

spring  
2014

# SCOPE

News from the Art Education Program at The University of Texas at Austin

What's  
New!

## Guatemala 2014

This April, 11 graduate students traveled with Dr. Paul Bolin to Antigua, Guatemala, for ten days to experience *Semana Santa*, or Holy Week. The amazing experience included field trips and tours in and around the city, talks with guest lecturers, and the hands-on experience of making an *alfombra* for the Holy Week processions. From our excursions to foreign places to little things like conversing with strangers, the trip provided us with many new ideas, insights, and experiences.

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to Milady Casco, a UT Art Education alumna and current program coordinator at Casa Herrera in Antigua. Her efforts, as well as those of other Casa staff and volunteers, afforded us a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience *Semana Santa* through the eyes of the Guatemalan people.

### **Semana Santa Moments**

Author and anthropologist Elizabeth Bell, one of our guest lecturers, told us to be on the look out for what she called “your *Semana Santa* moment,” a personal moment that encompassed your experience of Holy Week. Each moment is unique to the individual.

“Experiencing the procession on the first night. The smells, the sounds, the movement—it was an out-of-body experience.”

– Hannah Baker



## SCOPE

is a newsletter dedicated to keeping UT's community of art educators connected. The mission of the newsletter is to communicate the interests and accomplishments of current students, alumni, and faculty.

### **Editor**

Berang r LeFranc

### **Contributing Writers**

Amanda Barbee

Debra Hardy

Berang r LeFranc

Hannah Rabalais

Kim Varela

Rachel Vogt

### **Designer**

Berang r LeFranc

### **Faculty Advisor**

Dr. Paul E. Bolin

cont. on pg. 2

## Inside This Issue

Guatemala .....	2
NAEA 2014 .....	4
Faculty Update .....	5
Program Updates .....	6
Thesis Blurbs .....	7
Summer Internships .....	8

## Dr. Bolin's 10 Words on Our Trip to Antigua

1. Collaboration
2. Negotiation
3. Reciprocity
4. Ephemeral
5. Multisensory
6. Immediate
7. Educational
8. Experiential
9. Expansive
10. Essential



"Talking to the people who were watching as we worked on the *alfombra*, and playing with the kids helping us."

– Elise Erb

"Easter morning on Casa Herrera's roof. Watching the sun rise with the volcanoes all around—I got emotional!"

– Ashley Ham

"Getting inside of a church at four in the morning, and watching an *anda* leave the unlit church, covered in lights and surrounded by music."

– Debra Hardy

### What is an *Alfombra*?

*Alfombra* means carpet in Spanish. These ephemeral street art pieces are created specifically for the *Semana Santa* processions as an offering to Jesus Christ. When the procession passes over the alfombra, the piece is considered blessed. Traditionally made of dyed sawdust, we observed alfombras made of many other materials such as fresh flowers, fruit, and even glitter.

"Our trip to San Juan Comalapa to see the community mural. The mural addressed important issues for the town—from clean drinking water, to carrying on traditions, to the Civil War and violence that continued after such as domestic violence. Youth were leaders of the project and it was very inspiring."

– Ariel Kay

"My favorite part was seeing the faces of the faithful carrying the giant *andas*, especially the faces of the little ones. The devotion was visible as they worked so hard, bending and swaying with the weight on their shoulders."

– Hannah Rabalais



"Watching our *alfombra* come to fruition after weeks of planning through selfless teamwork and collaboration. Building a small *alfombra* with local children as their parents watched with smiling faces. Observing and feeling all the effort and heart put into an ephemeral art piece for which no individual would take credit."

– Berang r LeFranc

"My favorite thing was experiencing and enjoying the little moments. I got coffee every morning and practiced ordering in my terrible spanish. I also enjoyed saying '*Buenos*' to every person I met. Sitting in the rocking chairs at Casa Herrera and talking with friends in the hot afternoon was also really nice."

– Kirstie Parkinson

"Looking down at our finished *alfombra* with all of the spectators taking photos and sharing in our excitement!"

– Kim Varela



Guatemala panorama photo: Berang r LeFranc  
all other Guatemala photos: Kirstie Parkinson

# National Art Education Association Conference 2014

The National Art Education Association annual conference was held March 29th to 31st in San Diego, California. For several of us, NAEA was our first professional conference experience. We attended sessions centering on a wide variety of topics related to this year's theme: "Spark! Fusing Innovative Teaching & Emerging Technologies." Sessions were geared toward various audiences, such as schools, higher education, community-based, and museums. In addition to attending sessions, we also networked with professionals in the field. Our spirited initiatives even led to several summer internships! After hours we were free to explore San Diego's lovely Gaslamp district. Elise's family friends treated us to dinner in their gorgeous San Diego home. Thank you for your hospitality Eric, Susan, and Matthew Naslund, and thank you to Jack and Theresa Erb for helping put the day together! All in all, NAEA in San Diego was a fun and beneficial experience for us all. We look forward to attending the conference next year in New Orleans!

## Tips

Look for workshops that really interest you. Don't go to one just because you feel like you have to constantly be in sessions.

– Elise Erb

Because my thesis is about implementing technology in art museums, it was really refreshing to hear how mobile devices are also being used in art classrooms. Seeing how creative teachers are in their classroom use of mobile technology is really hopeful for how it can be implemented in art museums!

– Kim Varela

Download the NAEA app. It was a lifesaver!

– Rachel Vogt

Put yourself out on a limb. Network. Talk to people. Ask questions in sessions. Chances are that your nerve will be worth it!

– Debra Hardy

## Favorite Moments

Dinner with Elise's family and friends was truly a delightful evening. Instead of going out for dinner as a group, they invited us into their home and provided a delicious Mexican dinner, a gorgeous view, and excellent company. I think we all agreed this was the highlight of our trip!

– Kim Varela

My highlight would probably be finding the one other person at NAEA who is interested in fundraising and making that connection with her. And saving the bus when the driver got lost at pre-conference.

– Elise Erb

My favorite session was an open forum hosted by the LGBTQ Caucus. They sourced questions and topics of interest from the crowd, which offered multiple insights into the challenges of LGBTQ youth and educators. The forum ended with a wedding on top of the convention center!

– Hannah Rabalais

The Gallery Teaching Marathon at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego was a blast! I observed and participated in several different methods of teaching in the gallery. The day ended with a session conducted by Elliot Kai-Kee, who led us through an auditory and kinetic exploration of Céleste Boursier-Mougenot's untitled installation.

– Rachel Vogt

My favorite part of NAEA was getting to meet and see so many art educators who I admire and getting to experience them as people. I got to see Philip Yenawine enjoying a cup of coffee in a coffee shop, Paul Duncam walked the same way as me to head to a lecture, Elliot Kai-Kee opened a door for me, and I casually networked with people whom I wish to work with in the future. It was an incredible experience!

– Debra Hardy

To my delight, the range of topics offered at this year's NAEA Conference met every niche of art education that I love, and introduced me to even more. I have gained: a working understanding of STEAM in the art room, several new technologies in our field, developments for Choice-Based classrooms, and information on great studies being done within Arts-Based research. Most of all, I just enjoyed hearing familiar challenges, celebrations, and solutions being discussed among art educators from across the country.

– Amanda Barbee

## Newly Elected

Congratulations to Amanda Barbee, newly elected Preservice Division Director Elect for the NAEA.

As the Preservice Division Director Elect, Amanda is elated to be part of this new division and eager to see the fruition of developments and efforts currently underway. She believes this division has the opportunity to draw from the collective wisdom and multiple facets of art education to help new professionals feel successful and supported in the beginning of their careers.

## faculty update

Learning in the arts requires the ability and a willingness to surrender to the unanticipated possibilities of the work as it unfolds.

Elliot Eisner

## Introducing Dr. Heidi Powell

BY HANNAH RABALAIS

The Department of Art & Art History is happy to welcome the smiling face of Dr. Heidi Powell, M.A., Ed.D. Filled with energy and ideas, Dr. Powell has been a positive force in the third floor halls of the ART building. Dr. Powell instructs undergraduate Visual Art Studies students and coordinates placements and evaluations for pre-service art educators. I was fortunate to serve as Dr. Powell's teaching assistant this past semester and have learned many lessons, formally as well as informally. I gained experience with managing a classroom, assessing students, and addressing special needs in the classroom. Outside the classroom I learned how to be a reflective professional, analyzing my actions and those of my students to improve for the next opportunity. I learned how to be a flexible and spontaneous teacher through reacting to the needs of the classroom rather than fumbling when my plans go astray. Dr. Powell has instilled confidence in me for my abilities and goals.

Dr. Powell holds a Bachelor of Music in Performance and Education from Houston Baptist University. She earned a Master of Education and a Doctorate of Education in Art Education Curriculum & Instruction, both from the University of Houston. Before joining us at UT Austin this spring, Dr. Powell spent time traveling and exhibiting her art around the world. She was a Fulbright Scholar in Iceland at Listahaskoli, The Iceland Academy of the Arts in 2009, and showed during her time there. She has also shown her work in Austria, Croatia, and around the United



Dr. Heidi Powell

transcultural conceptions of place and space and of femininity. When asked about her artwork, Dr. Powell says, "For me, art making is a way of adding original dialogue and new ideas to artistic narratives of knowledge that demonstrate how

**"For me, art making is a way of adding original dialogue and new ideas to artistic narratives of knowledge that demonstrate how individual truth, imagination, and experience work together."**

States. She even has a sculpture on permanent loan in the Voices of Our Ancestors Depot Museum in Arkansas. Her creative work focuses on histories of indigenous and isolated peoples and their relationship to contemporary society. Her art making involves a variety of methods such as encaustic, printmaking, ceramics, and sculpture. She explores indigenous Native American and

individual truth, imagination, and experience work together." This semester, Dr. Powell traveled to California and North Carolina to present at the National Art Education Association Conference and the Arts Connect Conference, respectively. Please help us welcome Dr. Powell to The University of Texas at Austin!

Students pause for a photo with Dr. Powell, Dr. Bain, and Dr. Mayer.

The arts humanize while affirming the interconnectedness of all forms of knowing. They are a powerful means to improve general education.

Charles Fowler

One of the basic abilities that should be taught in our schools is the ability to discover, to search for answers, instead of waiting for answers and directions.

Viktor Lowenfeld

## UT Artists in Action

BY AMANDA BARBEE

Combining advocacy and service with and through art, the National Art Education Association's Student Chapter, UT Artists in Action, has made tremendous strides. Through collaborative efforts between undergraduate and graduate students from both the Art and Visual Arts Studies/Art Education areas, our membership has doubled, and we have established connections across various disciplines and colleges on campus.

In only one semester UTAIA has hosted events to create bowls to be auctioned off at two separate



Hannah R., Amanda, Destiny and Shaun delivered handmade valentines to Bona Terra special needs adults.

Empty Bowls events, created and delivered Valentines to the participants of Bona Terra Adult Day Center, hosted a TAEA Big Art Day event on the ART building lawn, and collaborated with several other areas to host a Fine Arts Showcase with performances and a juried art show.

On April 30, Artists in Action was honored to receive a Tower Award from The University of Texas at Austin Longhorn Center for Civic Engagement. As UTAIA continues to grow in both membership and impact, we see great developments on the horizon, and hope to increase the number of individuals positively affected through art.



Amanda and Berang r lead art activities at the College of Fine Arts 75th Anniversary event this spring.

## Brushes with History

BY DEBRA HARDY

This semester, the Department of Art & Art History welcomed Dr. Mary Ann Stankiewicz of Penn State University and Dr. Ami Kantawala of Teachers College, Columbia University, to our campus for the visiting lecture series. Both Dr. Stankiewicz and Dr. Kantawala are prominent writers in the field of art education history. During her lecture, Dr. Kantawala addressed the complex and unknown history of art education in India, her native country, and its direct link to British imperialism and England's fascination with India's already-existing art forms. Dr. Stankiewicz described her current work on the early history of the Massachusetts Normal Art School—now known as the Massachusetts College of Art (MassArt)—the first school created specifically to educate future art teachers. Both women spoke passionately about their research, identifying connections between their research topics and the multitude of directions

they could lead. An interest in diversifying what we know about our own history was conveyed strongly in their lectures. Dr. Kantawala, Dr. Stankiewicz, and Dr. Bolin also announced their work on an art education history conference, "Brushes with History," to take place at Teachers College in New York City in November 2015.

As my own research has brought me to art education history, I found their lectures truly inspiring. Both of these strong women are seeking to make art education history a diverse place that examines multiple perspectives and contests the idea that art education history is neutral and placid. They inspire me to write passionately about art education history and bring out narratives that

have been shut away from the field for far too long. I am extremely grateful to know these women are part of an exciting field into which I am just entering. I would like to thank Dr. Bolin for inviting both Dr. Kantawala and Dr. Stankiewicz to The University of Texas at Austin this semester.



## thesis blurbs

The arts are not a frill. The arts are a response to our individuality and our nature, and help to shape our identity. What is there that can transcend deep difference and stubborn divisions? The arts. They have a wonderful universality. Art has the potential to unify. It can speak in many languages without a translator. The arts do not discriminate. The arts can lift us up.

Former Texas Congresswoman Barbara Jordan

Thesis topics have been on our mind constantly since we returned to the university this January to begin our second semester as graduate students. Over the past several months, we have developed, changed, and honed our research questions to prepare ourselves for thesis research. Some of us found ourselves drawn to historic research, excited by the idea of combing through archives to find answers. Others became intrigued by potential sites to conduct case studies. A few people decided to embark on a self-study using action research. The graduate students have enjoyed getting to know each others' research interests. The support of and constructive criticism from our peers have been invaluable on our journey.

**Hannah Baker** will be researching students with dyslexia who have undergone a Visual Thinking Strategies program at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston in conjunction with the Boston Public Schools' curriculum and observing how VTS has affected their academic and social development.

**Amanda Barbee** will be working with preservice art educators from The University of Texas at Austin Visual Arts Studies undergraduate program. She will explore the possible benefits of Arts Based Research in the reflective practices of student teachers, within the context of a communal blog shared by the class.

**Elise Erb** will be writing her thesis on crowdfunding as the future of museum fundraising. Identified by The New Media Consortium as one of the changes on the near horizon in museums, she is excited to work with this emerging technology. She will conduct a case study at the Harry Ransom Center on the UT Austin campus.

**Ashley Ham** will be looking into the initiative "The Memory Project" to determine if such an art project increases high school students' capacity for global empathy. She is looking forward to partnering with local high school art teachers and their classes during the fall semester.

**Debra Hardy** will be writing her thesis on the history of the South Side Community Art Center in Chicago. Founded in 1940, the art center continues to function today. Debra hopes to uncover what helped the center continue during the tumultuous 1950s. She is very excited to begin her archival work this summer.

**Ariel Kay** will be writing her thesis on the process of curriculum writing and facilitation of a summer art program for low-income youth. Ariel is focusing on creating a social justice-oriented art curriculum that guides students to think critically about their world, their community, and their position in society.

**Hannah Rabalais** will be conducting a case study in Las Vegas, Nevada, to identify strategies to promote acceptance in the art classroom for LGBTQ youth. She will be observing one educator, focusing on teacher attitude, physical environment, curriculum, pedagogy, and classroom management.

**Berang r LeFranc** will participate in twelve weeks of mindfulness training in order to develop a relationship between the practice of mindfulness and art education. As a community-based teaching artist, she hopes to contribute to our understanding of how mindfulness can complement art education in public schools and other youth programs.

**Ruth Linford** will be exploring what community members, artists, teachers, and high school students in Helena-West Helena, Arkansas, think about art education. She will use this information to investigate how collaboration could potentially function to improve youth investment and increase economic opportunity through the arts in the Arkansas Delta.

**Kirstie Parkinson** will be writing her thesis on the popular art history textbook *Art Through the Ages* and analyzing events that may have inspired author Helen Gardner during the time she was writing the second edition from 1926 to 1935. Kirstie is interested in exploring how these events speak to their own contemporary history.

**Kim Varela** will be investigating the use of mobile technology in museums and how the visitor learning experience is affected both inside and outside of the museum. By selecting native and web applications voted by the Museum and the Web conference from the past two years, she will analyze how they enhance visitor learning.

**Rachel Vogt** is researching docent programming. She wants to know why—despite a proliferation of other teaching methodologies—the lecture model persists, and what we as art museum educators can do to promote change.

### Congrats Recent Graduates!

We would like to congratulate **Emily Kelly** (Community) and **Katie Stahl** (Community) on graduating in December 2013 and **Samantha Garfield** (Schools), **Lucy Kacir** (Museums), and **Jessica Piepgrass** (Museums) on graduating this Spring 2014. Congratulations ladies! We wish each of you the best in the next steps of your careers.

# What are you doing this summer?

## Internship Locations

- 1. San Diego, CA**  
ELISE  
*Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego*
- 2. Dallas, TX**  
ASHLEY  
*The Dallas Museum of Art*
- 3. Austin, TX**  
HANNAH R.  
*The Art Garage*  
BERANGÉR  
*City of Austin Cultural Arts Division*  
ARIEL  
*Foundation Communities Sierra Vista*  
AMANDA  
*mindPOP*
- 4. San Antonio, TX**  
KIM  
*Artpace*
- 5. Helena-West Helena, AK**  
RUTH  
*Thrive Center*
- 6. Columbus, OH**  
RACHEL  
*Columbus Museum of Art*
- 7. Salem, MA**  
DEBRA  
*Peabody Essex Museum*
- 8. Boston, MA**  
HANNAH B.  
*Museum of Fine Arts Boston*
- 9. Bangor, ME**  
KIRSTIE  
*The University of Maine Museum of Art*

