

f NEWSMAGAZINE

Making the Cut: FASHION 2011

Art and the Arab Spring

Bonus: Cut-Out Patti Smith Mask





Cut out

Wear to graduation

f NEWSMAGAZINE MAY

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F Newsmagazine

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Dear reader,

It seems like just yesterday that the F Newsmagazine staff that's been in place for the past three semesters wrapped up it's final full print issue.

And that's because, it was just yesterday. Hard to believe.

It has been an honor writing for you. Along the way, we've shared some laughs, we've mourned loses to our community, we watched one president leave and another enter. Throughout all of it, we've endeavored to keep your interests in mind.

While F Newsmagazine is going to be undergoing pretty drastic changes in terms of personnel, F Newsmagazine will almost certainly (or at least, probably) preserve it's commitment to serving the student body, generating and enriching important discussions, and hopefully, giving you something to chuckle about every once in a while.

Be on the lookout for our summer supplement, which will be dispersed at graduation, and on newsstands in the fall.

Here's looking at you, Kid,
The F Staff (alphabetically)

Amanda, Ania, Annalise, Brandon, Casilda, Elliott, Jenn, & Nick.

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SAIC FASHION 2011



The work of SAIC Fashion Design students culminates in the department's largest event to date

By AMANDA ALDINGER, FASHION EDITOR

They spend the year living in their studios, and each May, the efforts of SAIC's Fashion Design students culminate in a day-long affair of high-concept fashion. This year's FASHION 2011 is the department's largest event to date, including four separate fashion shows, an award ceremony for Ikram Goldman (this year's "Legend of Fashion" honoree), and the announcement of the Eunice W. Johnson Fellowship award winner: a \$25,000 prize given to a graduating senior to help them start their own fashion line. It's a pretty big deal. And, beginning May 5 at 9 a.m., it's just around the corner.



THE EVENT

Last year's FASHION was held in the Modern Wing of the Art Institute, a spectacular affair with a runway that stretched nearly the entire length of the wing. Although previous FASHIONs have been successful, there was a desire to reinvent this year's approach, so the department has developed a runway show that hearkens back to when New York Fashion Week was held in tents at Bryant Park.

On May 5, re-purposing Chicago's Millennium Park in this same vein, a tent will be erected and the Fashion department's largest show to date will commence. "As always, we will integrate the same intensity into each show, only this year we are stepping it up in a much more serious arena," explains Conrad Hamather, Fashion Design faculty and the organizer of this year's FASHION 2011.

When it comes to producing a fashion show, aside from good clothing, the music and sponsors can be

the ultimate pièces de résistance. This year, FASHION 2011 has exciting news about both. "FASHION 2011 will be presented by the design house of Swarovski," says Hamather. In a first-time move of direct sponsor-to-designer collaboration, the design students will be provided with Swarovski products to implement into their garments. As fashion design students are responsible for purchasing the fabrics and materials they use to create their collections, this rare gift is an incredible opportunity.

While jewels may be pretty, a fashion show is nothing without a memorable soundtrack. So, also for the first time ever, the department is introducing a live, "more cohesive sound component, [DJ/sound artist] Skooby Loposky from Brooklyn, NY." Working with the designers, Loposky will generate original content that enhances the "styled concepts" and "utilization of the body as vehicle" that Hamather cites as the founding concepts for the show.

THE DESIGNERS

The show itself is comprised of work from the sophomore, junior and senior classes. Sophomore students each show one look — a top and a skirt — which is made of cotton, and can be dyed through the gray scale. The juniors and seniors have a bit more creative leeway, developing mini-collections from concepts of their choosing with no fabric or color restrictions — the juniors producing three looks and the seniors, five. Focusing heavily on concept, the students spend all year developing their ideas into cohesive stories that can be realized through clothing.

"My concepts usually revolve around travel," explains junior Jordan Jenner, one of two SAIC students to win a college-level Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) award for his collection. "They work to define the ideas and emotions associated with home, distance, and time, gathering inspiration for material and silhouette from travel accessories, traditional garments, and the cultures I have encountered." For this show, Jenner is deviating from his affinity for travel by designing a collection that explores the relationship of a musician to his or her body, and the resultant physical and emotional effects of amputation.

Other students are culling from real-life references to pop and art culture. And what's better than a throwback to the glittery, brightly hued youth of the New York club scene? "I focused my collection on the original '90s club kids, particularly Richie Rich, James St. James, and Michael Alig," says junior Cyndi Outarsingh. "It's my way of addressing, through fashion, the lack of sexuality in general American culture by acknowledging and illustrating a niche in pop culture where sexuality is celebrated." Of course, no collection is complete without a personal touch — or the underlying desire to create your own dream wardrobe. "To make the collection contemporary and more personal, I imagined what my friends and I would wear if we were dressing up as the original club kids."

Like Outarsingh, senior Julia Covintree is also seeking inspiration from New York scenesters, although her concept is rooted in an examination of Jean Michel-Basquiat's graffiti art and the hip-hop culture of the '70s and '80s. But unlike the majority of her classmates, Covintree is exploring her concept through menswear. Explaining her concerns throughout the design process about the wearability of her collection and what her customer may or may not wear, Covintree says that her worries only served as helpful motivation, and helped her identify her strengths as a designer. "This collection shows my ability to create energetic menswear while pushing classic silhouettes with prints and non-traditional fabrics," she told F News magazine.

For those who haven't attended an SAIC fashion show, to say that it's not your typical runway experience is an understatement. Exploding with experimentation in shape, color, texture and form, the looks produced by the designers seem more akin to a high-concept art exhibition than what might stock your local boutique.

For junior Laura Dodd, the department's deviation from sartorial trends is exactly what drew her to SAIC. "Unlike the majority of American fashion schools, we are allowed to create in an uninhibited manner, that doesn't shove current or future trends down our throats. We're encouraged to approach design in any fashion that we may chose, whether it's ready-to-wear or couture — or, in some circumstances, a hybrid of both." Dodd, also a CFDA award winner, will be showing a collection inspired by the corruption in U.S. history. Her dark-palette, deconstructed garments evoke the devastation of a nation destroyed by war, and a heroic race of individuals who rise above, immune to corruption and united by integrity.

Both Dodd and Outarsingh worked with unconventional materials outside of typical fabric selections. Encouraging experimentation is a strength they both credit their department with. "At SAIC, I'm not just a fashion designer," notes Outarsingh. "I'm a fiber artist, a sound artist, and so on. My collection is very heavy on fabric treatments: I'm dying most of my fabrics, screen-printing all of my own images, and I've even thrown in a little crochet."

Senior designer Eliza Angell, whose collection "is based off the idea of sustaining relationships over time and distance," chose to incorporate alternative materials as a means of personalizing her garments. Having moved frequently as child, her garments refer to the letters she kept throughout her travels. "[Moving often] has left me a vast collection of personal letters and notes that have resulted in this collection. The prints in my collection reference the textures, shapes, and colors of packaging and envelopes," she said. "Like packaging, the fabrics act as protective layers that unfold and unwrap into something very soft and romantic."

The ability to build, re-appropriate and re-purpose does not go without intense study and outside work. In a dual-purposed collaboration meant to both help the designers build their collections, and develop skills outside of what the Fashion department offers, SAIC paired with Ikram Goldman, the internationally recognized owner of local boutique, Ikram. This popular style advisor, who has famously lent her eye to Proenza Schouler, Viktor and Rolf, and Michelle Obama, among others has developed an internship specifically for SAIC fashion design students. This year, Ikram was also named FASHION 2011's "Legend of Fashion."

"Unlike the majority of American fashion schools, we are allowed to create in an uninhibited manner, that doesn't shove current or future trends down our throats. We're encouraged to approach design in any fashion that we may chose, whether it's ready-to-wear or couture — or, in some circumstances, a hybrid of both." — Laura Dodd



Liz Crum's work in progress. Photo by Alli Berry.



Kristie Breitfuss at work in the studio. Photo by Alli Berry.



WHAT'S NEXT?

What happens when four years of living on the seventh floor of the Sullivan building is over? For Jenner, it's the SAIC way: a little bit of everything. "I plan to get a job in fashion design for a couple of years, and then to go to graduate school for fine art. That way I can practice both commercial fashion and produce a correlating body of gallery work," she says.

For senior Amanda Bauer, whose focus this year has been perfecting a minimalist design approach in a way that still exudes a bit of creative playfulness (think clean lines and transformative embellishments), it's important to fuse what she has defined as her aesthetic with the most marketable career choice. "After graduation, I will be looking for a job in New York with a womenswear designer that has a focus on a more minimalist design approach," she told F.

For some, that desire is a pretty relatable one: to get a job. If this article makes it all the way to the German-born, Belgium-stationed fashion designer, Bernhard Willhelm, Cyndi Outarsingh has a personal request: "Bernhard Willhelm, if you'd like to hire me, that'd be amazing."

Whether you're a seasoned connoisseur of fashion, someone who enjoys flirting with the avant-garde, or if you're just attending the show to support your fellow students, you're in for a treat. And if all else fails, look for Outarsingh's '90s club kids. "I like to cross lines, I like to make people laugh, and I like to make people wonder about themselves. Hopefully, my collection does all of the above."

THE HONOREE

Ikram is as passionate about the students and their work as they are themselves, and she feels that being named a Legend of Fashion does not come without its unique responsibilities. "When you're given such an award, it is really an honor that people recognize something in you that you might not even recognize in yourself," Ikram explains. "It's a big responsibility for me to be better for the students of the School of the Art Institute. It puts things in perspective: here [the students] are working, making things happen, sewing the clothes, learning from the teachers, and then you meet people that you can look up to that help you to that next level."

Helping the students get to that next level is precisely what Ikram's internship strives to achieve. "I've allowed them to come into our alterations department as interns, and spend three days in a row with us, learning certain techniques they otherwise wouldn't learn in school," she said.

Ikram admits that there is a gap

between resources in Chicago and their utilization by the students. When questioned as to whether or not this results from a misunderstanding of SAIC's conceptual approach to fashion, she said no, that it's a collaborative effort that is definitely a work-in-progress. "There's so much more to provide for them, I just don't know how they can do it in a way that Chicago can be more involved. Not just me, in my store, but to make it a city-wide involvement."

But what does it mean to have students producing such avant-garde work in the heart of the Midwest? For someone who has garnered renowned international acclaim from her small boutique on Oak and Rush, the notion of the Midwest as a place of stagnation is something to balk at. "I was always fascinated by those comments from fashion people — we're a really hip town, we've just been under the radar," Ikram says. "But I'm okay with that, because it allows us to be bigger, to have a bigger platform to showcase what we can do in the end. I also think Chicago is no longer the underdog in terms of fashion, we just present it differently."



Photo by Alli Berry.

SAIC FASHION 2011

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Annual Fashion Show
Thursday, May 5, 2011

Millennium Park, 201 E. Randolph Street

9 a.m.: \$40; noon, 3 p.m.: \$75

For tickets, go to www.saic.edu/fashion. For more information contact the Fashion Design department at 312.629.6897 or fashion@saic.edu.

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Grad Day Fashion

By ERIC BASKAUSKAS & BRANDON KOSTERS

It's the moment you've been waiting for your whole life: snorting Ronald Reagan's ashes off the bill of Spielberg's baseball cap at the Oscars after-party, having just made history as the first male to win "Best Supporting Actress."

Just a minute. Before you hit that point, you must formally accept your diploma from SAIC.

As you know by now, we're all about subverting conventions here. "Exploring," if you will. So much so, that we're not required to wear the traditional cap and gown ensemble at graduation.

This raises two very important questions about your wardrobe as you prepare: 1.) "Is this too hideous and tacky?" and 2.) "Is this not hideous and tacky enough to look ironic?"

Dust off your propeller caps and polish up your ass-less chaps, and why don't you have us sit in the dressing room with you for good measure? Hot Tips is gonna pimp your swag, grad-style.

ENDLESS SUMMER

Graduation is the first day of the rest of your life. Technically so is today, so that's actually not a big deal. Show the world you're prepared for what lies ahead by picking up some gray sweatpants at Target before the ceremony. Don them with your most prized T-shirt from 1997. Bring your own beef jerky.

PORK AND CIRCUMSTANCE

Speaking of beef, leave the meat suit at home. Lady Gaga's trend-setting ways may be tempting to replicate, but beware: Graduation is being held in Millennium Park, home to numerous forms of wildlife who will peck you clean before you can say, "Here, kitty."

WEAR DEODORANT

Ha! As if.

SHARE THE GLOVE

Don't fret, there's plenty of American Apparel to go around. If your friend already has the sheer neon green unitard, it's okay. Step down the rack a few inches and grab yourself one in neon lime.

THE FIX IS IN

Your U-Pass expires three days before the ceremony, but that's no problem for the proactive SAIC grad. We pride ourselves on our mobility. Bring your bike! Of course, it can be hard to slow down on those fancy fixed-gear cycles, so kill two birds with one stone. Show your parents and friends where all your rent money really went by riding that thing right across the stage to grab your diploma. It'll look sweet tucked in the spokes as you ride to work at Starbucks on Monday.

MOUSTACHE? MUST YOU?

Yes, it's very impressive that you can walk around looking like there's a caterpillar resting on your upper lip. 'Staches worked great for Walt Disney and Hitler. So congratulations. You've joined the ranks of one of the most virulent anti-semites of all time. And that German dictator.

If your studio work has been so insipid that you can only be remembered for your facial hair, think more along the lines of a Colonel Sanders, or the subtler Rosanne Barr.

TOXIC

College is all about finding yourself. It's not what's on the outside that counts. Fashion is a mere symbol, a signifier of how you feel inside. Before you graduate, eat a pound of fresh-cut roses and bathe yourself in Britney Spears' new fragrance, "Radiance."

MINOR THREAT

Everyone knows that nothing says "I'm an adult" like one of those tuxedo shirts. They also know that nothing says "I'm young at heart" like a diaper. Avoid sending mixed messages and find a happy medium. Show off your youthful zest for life as well as your newfound secondary education wisdom by rolling across the stage in one of those human-sized hamster wheels. Any prospective employers in the audience will be impressed.

MAKE LIKE A TREE AND BLEND IN

So you've taken out so many loans to earn this degree that you have to forfeit a kidney to the black market, your first-born child to Satan,* and almost certainly the next 55 years of your life to Starbucks.* You basically have to attend this ceremony, if for no other reason than you may never again be able to afford to taste champagne. Or strawberries even, barring the conception of strawberry-flavored Ramen.

But all the pesky relatives. Those dweebs you've made a concerted effort to avoid throughout your stay here.

Adhere foliage to your collar and leafy branches to your sweater. Practice sustaining tree-like poses for hours on end. A yoga class may prove helpful.

Immediately after you've accepted your diploma, you'll haul ass to the Lincoln monument in Grant Park, where you'll pretend to be a fresh budding tree until everyone is gone. This may be the one situation in your life where an animal or homeless person urinating on you will indicate that you're doing a good job.

*Supposing that the two are not interchangeable.

CERTIFIED ART BUFF

Soulless hipsters will crack jokes at your expense if you overdress. Remember to wear a smile ... and nothing else.

Interning or Indentured?

In today's economy, the internship is a symbiotic and strings-free relationship. So if we're only dating, why do schools charge for the privilege?



Illustration by Joe Carpenter

By ELIZABETH CRONIN

While the reality of interning next year may interfere with plans for finally obtaining a Ramen-free diet and an actual lease (not with your parents), it isn't like we weren't warned. Internships have become synonymous with the word unpaid. Discussed last April in both the Washington Times article, "Is Use of Interns Abuse of Labor?" and Ross Perlin's New York Times op-ed, "Unpaid Interns, Complicit Colleges," it's clear that the practice of employers hiring unpaid student interns while schools charge tuition for the privilege is garnering critical attention. Though many students may be complacent about the practice, are schools to blame for this potentially exploitative relationship?

"[The schools] should stop charging students to work without pay — and ensure that the currency of academic credit, already cheapened by internships, doesn't lose all its value," argues Ross Perlin. This may not be an issue for students with unlimited parental support. But for students like Abraham Ritchie, whose internship comes with a heavy course load and a part-time job at the Art Institute, it's grounds for a serious reappraisal of a system seemingly oblivious to the needs of students.

Ritchie, a New Arts Journalism student at SAIC graduating this May, is an intern at Bad at Sports (a blog and weekly podcast series about contemporary art). "In art school, the internship is seen as 'good experience,' and payment is optional," Ritchie said. "This is silly. Students have to live in the real world just like everyone else. We have rents to pay, we need to eat and we need jobs."

Sarah Taylor, a first-year New Arts Journalism student, agrees — and as a nearly five-year internship veteran, she admits she's torn. "On one hand, I agree with the internship requirement. It

truly teaches you outside of the program and I think it should be mandatory. That being said, requiring us to pay tuition money to essentially work for free seems a little suspect."

To successfully meet the requirements of their programs, New Arts Journalism (MANAJ) students must complete six internship credits over two semesters, and Arts Administration (MAAAP) students must complete three. Those three credits equal 210 hours of work per semester, which breaks down to two eight-hour shifts a week — but it's not the requirement most students are questioning. It's the price tag.

"For the money we spend [\$7,548 over two semesters], there should be a significant return," adds Ritchie. "If the internships that the school generates aren't creating valuable and marketable work experience, or leading directly to a job after graduation, then the students will start to question the return on their mandatory investment [tuition]. I think that they are widely starting to do so, which isn't to say that's good or bad, it just seems to be the case."

Kelly Reaves, a 2010 MANAJ graduate who interned at Gapers Block (a web-based guide to art events in Chicago) explained, "I'm irritated with the school system, not the employers. I arranged my own internship. I didn't need to do it through the school. But then again, a lot of places won't hire interns who aren't students because they're skeptical about your motivation or dedication if you're not paying for it, and you have nothing tangible to lose from not showing up."

Vicki Engonopoulos is the Director of the Cooperative Education Internship Program (Co-op) at SAIC, which counsels students through the internship process and works with employers to post up to 700 internships per semester (including BFA, MA & MFA opportunities). According

to Engonopoulos, the internship should be looked at "like a course, a learning experience, like you're going to a different kind of classroom."

Students can begin their internship search by either calling the office to schedule an appointment with one of the eight full-time faculty advisers, or they can search for opportunities online using SAIC Launch. Once the employer has been vetted and the student has been placed, the student's faculty adviser continues to monitor his or her progress with regular site visits, as well as more informal meetings with the student off-site. Engonopoulos states the program's goal is to make sure that "employers meet their criteria so students have a good experience."

Reaves acknowledges her internship has been instrumental to her professional development and advises students to "do the work well. Be enthusiastic. The only thing worse than having to pay to do an internship through the Co-op program is paying to do an internship through the Co-op program, and then doing a half-assed job and not learning anything. Then you're really throwing your money away."

SAIC's Jim Yood, Professor of Art History and Director of the New Arts Journalism Program, explained that arts journalism is a profession as well as an intellectual discipline. The hours spent outside the classroom are meant to provide students with the professional training necessary to be competitive. When asked about the concern some MANAJ students had expressed about the Co-op program's tuition policy, Yood replied, "We expect people who employ our students as interns to provide them with intriguing work to do. The aim is not simply to provide non-profits and corporations with unpaid labor, but to provide our students with professional experience."

Editor and publisher Andrew Huff of Gapers Block has

employed two MANAJ interns over the years, and says that he's been "very happy with their abilities and enthusiasm for the work." The staff at Gapers Block consists solely of volunteers, so it would be a "little odd to pay interns in our case," says Huff. Although he wasn't aware that tuition dollars were being applied to help fund the program, and concludes it does seem a "little unfair," he imagines that it must be tied in with the administrative time spent overseeing the program.

Reaves described her internship at Gapers Block as a "great experience" with a full-time editorial position waiting for her at the end of her run (although pay still remains an issue). However, she also shared that her continued education has translated into paying thousands of dollars for a master's degree which has left her with "less skills and experience than my boyfriend, who is also in the arts field, and who didn't graduate from college. Now I'm finding myself having to choose between continuing to work there during the day for pennies, going to work in a bar at night for money, or taking a boring clerical job instead of having my nights free. SAIC's a great school — it teaches you to think. But it doesn't teach you how to make money."

Should it? Art schools like SAIC aren't exactly in the business of grooming graduate students to secure high-paying jobs after graduation — its focus is art, not business. And the internship experience is meant to reflect that philosophy. But how do you translate "experience" into "practical" and turn it into "profitable?" Furthermore, how do you manage to stay financially afloat while making it happen? Should SAIC charge students for experience gained outside the classroom?

A good internship may turn out to be a great experience, but unfortunately, I don't think my landlord will care.

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i myself have seen it: PHOTOGRAPHY & KIKI SMITH

april 8–august 14, 2011



I Myself Have Seen It: Photography and Kiki Smith was curated for the Henry Art Gallery by Chief Curator Elizabeth Brown with support from Steven Johnson and Walter Sudol, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation and ArtsFund. Its exhibition at the Block Museum is supported by the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation, Myers Foundations, and the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency. IMAGES: Kiki Smith, *Untitled (Head of Kuan Yin)*, 2002; *Untitled (Harpies)*, 2000. Both images are Chromogenic (Ektacolor) color prints. © Kiki Smith, courtesy The Pace Gallery.

BZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ

A composite image. The left side features a detailed black and white line drawing of a bee, possibly a bumblebee, shown in profile facing right. It has a fuzzy thorax, a striped abdomen, and its wings are partially spread. The right side is a photograph of a real bee, likely the same species, interacting with a plant. The bee is positioned in the center, with its head buried in the plant's structure. The plant has long, thin, needle-like leaves. The background of the photograph is a blurred mix of green and yellow, suggesting an outdoor setting.



Photo by Akemi Hong. Illustration by Luke Armitstead.

By BRANDON KOSTERS

"They're domestic animals, and they've been bred for thousands of years to be as gentle as they can be for a stinging insect," he continued. "Even when you've made a hive really mad, there may only be 10 bees from a hive of 50,000 that are trying to sting you."

Some do it for the purpose of generating money through pollination and honey sales. For some it's a pet project. And for others, the job is about educating the public about the value of bees and dispelling preconceptions that they're something to be feared.

CHICAGO CO-OP

The co-op contracts through the Department of Cultural Affairs to keep bee hives on top of City Hall and the Cultural Center. This year, they established a hive in Millennium Park.

In addition to keeping the bees, Walker also makes candles and body products using the beeswax. "That's another part of our business," he said. "It's a nice smattering of activity."

"Spring time is kind of relaxed," Walker said. "There's not a lot of work in the aviary to do." He checks on them periodically this time of year to monitor egg laying patterns.

The population peaks in July or August. Walker begins collecting honey around July.

Walker said that on the job, he generally wears long work pants; a thin, long-sleeved collared shirt (to stay cool while still being adequately covered); and a bee veil. "That's what I wear in the bee yard, where there are a lot of bees flying," Walker said. "Even if you're not making them angry, with that many flying, there's a good chance that you can end up with a bee in your beard or your hair or something." And as their nemeses have historically been large furry mammals, being stuck in hair makes bees angry.

Walker can see himself doing this for the rest of his life. "Or as long as I'm able to lift a box full of honey. When I get old, I may have to enlist a youngster to help me lift things. As long as there are bees, I'll probably be keeping them."

Founder Jeff Leider has been practicing beekeeping independently for three years.

He was inspired when he visited a friend who kept hives in a Lake County suburb. "I have fruit trees," Leider said. "And I wanted to pollinate my garden and fruit trees, so that was always at the back of my mind." He "fell in love with honey bees" that afternoon, and ordered the materials to start making hives and bees shortly thereafter.

"I read every book out there," Leider said. "Saw every movie. Made friends with a lot of commercial, organic beekeepers, took professional beekeeping classes, with certain people that have been in the business over 40 years."

This isn't Leider's primary source of income. "I've been in real estate for 17 years," Leider said, "and I'm just walking the fine line of 'Do I want to do this as a living?' You need a lot more hives than I have now, and it's full time. You're a farmer, and you're at the mercy of the weather and your livestock."

Leider explained that honey



bees are not native to the United States, with most imported from Europe. They don't fare well in the Chicago winter, and Leider struggles to maintain a temperature of 93 degrees Fahrenheit to keep his hives healthy.

Leider is an organic beekeeper, which means that he avoids chemicals to ward off pests and tries to save enough honey each year to feed a new hive in the spring. Leider said that many commercial beekeepers supplement the hives' food supply with sugar water or high fructose corn syrup.

Leider said, "The problem that people run into is that everyone gets greedy, they take too much honey, and then the bees don't get the proper nutrients" at a time when they need strength to forage for pollen and nectar.

Leider marvels at the bees' efficiency, particularly the astonishing amount of tasks the worker bees perform throughout their 35-45 day lifespan.

The worker bee's tasks include cleaning out wax cells in the hive, feeding larvae, transporting food throughout the hive, guarding the hive from other bees and predators, and then collecting pollen.

"They work themselves to death," Leider said. "That's how busy they are."

THE NORTH PARK VILLAGE NATURE CENTER

"Bees aren't flying around, looking to commit suicide on us to make our finger hurt for a day or two," said beekeeper Sean Shaffer. "Our goal is to get people comfortable with bees and make people aware of how cool they are, and that they're not just looking around for people to sting."

Occupying 155 acres of land, the North Park Village Nature Center is home to an Audubon center, gymnastic offices, three community gardens, senior housing, a high school for the cognitively challenged, and Shaffer's hives, which serve educational purposes.

The motive here is not to generate profit from honey. "If we do get honey," Shaffer said, "we end up sharing it with our volunteers."

A large part of his mission is educating children.

"We have preschool programs where we can go into the hive, bring out a section that has bees on it, and the preschoolers can poke their finger in and get a taste of the honey in the hive."

"It's a great time to talk to the kids and be an advocate of the bees and let them know what they do for us" Shaffer said. "They pollinate one third of

our food, so it's beyond honey. They sweeten our lives."

Shaffer says that children commonly confuse bees with wasps. "Wasps give bees a bad rap," he said. Wasps are more territorial, carnivorous, and they become desperate towards the end of summer, as they cannot survive the winter. "I usually tell the kids, 'Bees are fuzzy, and fuzzy is friendly.'" The wasps are neither.

Shaffer was fearful of bees himself at one time.

"Before I worked at the Nature Center, I was friends with the staff, and we would do programs together," Shaffer said. "The director at the time was a friend, and we were hanging out after work, and he said 'Oh, here! Help me out.' He gave me a little box and said 'Follow me.' He didn't tell me what we were doing. We ended up at the hives. In the little box I was holding was a queen. He didn't put on any gear or anything, and he kind of told me to go in, and said, 'Don't make any quick movements. I think you've got the right demeanor for this.'"

Shaffer eventually got a job there, and took over the hives after his friend left.

"My fear has definitely diminished. It's become more of an awareness," Shaffer said. He went on to say that being attentive to the bees is the key to avoid being stung. "I'll listen to the bees," Shaffer said, "and before they sting me, they'll let me know, 'Hey, Sean, it's not a good day. A little windy today. Why don't you come back tomorrow?'"

Shaffer said that the warning signs could be the pitch of their drone fluctuating, or hovering. Not surprisingly, the bees are more irritable when the weather is unpleasant.

The nature center also has an observation hive. "It's a small three-frame hive, but it's behind glass. You see the disgust turn to curiosity in like a breath as kids will walk in and see that."

Shaffer attributes the growing popularity of the profession to "the dwindling, to the colony collapse disorder, which is happening to bees on a large scale."

Leider says it reflects the interests "of people who are learning more self-reliance skills, permaculture skills. They think it's a cool thing for that. A lot of people are interested in that."

"The news is out there that bees are in trouble," Shaffer said. "They're threatened. So some people are stepping up and saying, 'I'm gonna help.'"

"Also," Shaffer added, "it's free honey."

SWARMING

A major beekeeping task around this time of year is "swarm prevention."

"Swarming is the bee's natural mechanism for reproducing on a high level," Walker explained. "One hive will turn into two. What happens is that the queen that is already in the hive will lay special eggs. The workers will build special cells to receive eggs that are then destined to be new queens. The queen will lay a dozen of those in her hive, and then the workers will feed those larvae royal jelly, which is a really nutrient dense, hormone packed food that they produce mostly with their bodies, and that results in a fully sexually mature bee. The queen is actually the only bee in the hive that is fully sexually mature."

It is through this feeding that the bees establish their hierarchy.

The old queen departs with half of the hive, and establishes a new hive elsewhere. "As a beekeeper you don't really want half of your bees to fly away during a prime nectar flow," Walker said. "So most beekeepers will just kill the queen cells."

"If we like the bees in our hive," Walker continued, "We'll actually try to use the queen cells to start a new hive and move our old queen to another hive to facilitate a swarm, and multiply the number of hives we have. That can be an exciting time of year, from May 'til July."



Illustrations by Luke Armitsted

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Thomas Ruff, Untitled (Portrait), 1990. Oil on canvas, mounted panel. 14 1/2 x 11 1/2 x 1 1/2 in. (36.8 x 29.2 x 3.8 cm). Collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. Photo: © 2014 Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. Photo: © 2014 Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.



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Audiophiles

BY BRANDON GOEI

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE FOLKS AT SAIC WHO PRODUCE VISUAL AND SONIC ART



Image courtesy of the artist.

This month's Audiophile is Jonathan Alvin, a BFA student in the Painting & Drawing department with a Liberal Arts thesis on Jungian Art, who isn't afraid to sit down, take a breath, and hear the beauty in balance and authenticity. To really listen to music.

BRANDON GOEI: How did you get your start making music?

JONATHAN ALVIN: I was enrolled in music classes at DePaul University at the time, and a couple of my friends and I decided to drop out, take out a small business loan and open up a recording studio — I was 19 years old. The name of the studio was Big Gold and it was in the place where Kingsize Soundlabs used to be, which is where Wilco recorded “Summerteeth.” At the time, we had barely any training running the equipment in the studio, so I had to learn a lot in a really short time. I came to realize that there was this whole other world outside of the music that had so much impact on it. So working with a bunch of other people and experimenting with what kinds of sounds we could coax out of the studio, I quickly learned that regardless of genre and style, when there's something really human in a piece of music, I'm immediately taken away by it. What I like to hear is someone really articulating themselves — that's when I make a real connection.

BG: In which department are you currently studying?

JA: Painting and drawing.

BG: How do you view music then — is it a hobby or side project for you? And why not study in the field of sound?

JA: Studying sound at SAIC is something different than what I was looking for in an exploration of the field. Many of the courses focus on technical skills, which wouldn't leave me very much room to grow. I did take Rhythm with Bob Snyder, and that got me thinking about the feel and vibe of music and how it affects the way the music comes together as a whole. And when I took Color with Betsy Rupprecht, I learned about the ways that color can influence the balance of a work. I try to tie those concepts together in the work that I have a hand in creating, both in my art and my music — using balance in a way that conveys a message.

BG: What kind of paintings do you create?

JA: I work largely with mandala forms, which possess a predilection to balance and symmetry.

BG: So when you set out to create either a painting or a musical piece, do catharsis and emotional release take a backseat to balance and symmetry?

JA: Interestingly, with both media, I never actually start out thinking about how to make a work that is necessarily balanced. In fact, the mandalas I make aren't always very balanced themselves. When they do take the shape of balance, it always seems to be something that happens unconsciously.

BG: Do you consider yourself a sound artist or a musician?

JA: I would say that I'm more of a sound artist, because the actual music is in my periphery. For me, it's more a matter of capturing the intricacies of an instrument's sound than it is about picking an instrument up and making a straight piece of music.

BG: What's the difference?

JA: Well, for me it's because I'm channeling something inside of me — a drive that I'm trying to realize in the world. And I can be doing that either through the studio or when I pick up an instrument. I think that most people (myself included) live out both sides of it. When you're creating music, I don't think it's really your choice either. It seems to be just the intention or the energy of the action that dictates it, and it also seems to be in the hands of the listener too. Someone might connect with how a piece sounds in an entirely different way than I could have imagined. I feel that way when I'm listening to music, too — like I'm gifted by great sounds. I could be listening to J Dilla or Radiohead or Messiaen and something will just click with me in a way that I'm not sure is translatable.

BG: What kind of instruments do you use to make music?

JA: I actually don't own any traditional instruments at the moment. My most important instruments are a pair of Yamaha NS-10s.

They're just these beautiful speakers. If I need to be really creative, I try to hear my inspiration first. Since I make a living recording other people, I can also listen to tons of samples of people playing their instruments on my hard drive, which is often an eye-opening experience.

BG: I was listening to the track you sent me — is it a single piece or multiple?

JA: It's a mix of several different pieces.

BG: I couldn't help but pick out two binaries in it. There's a blippy ambient part that reminds me a lot of Radiohead's later work, but portions of it jump out at me like a classic Grandmaster Flash track.

JA: That's pretty accurate. I did start out listening to a good amount of Radiohead when I was growing up. It was something that opened up a lot of doors for me in regards to music. Likewise with Grandmaster Flash — I look to him for the feel and vibe of the music.

BG: What exactly do you mean by “feel” and “vibe”?

JA: To me, those terms stem from interesting ways that rhythm and syncopation can affect a track. There are all sorts of types of feel for a song, and the reason that Grandmaster Flash has that “get funky” feel (as opposed to a straight feel) is because of that offbeat syncopation. A lot of my interests lie in how to play with syncopation, and in this track it starts off with that dance-y feel and a groove beat, then slides off into deep ambient territory. I think the juxtaposition of the two is interesting.

BG: As someone who records artists both local and not, what do you think makes the Chicago music scene tick?

JA: Well, that depends on what you mean by “tick.” With any music scene, it could be that there are people feeding it with attention, or feeding it financially, or both. I guess Chicago isn't particularly strong in either respect. I think the reason for it is that there's not enough structured chaos in peoples' music. There are too many musicians that just don't seem willing to explore things outside of their usual sound. What there's plenty of is people who are great at what they do — really tight bands with amazing instrumentalists, even though they're not always coming out with something fresh.

BG: Do you see any potential in the scene progressing further from where it is now?

JA: Yes, possibly. What I really like to see is an artist stepping outside of his comfort zone and experimenting with his sound. If they're truly examining themselves, then everything else will follow. Take Animal Collective, for example. If you go back and listen to their earlier stuff, it literally sounds just like someone fucking around in the studio, but now they've arrived at a sound that authentically beautiful. I wouldn't want to see Chicago's scene turn into a haven for band-wagoners.

It's like what Matisse once said: ‘You must draw first, to cultivate the spirit and to be able to lead color into spiritual paths. That is what I want to cry aloud, when I see the work of the young men for whom painting is no longer an adventure, and whose only goal is the impending first one-man show which will first start them on the road to fame.’

“For me, it's more a matter of capturing the intricacies of an instrument's sound than it is about picking an instrument up and making a straight piece of music.”

Mainstream muddle

Yet another disappointing film on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict

By DARYL MEADOR, STAFF WRITER

At the Chicago opening of the new film “Miral,” my skepticism was immediately triggered by the movie poster outside the theater. It showed Indian actress Freida Pinto, the star of the film, dressed in a schoolgirl’s outfit and staring up from behind the words, “Is this the face of a terrorist?” It may have been a comment on the dominant assumptions made about Palestinians in American society today, something not often seen in mainstream cinema. But to me, the poster seemed like a shallow approach to that subject, and a manipulative use of Pinto’s natural beauty.

My reaction to the film, directed by Julian Schnabel (the artist behind the infamous broken plate paintings of the 1980s, and director of films like “Before Night Falls” and “The Diving Bell and the Butterfly”) similarly vacillated between skepticism and vague appreciation. Palestinian writer Rula Jebreal wrote the screenplay, adapted from her

surrounding them. Hussein tells him that the rocks used to be houses, and what they are walking through used to be a Palestinian village. The house demolition witnessed by Miral was especially touching as well, as it concentrated on the distraught faces of the Palestinian family as they watched their home turn into rubble before their eyes.

But beyond a few touching scenes, the film’s script is just as contrived as the movie poster. The dialogue is simplistic and overdramatic, coupled with acting that lacks fervor. Most of all, the film falls short of exposing the extent of the damage and misery caused by the Israeli occupation of Palestine. While it is more sympathetic towards the Palestinians than most mainstream movies, it doesn’t fully represent the miserable conditions that drive the Palestinian resistance, as the majority of the film shows Miral’s seemingly comfortable life in East Jerusalem.

And finally, in perhaps its biggest downfall, the film ends with a misleading glorification of the 1993

The dialogue is simplistic and overdramatic, coupled with acting that lacks fervor.

autobiographical book of the same name. It focuses on the life of Miral (played by Freida Pinto), a Palestinian girl who grew up during the second intifada (or Palestinian uprising) of 2000. After her mother commits suicide, Miral spends most of her childhood in an East Jerusalem orphanage. As a teenager, she visits the refugee camps of the West Bank, where she witnesses the abrupt devastation caused by an Israeli home demolition. She is then drawn into the populist struggle of the intifada, develops a romantic relationship with a handsome Palestinian underground organizer, and is eventually arrested and brutally tortured by Israeli officials for her involvement in the movement.

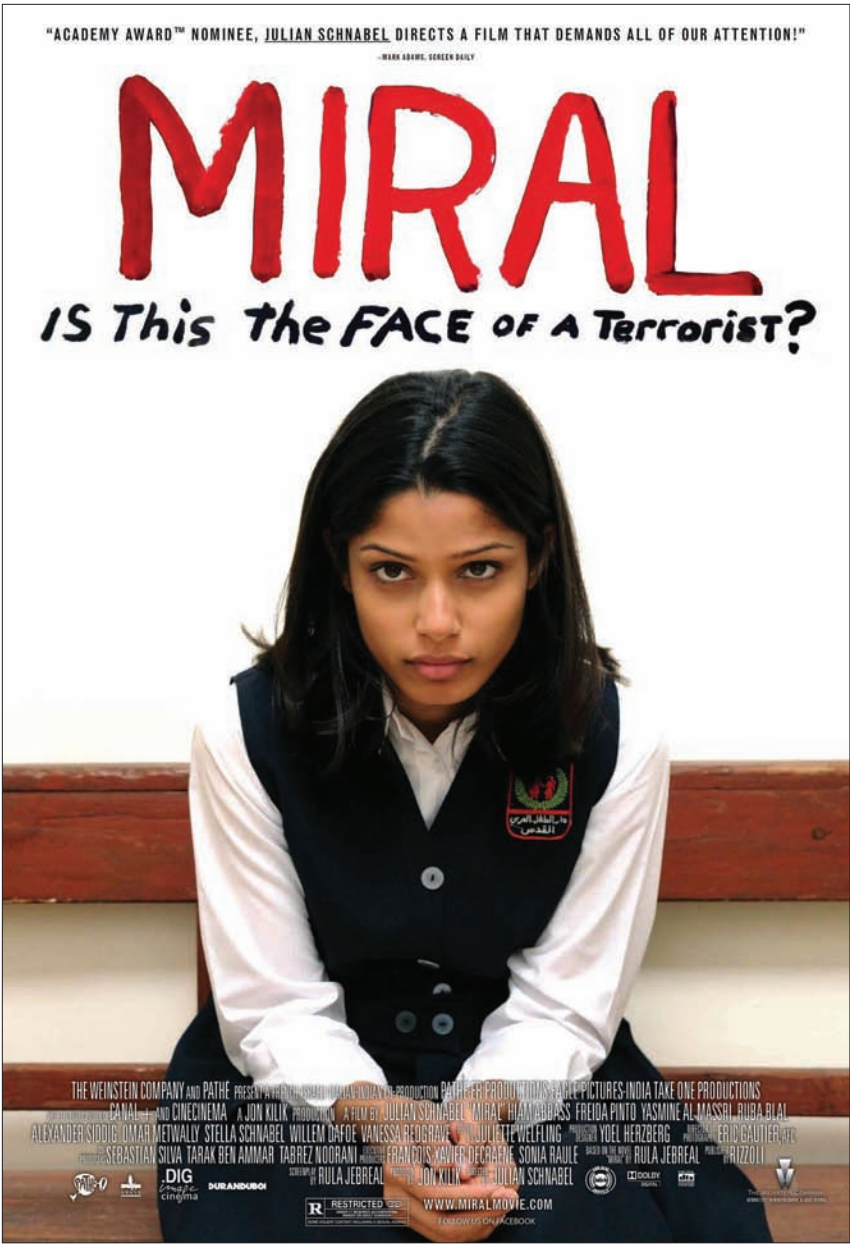
Since its release, “Miral” has proven to be controversial on all fronts. Activist groups for Palestine have criticized the film for not delving far enough into the detriment caused by the occupation of Palestine, while it has also been wildly criticized by others, such as the American Jewish Committee, for its alleged portrayal of Israel in a “highly negative light”.

The film is most successful in its portrayal of the human side of the Palestinian struggle, a point of view often absent in Western media. It contextualizes the violence that isn’t seen by most Americans. A few poignant and touching scenes eloquently speak to the occupation’s destruction of the Palestinian way of life. Early in the film, the orphanage director, Hind Hussein, walks through a field of rubble with an American soldier, who comments on the rocks

Oslo Accords, a peace process that eventually failed. Miral’s activist boyfriend experiences a change of heart and tells Miral that he has decided to support the peace talks, saying that he will settle for 22 percent of the land and that the road he had been on was too bloody. Miral asks why the land can’t become one country for everyone, but her comment is dismissed. The film draws to a close as she hopefully awaits the outcome of the peace talks, believing that they will finally bring about an independent Palestinian state.

The film’s conclusion feels especially disappointing after the recent release of the Palestine Papers (thousands of pages of diplomatic correspondence that detailed the inner workings of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process), which revealed that past peace talks often sacrificed the sovereignty and livelihood of the Palestinians. While the film acknowledges that the Oslo Accords never went into effect, it still portrays them as a heroic and potentially viable solution to the conflict.

Miral will likely remain a thorn in the side of supporters of Israel, but ironically, it’s also a thorn in the side of America’s grassroots movement for Palestinian rights. As a mainstream movie, however, it does represent a step forward in the balanced portrayal of the Palestinians in Western culture, and will hopefully open a few more people’s eyes to aspects of the conflict that are not readily available in our mainstream culture.



Close to Home?

Activist reflects on Libyan crisis from Chicago

By ALEJANDRA MONSERRAT GONZÁLEZ ROMO, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Morad Askar just lost a cousin in Libya. He was killed in a car along with four others by Qaddafi's mercenaries. Most of his family is in Tripoli, where they are living in what Morad describes as an open-air prison. He says that they can't leave their houses, because out on the streets people are being shot randomly to avoid more protests.

Morad, founding member and chairman of the Network of Arab-American Professionals in Chicago, is a Libyan-American activist whose family has a long history of fighting for Libya. His grandfather fought to resist the Italian occupation in the first half of the last century, and his father owned the contracting firm that was hired by Qaddafi's government to build many of the military facilities currently under attack by NATO. Morad says his father was later tortured for ostensibly having too much power in Libya.

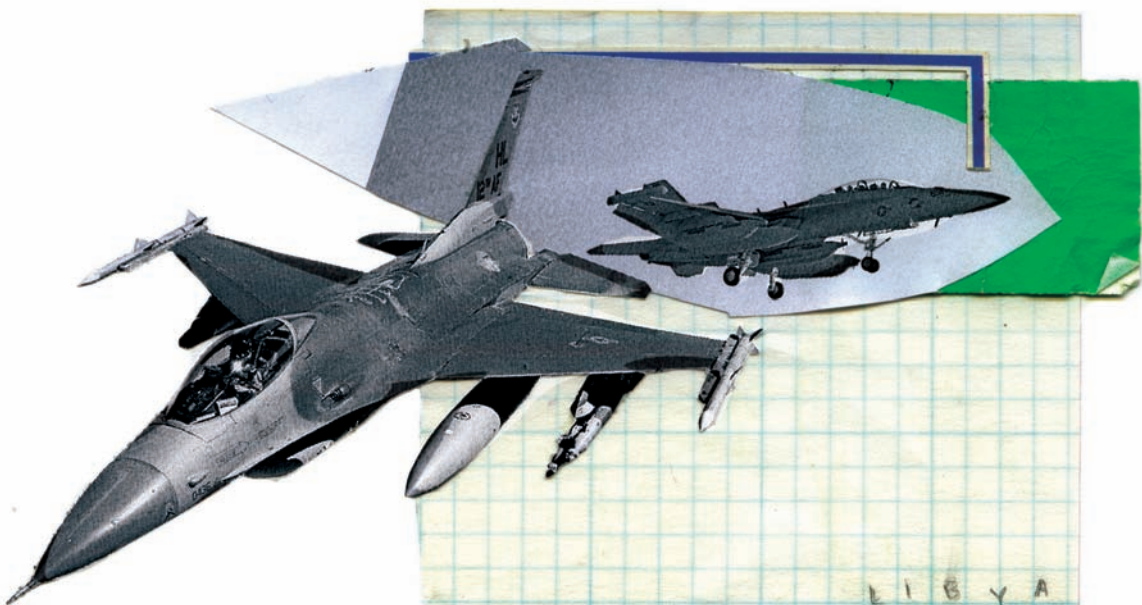
Even though Morad is thousands of miles away from his home country, he hopes to contribute to the fight by informing people of what is really happening in Libya. When the revolts started on February 17 he began passing information and videos to ABC News and the Wall Street Journal, and helped the Journal

get reporters into the country.

Muammar el-Qaddafi has ruled Libya since a military coup on September 1, 1969, which means that many Libyans have never known another leader. Uprisings against his rule started on February 17 as a social media revolution, inspired by recent events in Egypt and Tunisia. The Libyan dictator proved that he was willing to use all the violence necessary to silence his country. "He is more brutal than Saddam Hussein and every dictator combined," Askar told *F* News magazine. "Some of the footage I have been getting from my contacts in Libya show peaceful protesters being shot with anti-aircraft guns holding fifty-caliber bullets that cut people in half."

A month after Qaddafi's brutal repression had started, on March 17 the United Nations Security Council — led by the United States, England and France — approved the establishment of a no-fly zone over Libya. The U.N.'s Security Council resolution permitted "all necessary measures to protect civilians."

"Normal people do not have the means to fight against that [level of repression] so if it hadn't been for the U.N. resolution, which



me and other Libyans did so much to get, it would have been a complete massacre," Morad said. "The numbers right now are between fifteen and twenty thousand civilians dead. Without the intervention they would have been fifty thousand, or more."

Nevertheless, the month-long violence against civilians that occurred between the beginning of the revolts and the U.N.'s resolution made it evident that U.S. interests in the region go beyond the protection of civilians and the promotion of democracy.

Qaddafi's reign fostered a conveniently stable environment for U.S. businesses within the oil-rich country. When the revolts started, the U.S. still chose to wait to pronounce themselves against Qaddafi until the Libyans made it clear that the conflict would not end unless the dictator left the country. As the U.S. government became aware of this, they abruptly changed their perception of Qaddafi from business partner to enemy-dictator, ultimately deciding to unite to "stop Qaddafi's deadly advance," according to President Barack Obama.

Days after the intervention started, the U.S., U.K. and France formally agreed to pass command for the military operation in Libya over to NATO, and the changeover has been subject to substantial criticism — even by its own members. France and the United Kingdom claimed that NATO is not doing enough, and have asked the organization to intensify its efforts to weaken Qaddafi.

The deaths of acclaimed filmmaker Tim Hetherington and photojournalist Chris Hondros are dramatic evidence that the violence is continuing unabated. On April 19, Hetherington — who co-directed the award-winning

war documentary "Restrepo" — tweeted: "In besieged Libyan city of Misrata. Indiscriminate shelling by Qaddafi forces. No sign of NATO." The next day, April 20, he was killed in a mortar attack while reporting.

Meanwhile, as the U.S. political establishment begins to gear up for the 2012 elections, Senator John McCain — lead Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee — criticized President Obama over the stalemate that has emerged in Libya. "The president's emphasis seems to be on leaving the conflict rather than winning the conflict," McCain told CNN. "The worst result, a very bad result, of this conflict would be a stalemate, and I hope that we are able to prevail to get Muammar Qaddafi to leave, but hope is not a strategy. We do not have a strategy right now in Libya. ... It is basically, for all intents and purposes, a stalemated situation."

As the number of dead civilians keeps rising, there doesn't seem to be an end in sight. The rebel leadership is disinterested in speaking with Qaddafi. "We are open to a negotiated settlement with people other than Qaddafi and those around him whose hands have been bloodstained," Libyan opposition spokesman Shamsiddin Abdulmolah said, according to ABC News. Moreover, despite the early, misinformed rumors of his likely surrender, Qaddafi — as Libyans like Abdel Fattah Younes, former Libyan Interior Minister, are aware — is going to hold on to power as long as he can. "From my knowledge of Qaddafi, he won't leave; he will stay to the end, but he will stay alone," Younes said.

Askar explained, "He essentially hates Libya. He hates Libyans. He doesn't like being the leader of the country, he wants to be the leader of Africa

and he is using Libya's resources for his agenda," he said. "I know his military capabilities; I know what he is like. He is equipped to last a long time — to hold on for probably a year, if he has to."

With the biggest oil reserves in Africa, Libya is a wealthy country — but this wealth is unevenly distributed. Libyans are prepared for a transition. Each member of the National Transitional Council, quickly organized when the revolution started, has been working as a shadow government for the last month and a half. Mustafa Abdul-Jalil was nominated to be the revolution's representative as the Interim Chairman of the National Council, and he is already a widely trusted character in Libya.

Morad Askar describes the United States' coverage of this conflict as "poor," and fears the consequences from this lack of accurate information. "If Libya disappears from the news before Qaddafi and his family is gone, his people are going back out there to kill everyone who stood up to them."

Libyan rebels have been warning of a massacre in the city of Misrata and have begged NATO for more air strikes, while the international community struggles to come to an agreement about the mission. But the lives of Libyan people have no time to wait.

"Wars are not truly fought with bullets anymore, they are fought with information."
— Morad Askar



Illustrations by Emily Haasch



The experience not only pays homage to Basiony's work, but also communicates the chaotic experience of the revolutionary moment and the disorientation of the individual in a time of massive upheaval.



Honoring a Fallen Witness

Deceased artist Ahmed Basiony celebrated in the Egypt Pavilion

By ANIA SZREMSKI, ARTS EDITOR

“This is our last chance for our dignity, the last chance to change the regime that has lasted the past 30 years. Go down to the streets, and revolt, bring your food, your clothes, your water, masks and tissues, and a vinegar bottle, and believe me, there is but one very small step left. ... If they want war, we want peace, and I will practice proper restraint until the end, to regain my nation’s dignity.”

This was 32-year old Egyptian artist Ahmed Basiony’s last update to his Facebook status before he was killed on January 28, 2011 — the so-called “Friday of Wrath,” when over 2,000 protesters were injured, and at least 62 killed, on the bloodiest day of Egypt’s January Revolution.

Today, artists Shady El Noshokaty, Magdi Mostafa, and curator Aida Eltorie are preparing to honor Basiony’s life and career by re-staging his 2010 work, “30 Days of Running in the Space,” at the Egypt Pavilion in this year’s Venice Biennale. The historically conservative Egyptian Ministry of Culture’s acceptance of El Noshokaty’s proposal to celebrate Basiony’s work is a deeply poignant, and highly political, move.

When the Egyptian monarchy was overthrown and the nation was officially rid of the British colonial presence in 1952, one of the first acts taken by the freshly appointed President Gamal Nasser was to buy the land upon which the Egypt Pavilion would be built in Venice. The country’s representation in the prestigious Biennale was intended as a message that the newly independent nation was on the same playing field as the former colonial powers. And today, Egypt’s participation in the Biennale is symbolic of the most significant moment in the nation’s history since that Free Officer’s Revolt over 50 years ago.

Artist Shady El Noshokaty, a close friend and mentor of Basiony’s, spearheaded this project with the help of Eltorie and Mostafa. “30 Days” was first staged as part of the 2010 “Why Not” exhibition in front of the Palace of the Arts (a major state-run exhibition space close to the downtown Tahrir Square). In this cybernetic performance, Basiony dressed in a special self-designed sensory suit that monitored his vital signs and movements as he ran in place for an hour, computers simultaneously translating that data into colorful visualizations displayed on large screens behind him. The performance was repeated daily over 30 consecutive days.

For the Venice Biennale iteration, video footage from the performance will be projected onto a set of three screens. Two other screens will display random excerpts from raw footage of the demonstrations recorded by Basiony during the first days of the revolution. The experience not only pays homage to Basiony’s work, but also communicates the chaotic experience of the revolutionary moment, and the disorientation of the individual in a time of massive upheaval.

Magdi Mostafa’s role in the project is “as a partner to the artist, as someone who is really familiar with his work and the way he structures it. ... My role is to make a selection of the artist’s sound tracks and engineer them into a higher quality sound, put them in a multichannel format in the pavilion space, and then synchronize them as much as possible with the videos.” However, despite his familiarity with Basiony’s work, Mostafa initially declined to participate in the project.

To re-stage a performative artwork is always a fraught endeavor, and this particular piece is especially difficult. “It’s very emotional,” he told F Newsmagazine.

“It’s a very sensitive case. I can always feel him sitting next to me every time I play something of his work. I didn’t want to do it, but Basiony’s friends and family strongly recommended me to go ahead, because of our past successful collaborations.”

The two artists studied together at Helwan University and frequently collaborated, working together on projects like the award-winning “Madena” of 2007, as well as in the “Stammer” exhibition curated by El Noshokaty that same year. Mostafa told F that in his early years as an art student, it was rare to find others who shared his interest in sound installations and technological explorations. “It was such a good feeling to have a common interest between myself and another good artist,” he said. “Before collaborating with Basiony, I felt lonely in this career in Egypt. I could share a lot of ideas and thoughts with others, but not at a high level, like I could with him.”

When the January 25 revolution began, Mostafa and Basiony took to the streets together each day. Their initial goal was to take sound and video recordings of the demonstrations, but the artist says they would often forget the task at hand and get swept up in the protests themselves. January 28 was the last day they went to Tahrir Square together.

“We got lost from each other four times throughout that day, because of the crazy attacks of the police on us, but then we would find each other again,” Mostafa said. “But then I went up closer to the police lines, and he was in the back interviewing people with his video camera. It was so wild, the person next to me got shot in the back with a real bullet, and I was injured in my head and my arm, so I was bleeding like crazy. A girl and her father took me in their car back to my house, so [Basiony] was there alone, and I couldn’t

call him because the government had shut down the mobile connections.

“That was the last time I saw him. After I left, he went up to the front lines of the police to try to record a sniper who was on the top of the building [shooting into the crowd] with his video camera. The sniper shot him in the head with a rubber bullet so that he fell to the ground, and a police car smashed his ribs.”

The footage that Basiony recorded that day was never found.

For Mostafa, the very possibility of re-staging “30 Days” is of profound significance, both in terms of Egypt’s evolving political climate and in terms of what it means for practicing artists. “The project shows that the category of the ‘young artist’ isn’t valid anymore,” he said. “Basiony and I were rejected to represent Egypt in this same pavilion two years ago. But a good artist should now be able to represent his country or his generation without challenges from the curator.”

But even more than that, for Mostafa the true goal of restaging “30 Days” isn’t to glorify (or fetishize) the revolution, nor is it to highlight the personal relationships that he and his collaborators had with Basiony. Rather, “it’s about presenting this mind to the world, his experiments — it’s about this artist.”

To learn more about the artist, visit www.ahmedbasiony.com

The online radio station 100radio is currently dedicating its programming to the memory of Basiony. Visit www.100radio.com to hear electronic music and more by Magdi Mostafa as part of that tribute.

Tarnished

GUGGENHEIM
COMING TO A CITY NEAR YOU

Illustration by Albert Porto

by Protests

Guggenheim Foundation accused of using exploited labor to build their franchise in Abu Dhabi

By FRANCISCO ROSAS

New York has the original, Venice has one on the Grand Canal, it transformed Bilbao, and you can find it in Berlin. Las Vegas had one (but it closed and is moving to Lithuania). Things fell through when Guadalajara, Taiwan, Rio de Janeiro, and Hong Kong tried to get one, but Helsinki is still in talks to get a branch. And something as minor as artists' protests over workers' rights isn't going to stop Abu Dhabi from getting its own Guggenheim museum.

In March, a group of more than 130 artists, curators, and writers signed the Gulf Labor petition letter addressed to Richard Armstrong, the director of the Guggenheim Foundation. The petition states that signatories will boycott the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. "Our cooperation with the Guggenheim in Abu Dhabi (and, for many of us, at other Guggenheim locations) will not be forthcoming if the Foundation fails to take steps to safeguard the rights of the workers who will be employed in the museum's operations on Saadiyat Island," it proclaims.

The petition was organized by Beirut-born, New York-based artist Walid Raad and the Palestinian artist Emily Jacir. Both Raad and Jacir are in the Guggenheim's collection, and Jacir has had solo shows at the Guggenheim in New York. But that doesn't mean they're loyal to the institution. Raad told the New York Times that "artists should not be asked to exhibit their work in buildings built on the backs of exploited workers," and "Those working with bricks and mortar deserve the same kind of respect as those working with cameras and brushes."

Other well-known artists who have signed the petition include Shirin Neshat, Mona Hatoum, Akram Zaatari, Yto Barrada and Kader Attia. And it's not just Middle Eastern artists who signed the petition — internationally renowned artists Hans Haacke and Barbara Kruger also signed.

Slated for completion in 2015, the \$800 million Guggenheim Abu Dhabi will be 12 times the size of the Solomon R. Guggenheim in New York City. The government of Abu Dhabi is footing the bill for construction, but the museum will be managed by the Guggenheim Foundation. The Foundation is attempting to build a collection for the new museum, with a focus on contemporary Middle Eastern Art. But buying a collection is going to be difficult if artists are unwilling to sell to the museum.

The Tourism Development &

Investment Company (TDIC) is the Foundation's partner in building the new Guggenheim. TDIC was established in 2006 to "deliver to the highest standards and meet the needs of a rapidly growing tourism industry," and as part of that mission, TDIC is also overseeing several cultural behemoths being built in the Saadiyat Cultural District development in Abu Dhabi. All these institutions were designed by starchitects: the Zayed National Museum by Norman Foster, the Performing Arts Centre by Zaha Hadid, the Louvre Abu Dhabi by Jean Nouvel, and the Guggenheim by Frank Gehry. The New York Times claimed that the Emiratis are "using architecture and art to reshape their national identities virtually overnight." But meeting this

report saying they would do two things. One, they would create "a robust independent monitoring program," which would also publish public reports. Two, they would begin to "contractually require all contractors to reimburse workers for any recruitment fees." But last month's petition begs the question whether either of these things have actually happened. The foundations for Gehry's museum are now almost done, but the issue of workers' rights has still not been resolved. In response to the Gulf Labor petition letter, Human Rights Watch's Middle East director, Sarah Leah Whitson, declared, "If the Guggenheim and TDIC fail to address the artists' concerns, the museum may become better known for exhibiting labor violations than art."

the workers building the Saadiyat Island site could be protected. And beyond Saadiyat Island, TDIC is responsible for developments all over Abu Dhabi. The pressure created by this one petition has the ability to change workers' rights across the entire state. Behold the power of artists!

It's a good time for the petition — the world has its eye on this part of the world because of the political turmoil and civic unrest in the Jasmine Revolution. This creates a media platform for these artists' voices to be heard. Their petition is a testament to the potential impact artists can have on issues unrelated to the arts, issues like labor practices. The political potential for art has long been debated, but this example shows that the artist's role in society can be a force to be reckoned with, and can be instrumental to change.

It would behoove the Guggenheim to institute ways of improving workers' rights and be transparent about their efforts; otherwise, the new museum may not have artwork to display in its galleries. Is the Guggenheim being unfairly singled out? Perhaps, but unlike the neighboring Louvre, the Guggenheim actively engages living artists, and in the words of Walid Raad, "They need the artists' participation." Fortunately, living artists can be a lot louder than dead ones.

Buying a museum collection of contemporary Middle Eastern art is going to be difficult if artists are unwilling to sell to the museum.

"overnight" deadline may mean exploiting the people who build those high-profile destinations.

In Abu Dhabi, workers' rights aren't exactly a priority — building things fast is. To this end, migrant laborers are hired on the cheap, many from India and Pakistan. In 2009, Human Rights Watch (a watchdog organization that defends and protects human rights) issued a report documenting workers' rights abuses on Saadiyat Island. These include the practice of recruitment fees, which leave migrant workers deeply indebted, sometimes unable to even leave their jobs. These recruitment fees are supposed to be reimbursed to laborers, but rarely are. According to the Human Rights Watch report, there is a "nearly universal acceptance of this practice in the UAE." Contractors sometimes also retain workers' passports, preventing them from leaving the country.

In September 2010, the Guggenheim and TDIC had issued a joint statement in response to the 2009 Human Rights Watch

The TDIC responded to last month's Gulf Labor petition letter by announcing that a new internationally recognized consultancy will be appointed and announced by May 2011, and that they will publish the promised audit reports on an annual basis. Armstrong, the Guggenheim director, also defended the museum in an open letter, and said it "is firmly committed to working to protect the rights of individuals on the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Museum site." He believes their "work with TDIC has been instrumental in bringing about this progress."

The Guggenheim Abu Dhabi petition could be instrumental in bringing about wider reforms. If the Guggenheim is pressuring the TDIC to adopt safeguards to protect worker's rights, then perhaps those policies will be implemented in all TDIC developments. If policies are put into place and actually enforced, the workers of the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi won't be the only ones protected. The workers building the Louvre Abu Dhabi next door could be protected; all

On Leaving

An MFA student reflects

By ERIC BASKAUSKAS

A stress-free cow makes for a tasty steak. They leisurely round curve after curve until, suddenly, they are decapitated. In contrast, here at SAIC they set you up on a straight-line death march toward the end.

It's funny. I ditched the working world to come to graduate school so I could avoid feeling like a piece of machinery for a couple of years. I guess it worked, but I must admit that the MFA Thesis Exhibition 2011 installation has left me feeling like I just got churned out of a meat grinder.

That sounds worse than it really is. In fact, it's a very efficient and relatively painless meat grinder. All people involved in the exhibition process were incredibly pleasant and helpful, from the exhibition staff, to the Media Center folks, to the security guards, and everyone in-between and beyond. As expected with any huge production, I observed plenty of difficulties, but as far as I can tell, each was resolved calmly and effectively. It's a product of

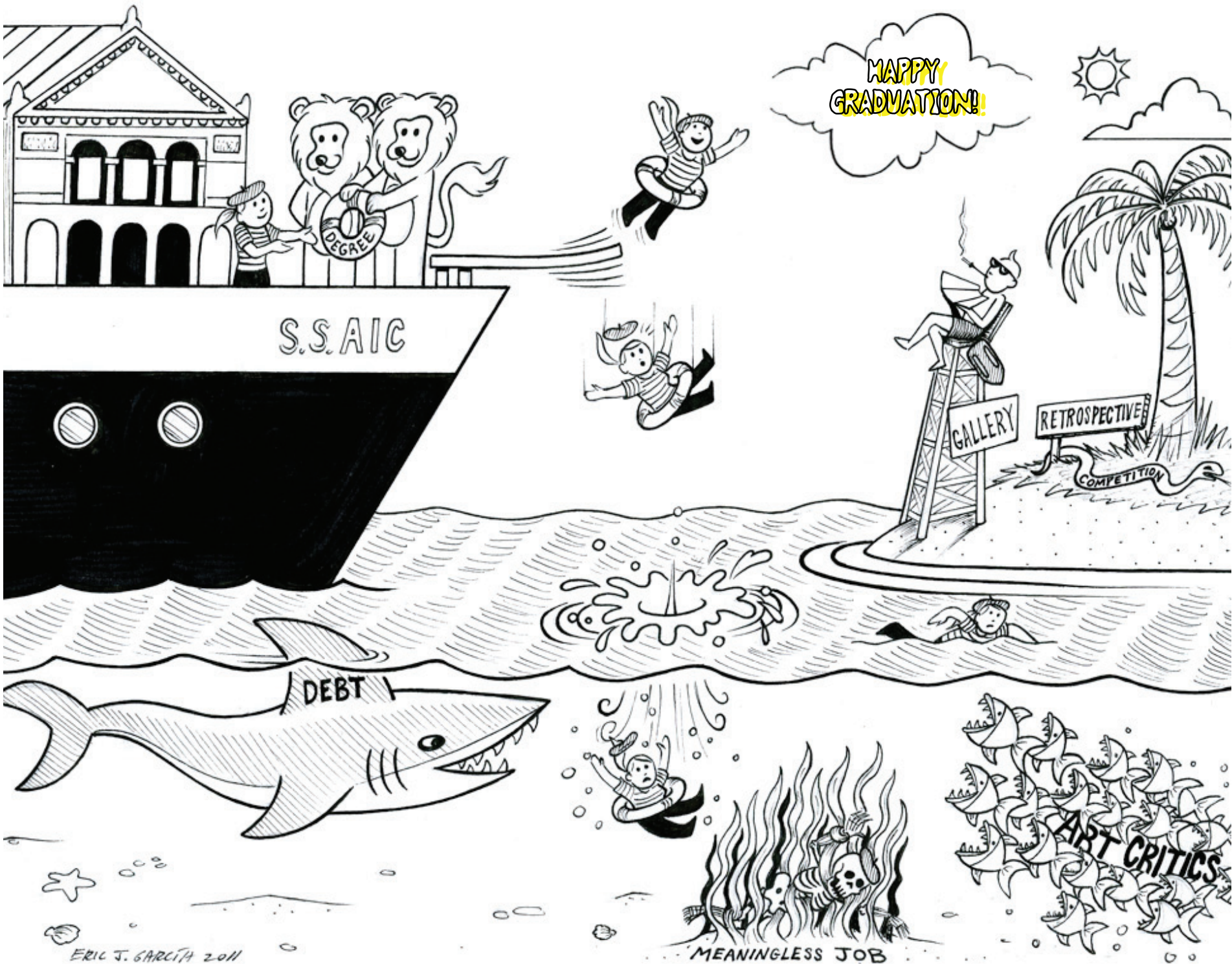
the fact that they do this every year, and that by the time we're done installing I'm sure they're already looking toward next year's show. Hence the feeling of being processed. It's a privilege to get chewed up and spit out by such a well-oiled machine.

But if the MFA show is the meat grinder, then the School itself is the slaughterhouse, and I've got a bone to pick. Have you heard of those curved pathways for the cows? They make them that way at the stockyards so the cows can't see the blood-curdling instruments of death that await them at the end of the line. A stress-free cow makes for a tasty steak. They leisurely round curve after curve until, suddenly, they are decapitated. In contrast, here at SAIC they set you up on a straight-line

death march toward the end. "MFA show" this and "Thesis" that. I understand that the whole reason we undertake graduate study is to produce a thesis, sure, but I think that the emphasis on final production has a paralyzing effect on a good number of the graduate students I've talked to in line. Around here, "What are you doing for the thesis show?" is a question far more common than "What are you researching?" I think that can dampen the exploratory spirit and make us feel, once again, like machines.

Fortunately, the clean exhibition process gets rid of much of the anxiety, and keeps us from running around like headless chickens.

You can't have your burger and be it too.



Comic By Eric Garcia

Lecture Roundup

By TARA PLATH, STAFF WRITER

From Japan's tsunami to pop-art inspired history paintings, April's on-campus lecture scene featured a dynamic group of speakers. Talking to students about everything from their practice to broader issues in art criticism, here's a look at some of the lectures that were delivered this past month.

Wangechi Mutu ends VAP on a High Note

The last lecture in this year's Visiting Artists Program had an enormous turnout on Tuesday, April 12. Every seat of the Columbus Auditorium was occupied by students, faculty and the general public, all eager to hear the words of collage and video artist Wangechi Mutu. Dean Lisa Wainwright opened the night with emphatic words about her encounter with Mutu's work in a Chelsea gallery, noting that Mutu's ability to "blend the real with the unreal remains uncanny, never failing to mesmerize and bewitch. And I was bewitched."

"If I seem nervous, it's because I am," Mutu immediately confessed upon taking the stage. The lecture and presentation that followed showed Mutu's collages, sculptures and videos, woven together with quotes from the people who inspired her most and some of the violent imagery she draws from in her work.

Throughout the evening, Mutu confronted the audience with images that were hard to swallow: mass graves filled with the bodies of Holocaust victims, African children missing hands, mothers protesting their children's imprisonment by baring their skin to disarm soldiers. Mutu's decision to show these photographs — as well as the duration of time she required the audience to sit with each image — seemed carefully calculated. Her own familiarity with the images and their history provided insight into the sometimes grotesque nature of her own work.

In her work, Mutu's depictions of the female form are composed of clippings from fashion magazines, National Geographics, old anatomy books and iconic images of Africa, each investigating fictitious symbols created by the media. Lips and legs from fashion editorials, breasts and thighs from pornography, and bright colored African garments and masks are unabashedly layered in such a way that they develop their own unique fictions — alien characters emerge, complete in their form and attitudes, squatting on the page.

Mutu's lecture seemed thoughtfully aimed at the art school audience, as she addressed material, process, and life after art school. Her decision to work in collage was "entirely practical," she explained. A lack of space and lack of resources when living in New York City after completing her MFA at Yale led her to create small works from found materials as a way of "reinventing herself" without the safety and support of the institution. Her long list of inspirations was enlightening — Eartha Kitt, Grace Kelly, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Sun Ra, the scientific photos measuring the proportions of African faces, and the newsstand, which she described as "one of the best fecal samples, the DNA of our society." Mutu's presentation of her work was articulate, illuminating, and in the words of Wainwright, "grotesquely delicious." Overall, a great way to end the Spring 2011 season of Visiting Artists Program.

Chicago artist and U of C professor Doug Ischar talks photography at a Parlor Room lecture

Doug Ischar stood before a small audience at SAIC on April 19 as part of the Photography Department's Parlor Room visiting artist program. He has taught in the Photography Department at the University of Illinois at Chicago since 1990, and his first body of photographs was shown in its entirety at Golden Gallery in 2009. This group of photos depicts young gay men sprawled across the Rocks, seemingly comfortable and relaxed; but "we were in the midst of a nightmare — the historical AIDS epidemic," Ischar reminded his audience.

It was clear that Ischar's emotions are deeply embedded in his work, as both a photographer and as a gay man. Regarding his second body of photographs, taken at the San Francisco bar, The Eagle, Ischar described the scene for the audience: "It was a type of environment where I'd spent countless hours and met countless men." Although the artist imbued his presentation with his own poetic narrative, Ischar quickly grounded his work with personal humor and sentiment, verbally captioning one photograph of a man with a piercing stare as "exactly the type of guy I was cruising and fucking at the time."

Ischar also showed footage from several of his video installations, explaining each piece one by

one before showing them consecutively. The works were difficult to absorb, but one piece in particular stood out: "Off Limits" was an X-ray fluoroscope of the inside of a locked box given to Ischar by a friend who had passed away. Inside the box the X-ray slowly and methodically revealed porno mags, titty clamps, and keys to the box — a series of images that were detached, yet voyeuristic.

The final works Ischar showed were videos completed in 2008 and 2010. The first, titled "brb," was composed of an AOL conversation that read like subtitles across blurry footage taken from a moving car. The conversation between Ischar and another man was extremely intimate and almost uncomfortable to read in a public forum, with one man wishing to be with the other, to "lick your tears, suck your dick." The video matched the conversation's pace, ending painfully slowly with several good byes, "hugs," a "smooch," and semicolon winks.

Ischar was nearly unable to end the barrage of questions asked at the end of the night: "Keep it comic, c'mon!" he pleaded. He was as honest and straightforward as possible, but still perhaps a bit too deeply embedded in his work to go as far as the audience may have wanted.



Dexter Dalwood speaks about death and dystopia at VAP Lecture

Dexter Dalwood spoke about his work to SAIC students and faculty at a Painting and Drawing Visiting Artist lecture on April 5. In a casual lecture and slideshow of his own work, Dalwood displayed a body of paintings and collages spanning over 20 years. Painting professor Terry Myers introduced Dalwood’s paintings as having a “packed fullness” that “begs us to take the bait.” Before diving into a discussion of his work, Dalwood shared that he played bass guitar for the 1970s punk rock band, The Cortinas. Curiously, this information led into his first slide, which was an iconic photograph of Andy Warhol in his Factory. Through his interest in punk and the Velvet Underground, Dalwood was led to Warhol, in whom he was admittedly less interested than he was in The Factory. This

time period. His compositions integrate iconic figures from pop culture as well as specific references to paintings from the Old Masters. “Jimi Hendrix’s Last Basement” places the viewer at a high and awkward angle, looking down and across the room at a bed and Morris Louis-inspired carpet. “Brian Jones’ Swimming Pool” — an homage to the late Rolling Stones star who was found dead at the bottom his swimming pool — references a Clifford Still painting with a flat blue shape against the interior walls of the pool. The cultural references go on and on, with “Jackie Onassis” — a depiction of Jackie O’s yacht — as well as “Robert Mapplethorpe’s First Loft,” and “Kurt Cobain’s Green House.” Dalwood’s more recent work only gets darker. He explained that he was interested in things

“You walk by the old masters and you think they’re dead, they’re dead, they’re dead, they’re all dead.” — Dexter Dalwood

intriguing space around Warhol was the impetus for an ongoing body of work that explored spaces in which things did, or did not, happen. The continued exploration of the potential of space began when Dalwood was “vaguely depressed” and could only paint the corner of his room, as it was in his direct line of vision from where he laid in bed. Over the next two decades, the spaces Dalwood portrayed evolved into fictive cluttered stages with titles such as “Sharon Tate’s House,” “Bill Gates’ Bedroom,” and even an early, abstracted — but easily recognizable — painting of the interior of the Starship Enterprise (the artist admitted he was once a “space-race-nerd-kid”). For the most part, his paintings omit figures. “Occasionally I put a figure in,” he explained. “I don’t like the idea of the figure working as the protagonist.” Dalwood calls his pieces history paintings. His subjects are rooted in historical calamities while his style relates to, or directly copies, art from the same

such as the very moment when something shifts from “real events to descriptions within fiction,” how utopias turn into dystopias, or the second when Lenny stops talking about the life he and George will live and pulls the trigger of a gun in “Of Mice and Men.” “All painting is about death in a way,” said Dalwood. “You walk by the old masters and you think they’re dead, they’re dead, they’re dead, they’re all dead.” In the course of an hour, dozens of murdered celebrities, modernist painters, and other influences were listed — not excluding Kanye West’s new album and the rapper’s “deep understanding of appropriation.” Dalwood unleashed a refreshing, humorous account of his process and interests, as well as his dislikes. “You’ve got to know what you hate. I think hating is something positive. ... I love painting, but I also hate all sorts of shit I see.” But in the end, the artist didn’t hesitate to proffer a bit of hope. “You make what you want to see.”

Physics teacher Kathryn Schaffer attempts to cool students’ fears with presentation on the recent catastrophe at Japan’s Fukushima Nuclear Plant

More than two dozen students and faculty gathered on March 21 to learn more about the Fukushima Nuclear Plant, whose radiation emissions are causing a crisis in both Japan and around the world. Schaffer, a physics teacher at SAIC, hoped to quell people’s fears by giving them a better understanding of the scientific terminology in the media. Using a slide show that she admittedly reduced to the simplest form of a physics lesson, Schaffer explained exactly what radioactive material is: a “lump of stuff emitting particle radiation.” Schaffer seemed most interested in giving students the tools to understand that, while the situation in Japan is serious, the language and images used by the media could lead to sensationalized ideas of nuclear reactions. Explaining just how radioactive material was released by the earthquake, Schaffer shared that after an 9.0 magnitude earthquake and tsunami devastated Japan’s northeast coast on March 11, four nuclear reactors lost power when they were flooded by the giant waves. The loss of power caused the reactors’ cooling systems to fail, which led to the overheating of the fuel rods in the core, as well as adjacent spent fuel pools. The reactors were flooded with seawater in a desperate attempt to cool the rods, which, if not cooled, would produce hydrogen and an incredibly dangerous explosive situation. Explosions have already blown off the outer shells of some of the reactors, but the primary concrete containers that hold the fuel rods have not been extensively damaged. While recent reports of evidence of radioactive material in the United States have renewed fears that we might also be at risk for exposure, Schaffer effectively broke down images and information

presented in the media, assuaging concerns and decoding scientific jargon. Referencing harrowing photographs that have gained popularity through Internet circulation — such as small children being scanned for radioactivity, or a quarantined daughter speaking to her mother through foggy glass — Schaffer explained that these people’s health is most likely not at risk. Despite the seeming severity of radiation exposure, slight contact with radioactivity can be easily addressed with a shower. An hour was certainly not enough to cover the wealth of complicated material Schaffer had prepared, and unfortunately, she had to skip several slides of her presentation in order to cover the most pertinent material. A quick question and answer session revolved around students’ own interests in being able to accurately gauge their safety if such a catastrophe were to happen here in Illinois, the state with the most nuclear reactors in the U.S. While Schaffer debriefed attendees about varying levels of potential exposure and nuclear threat, it was a humbling experience to have so many individuals gathered in response to crisis — even if it was to debunk how the earthquake potentially threatens the U.S.

If you’re interested in supporting the Japanese relief effort, check out this SAIC-sponsored event:

May 9: “First Thursday” event, 4:30 — 6 p.m. in the MacLean Ballroom. Details TBD. Keep checking fnews-magazine.com for more information about this event.

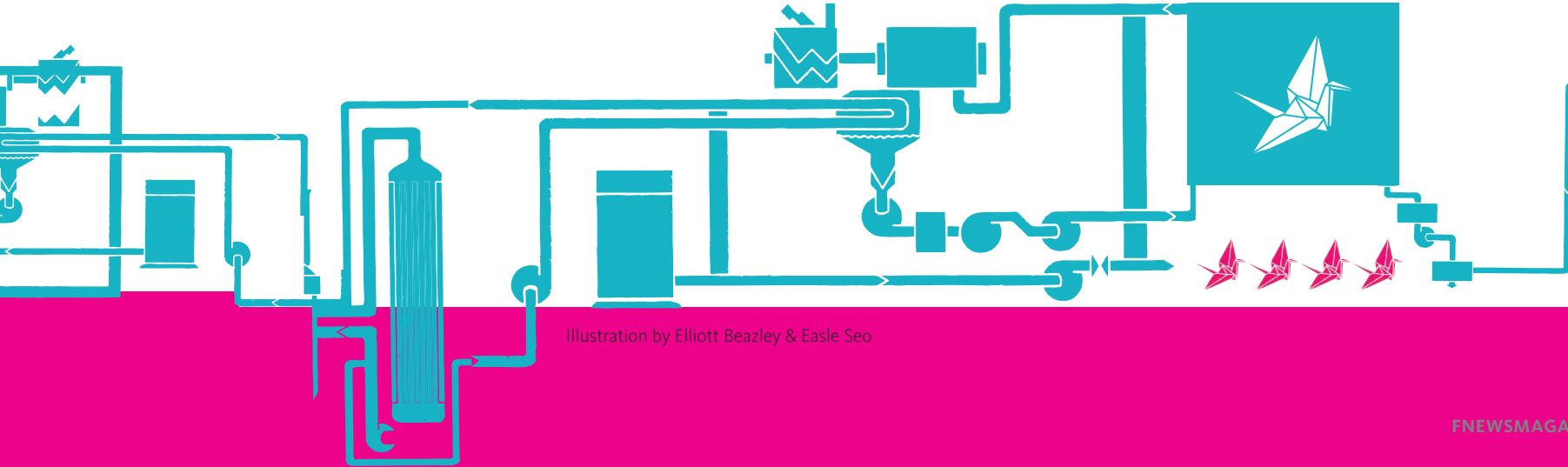
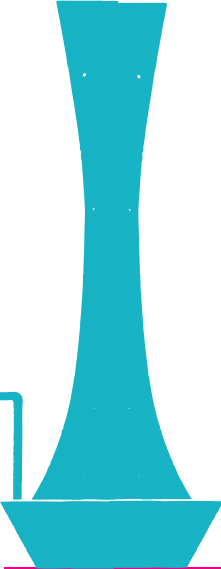


Illustration by Elliott Beazley & Easle Seo

Turning Warehouses into Studios

Chicago locals respond to the city's plans for a new creative district



Photos by Alli Berry

By MIA DIMEO

Chicago's ambitious plan for the development of four near-south warehouses could significantly impact Chicago's creative economy. Poised on the river between Chinatown and Pilsen, this small area is the city's most intact grouping of early 20th-century industrial waterfront buildings, linked to the rest of Chicago by a period lift bridge (the last of its kind in the city). It used to be called the Spice Barrel District, a name taken from the former life of one of its historic structures, a spice importing and processing company. Today, it's being rehabbed and re-branded by the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs as the Cermak Creative Industry District. The DCA has begun looking for consultants on the project, which has a yet-to-be-determined timeline and an estimated cost of over \$100 million dollars that will be covered by rent, private investments, and grants.

Planners hope to encourage all industries under the broadly-defined "creative" umbrella by providing practical accommodations to meet the various needs of graphic designers, dancers, and

any other artists in the applied, performing, and visual arts. The Cermak Creative Industry District is devoted both to the historic preservation and revitalization of the Cermak corridor, and to providing new outlets and opportunities for artists of all kinds; but as *New City* editor Jason Fournberg pointed out in a 2010 article that strongly supported the project, "galleries and studios will be just a small fraction of the big picture, if at all." That is, the goal of the district is to encourage new businesses of many kinds (from graphic design studios to cafes) as much as it is to support artists.

Cultural activity is nothing new to these buildings, some of which have been inhabited by artists and their studios, legally and illegally, for several decades. But according to Barbara Koenen, cultural planner for the DCA, such activity couldn't flourish until the city got involved. Cultural historian Tim Samuelson, Koenen's husband, acquired landmark status for the buildings in 2006, saving the 800,000 square feet of space from an uncertain fate and paving the way for the initial planning stages. "Because they are landmarked, their character has to be preserved, and some conventional industry might have

wanted to change them or tear them down to build something else. Now they can't, and the city is working on changing the zoning to accommodate what the arts and culture industry needs," Koenen told *F News* magazine.

Koenen, who is also the director of the Chicago Artists Resource website and an artist in her own right, points out that it's very early to be discussing specific details about the process. "It's a formal urban planning process, as opposed to other creative districts in the city that are the visions of individuals or groups, like the Zhou brothers or the Podmajerskys," she says. "Hopefully we can mirror the successes of those visions and expand on their limitations." Koenen added that she felt the Cermak Creative Industry District could only benefit the other arts districts in Chicago.

It might be early, but things are already moving along. Last summer, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Mayor's Office of City Design awarded the project a grant to help with the research and planning phases. In February, the DCA conducted the Creative Chicago Survey with part of the grant money to improve their understanding of the range of

creative activity in the city, and to "foster creativity in terms of space, programs and other assistance."

An important part of the plan is the incorporation of arts incubators to help small-business start-ups. "[The term] 'creative industry' [implies] that it's a business model and that financial transactions are taking place, so it's not envisioned as being a place where people are subsidized to do whatever they want," Koenen says. "It's job creation and economic development. Incubator projects will be there to help individuals create things that can be bought or sold, so that will exclude some types of practice."

CREATIVE INDUSTRY ABROAD: POTENTIAL MODELS FOR CHICAGO

Adelheid Mers (Professor of Arts Administration at SAIC) explains that funding for the arts is a balance that involves the complex interconnectedness of many factors. "The arts cannot be streamlined across the board to be profitable as other businesses can, and they need to be subsidized if their continued presence is desired," she says.

The future of Cermak could look something like the Cable Factory in Helsinki, Finland, one



Graphic by Patrick Jenkins



“Instead of saying that ‘the arts are good for society,’ now the tenet is ‘creativity is an economic good.’” —Adelheid Mers

example of an arts district subsidized by a major city. Museums, galleries, theaters, ateliers, and an event space for concerts make up this creative center, within a political and social environment for artists that is unlike that in the United States. “Artists have a strong voice in how state funds are being allocated, which also means that they have to be willing and able to participate in those negotiations,” Mers says. But, “as public funds are currently being cut in Europe, it is becoming clear that there is no philanthropic tradition to make up for losses.”

Mers notes that, in contrast, the U.S. market economy relies heavily on philanthropy and artists’ continued willingness to contribute their labor. Even limited use of tax monies for the arts is heavily contested, and Cermak appears to be “an effort to create a mutually constitutive environment, similar to something countries with large public sectors can produce, for example in Helsinki, by convincing the stakeholders — building owners, politicians, artists, and larger entrepreneurs — to work together.”

In China, Beijing’s 798 Arts District is a celebrated example of turning an under-utilized industrial relic into a revitalized area

of the city, cultivating a post-Mao era explosion of contemporary art and culture. However, Mers says that, in reality, the district has “no real non-profit structure and only limited entrepreneurial opportunities, and is entirely controlled by the state. As Ai Weiwei’s recent arrest reminds us, while Chinese artists have been allowed access to Western markets, they still have no voice. To allow artists to temporarily work in a beautiful, disused factory is not a model. It is a short-lived façade.” The district has also barely averted closure and demolition because of the rising cost of real estate and the rapid development of the city.

A FUTURE SOHO? CHICAGO ARTISTS RESPOND TO THE PLAN

Industry adds an important element to the arts and cultural economies, says Mers, and she notes this shift in how society thinks about art. “Instead of saying that ‘the arts are good for society,’ now the tenet is ‘creativity is an economic good,’” she points out. Artists here in Chicago understand this tension first-hand.

Edmund Chia, SAIC professor and founder of the artist-run space PERIGRINEPROGRAM in the Riverfront Work Lofts in the

Cermak district, sees promise in any effort that will create a new pocket of creative workspace in the city. However, he’s realistic about the city’s directive. “Foot-traffic numbers and tenant counts present only one kind of ‘success.’ At the individual level, there are creative workers who need space more than they rely on walk-in customers,” he told F. “A live/work situation is very different than one [that is] work-only, and a solely commercial zone will only attract businesses that can thrive there. In an ‘organically’ developed zone, creative workers find their own level and position.”

Arts Administration student Katie Fahey (MA ’11) is writing her thesis on arts districts and has researched Cermak and other areas like it around the globe. “The economic return on investment is really more than ever being emphasized in undertakings of this nature, [and] there is the danger that this project could turn into a tourism-focused, commercial district. But hopefully it won’t,” she says.

And Koenen emphasizes that although a new, burgeoning cultural center in Chicago will draw visitors, tourism is not the central goal. “Navy Pier is for tourism — this is about giving people a place to work and make things,” she says.

Still, Fahey sees a possibility that Cermak could precipitate a shift towards an economy-driven, “displaying” kind of arts district, as opposed to a place that fosters creative development, experimentation, and production. “I think there needs to be a sense of not necessarily sustainability, *per se* (because that implies a stagnation in culture), but a balance in growth,” she says.

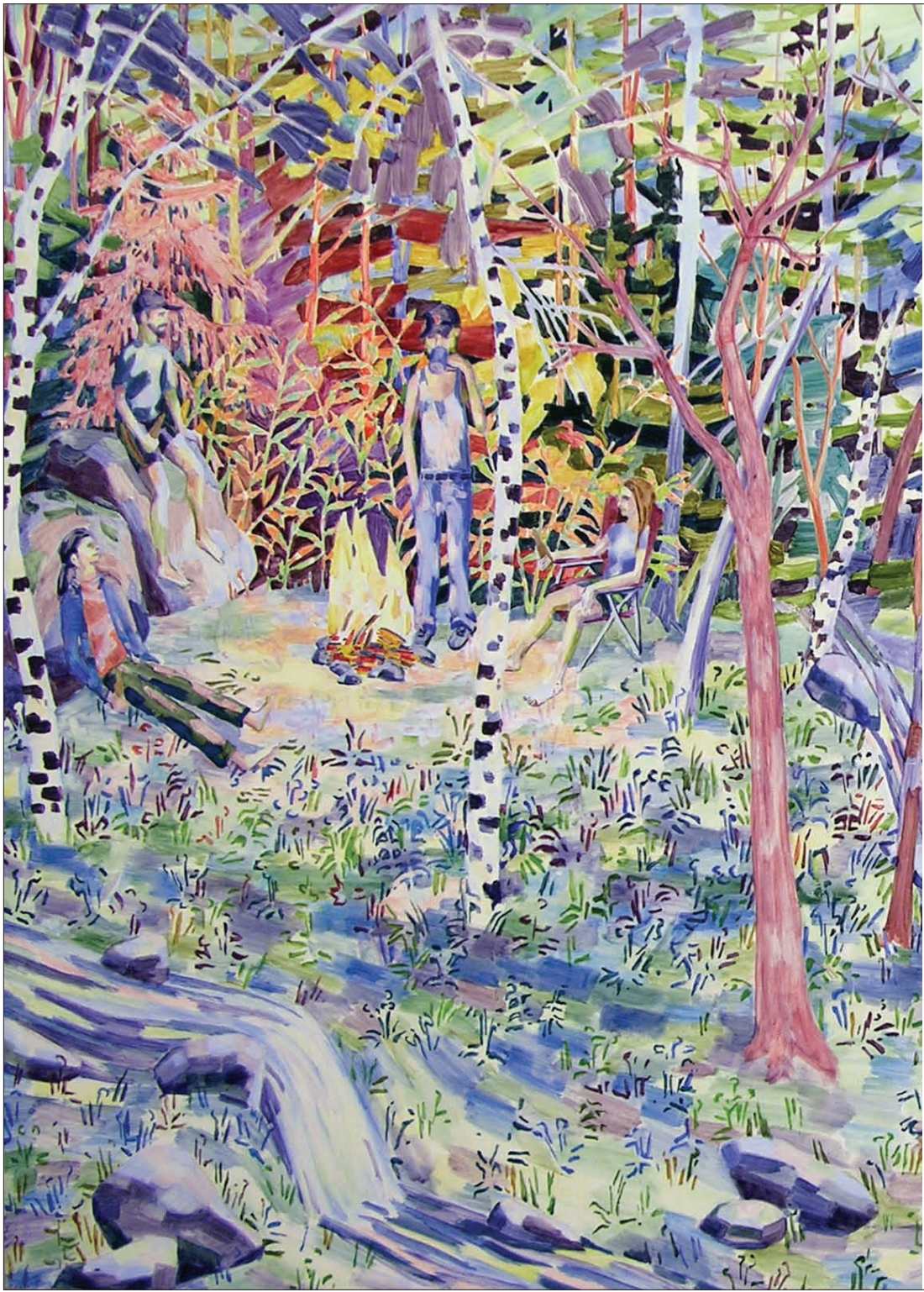
As an artist that runs his own gallery space, SAIC student Dave Sharma welcomes the development, but is cautious as to what it will mean for young artists 10-15 years from now. “Creating low cost spaces is definitely positive for artists and developers. However, artists have historically established these neighborhoods only to be priced out during times of redevelopment and economic

growth, and become victims to gentrification,” he says. “The whole project could potentially be used by developers to create a community, create occupancy and revenue, only to be flipped and sold to another developer when the cultural equity has been built.”

There’s a prime example of this type of failure very close by to the Cermak Creative Industry District site. The Pilsen neighborhood’s Podmajersky arts district has left 18th Street little more than a stretch of empty storefronts that were once filled with galleries and studios. UIC Professor Daniel Sauter is the last tenant in his live/work space in Pilsen, and is planning to relocate shortly. “By not paying property tax for vacant buildings, the developer can ‘afford’ to artificially direct rental level in a monopolistic manner,” he told F Newsmagazine. “The fact that there are only Podmajersky buildings in the 18th Street area, and the heavy-handed approach by the developer to keep it that way, is the reason that this is a privatized marketing effort more than an artist-driven district.”

Sauter has high hopes for Cermak and its position as a counterpart to Chinatown and Pilsen. He believes that, as a city-supported vision that carefully considers infrastructure, Cermak would dynamically impact surrounding areas as well. “A vision that considers price/rent development long-term would send the right signal in regards to commercialization, and protect non-profit and small business creative industries,” he says.

Fahey hopes that the project will address Chicago’s oft-discussed problem of “MFA graduate flight.” “While many artists are educated in Chicago, they leave when they’re done,” she says. “Those artists, who are no longer affiliated with an institution, need access to equipment and studio space. If the city serves that need, they might succeed in retaining a solid base of artists who not only will continue to contribute to the creative vitality of the city over time, but will also feel a sense of loyalty to place.”



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Rumble in Humboldt Park

As Humboldt Park residents hold hearings to stop a corporate pawn shop from moving into their neighborhood, Rumble Arts Center is thrust into the spotlight.



All photos courtesy of Rumble Arts Center.

By JENNIFER SWANN, WEB EDITOR

In mid March, Humboldt Park residents received notification that a new business had applied to fill the vacant storefront (formerly Ten Human Performance Center) at 3201 W. North Avenue. That business is Cash America, a corporate-owned chain of pawnshops headquartered in Texas whose franchises are operated throughout the city of Chicago.

A town hall meeting was called in late March to discuss the implications of Cash America's proposed move into the neighborhood. Concerned community members pointed out that Aaron's Jewelry & Pawn Shop, a family-owned pawn shop that had been in business for over 17 years, was located just a block away from the proposed location of the franchise.

Aaron's Jewelry & Pawn Shop helps finance Rumble Arts Center, a multicultural community art space right up the street at 3413 W. North Avenue. Rumble Arts Center thus became the poster-child for the petition against the invasion of Cash America in a stretch of North Avenue that is already home to a slew of corporate chains who profit from low-income communities, like Western Union, Family Dollar, and McDonald's, to name a few.

Brook Woolf, Executive Director of Rumble Arts, said the issue was much larger than just Rumble Arts; it was an issue that could adversely affect the entire Humboldt Park community. On March 28, Rumble Arts issued a statement on their website cautioning that "if Cash America gains a foothold in Humboldt Park, it will set off a devastating chain of events that will result

in fewer financial, cultural, and educational resources for our community." Through their website, Rumble Arts asked for community support in the form of an online petition against Cash America's proposed new location. Though the petition is now closed, it had accrued nearly 1,000 signatures by mid-April.

A second town hall meeting on this issue was held on April 12 at the Humboldt Park Field House. This time, residents invited representatives from Cash America to hear their side of the story. But when the representatives presented their case in a slide show, they incorrectly spelled "Humboldt Park" without the letter d. Community members joked that if a business couldn't even correctly spell the name of a neighborhood, how could they expect to move into it and provide a positive impact?

For Woolf and Rumble Arts staff, Cash America's potential presence is only the latest hurdle in a series of setbacks faced by nearly all nonprofit organizations in Chicago. Woolf explained that 80 percent of available state and citywide grants got cut last year, and the remaining funds will get cut by another 80 percent this June. This leaves Rumble Arts with just 5 percent of the grant funds available to them just two years ago. If Aaron's Jewelry & Pawn Shop goes out of business after its competitor moves in, the resultant loss of funding for Rumble Arts would be all the more devastating.

One way Rumble Arts has been coping with a smaller budget is by merging their initiatives with other local nonprofits that share similar missions. "If [other nonprofits]

don't necessarily have the money but we have the space, and we don't necessarily have the market," Woolf explained, "[collaborating is a way] to bring in more people and expand our ability to reach a much larger crowd and space."

Since being founded in November 2008, Rumble Arts has partnered and shared resources with organizations like print-making cooperative Spudnik Press, Chicago Youth Center Centro Nuestro, C4 community counseling center, and most recently, Green Star Movement, an arts organization whose projects have included community-made murals and mosaics in Chicago's public schools.

Despite drastic losses of funding, Rumble Arts continues to offer 22 different art, dance, and music programs on a donation basis to the general community. "We're really trying to reevaluate what family means to people, to bring the families together and bring the community together," she said.

Woolf and the Humboldt Park community await the second and final hearing with the Zoning Board of Appeals on May 20 at City Hall, 121 N LaSalle Street. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

For more information about Rumble Arts, visit www.rumblearts.com. To tour the neighborhood and Rumble Arts Center, visit the photo galleries on www.fnewsmagazine.com

SKEWL NEWZ TICKA...

Spring is a very sartorial season. In addition to SAIC'S FASHION 2011, which hits Millenium Park on May 5, SAIC fashion gurus are also earning a distinct web presence. Alum Anna Hovet (BFA '03) has been appearing in "So You Wanna Be A Designer," an online fashion reality series hosted by Kenmore that airs Tuesdays at 7 p.m. on Kenmore's Facebook page. Anna and her fabulous designs are still in the competition, so "like" Kenmore on Facebook (I know, it's awkward) and check her out.

An interactive demo combining poetry, sound and light allows viewers to fully experience Jan Tichy's "Cabrini Green Project" at the MCA. Synching poetry written by the area's inhabitants with a light display designed by Tichy and SAIC students, the demo allows you to watch as lights pulse to the rhythm of poems being read by their teen authors.

Looking to hook up with other SAIC students? No, me neither. But if you're bored some night, you should check out the University of Chicago's hook up site: eduhookups.com. Obviously inspired by Facebook, this poorly-designed (really, they should have called us) site allows you to connect with other people from your school with the purpose of, well, hooking up with them. We're one of the lucky Chicago schools that's just been added, so get your creep on and check it out.

Now on to a *real* source of merit: Congrats to Robert P. Workman, artist and SAIC alum, who has been nominated for the National Medal of Arts, the highest award given to artists and arts patrons.

And finally, F would like to extend its condolences to the friends, family and students of SAIC Faculty member Pat Hart, who passed away April 10. A well-known costume designer in the Chicago area, her work was a much loved staple in the Chicago theater scene. She and her creative energy will be missed.

ART NEWZ TICKA...

On April 3, artist Ai Weiwei was seized by Chinese authorities and continues to be held in an unkown location. The authorities claim the artist is under investigation for economic crimes, but Ai was only one of hundreds of artists, intellectuals, bloggers and activists who have been arrested throughout the month of April. Journalists speculate the crackdown is a proactive move to prevent the Middle East's Jasmine Revolution from igniting in China.

Speaking of the Middle East, yet another petition against alleged improprieties in the United Arab Emirates' art scene has been started (see our coverage of the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi in this issue). In April, curator Jack Persekian was summarily fired by the Sharjah Art Foundation from his six year-long post as artistic director of the Sharjah Biennial. Persekian was fired following complaints from the public over Algerian artist Mustapha Benfodil's installation "Maportaliche" (It Has No Importance), which included statements made against religious extremists by victims of rape. After his firing, other pieces on display in the Biennial were altered or removed (including a sound piece that interfered with hearing the call to prayer). Benfodil and curators Rasha Salti and Haig Aivazian have started a petition protesting Persekian's removal.

Closer to home, Midwest museums are still feeling the hurt of the economic downturn. The Minneapolis Institute of Arts just announced plans to get rid of seven full-time staff positions and three part-time jobs as part of their efforts to reduce annual spending by over one million dollars. Just two years ago, the institute let go 19 staff members for the same reason. Meanwhile, in Kentucky, the executive director and deputy director of the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft have announced that they will step down.

By ERIC BASKAUSKAS



A Box of Nice, Fresh Art

Abigail Satinsky talks about the Community Supported Art program

The project also opens up the possibility of owning artwork to people who may have never thought about collecting, and fights against the idea that art is only for the wealthy.



Conrad Bakker, "PRODUCE [Potato]," 2011. Photo courtesy of threewalls.



Sara Black, "Excerpts from a Demolition (The Palace at Dawn)," 2011. Photo courtesy of threewalls.

By INAYA YUSUF

Cities like Chicago that are on the periphery of the mainstream art market are always searching for experimental ways to explore economic development for the arts. As part of that search, threewalls gallery has adopted the model of community supported agriculture programs for their new collecting initiative, Community Supported Art (CSA). Shareholders in the program invest in an annual art subscription and, in return, receive six numbered and signed artworks over the course of three months.

The Portland-based non-profit Springboard for the Arts first spearheaded the CSA program. threewalls Director of Programs Abigail Satinsky told F Newsmagazine that she "thought Chicago would be a great place to do it, because we have an excellent community spirit [in the city]. We want to develop new and exciting programs to further expand opportunities for everyone. Reaching a new audience and helping them figure out how to support the arts is one of our on-going goals."

Satinsky and threewalls Executive Director Shannon Stratton curated a program of artworks by "a mixture of emerging and established artists ... [with] strong local, regional and national exhibition histories," said Satinsky. The 12 participating artists in the pilot year of the CSA are all regional, including Conrad Bakker, Sara Black, Edie Fake, Eric Fleischauer, Jesse Harrod, Jessica Labatte, Jason Lazarus, Laura Mackin, Aay Preston-Myint, Pamela Fraser, Steve Reinke and Dan S. Wang. The artists were each given \$1,000 and total creative freedom to create their artworks, with the only guideline that they must fit into artist Charlie Roderick's hand-crafted crates that were designed especially for the CSA.

"It has been a meaningful experience throughout," participating artist Sara Black told F Newsmagazine. "I am a sculpture and installation artist and my work is usually performance and time-based. Having threewalls invite me to become a part of this is a real honor, because I would not think that the type of work I do would be considered for a creation of multiples."

Unique projects such as CSA Chicago open up new distribution channels for the contemporary arts, and allow artists to make their practice more accessible and affordable. But it's not only for the benefit of the artists. The project also opens up the possibility of owning artwork to people who may have never thought about collecting, and fights against the idea that art is only for the wealthy.

"Given the economic situation in the last couple of years and the lack of funding, I feel that threewalls has been a lightning rod in the community and they set a tone for other organizations to find different ways to contribute," says fiber artist Jesse Harrod. "In the long run, it is important for us as both local and regional artists to help maintain spaces that support the arts community. At the end of the day, it is a win-win situation and we all benefit from the partnership."

Satinsky said that in future iterations of the program, she "would like to get more artists involved, have more money and more reach for it. I would hope that the project would grow and change every year. Keeping everything going is important. I feel great about the program and I don't see why it would stop. Once it has a life of its own, artist can utilize it as a platform." owning artwork to people who may have never thought about collecting, and fights against the idea that art is only for the wealthy.

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HOW TO PARTICIPATE

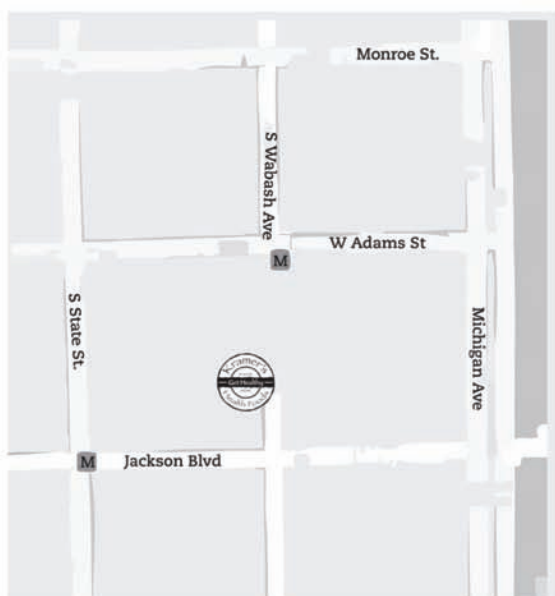
Each artist produced an edition of 51 pieces, 50 of which are available as part of the subscription program, and one of which was auctioned off during the CSA launch event on April 30.

For as long as artwork is available, subscribers can pay \$400 for a share and will receive a random selection of six artworks in a custom crate over a three-month period. For \$700, subscribers will receive a complete set of all 12 artworks.

Visit three-walls.org to learn more and subscribe.



Jesse Harrod, "Untitled," 2011. Photo courtesy of threewalls.



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Reframing Ourselves

“Construction of a National Identity” and “Police and Thieves” at Hyde Park Art Center

By NICOLE NELSON, STAFF WRITER

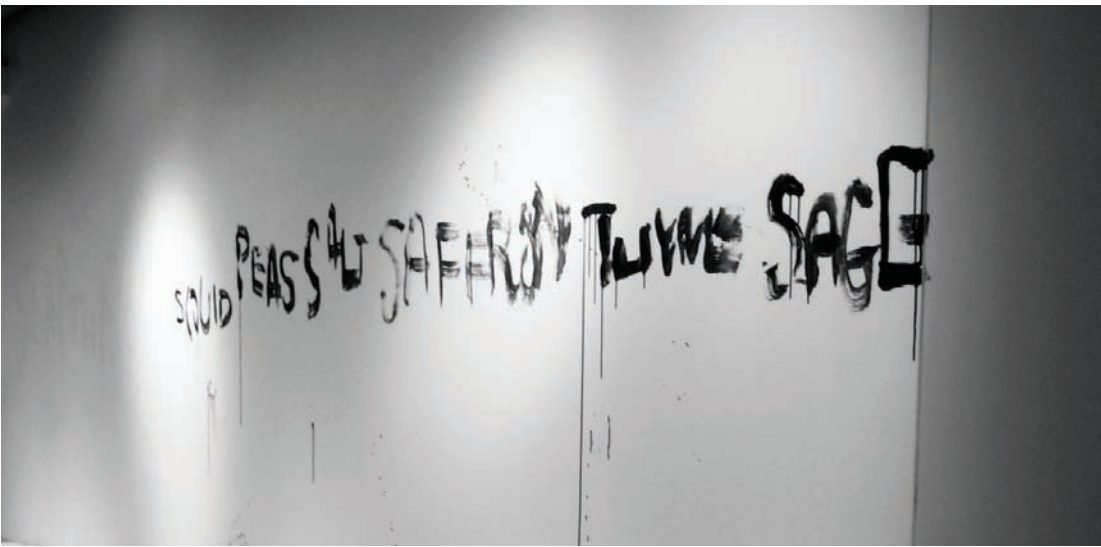
So much of identity is caught up in labels, in being included in one group and excluded from another. They separate “us” from “them.” They reduce the individual into something that is easily understood and digestible. But people are rarely so simple, as two shows currently on view at the Hyde Park Art Center suggest.

POLICE AND THIEVES

The exhibition “Police and Thieves” invites us to question the duality of law enforcement and criminal elements. The show takes its name from the reggae song by Juvin Murvin that tells of the struggle between cops and robbers. Though the show’s curators, Karla Diaz and Mario Ybarra Jr., are based in Los Angeles, “Police and Thieves” brings together artists from both L.A. and Chicago to explore this complex relationship in a variety of media including film, sculpture, photography, and drawing. The featured artists include Gusmando Cesaretti, Arnolando Vargas, Ben Stone, Ray Noland a.k.a. CRO, Meg Cranston, Amitis Motevalli, and the Los Angeles Poverty Department Collective, also known as LAPD.

The thematic core of the exhibit “Police and Thieves” is an exploration of the roles of hero and villain, and how easily the line between the two can be blurred. Both Los Angeles and Chicago have a colored history in relation to crime and law enforcement, providing plenty of material for the artists. The resulting work covers both ends of the spectrum from the absurd to the thought-provoking.

Chicago artist Ben Stone’s work falls on the more absurd side of that spectrum. His sculpture “Neighbor” brings to life the figure commonly known as “Boris the burglar” that graces neighborhood watch signs all across the country. We can immediately identify what the sculpture represents, but this symbol of lawlessness remains faceless and enigmatic — a mantle that anyone can assume. Arnolando Vargas takes the too-easily applied label of criminal even further with “Notice to Appear — Defendant’s Copy.” Black and white portraits of fresh-faced, normal-looking high school students are lined up with the police tickets they were issued, mostly for truancy. Labeling these teenagers as



Ray Noland a.k.a. CRO, “Officer Frugoli,” 2011. Photo courtesy of Hyde Park Art Center.

“Construction of a National Identity” and “Police and Thieves” invite us to question the snap judgments that we make about other people and the way we view ourselves.

criminals seems extreme.

Los Angeles Poverty Department’s contribution, a video titled “State of Incarceration,” presents a critical examination of the effect of prison on the convicted and those who watch over them. The group’s performers, some of whom have served time, are identified by their white t-shirts. Both the performers and the audience cram into a claustrophobic cell filled with wall-to-wall bunks. The video postulates that the inmates and correction officers each try to imagine what the other is thinking — an exchange that the LAPD acts out in a poetic, push-and-pull performance. The video ends with a soliloquy: “By the time you get out, you can’t forgive [the correction officers], you can’t forget them, but most of all, you can’t forgive yourself ... How do you move past so much rage?” It forces us to ask, who is truly responsible here?

“CONSTRUCTION OF A NATIONAL IDENTITY”

Another show at HPAC, Stephen Lapthisophon’s “Construction of National Identity” is an 80-foot long installation of found materials. Lapthisophon, who is of Thai and Irish descent and spent

many years in Germany and Italy, intends the installation to be a commentary on the fragmented nature of identity. The idea of construction is referenced in a literal way, through the use of scrap wood and platforms carefully situated along the length of the hall. Color, sound, food, and drippy, loose writing scrawled on the wall help to divide the space into what the artist calls “events.”

These events appeal to different senses, with visual, aural, and tactile stimuli. A wall painted with the word “night” in different languages is juxtaposed against a field of deep blue paint on the other side of the hall. A piece of brown paper left on the floor holds a small pile of rice — a grain that is a dietary staple in many different countries. Speakers provide an exotic soundtrack of bird cries, travel noise, news reports, and foreign language instruction tapes, repeating phrases in English and German.

The fractured nature of these events alludes to the fractured nature of identity, allowing the viewer to create her own interpretation of the offered material, drawing on the associations that are suggested by her own culture and experience.

Whether or not this experiment is entirely successful is uncertain. But Lapthisophon’s concept is compelling in the way it forces us to examine how we see ourselves in relation to the art — construction of meaning is not just the sole responsibility of the artist, but of the viewer as well.

“Construction of a National Identity” and “Police and Thieves” invite us to question the snap judgments that we make about other people and the way we view ourselves. And they show us that labels can be challenged and identity is fluid — and recognizing this is important for better understanding ourselves.

Stephen Lapthisophon,
“Construction of a National Identity”
Jan. 30 - May 22, 2011

“Police and Thieves”
Feb. 3 - May 29, 2011

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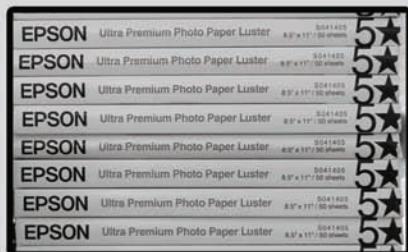
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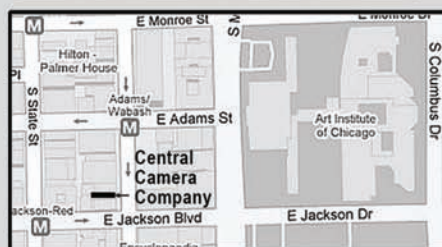
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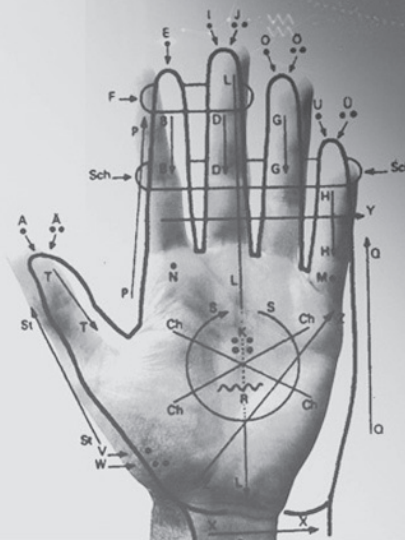
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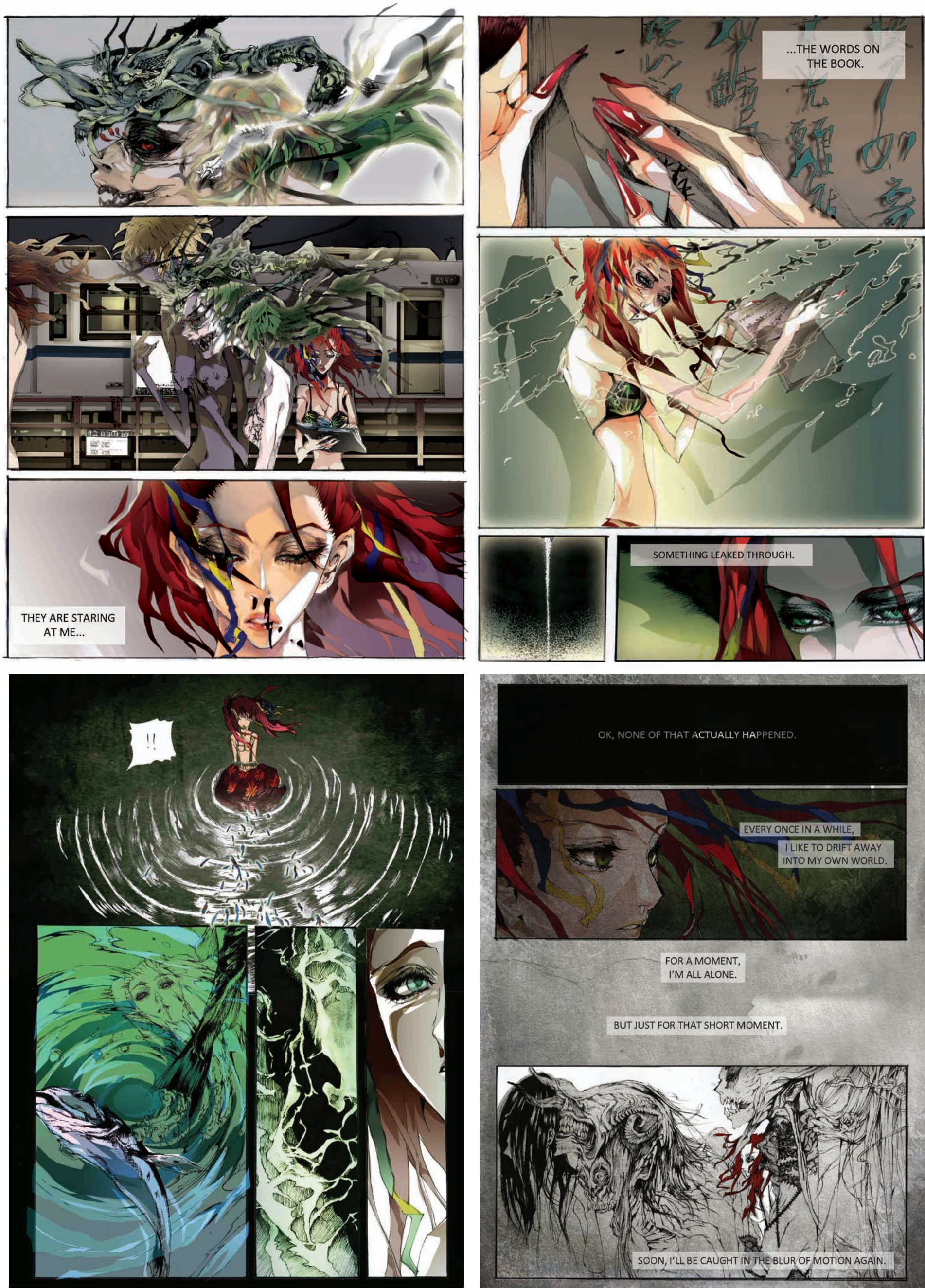


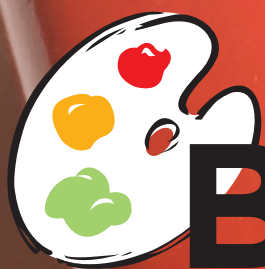
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