

VISUAL ARTS FACULTY EXHIBITION 2011



DOUBLE TIME

EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY | AKUS GALLERY

DOUBLE TIME

Visual Arts Faculty Exhibition

September 1 – October 13, 2011

PREFACE

In summer 2010, Eastern Connecticut State University received funding and approval from the state to enter a design phase for a Fine Arts Instructional Center. This new facility will house the Visual Arts Department, the Performing Arts Department and the Department of Gallery and Museum Services, as well as greatly expanded and enhanced classrooms, studios, rehearsal spaces, three state-of-the-art theaters and a greater gallery presence. To celebrate the release of design funds, these three departments coordinated joint programming over the 2010-11 academic year to create the “Year of the Arts: American Identity.” All faculty are deeply invested in the process and have been putting in extra effort to shape this new facility, which will become a beautiful focal point in the heart of Eastern’s campus.

In addition to their usual workload of classes, the Visual Arts Department faculty has enthusiastically met with the architects and other departments to vet plans for the new facility. They keep this pace while honoring their ongoing commitment to their craft to be active, exhibiting and working artists as well as professors who are deeply invested in the success of their students. They are clearly working harder than ever to get the job done! They are in high gear as they see plans for the new facility coming together. The exhibition “Double Time” celebrates a faculty working collaboratively at an ever-increasing tempo, while continuing to deliver excellence year after year.

Elizabeth H. Peterson
Director, Akus Gallery
Coordinator of Gallery and Museum Services
fall 2011

INTRODUCTION

Artists who teach at Eastern Connecticut State University overlay the rhythms, memories and moments of their lives into a cacophony of visual forms. These artists/faculty members not only create vibrant accessible images, they are equally committed to sharing their methodologies and insights. They have been able to accomplish this by doing “double-time” – working as professional artists as well as mentors to their students.

Embracing their unique cultural heritage, geographic background or medium in which they work, each faculty member/artist in this exhibition has created art that responds to their greater community and engages it in new ways. In the paintings of Andy Jones, views of trees drenched in the light of dawn encourage the preservation of the farm lands of Connecticut. June Bisantz creates signs for our contemporary urban world. Influenced by the advertising imagery of the 1940s, she brings the past and present together in a blend of words and images. Imna Arroyo worked with her mentor of decades earlier to create re-interpretations of a music form from Puerto Rico which chronicles community events and can still be found in today’s American multi-cultural neighborhoods. Abstract patterns in the colored pencil drawings of Lula Blocton emulate the patterned cloths of Africa, while their vibrant colors evoke rainbows of cultures coming together as one complex but unified world. Curving elusive shadows are cast by bold patterns of steel carefully forged by Claudia Widdiss. The positive and negative images that she creates coalesce and balance one another to create monumental meditative and mesmerizing work. The pastel portrait painted by Terry Lennox illuminates a wall of white flowers in full bloom surrounding a young woman; the flowers signify the girl’s coming of age as the light glistens on her face. Qimin Liu has created portraits of his students, now alumni, in a series of mixed media drawings. They share a vibrancy of technique and expression that documents his engagement with students in the University community. The many other artists in the department have also dedicated their lives to making art, while also sharing, directing and inspiring young adult minds. Each artist frames, colors and sculpts their vision of the world, at the same time sharing that motivation with the next generation of artists.

These artists who teach/professors who make art, have exhibited in New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts but also Louisiana, North Carolina and California. They have worked in China, Nigeria, Cuba, Italy and Australia. Their works are projected across city streets, grace the halls of museums, and are found in contemporary

art galleries. Known within their field, they have been critically acclaimed locally, nationally and internationally. They cross the boundaries of disciplines, working with geologists and storytellers, musicians and corporations. They work with pastels, colored pencil, charcoal and paint, but also bend steel, transform photographs, words and images in the digital world, or carve wooden planks into plates in order to make paper prints. It is this diversity of form and content that gives their students a unique opportunity to experience and experiment with a broad range of possibilities.

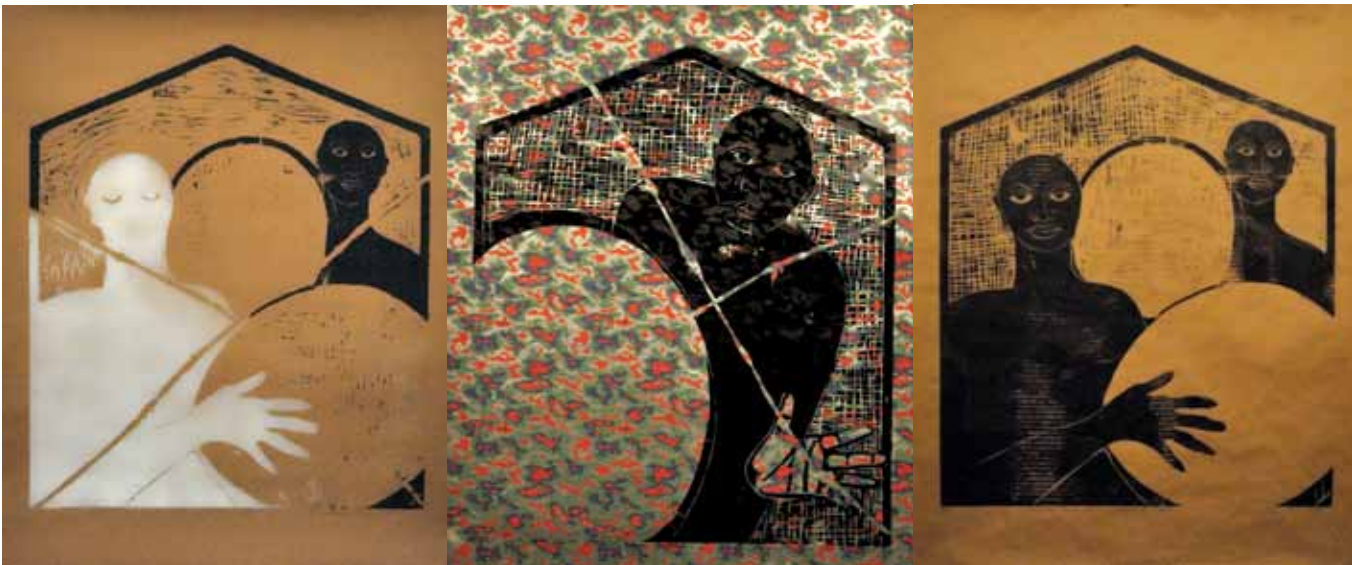
A great work of art can point to something greater than itself, and a great art professor inspires beyond themselves. Dedicated to their art and to working with their students through careful direction, critique, and by example, their role as mentor is not to create carbon copies of themselves, but rather to inspire students to visualize their own world. They guide their students to find their own path, their own visual voice. They inspire and nurture innovation and creativity – attributes that can influence the very core of any student.

Gail Gelburd, Ph.D.

Professor of Art History

Chair, Visual Arts Department

fall 2011



Left to right – *La Casa de la Plena III/House of Plena III*, 2009. Woodblock on brown paper. 36.5” x 32” | *La Casa de la Plena I/House of Plena I*, 2009. Woodblock on color metallic paper. 36.5” x 32” | *La Casa de la Plena II/House of Plena II*, 2009. Woodblock on brown paper. 36.5” x 32”

“La Casa de la Plena/House of Plena was created at La Plena Immortal workshop given by Antonio Martorell at the Taller Experimental de la Grafica in Havana, Cuba. The workshop took place in conjunction with the 2009 Havana Biennale. Plena is a traditional Afro-Puerto Rican musical form. The lyrics generally chronicle community events. The theme of Martorell’s workshop was inspired by Lorenzo Homar and Rafael Tufiño’s famous Plena Portfolio. My sources of inspiration for La Casa de la Plena were Las Casitas/Little Houses of the South Bronx. Las Casitas are cultural institutions in the Nuyorican community. They are literally tiny houses constructed in once-vacant city lots that have been transformed into community gardens. They are gathering places where important culture and traditions are passed down to generations of Puerto Rican immigrants. La Casa de la Plena attempts to join Tufiño, Homar and Martorell’s efforts to representation and pay homage to this rich musical form.”

CSU Professor of Art, Printmaking
 M.F.A., Yale University, Painting and Printmaking
 B.F.A., Pratt Institute
www.imnaarroyo.com

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Clockwise from top left – *Opportunity* | *Monkey Mind* | *Politics as Usual*, 2011. Models for illuminated outdoor signs, digital prints on glass, metal, electronics. Each image is 12.5" x 10.5" x 1.5"

"I'm fascinated with visual language – not just with the vocabulary of art and design, but also the intensely visual world of public space and its chaotic mixture of word and image that defines daily experience. The way commercial enterprise shapes the urban landscape, graffiti and construction markings on sidewalks, new technologies in outdoor illumination, the latest advancements in municipal signage, building surfaces, billboards and public transit vehicles – all present irresistible opportunities to express ideas and connect with people. The pieces shown here are models for illuminated outdoor signs. Imagine them on dimly lit buildings, glowing faintly and flickering slightly."

Professor of Art, Digital Art and Design
M.F.A., Claremont Graduate School, Painting
B.A., University of Connecticut, Philosophy
www.junebisantz.com

JUNE BISANTZ



Pattern Rhythms, 2007. Oil on linen. 35.125" x 93.25"

"The central focus of my artwork has been the exploration of color relationships, specifically the illusion of transparencies, created by varying colors over patterns. This produces a variety of colors while enhancing the underlying designs. The artwork combines my interest in abstract pattern and transparency with geometrical and curvilinear African designs. This radiant spectrum has both a traditional and personal meaning. National and international organizations use the rainbow to represent their commitment to moving the world towards social, racial and economic justice. The rainbow, therefore, suggests the promise of uniting people of diverse ethnic, religious, economic and political backgrounds to make liberty and justice for all a reality."

Professor of Art, Painting and Drawing
M.F.A., Indiana University, Painting
B.F.A., University of Michigan
www.blocton.com

www.easternct.edu/visualarts/FacultyBios/bloctonbio.htm

QULA MAE BLOCTON



February Morning, 2011. Oil on canvas. 42.625" x 68.625"

"The focus of my artwork has been studio and field works in oil, watercolor and ink, based on my response to the landscape and surroundings. Work in the field involves simplicity, that is, open-air life sketches that quickly capture color, light and atmosphere, whereas studio work accommodates the demands of larger-scaled and detailed paintings. My use of imagery first centered on the rural surroundings of northeastern Connecticut and has continued with explorations throughout the state and New England. As a member of the Connecticut Plein Air Society, I have worked, painted and exhibited in support of the Working Lands Alliance, which aids in the preservation of farmland in Connecticut."

February Morning
A response to seeing early light during mid-winter

Professor of Art, Painting and Drawing
M.F.A., Louisiana Tech University,
Painting and Printmaking
B.A., St. Andrews College
www.cpaps.org/AthruMPages/Jones.html

ANDY JONES



Portrait of Abigail, 2009. Pastel on sanded pastel paper. 34.5" x 46.375"

"I have the good fortune of having two daughters who are extraordinarily kind, talented and bright. This pastel painting of Abby is especially poignant because she posed for this portrait when she came east for her sister Lucia's graduation from college. On this fortuitous weekend, the rhododendron in the front yard exploded into bloom as never before. A hint of joyous humor in Abby's face was the moment I was looking for as I photographed her in the garden. In the painting, I transformed the super-abundance of blossoms into a curtain of filtered light, a fitting backdrop for her magnificent adulthood."

Assistant Professor of Art, Digital Art and Design
M.F.A., Yale University, Painting
B.F.A., Syracuse University, Painting
www.tlennox.com

FERRY LENNOX



Six-Degree Link: The Student Project, 2007-09. Mixed media on paper. Eight works. Each 30" x 22"
Installation from "30 and Beyond," College of Design Alumni Exhibition, Iowa State University

"Since 1997, I have been working on a project depicting the homeless people in America's inner cities. The subjects are homeless individuals who struggle with mental and physical disabilities, and substance abuse. In 2006, I started developing another project, titled Six-Degree Link: The Student Project. This project was inspired by the students I have taught and mentored throughout the years. With these two projects, I intended to capture the diversity and vitality of poor neighborhoods and the Eastern community to discuss meaningful contemporary art issues. My artwork from these two series has won accolades from more than 50 newspapers and magazines, including the New York Times, Philadelphia Inquirer, Hartford Courant and Des Moines Register."

Professor of Art, Painting and Drawing
M.F.A., Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Painting
M.A., Iowa State University
B.F.A., Institute of Chinese Traditional Drama, China
www.easternct.edu/visualarts/FacultyBios/liubio.htm

QIMIN LIU



Awakening, 2011. Detail of steel sculpture. 6'x7'x16"

"As a sculptor I have worked with many materials, but metal has a special magic for me. Manipulating metal in a variety of ways gives me opportunities to play with negative space, shadows, pattern and rhythm. I enjoy the process and challenge of transforming a rigid sheet of steel. My work is an attempt to create symbols of peace."

Professor of Art, Sculpture
M.F.A., Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Sculpture
B.F.A., Rhode Island College, Sculpture
www.easternct.edu/visualarts/FacultyBios/widdissbio.htm

CLAUDIA WIDDISS

VISUAL ARTS AT EASTERN

The Bachelor of Arts Degree in Visual Arts offers five concentrations of study: Art History, Digital Art & Design, Painting & Drawing, Printmaking and Sculpture. Program graduates pursue advanced degrees or other courses of study, and/or become professional artists, graphic designers in print or new media, painters, printmakers, sculptors, or professionals in art galleries and museums. **For more information, please visit www.easternct.edu/visualarts.**

FACULTY

Imna Arroyo, CSU Professor of Art, Printmaking
June Bisantz, Professor of Art, Digital Art & Design
Sharon Butler, Professor of Art, Digital Art & Design
Lula Mae Blocton, Professor of Art, Painting and Drawing
Michelle Craig, PhD, Assistant Professor of Art History
Anne Dawson, PhD, Professor of Art History
Gail Gelburd, PhD, Professor of Art History, Department Chair
Andy Jones, Professor of Art, Painting and Drawing
Terry Lennox, Assistant Professor of Art, Digital Art & Design
Qimin Liu, Professor of Art, Painting and Drawing
Claudia Widdiss, Professor of Art, Sculpture

ADJUNCT FACULTY

PAINTING & DRAWING

Karen Bartone
Shirley Bernstein
Clarissa Gerber
Beverly Goslin
Cynthia Guild
Tom Hébert
Derek Leka
Mark McKee
Muriel Miller
John O'Donnell
Neal Parks
Afarin Rahmanifar

Blake Shirley
Alvin Wilkerson

DIGITAL ART & DESIGN

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James Holland
Jay Nilsen
Jane Rainwater
Jamie Uretsky
Erika Van Natta
Cara Vickers-Kane
Nancy Wynn

ART HISTORY

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Elizabeth Peterson
Samantha Pinckney
Walter Smith
Elena Varshavskaya

SCULPTURE

Belinda Gabryl

PRINTMAKING

Amanda Lebel

ART EDUCATION

Beverly Goslin

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GALLERY



Monday & Friday | CLOSED

Tuesday & Wednesday | 11 a.m.–5 p.m.

Thursday | 1–7 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday | 2–5 p.m.

Gallery (860) 465-4659

Office (860) 465-4647

www.easternct.edu/akusgallery

For more information about and images of the work of full-time and adjunct visual arts faculty, visit the Akus Gallery on the web at

www.easternct.edu/akusgallery

For more information about Visual Arts at Eastern, visit

www.easternct.edu/visualarts



EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

83 WINDHAM STREET • WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT 06226

(860) 465-5000 • www.easternct.edu