. Bain co-presented "The Anatomy of Medical Education and Arts Integration Curriculum" at Enhancing Lives through Arts and Health: 25th Anniversary Conference and Celebration in Houston, Texas (April 2014). As part of the Art and Media Communication grant, awarded by the Texas Education Agency, she helped lead a professional development workshop for art teachers at UT during Summer 2014. The Texas Art Education Association invited her to speak about practical aspects of leadership with UT graduate Kaela Hoskings at the TAEA Leadership Institute, held in Bendera Springs, Texas. Recently, she participated in a panel at the Blanton Museum as part of a screening for the Art21 video series.

Dr. Paul Bolin had an active fall. At the TAEA conference in San Antonio in November, Dr. Bolin co-presented in two sessions. The first session was titled “Art Education History Detectives,” in which Bolin presented with his colleagues in Art Education and Visual Art Studies here at The University of Texas at Austin: Heidi Powell, Chris Bain, and Melinda Mayer. The second session Bolin presented at the TAEA conference was with Kaela Hoskings, Director of Education at Artpace San Antonio, and titled “Look! Do You Hear That?” This session emerged from an art education history article published in the Fall (2014) issue of the journal Trends, titled “Listen Do You See That? Art Education and the Technology of Radio.” In October, Bolin had the pleasure of presenting a morning-long session to the Docent Group of the Contemporary Austin, titled “Material Culture, Stories, and the Museum.”
Dr. Melinda Mayer began the summer by representing UT’s graduate program in Art Museum Education at the second convening of the Art Museum Educators Consortium, a think tank on the future of Museum Education. Attendees included leaders from national and international organizations of museum educators, including the National Art Education Association, the American Alliance of Museums, The Journal of Museum Education, and The New Media Consortium as well as the graduate programs in museum education at George Washington University and Banks Street College of Education. In publications, Multiculturalism in Art Museums Today, edited by Dr. Joni Acuff and Dr. Laura Evans, came out in August. The book closes with Dr. Mayer’s chapter I Cannot Tell a Lie. Dr. Mayer kicked off the fall leading September’s Art Gazes program at the Blanton Museum of Art’s Third Thursday public program. She also participated in three sessions at the Texas Art Education Association annual meeting in November. Dr. Mayer joined Dr. Paul Bolin, Dr. Christina Bain, and Dr. Heidi Powell to present Art Ed History Detectives. Kim Varela, Rachel Vogt, and Dr. Mayer gave a session called Designing Looking, which they will also present at the National Art Education Association conference in spring 2015. Lastly, Dr. Mayer organized an annually presented session entitled Graduate Art Education Programs in Texas.

Dr. Heidi C. Powell has been collaborating with Col. Denton Knapp, Director of the Center for Army Profession and Ethic, West Point, NY co-facilitating ethics training at Camp Mabry, with an emphasis on using the visual in ethics and training. She serves on the Professional Materials Committee for the National Art Education Association, Fulbright Minds, a Fulbright scholars alumni organization, and is Co-editor of Trends, The Journal of the Texas Art Education Association. Dr. Powell co-presented at The Global Alliance for Arts & Health (GAAH) Conference Enhancing Lives through Arts and Health: 25th Anniversary Conference and Celebration in Houston, Texas (April 2014) with Dr. Christina Bain (“The Anatomy of Medical Education and Arts Integration Curriculum”) and Hannah Rabalais (“Art, Spirituality and Healing: A Personal Journey”). She was an invited speaker at University of North Carolina-Charlotte’s Art Connects Conference (April 2014), presenting “Storying Art Experiences,” and was a Continuing Education (CE) speaker for the University of Minnesota (GAAH). She also co-presented with Dr. Gayle Curtis, Dr. Donna Reid, and Velvette Lawrence from the University of Houston at the American Association for Teaching and Curriculum in Tampa, FL. (October 2014), presenting “Building a Blended Professional Family: Curricular, Technological, and Instructional Collaboration in Pre-service Teacher Education.” She led professional development workshops this past summer for Austin ISD teachers through MindPop to enhance curriculum through arts integration. As an artist, she has participated in local fundraising exhibitions, such as Toma Mi Corazon XXII (Take My Heart) at La Pena in Austin (February 2014), and national exhibitions such as It Narratives: The Movement of Objects as Information, at Franklin Street Works, Stamford, CT (September 6-November 9, 2014). She will be co-presenting at AERA (American Educational Research Association) in April of 2015 called “Improving Faculty Reflective Practice.” She has two co-authored articles under review related to collaboration and arts integration and medicine.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Taylor Browning is currently the Assistant Curator of Education for Teen and University Programs at Artpace, San Antonio.

Taylor says she has known since high school that she wanted to be an art educator. “I enjoyed making and studying art, but I did not want to be a professional artist,” she wrote. She began her higher education at St. Edwards, where she graduated in Studio Art in 2009. She originally enrolled in the schools track of UT’s Art Education program, only to change to museums along the way. She was nervous to make the switch, but she says a long lunch with Dr. Mayer, head of the museums track, made her realize that she would be much more prepared to understand and work with teachers in the museum because of her coursework in schools. Ultimately, she says the program at UT “prepared me not just to get a job, but also contribute to making change in the field and the confidence to experiment with new ideas.”

Taylor, pictured bottom right, is with Artpace’s You(th)Pace Teen Art Council and the Contemporary Austin Teen Council, with their organizer, Hannah Zurko.
Taylor mentions networking several times during our interview, encouraging current students to attend conferences and getting involved with organizations that are meaningful to them. In addition to completing four internships with area organizations during her UT years, Taylor has consistently presented at both the National Art Education Association and Texas Art Education Association’s annual conferences. “Becoming a part of the network of art educators is a great source of support and learning as well as contributing to the field by presenting, writing, and continuing to research,” she says. “Get out there and meet people who are doing things that interest you.” It is evident by talking with Taylor that she is passionate about her values and the necessity of each person to decide for themselves what those are. She explains she makes her goals based on these values, and that is what brings her more sustained happiness. “I’m also a people person and an encourager,” she explains in her email. Both of these traits shine in her current role at Artpace, which she describes as “not quite a museum, not quite a gallery, Artpace is a contemporary artist residency program that gives artists the freedom to dream.”

Within this unique space, Taylor manages the You[th]Pace Teen Art Council, a group of 15 area students who are hired to meet at Artpace at least once a week and work with artists, develop teen-based programming, and become advocates for contemporary art. This summer, Taylor and two students from the group attended the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston’s annual Teen Convening, a unique opportunity to network with other teen programs around the country. In addition, she manages the intern program and coordinates programs with local universities. Having served as one of her interns, I can tell you that within such a small education department (three, count ‘em), she does tons more that can’t really be defined, but she does it all with a huge smile and a willingness to help whenever she can. She is a passionate, driven individual doing work that is meaningful to her and her community, while continuing to contribute both to our program and art education as a field. Thanks Taylor!

-Kim Varela

SUMMER INTERNSHIP UPDATE

Debra Hardy spent her summer in not-haunted Salem, MA at the Peabody Essex Museum as the Student and Teacher Programs intern. At PEM, Debra executed her own art lessons based on current exhibitions for student tours, created a large-scale model for education in the new Maker Lounge, and worked extensively to help facilitate a week-long Teacher Institute. Her favorite experience was being able to work extremely closely with a J. M. W. Turner exhibition.

-Debra

This summer I accepted an internship as an art camp teacher at The Art Garage in Austin, TX. It was here that I taught themed camps for ages 5-14. We did various media including acrylic on canvas, glass fusion, clay, collage, watercolor, sketching, and more. The themes ranged from general camps like, Nature Art, to ones inspired by pop culture, like Disney’s Frozen camp. It was great to see the kids get so excited about exploring new materials or learning new techniques around something that they loved, like Olaf the Snowman! Pictured here is a project from Comic Books and Graphics Camp where students illustrated a comic book onomatopoeia using acrylic paint on canvas.

-Hannah R.
I taught a teen art summer program at a Foundation Communities low-income housing Learning Center. Students chose an issue relevant in their community and then created a community solution. They then made a slogan to summarize and spread the word about their community solution. Students coupled this slogan with an image of their choice to create an original stencil. They then cut and spray-painted their stencils onto posters and t-shirts to spread the word about their ideas to improve their community. - Ariel

I spent the summer of 2014 working with the Education Department at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA). Specifically, I worked with Sarah O’Leary, Assistant Manager of School Partnerships and Outreach Programs, with their Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) Partnership program with the Boston Public Schools. I helped compile data for the MFA’s longitudinal study on students’ critical thinking skills, as well as put together a history of the almost 30 year partnership program for the museum. I continue to work with O’Leary and the MFA in conjunction with my thesis research on the potential benefits of VTS with dyslexic students. - Hannah Baker

I interned for the Dallas Museum of Art’s summer art camp program through the DMA’s Center for Creative Connections. I learned lots about management, lessons, and how to have an awesome art dance party! One of my favorite projects was indigo dying scarfs with 6-8 year olds. - Ashley

I spent approximately two months as a summer intern for the City of Austin Economic Development Department’s Cultural Arts Division under Janet Seibert, a Civic Arts Program Consultant. After the division received two major ArtPlace grants, my primary task as an intern was to develop and implement a system of categorizing hundreds of important documents. I also assisted with a three-part speaker series on Creative Placemaking hosted by the Cultural Arts Division. I wrote biographies of the featured guests for the city’s website, secured permits, ran audio and visual technology, and assisted with the set-up and break down of the events. I was also fortunate to be able to interact with and learn from many of the city’s cultural partners, such as Creative Action and Fusebox Festival. - Berangér
To fulfill my summer internship requirement, I participated in a three-week Curriculum Writers’ Cadre with Austin Independent Schools District. Collaborating with other members of the Creative Learning Initiative (https://www.austinisd.org/academics/finearts/cli), I hosted workshops with Arts-Based Strategies for all subjects, created extensions for use in specific lessons, and integrated various strategies for the use of AISD social studies teachers in grades 6-8 primarily.

In addition to this internship, I was also hired as project manager for Visual Arts-Based Strategy training for the AISD Creative Learning Full Faculty workshops. By writing the agenda and script, training the facilitators, and organizing various people and materials, I gained a huge insight on how collaboration and planning at this level is best implemented. It was an incredible experience to help in bringing Visual Art strategies to more than 1,000 teachers! –Amanda

Though I always knew being a docent coordinator was about people, I never quite understood the extent that people were the job. Building and then fostering the growth of those relationships – within the museum, the docent corps, and the community – is essential. I think the thing I’m taking away from my experience is that more than preservation and education, museums are about relationships. This isn’t a revelation, but a strengthening in my conviction about my direction and place within the field.

–Rachel, Columbus Museum of Art

Last summer I was the Advancement intern at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego. On a day-to-day basis, I helped coordinate events, research potential donors, and managed memberships and correspondence. My big project was obtaining donations for an opportunity drawing at an event in September. I was so excited to hold donations that I had solicited by myself in my hands! –Elise

I spent my summer at Artpace San Antonio, working as the Graduate Intern in the Education Department. Not quite an art gallery and not quite a museum, Artpace offered a unique experience, including developing a children’s summer camp and interviewing local, national, and international Artists-in-Residence. My favorite activity was creating Kehinde Wiley-inspired portraits with the students, ages ranging from 4-13. The experience of developing materials for an education department has influenced her thesis, which now focuses on the uses of iPads as museum resources in the classroom. –Kim

My summer internship took me back to the Arkansas Delta for thesis-related research and community development work through arts. Now more than ever, I feel confident that my inquiry into the art education climate of Helena West Helena will have a lasting impact for those working alongside Thrive. According to their website http://www.thrivecenter.org/, their vision is for Rural America to become a center for thriving communities, among other things. As of now, their mission includes increasing economic mobility and decreasing rural brain drain (thrivecenter.org, 2014), two major themes in my thesis work and research. I was honored to join them this summer in rebuilding the heart of America.

–Ruth