Contents

Vol. XIV, Fall 2014

The President's Letter ................................................................. 1

On Site with Catherine Peck .................................................... 2–5

Sweet Briar Alumnae in the Visual Arts .................................. 6–9

Students Explore Museum Internships .................................... 10–11

The “Big Night” in Guion Pond ............................................... 12

Art History Professor Maps the Middle Ages ....................... 13

The Studio Art Prize ............................................................... 14

The Writing Prize .................................................................... 15

News of the Collection ........................................................... 16–17

Membership News .................................................................... 18

The Acquisition Plan ............................................................... 19

Calendar of Exhibitions and Programs ................................. 20

The Acquisition Plan ............................................................... 21

On the Cover:

Please note that alumni news from those active in the visual arts—for example, your accomplishments in art history, art appreciation, studio art, design, architecture, art management, museum administration and the like—is always welcome for inclusion in issues of this newsletter. Please contact Karol Lawson at 434-381-6248 or klawson@sbc.edu.

The Friends of Art Vision Statement

The Friends of Art at Sweet Briar College actively supports the acquisition, preservation and presentation of the visual arts in service to education at the College and in the broader community. The Friends of Art recognizes both the benefits and joys that knowledge of the arts can bring to one’s life. It advocates study of the arts to develop understanding of the present and historical world and to foster a disposition to think critically and creatively.

Art Collection and Galleries Vision Statement

The regular study of original works of visual art is an invaluable component of a liberal arts education. The Sweet Briar College Art Collection and Galleries enrich the curriculum by providing an on-going opportunity for students and professors to examine and research significant paintings, prints, drawings, photographs, sculptures, and other works of fine art.

Friends of Art Board

President
Molly Sutherland Gwinn ’65
Treasurer
Barbara Hastings Carne ’69
Secretary
Melissa McKeen Kelchisian ’71
Members
May Carter Barger ’81
Elaine Loewen Boyd ’74
Margaret Hayes Brunstad ’72
Sigrid Zabel Carroll ’93
Susan Stephans Geyer ’74
Kathy Jackson Howe ’78
Reyhan Tasan Lurrie ’82
Linda Lipser ’73
Nancy Cail Lofin ’81
Elizabeth Way Leupold ’78
Chanty Clarke Miller ’04
Barbara Behrens Peck ’78
Deborah Schmidt Robinson ’81
Frances Anne Root ’80
Susan Stephens Geyer ’74
Sigrid Zirkle Carroll ’93
May Carter Barger ’81
Melissa McGee Keshishian ’71
Margaret Hayes Brunstad ’72
Elizabeth McKeen Kelchisian ’71
Visions re-editors
May Carter Barger ’81
Margaret Hayes Brunstad ’72
Melissa McKeen Kelchisian ’71
Visions designer
Nancy Blackwell Marion ’74

Designed and produced by The Design Group, Lynchburg, Virginia.

Visions Fall 2014

President’s Letter

The hot topic among college educators for the last few years has been the viability of online learning as a tool for making higher education accessible and affordable to more young people. The popularity of Massive Open Online Courses, or MOOCs, is due in large part to their digital format, readily available to anyone with an internet connection, and by extension, their disruption of the old knowledge delivery system, which required lecture halls, seminars and laboratories, and instructors in place. Students registered for MOOCs in overwhelming numbers, but it remains to be seen how many will complete the courses required for a degree and upon graduation, find a job in their field. While MOOCs satisfy our modern taste for innovation, our need for the next big thing in education, how can they replace the traditional model of face-to-face learning and research on campus?

The process of education at Sweet Briar, through real-time interactions and conversations between students and faculty members or hands-on research projects, has always been the focus of Friends of Art support. From the beginning, we believed in the value of making works of art from the Sweet Briar collection available to students as they mastered the histories and processes of art. Each spring students are invited to submit writing projects or studio works inspired by objects in the collection and the winners are recognized with cash awards, as well as publication in Visions. In addition, our support of experiential learning in the arts now includes a stipend for a summer internship at a museum, which this year was awarded to Alexandra Raifsnider ’15 for her work at the Pearl Buck historic house outside Philadelphia. Most recently students have had the experience of working with architect, sculptor, and alumna, Catherine Peck ’01, as she developed the concept of her environmental sculpture Uplift, now taking shape behind the library. The project has been undertaken by the Friends of Art in celebration of our 75 years as an organization and in honor of the newly renovated Cochran Library.

For us, MOOCs are no substitute for a Sweet Briar education as we know it, but the online classroom may prove effective in extending the reach of programs, not just in the arts, but across the curriculum, to underserved groups, for example, to students who cannot afford the cost of a four-year program; to members of other institutions such as community or neighboring colleges, who must fulfill a course requirement; to life-long learners, for whom continuing education adds richness and the challenge of new ideas. In short, the virtual classroom can open the door to the physical campus. And the eventual role of MOOCs may be as higher education’s most powerful marketing tool.

The possibilities for combined learning experiences are endless.

Over the years many Friends of Art have given generously of money and energy to build the collection and to establish programs in support of the arts. Our thanks to all of you. We hope that you will renew your membership and join us for the new ventures that lie ahead, as the nature of a college education becomes more diverse in a technologically driven world.

Molly Sutherland Gwinn ’65

Molly Gwinn at the Museum of Modern Art, summer 2014
Last summer the Friends of Art board announced an exciting new endeavor—the commission of a site specific sculpture to celebrate the renovation and enlargement of Cochran Library and to mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Friends of Art (Sweet Briar’s oldest such organization devoted to the enrichment of the student experience). After months of reviewing proposals and inviting a short list of candidates to campus—a process led by art gallery staff and professors from the art history and studio art departments—the project was offered to architect and designer Catherine Peek ’01 in the winter of 2014.

When Peek first introduced her concept for an environmental sculpture to a faculty committee last fall, she was certain about a very few features: the title, location, and its form as a series of small rolling hills and dells that mimicked the topography of the campus. She called her piece Uplift, in reference to an early 20th-century African-American women’s movement that promoted the advancement of families through faith, education, community, and hard work. She also intended the title Uplift, to refer to the rise and fall of the Blue Ridge surrounding campus. She foresaw the sculpture on the incline behind the Library where undulating forms would attract the attention of drivers approaching the heart of the campus. From the first her proposal incorporated functionality: the gentle waves of the sculpture would create a quiet spot for reading or conversation or an outdoor classroom easily accessible from the Library.

Since then, many details about Uplift have evolved as Peek has adjusted her vision in response to suggestions from students and faculty members, who explored placement of the sculpture so students would actually use it, and from campus engineers and groundskeepers, who helped guide decisions about infrastructure and materials. The process of collaboration, which was initiated when Peek visited Professor Tracy Hamilton’s Land as Art class this past spring, had been written into the project from the beginning. Candidates were asked in the original request for proposal for a commitment to a “process of discovery” wherein the artist would work closely with students and faculty on a concept that would evolve into the final work of art. For Friends of Art board members, underwriting the sculpture project was as much about creating a new opportunity for learning as it was about adding the first earthwork on campus, and a substantial addition to the College’s art collection.

The process of collaboration, which was initiated when Peek visited Professor Tracy Hamilton’s Land as Art class this past spring, had been written into the project from the beginning. Candidates were asked in the original request for proposal for a commitment to a “process of discovery” wherein the artist would work closely with students and faculty on a concept that would evolve into the final work of art. For Friends of Art board members, underwriting the sculpture project was as much about creating a new opportunity for learning as it was about adding the first earthwork on campus, and a substantial addition to the College’s art collection.

Collaboration is nothing new to Peek, whose day-to-day work as an architect and urban designer depends upon incorporating ideas from colleagues and patrons. Peek admits that she is particularly drawn to projects that
At its spring 2014 meeting the board elected five new members who bring to Friends of Art years of experience working on behalf of the College, supporting and managing arts organizations of all types, fund raising in the nonprofit sector, and teaching.

Susan Stephens Geyer ’74, Dallas, Texas
Linda Lipscomb ’73, Dallas, Texas
Elizabeth Wilkins Talley ’88, Richmond, Virginia

Friends of Art welcomes new board members

At its spring 2014 meeting the board elected five new members who bring to Friends of Art years of experience working on behalf of the College, supporting and managing arts organizations of all types, fund raising in the nonprofit sector, and teaching.

“Schools have a natural energy, playfulness and engagement that really resonate with my approach and style.”

involve campus learning spaces. She says, “Schools have a natural energy, playfulness and engagement that really resonate with my approach and style.” Her liberal arts background—at Sweet Briar she majored in mathematical physics, but also found time to work in the art studio with Professor Laura Pharis—exposed her to an array of disciplines, honed her communication skills, and most importantly, encouraged her to ask questions.

In April, when Catherine led students on a tour of the site, she heard lots of advice. For example, the sculpture should be moved closer to the new library terrace and perhaps be linked by a pathway, to make the hills more inviting. Students also offered their ideas about strengthening the aesthetics of the piece, notably that the hills or waves of green should be allowed to appear and disappear as they stretched across the site to enhance the scale of the sculpture against the library wall.

Designing the work’s specifics this summer, Peek used geological survey maps to take profiles of several ridges visible from campus. When the installation is finished, each row will stand on the shoulders of the preceding row, similar to women standing on the shoulders of preceding generations. In June, Peek enlisted the help of Library student workers to interact with a full-scale mock-up of the earthwork, which extended across 200 linear feet of plotting paper. Students found spots on the model that seemed to invite lounging, even without the ambience of lush grass and filtered shade.

On the same visit Peek was able to check the correspondence of her created landscape to the actual ridgeline of Amherst County as viewed from the top of the library.

Peek’s challenge in the last weeks of summer was researching the materials that will bring her concept to life, and this led to frequent conversations with Steve Bailey, an engineer and head of the College’s physical plant department, and master gardener Donna Meeks, head of the campus’s grounds staff. For example, from Meeks she learned that engineered soils designed for green roofs would be the most stable material to use as infill behind the retaining walls. Her former advisor, mathematics professor Steve Wassell, who has a long-standing interest in architecture, pressed Peek to use stone for the retaining walls that appear as the hills rise across the site, but for practical and budget reasons she opted for cast concrete. By chance, Peek gathered exciting information from a visitor to campus, an expert in historic restoration, who recommended an oxidizing paint that could be tinted to match the color of Virginia’s distinctive red clay and applied to the concrete. Now, Catherine is making final decisions about ground cover, and creeping thyme might be the solution—soft, fragrant, and easy to care for.

Work on the site will begin in September shortly after classes begin. Faculty members requested that Catherine wait for the students’ return so that they could observe and be involved with various aspects of the sculpture’s construction. Further, in practical terms, exterior work on Cochran Library will be finished by then and the exterior “canvas” ready for Peek’s vision to take form in autumn’s cooler weather. The artist is confident that work will be complete for the November 7 dedication of Cochran Library. Mark your calendars for the exciting unveiling of Uplift!
During the Friends of Art reception on Reunion weekend 2014, a graduate of the class of 2004 could be seen intently studying the placards, competing for the prize in the FOA scavenger hunt based on the exhibit Student, Teacher, Mentor, Friend: The Impact of Artists’ Relationships. Kate Lawson, a native of Chanhassen, Minnesota, armed with a degree in art history and international affairs and a minor in German, was going for the gold. What almost stumped her? A question lurking near the end of the form, “One artist was inspired by another’s work. Name both artists.” She found the answer, and beat the competition to win the Sweet Briar bookstore gift certificate—a bonus for attending Reunion and returning to the institution that has helped shape her career in the global world of art.

The die had been cast early for Lawson on visits to museums like the Art Institute of Chicago with her family and exposure to the “art lady” (her mom) in her elementary school classroom. She arrived at Sweet Briar contemplating a major in history, but her choice of majors took a detour when she signed up for Professor Aileen Laing’s art history survey course. At the end of term she said, “This is what I want to do—not history!” After graduation, her first job was in Saratoga Springs, New York, assisting antiques dealer and auctioneer Mark Lawson (no relation). In 2007 she advanced her career by earning a master’s degree from New York University in art history with a focus on medieval art and the history of collecting. For the past five years, she has served as assistant director of academic affairs for New York University’s Institute for the Study of the Ancient World (ISAW).

ISAW was created in 2006 by a gift from the Leon Levy Foundation, whose benefactors, Leon Levy and his wife, Shelby White, envisioned a research powerhouse “encompassing the ancient world from the western Mediterranean to East Asia, from the Neolithic to the early Medieval period... focused on creating a new generation of scholars whose work crosses over the disciplinary boundaries of traditional departments.” ISAW offers an innovative interdisciplinary program of research seminars, exhibitions, archaeological projects, and work experience tailored to individual scholars’ interests, and promotes one-on-one contact with top faculty.

Lawson began as a graduate assistant at ISAW. She was then offered a promotion working with the director, Roger Bagnall, to help build the ISAW program from scratch—policies, programs, and guidelines. Bagnall says, “Kate brings to her work an extraordinary combination of energy and calm, efficiency and kindness. Her intelligence, thoughtfulness, and foresight have been a major factor in making everyone at ISAW, whether permanent faculty or one-day conference-goer, feel part of an intellectual community.” In her current role, she oversees meetings with faculty leaders from NYU, manages the doctoral and visiting scholar program, and coordinates lectures, seminars, workshops, and international conferences. To date, those events number around 40 and counting, and the number of Ph.D. candidates in the program now totals 16.

Where did Lawson learn to organize and pull diverse groups of people and ideas together? At Sweet Briar. She served as president of the German Club, treasurer of her senior class, and coordinated a number of campus activities with her peers. That leadership experience gave her a lot of confidence and the ability to express her opinion confidently. She recalls, “I was trusted to assume responsibilities—that has carried over to my current job, for example organizing a workshop on monastic education in the Greco-Roman world. SBC’s small environment handed me those types of opportunities.”

Her best advice to Sweet Briar students who want to pursue a career in art history? “Study German!” she vigorously notes. “Studying German at SBC has given me an advantage in my career. I did not realize how important it would be for further studies in art history, but as a result of my classes, I was able to take the language test for the M.A. right away without additional work, and it was no problem.”

Lawson also advises students to take on more internships, even if unpaid, to gain valuable experience they need for today’s job market. She also recommends classes in the arts management program and field trips to New York for networking with alumnae.

Lawson has seen the benefit of students having access to digitized collections while at ISAW, and hopes that in the future, Sweet Briar faculty and students will have similar access to the College’s permanent collection for research and study. ISAW, for example, is helping create a digitized repository of artifacts included in exhibitions even after the exhibits move on to other locations, providing permanent access to images, maps and other materials.

Eventually Lawson would like to transition from the academic side of art history to the curatorial, working directly with a collection.
in a museum setting. And yes, she is still on speaking terms with classmate, good friend, and eager Reunion scavenger hunt opponent, Christina Chubb '04, of Richmond, Virginia. “Rematch!” anyone?

“O ne of the most important things I have learned in my career is to always be progressing.” This statement is a perfect reflection of Céleste Wackenhut as a professional and an individual. Her career in the arts is evidence of her drive and fearlessness to explore and grow.

Graduating from Sweet Briar with a degree in art history and Italian studies, along with the arts management certificate, she became the interim admissions assistant at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. This led to the internship program at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice. Wackenhut then obtained her master’s degree from the University of Edinburgh in the history, curation, and criticism of modern art. A curatorial internship at the McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, Texas, led to a job as a curatorial and communications assistant there.

In conversation, she lists all of these achievements, not in the interest of self-aggrandizement, but as a reflection upon the value of each experience. Wackenhut also credits Sweet Briar with much of her success, highlighting the relationships and opportunities that it provided her. She remarks, “Even years after graduating, I felt like I could contact professors for advice or recommendations.” In the intimate yet challenging atmosphere of the College, she learned to never settle for less than she wanted or knew she deserved. So, not seeing enough room for advancement in the top-heavy museum world, Wackenhut took a huge chance by leaving the McNay Museum and joining Billy Lambert’s team at his San Antonio art and design firm, French & Michigan.

The two have built the gallery component of French & Michigan from merely an idea to a working gallery space. Combining contemporary art and design with an intellectual but community-minded orientation, French & Michigan is a pioneer in the San Antonio art world. Currently, the business continues to grow its innovative artistic outreach by developing programs for public and youth education, creating a publication highlighting local writers, and sponsoring an architectural residency program. French & Michigan’s mission clearly aligns with the multidisciplinary nature of today’s art. Wackenhut orchestrated the first exhibitions, including a publication release for their solo presentation in May. In managing the gallery, representing artists, and curating exhibitions, she has found a place that both challenges and highlights her strengths. “One of the greatest compliments that [the chief curator at the McNay Museum] gave me as I was leaving was saying that I was the perfect person to do this, with all my experience in curating, writing, and marketing, and I attribute a great deal of that to the foundation of my arts education at Sweet Briar.”
Internships

Encouraged by the College’s award-winning office of career services and armed with recommendations from their professors, Sweet Briar students disperse all across the country every summer for internships that will enhance their education and build the foundation for solid work experience. An increasing number of those students—many officially enrolled in the Arts Management Program and those pursuing majors in disciplines such as history and art history—are headed for enriching experiences in museums of all sorts.

Established by the Friends of Art board in 2012, the summer museum internship stipend—a complement to the Friends of Art student prizes for writing and studio art—is intended to encourage student awareness of career opportunities in nonprofit museums at home and abroad. The stipend helps support a student during a summer internship and can be used for any associated costs, such as travel or lodgings. Judges for this year’s competition were: Nancy Dabbs Loftin ’81, board member, Friends of Art; Tandilyn Phillips, assistant director, Office of Career Services; Karol A. Lawson, director, Art Collection and Galleries.

The 2014 winner of the internship award was Alexandra Raifsnider ’15, who spent June and July in Pennsylvania working with the curator of the historic home of author Pearl Buck. She wrote over the summer that in addition to working with Buck’s library and archives, “I am an active participant in the planning for the upcoming exhibit that will open on August 1st to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Pearl S. Buck International.” Raifsnider notes:

It was such an exciting and fun experience, and I truly learned a lot about working for a small organization that is in a period of transition...Please thank the Friends of Art board members again for their generosity for allowing me the privilege of accepting an unpaid internship with the Pearl S. Buck House. I would not have been able to participate in such an educational opportunity without the financial support that the stipend provided.

This summer several other students also ventured into the museum world under the supervision of art gallery director Karol Lawson, who teaches in the Arts Management Program. Rising junior Charley Gorman ’16 was a research intern at the Lynchburg Museum of Fine Arts in six weeks. She reported:

During my time there I helped to organize files on pieces in the collection. I also helped to consolidate information on places in Lynchburg. This experience taught me about what happens behind the scenes in a museum. I also learned about the importance of organization in order to have information readily available for those doing research. This experience has ultimately encouraged me to continue my education after Sweet Briar.

Rising senior Chloe Bandas ’15 was the fortunate recipient of a privately-funded stipend that allowed her to work as an intern at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond. Guided in part by the example of the Friends of Art internship award, August Davis, of Richmond, had worked with Margaret Lippard, director of major and planned giving at Sweet Briar, over the past year to establish the stipend in memory of his late wife, Virginia Cummings Davis ’42. Bandas spent the summer in the office of Jeffery Cummings Davis ’42. Bandas spent the summer in the office of Jeffery Allison, Paul Mellon Collection educator and manager, and manager of the museum’s statewide programs. She helped the office run efficiently, assisted with exhibition research, and contributed to publicity preparation. In addition to meeting new people and finding her way around the routines and expectations of an office environment, she notes that by working in a world-class museum, “I got to see what my future profession could look like!”

Following a busy freshman year Abigail Schutte ’17 kept her momentum by working at the Reitz Home Museum in Evansville, Indiana, an historic property. Filled with enthusiasm, she wrote to Lawson, whose museum studies class she had taken in the spring, “after doing this internship I've completely fallen in love with the atmosphere of a museum even more!”

Schutte worked with the collections of the museum through the database management software PastPerfect, led daily tours of the mansion, and sent out weekly newsletters to donors.

The Pearl S. Buck Home, Perkasie, Pennsylvania. Alexandra Raifsnider ’15 worked in Buck’s library and archives in June and July.

The Lynchburg Museum where Charley Gorman ’16 interned. Photo courtesy of the Lynchburg Museum System.

Chloe Bandas ’15 (left) hard at work at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. She is shown with fellow intern Lori News, a student at James Madison University.

“The Big Night” in Guion Pond

May Carter Barger ’81

Every year on a warm, rainy night near the end of winter, spotted salamanders (Ambystoma maculatum) return to the pond where they were born.

Every two years, Dr. Linda Fink’s biology students interrupt Sweet Briar’s salamanders on this journey in order to study their life span and mating habits. Because amphibians are in trouble worldwide, the biology students are monitoring the health of this campus population. Professor Fink’s field natural history and ecology students have been surveying the salamanders since 2007. This year, the biology students joined forces with Professor Laura Pharis’s studio art students to write, design and publish a book about Sweet Briar’s salamanders’ annual migration from burrows in the forest floor to Guion Pond, where they celebrate what students refer to as “The Big Night.”

When rain began falling on the evening of March 2, seven students donned their rain gear and headlamps and headed for the woods. The more than 500 salamanders were just beginning their journey. Twenty students worked in shifts until midnight; some collecting the salamanders and others taking turns weighing, measuring and checking for abnormalities. An ultraviolet light was shined on one leg to determine if there was a pink or orange dot, indicating the salamander had been counted in a previous census. These data will be used to help determine the salamanders’ life spans, and to determine whether the population is stable, growing or shrinking.

After each salamander is examined, it was released back into Guion Pond for a “Big Night” of mating.

For the book, the biology students wrote the explanatory text, while etching classes provided illustrations and a two-dimensional design class created the capital letters and typeset the text.

If you want to know what Sweet Briar’s salamanders actually DO on “The Big Night,” you’ll have to read The Secret Life of Sweet Briar’s Salamanders! You can find it at: spotedsalamandersatsweetbriar.shutterfly.com.

Explanatory page from The Secret Life of Sweet Briar’s Salamanders.
In 2009, the Friends of Art board approved the establishment of a prize for currently enrolled Sweet Briar students to recognize excellence in writing about art, specifically original works in the College art collection. The writing submitted can be of any sort—from art historical research and formal analysis to poetry and short stories, and anything in between. Gallery director Karol Lawson notes that, “The possibilities are endless within a liberal arts curriculum. I would love to see a theater script or journalism piece submitted in the future!” Judges for this year's competition were: Kimberly Morse-Jones, assistant professor of art history; Seth Clabough, director of the Academic Resource Center and assistant professor of English; Margaret Hayes Brunstad '72, board member, Friends of Art; Karol A. Lawson, director, Art Collection and Galleries.

Two creative applicants caught the judges’ attention this year: Elizabeth Wise '11 (graduating 2014) and Khristen Cook '15.

Established by the Friends of Art board in 2012 and funded in loving memory of Lydia C. Daniel by her family, the Studio Art Prize recognizes student achievement in the visual arts inspired or precipitated in some fashion by original works in the College’s art collection. Judges for the 2013-2014 competition were: Laura Pharis, professor of studio art; Elinor Plowden Boyd ’74, board member, Friends of Art; Karol A. Lawson, director, Art Collection and Galleries.

The winner of the 2014 prize was Marcelle Coronel ’17, a first-year student. Her submission, Cover Up, Covergirl, was a response to Lalla Essaydi’s 2005 photograph Les Femmes du Maroc #17—a perennial favorite with students since its purchase with Friends of Art support in 2007. The judges found this a particularly moving entry, since it addresses—with a wry edginess—the dilemma of young women the world over.

Coronel wrote in her application:

The similarities between our pieces of art are remarkably distinguishable. Both our pieces are mostly black and white with the featured woman's skin being the only noticeable color difference. Unlike Lalla's piece, the words on my piece are written in English...Except for the fact that the woman in my piece is American, she has no distinct identity. The words written on the black and white surfaces represent the voice of both the American society and the American social media. Whereas, the words on the woman's skin are her own voice. As young American women, we are pressured by what our society says we should and should not do. It is our job to find our inner light, our inner voice, to speak up against the chaos that, at times, seems to suffocate us.

Coronel wrote in her application:

The similarities between our pieces of art are remarkably distinguishable. Both our pieces are mostly black and white with the featured woman's skin being the only noticeable color difference. Unlike Lalla's piece, the words on my piece are written in English...Except for the fact that the woman in my piece is American, she has no distinct identity. The words written on the black and white surfaces represent the voice of both the American society and the American social media. Whereas, the words on the woman's skin are her own voice. As young American women, we are pressured by what our society says we should and should not do. It is our job to find our inner light, our inner voice, to speak up against the chaos that, at times, seems to suffocate us.


Marcelle Coronel, Cover Up, Covergirl, 2014, graphite and pen on paper with digital imaging, 6 x 8 3/8 inches. Courtesy of the artist.


Elizabeth Wise

He grinds away the hard evidence
To let the veins of the rock
Spread back to the throttle.
There, it churns
The river is dyed with life
Like it’s one of Earth’s veins
His mindful hand reminds us how time works
How blood works. Everyday. Overtime.
In everything.
Solid
Beholds
Liquid
And he leaves behind
A red puddle of rock.

The poem is printed courtesy of the author.


The Studio Art Prize

The Writing Prize

In 2009, the Friends of Art board approved the establishment of a prize for currently enrolled Sweet Briar students to recognize excellence in writing about art, specifically original works in the College art collection. The writing submitted can be of any sort—from art historical research and formal analysis to poetry and short stories, and anything in between. Gallery director Karol Lawson notes that, “The possibilities are endless within a liberal arts curriculum. I would love to see a theater script or journalism piece submitted in the future!” Judges for this year’s competition were: Kimberly Morse-Jones, assistant professor of art history; Seth Clabough, director of the Academic Resource Center and assistant professor of English; Margaret Hayes Brunstad ’72, board member, Friends of Art; Karol A. Lawson, director, Art Collection and Galleries.

Two creative applicants caught the judges’ attention this year: Elizabeth Wise ’11 (graduating 2014) and Khristen Cook ’15.

A repeat winner, Cook, an art history and creative writing double major, also won the 2013 prize with a short story inspired by the prints of Ana Maria Pacheco. Her 2014 submission was a magical short story, “We Are Light and Shadow,” inspired by a 1938 lithograph by Peter Hurd, Sermon from Revelations. Indeed, Cook’s entries in the Friends of Art competition have paralleled her work in an independent study course last spring, an honors research project this summer, and an ambitious honors project as she heads into her senior year—all focused on ekphrastic writing and significantly inspired by the College art collection.

Wise, an art history major as well as a professional musician, caught the judges’ attention with her succinct but thoughtful exploration of a photograph that documents a work of environmental art.


Elizabeth Wise

He grinds away the hard evidence
To let the veins of the rock
Spread back to the throttle.
There, it churns
The river is dyed with life
Like it’s one of Earth’s veins
His mindful hand reminds us how time works
How blood works. Everyday. Overtime.
In everything.
Solid
Beholds
Liquid
And he leaves behind
A red puddle of rock.

The poem is printed courtesy of the author.
José Guerrero (1914-1991), Untitled, ca. 1960-1980, watercolor and gouache on paper, 18 1/8 x 24 3/8 inches. Bequest of Arthur M. Bullowa, Grenada, Spain, and was educated there

NEWS OF THE ART COLLECTION

Featured Work

The artwork featured on this issue’s cover is from the permanent collection and will be included in a spring 2015 exhibition in Pannell Gallery. This is one of two abstract compositions in gouache, an opaque water-based medium, by Spanish-American painter José Guerrero. Both came to the College’s permanent collection as a bequest from the significant New York collector Arthur M. Bullowa, whose estate was managed by David Prager, the husband of Annabelle Forsch Prager ’43. Bullowa, a Manhattan lawyer, collected pre-Columbian artifacts as well as modern art and served for a number of years as the president of the Aperture Foundation, which publishes journals and books devoted to photography.

Guerrero (1914-1991) was a native of Grenada, Spain, and was educated there and in Madrid and Paris. Following several years of travel in post-war Europe, he immigrated to the United States with his wife, American journalist Roxane Pollock. They settled in New York, where Guerrero soon associated himself with the Abstract Expressionist movement. In the 1950s his professional debut was marked by a solo exhibition at the avant garde Betty Parsons Gallery—an important commercial venue for an entire generation of innovative American artists such as Jackson Pollock and Barnett Newman—and his inclusion in a show of promising young painters at the Guggenheim Museum. Influenced by friends and colleagues such as Mark Rothko, Franz Kline, and Robert Motherwell, Guerrero became known for his vivid palette and dramatic gestural compositions.

He and his family returned to Spain in the mid 1960s as the Franco regime waned and he played an important part in the revitalization of the nation’s contemporary art world. Guerrero was honored by major retrospectives at the Museo de arte contemporáneo, Seville, in 1990, and at the Museo nacional centro de arte Reina Sofía in Madrid, in 1994. The artist’s family opened the Centro José Guerrero in Granada in 2000.

New Acquisition Honors Professor

As part of its June 2014 meeting the Friends of Art board visited the Amherst, Virginia, home and studio of Joe Monk, who was set to retire from the College’s studio art department after several decades of distinguished service. To commemorate his tenure, a major recent work—one of Monk’s “memory jars,” an example of his pique assiette style of work using found objects and slip cast shapes to encrust sculptural and functional forms—has been acquired for the College’s permanent collection. In fact, this piece was shown in a 2011 group exhibition in Pannell Gallery of the studio art faculty. On that occasion, Monk wrote that:

While some artists explore an idea in incremental steps—one piece naturally following from the work that directly precedes it, my work also moves in increments but along four major lines of interest: sculptural forms that often spring from repurposed items found in the hardware or automotive store; sculpture that borrows from the traditions of ceramic art making, vessel forms that appear to be functional but, in truth, are not; traditional vessel forms that have inspired potters for thousands of years; the humble pieces made to hold water or morning coffee...I have made thousands of objects over the years for the simple reason that I like to make things.”

Ancient Artifacts Repatriated

Readers of this newsletter will recall a 2013 article about the art gallery staff’s work to return to their cultural community Native American ceramics associated with human burials under the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990. Following months of research, reports, and coordination, in June 2014 director Karol Lawson drove the 10 artifacts home to the Quapaw Tribe of Indians. She handed them over to the tribe’s chairman, John Berry, on a patio outside the curatorial offices of the Arkansas Archaeological Survey, in Fayetteville, which serves as an official repository for the Quapaw.

Berry “ smoked” each pot over a fire of hickory, red oak, and cedar, and brushed them with an eagle wing. This blessed and rededicated the artifacts before they joined the thousands of similar Quapaw ceramics inside the facility. Lawson was impressed by the simplicity and sincerity of the ceremony and was touched by the Quapaw leaders’ expressions of appreciation for the care that Sweet Briar had devoted to the objects for many years.

Spotlight on the Collection

Joe Monk, Memory, Covered Bay 2011, ceramic and found objects, 22 x 22 inches. Purchase made possible by the Friends of Art, Collection of the Sweet Briar College Art Collection and Galleries. Courtesy of the artist.
The Friends of Art is a volunteer membership organization at Sweet Briar College comprising alumnae, students, faculty, staff and community members that promotes and supports the study of the visual arts on the Sweet Briar College campus. With your vital support, many pieces have been added to the collection and the impact of your tax-deductible gift is seen every day throughout campus. Your annual membership makes a real difference!

Thank you to all who have joined or renewed your membership in the past year! You have helped increase our active membership by 17%, and together we have increased our total financial capacity to support the art gallery’s acquisitions and student outreach by 23% over 2012-2013.

LEVELS OF SUPPORT*

- **General donor.** . . . . up to $25
- **Student/Young Alumna.** . . . . $25–$50
- **Family/Couple.** . . . . $50–$100
- **Contributing.** . . . . . $100–$250
- **Patron.** . . . . . $250–$500
- **Benefactor.** . . . . . $500–$1,000
- **Sustainer.** . . . . $2,500 and above

*All categories apply to an annual membership.

Contributions to Friends of Art are fully tax-deductible.

For more information, please contact the College’s development office at (888) 846-5722 or www.giving@sbc.edu.
The Acquisitions Plan

The permanent collection supports the College’s educational mission, providing teaching and learning opportunities across the liberal arts curriculum. Objects that enrich the teaching and research focus of art history and studio faculty are especially welcome. The Friends of Art acquisitions committee has focused for a number of years on collecting the work of modern and contemporary women. Please see the list below for individual artists in whom FOA has a particular interest. To discuss proposed gifts or bequests please contact Karol Lawson, director of the Art Collection and Galleries at (434) 381-6248 or klawson@sbc.edu.

Abstract Expressionism/Later Surrealism
Sherry Levine
Eccentric Abstraction
Sara Auerbach
Gego
Rachel Whiteread
Yayoi Kusama

Asian American
Amy Cheng
Hung Liu
Jiha Moon
Yoko Ono
Shahzia Sikander
Mayumi Terada

African American
Diane Edmond
Ellen Gallagher
Adrian Piper
Bettye Saar
Renée Stout

Native American
Emmi Whitehorse

Photorealism
Geometric
Lee Bonetca
Chryssa
Mary Frank
Sylvia Mangold
Agnes Martin
Jill Olin
Barbara Chase Riboud
Dorothea Rockburne

Printmakers
Native American
Emmi Whitehorse

Asian American
Suzanne Caporael
Amy Cutler
Susan Hall
Freya Hansell
Mary Heilmann
Marco Humphrey
Mary Javath
Elaine Kazak
Blanche Lazzell
Julie Mehretu
Cynthia Nortons
Elizabeth Pea
Amy Skillman
Eve Sonneman
Anna Heyward Taylor

Photographers
Berenice Abbott
Tina Barney
Valérie Belin
Margaret Bourke-White
Deborah Fleming Callery
Julie Margaret Cameron
Imogen Cunningham
Judy Dater
Lynn Davis

Scalpers
Diana Al-Hadid
Alice Aycock
Nancy Graves
Barbara Hepworth
Louise Nevelson

Pop/Op/Color Field
Jill Olm
Sylvia Mangold
Mary Frank
Chryssa

Linguistic Abstraction
Sylvia Sleigh
Janet Fish

Photorealism
Lynn Davis
Judy Dater
Imogen Cunningham
Julia Margaret Cameron
Deborah Flemming Caffery
Margaret Bourke-White
Valérie Belin
Tina Barney
Berenice Abbott

Photorealism
Photorealism
Geometric
Sylvia Sleigh
Janet Fish
Sylvia Mangold
Mary Frank
Chryssa

Photorealism
Photorealism
Geometric
Sylvia Sleigh
Janet Fish
Sylvia Mangold
Mary Frank
Chryssa

African American
Susan Crowder: Future Nature
September 18–November 19, 2014
Reception and artist’s gallery talk, Thursday, September 18, 5–6 p.m. Open to all.

2014-2015 Calendar of Exhibitions and Programs

Anne Gary Pannell Center Gallery
Exploring the Visual Experience
September 12–December 12, 2014
Reception, Friday, September 12, 5–6 p.m. Open to all. Conversation in the Gallery, Tuesday, October 7, noon–1 p.m. Open to all. Attendees are welcome to bring lunch.

The Art of Teaching: Laura Pharis, John Morgan, Paige Critcher, Chatham Monk, and Justin Rice
January 22–March 4, 2015
Reception Thursday, January 22, 2015, 5–6 p.m. Open to all. Artists’ gallery talks, Wednesday, February 11, and Wednesday, February 18, noon–1 p.m. Open to all. Attendees are welcome to bring lunch.

The Art of Collecting: 20th Century Highlights
March 20–May 31, 2015
S.W.A.N. (Support Women Artists Now) program of readings and performances, Friday, March 20, 7–9 p.m. Open to all. Slow Art Day lunch and casual roundtable discussions, Saturday, April 11, 12–5 p.m. Open to all.

Babcock Fine Arts Center Gallery
Susan Crowder: Future Nature
September 18–November 19, 2014
Reception and artist’s gallery talk, Thursday, September 18, 5–6 p.m. Open to all.

Babcock Fine Arts Center Gallery
Exploring the Visual Experience
September 12–December 12, 2014
Reception, Friday, September 12, 5–6 p.m. Open to all. Conversation in the Gallery, Tuesday, October 7, noon–1 p.m. Open to all. Attendees are welcome to bring lunch.

The Art of Teaching: Laura Pharis, John Morgan, Paige Critcher, Chatham Monk, and Justin Rice
January 22–March 4, 2015
Reception Thursday, January 22, 2015, 5–6 p.m. Open to all. Artists’ gallery talks, Wednesday, February 11, and Wednesday, February 18, noon–1 p.m. Open to all. Attendees are welcome to bring lunch.

The Art of Collecting: 20th Century Highlights
March 20–May 31, 2015
S.W.A.N. (Support Women Artists Now) program of readings and performances, Friday, March 20, 7–9 p.m. Open to all. Slow Art Day lunch and casual roundtable discussions, Saturday, April 11, 12–5 p.m. Open to all.

Babcock Fine Arts Center Gallery
Exploring the Visual Experience
September 12–December 12, 2014
Reception, Friday, September 12, 5–6 p.m. Open to all. Conversation in the Gallery, Tuesday, October 7, noon–1 p.m. Open to all. Attendees are welcome to bring lunch.

The Art of Teaching: Laura Pharis, John Morgan, Paige Critcher, Chatham Monk, and Justin Rice
January 22–March 4, 2015
Reception Thursday, January 22, 2015, 5–6 p.m. Open to all. Artists’ gallery talks, Wednesday, February 11, and Wednesday, February 18, noon–1 p.m. Open to all. Attendees are welcome to bring lunch.

The Art of Collecting: 20th Century Highlights
March 20–May 31, 2015
S.W.A.N. (Support Women Artists Now) program of readings and performances, Friday, March 20, 7–9 p.m. Open to all. Slow Art Day lunch and casual roundtable discussions, Saturday, April 11, 12–5 p.m. Open to all.

Babcock Fine Arts Center Gallery
Exploring the Visual Experience
September 12–December 12, 2014
Reception, Friday, September 12, 5–6 p.m. Open to all. Conversation in the Gallery, Tuesday, October 7, noon–1 p.m. Open to all. Attendees are welcome to bring lunch.

The Art of Teaching: Laura Pharis, John Morgan, Paige Critcher, Chatham Monk, and Justin Rice
January 22–March 4, 2015
Reception Thursday, January 22, 2015, 5–6 p.m. Open to all. Artists’ gallery talks, Wednesday, February 11, and Wednesday, February 18, noon–1 p.m. Open to all. Attendees are welcome to bring lunch.

The Art of Collecting: 20th Century Highlights
March 20–May 31, 2015
S.W.A.N. (Support Women Artists Now) program of readings and performances, Friday, March 20, 7–9 p.m. Open to all. Slow Art Day lunch and casual roundtable discussions, Saturday, April 11, 12–5 p.m. Open to all.

Babcock Fine Arts Center Gallery
Exploring the Visual Experience
September 12–December 12, 2014
Reception, Friday, September 12, 5–6 p.m. Open to all. Conversation in the Gallery, Tuesday, October 7, noon–1 p.m. Open to all. Attendees are welcome to bring lunch.

The Art of Teaching: Laura Pharis, John Morgan, Paige Critcher, Chatham Monk, and Justin Rice
January 22–March 4, 2015
Reception Thursday, January 22, 2015, 5–6 p.m. Open to all. Artists’ gallery talks, Wednesday, February 11, and Wednesday, February 18, noon–1 p.m. Open to all. Attendees are welcome to bring lunch.

The Art of Collecting: 20th Century Highlights
March 20–May 31, 2015
S.W.A.N. (Support Women Artists Now) program of readings and performances, Friday, March 20, 7–9 p.m. Open to all. Slow Art Day lunch and casual roundtable discussions, Saturday, April 11, 12–5 p.m. Open to all.

Babcock Fine Arts Center Gallery
Exploring the Visual Experience
September 12–December 12, 2014
Reception, Friday, September 12, 5–6 p.m. Open to all. Conversation in the Gallery, Tuesday, October 7, noon–1 p.m. Open to all. Attendees are welcome to bring lunch.

The Art of Teaching: Laura Pharis, John Morgan, Paige Critcher, Chatham Monk, and Justin Rice
January 22–March 4, 2015
Reception Thursday, January 22, 2015, 5–6 p.m. Open to all. Artists’ gallery talks, Wednesday, February 11, and Wednesday, February 18, noon–1 p.m. Open to all. Attendees are welcome to bring lunch.

The Art of Collecting: 20th Century Highlights
March 20–May 31, 2015
S.W.A.N. (Support Women Artists Now) program of readings and performances, Friday, March 20, 7–9 p.m. Open to all. Slow Art Day lunch and casual roundtable discussions, Saturday, April 11, 12–5 p.m. Open to all.

Elevation sketch for the final design of *Uplift*. Courtesy of Catherine Peek.