

2015

Sketch

Diamond, Sara, Andrew, Suzanne Alyssa, Goodden, Sky, Jordan, Betty Ann and Kenny, Lesley

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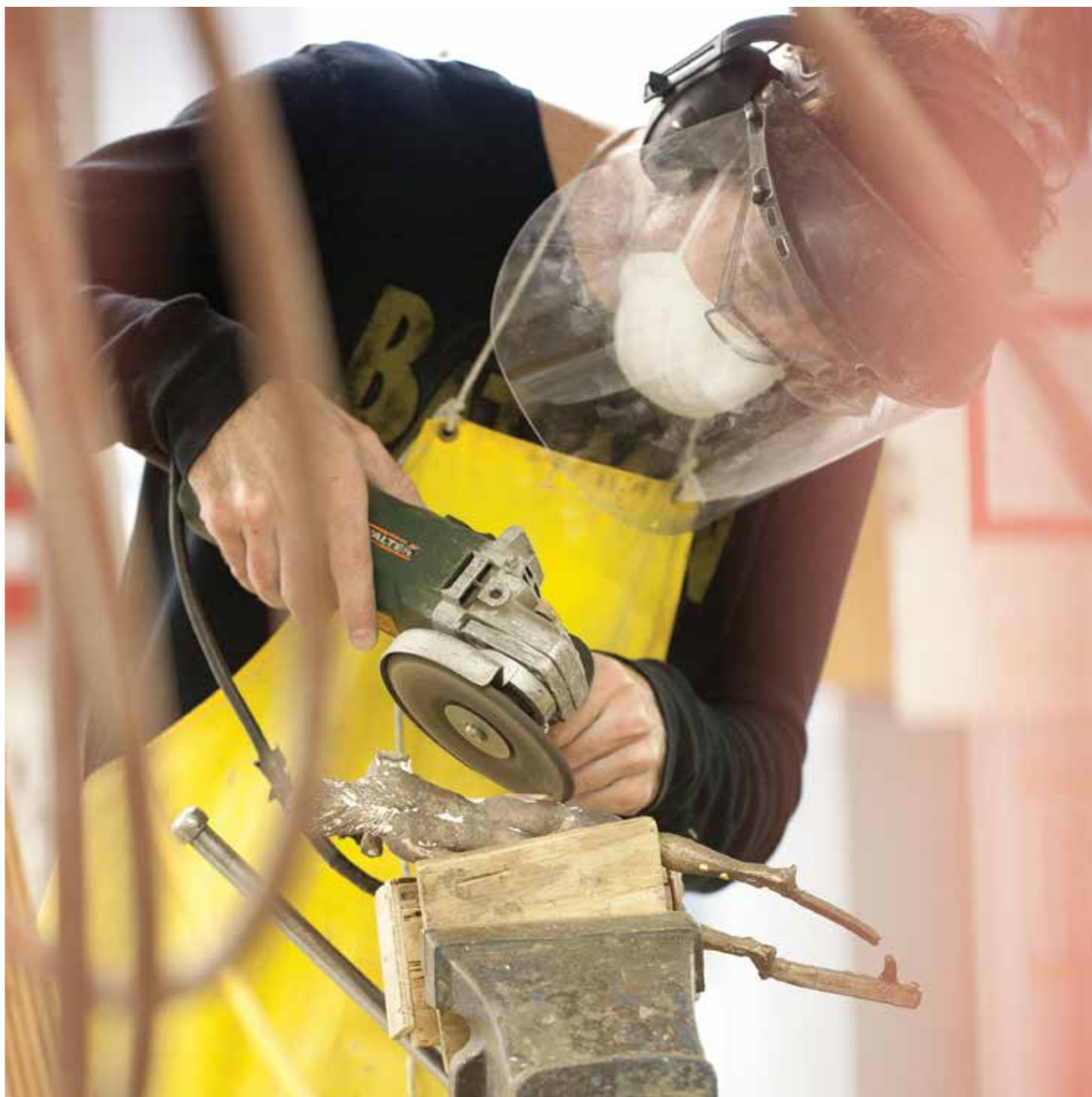
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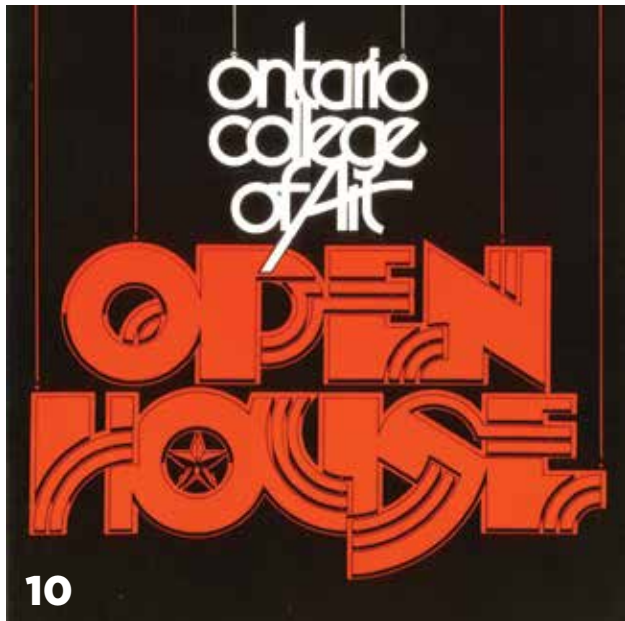
CONTENTS



4



18



10

FEATURES

10 Exit extraordinary:

100 years of exhibiting innovative student works

By Betty Ann Jordan

centrefold Imagination: The inside tour

OCAD University 2013/14 Annual Report

2 HAPPENINGS

3 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

4 CAMPUS NEWS

18 ALUMNI NEWS

25 EXHIBITION



Front cover Gary Taxali, poster for 100th GradEx, 2015

Opposite Sculpture/Installation student at work in studio.
Photo by Christina Gagic

Above (4) Alex McLeod, *Red City*, as featured in
RBC Emerging Artists Project (page 6)

Above (18) Elise Victoria Louise Windsor, *Fleur Yellow*, 2014

Above (10) Annual Open House invitation, 1978.

OCAD University Visual Resources

Back cover Bri Cleary, *CitypathsA*, urban infographic
pattern exhibited at GradEx 2014



Happenings



Row 1 (L-R): Work by Lorna Mills at OCAD U's presentation for Scotiabank Nuit Blanche; guests take in work by Aryen Hoekstra at Nuit Blanche; OCAD U's Nuit Blanche artists (L-R): Mathew Williamson, curator Stefan Hancherow, Lili Huston-Herterich, Aryen Hoekstra, Grégoire Blunt and Emmy Skensved

Row 2 (L-R): Former MP Olivia Chow with President Sara Diamond at OCAD U's presentation for Scotiabank Nuit Blanche; work by Grégoire Blunt and Emmy Skensved for Nuit Blanche

Row 3 (L-R at top): OCAD U artists Jenna Allain and Katie Switzer at Sharp Centre Anniversary event; Sharp Centre "costume" creator (see below) Rob Shostak and friends view installation by Philippe Blanchard

Row 4 (L-R at bottom): Development Director Rose Anne McCants, Industrial Design Chair Paul Epp, Design Dean Gayle Nicoll, Imagination Catalyst's Heather Tay at the Sharp Centre Anniversary event; guests view "10: Sharp Centre for Design Anniversary Exhibition"

Row 5 (L-R): Architect Will Alsop with urban affairs/architecture critic Christopher Hume; Honor de Pencier, Will Alsop, Rosalie Sharp; Indigenous singer/songwriter Cheryl L'Hirondelle performs at the Sharp Anniversary event

Row 6 Indigenous Visual Culture program Chair Ryan Rice, Chancellor Catherine (Kiki) Delaney at the Sharp Centre Anniversary event

Photos by Robert DeLeskie (rows 1 and 2) and Gary Beechey (rows 3 to 5)

President's Message

We start
with a drum roll



Every year, there are two events that fill our community's hearts with inspiration as the academic term draws to an end — GradEx and Convocation. Each marks a life transition for our next generation of alumni, confirming and celebrating their commitment to imagination and the discipline of creativity. This year is truly special! It is OCAD University's 100th GradEx, showcasing an expanded presentation of undergraduate and graduate thesis projects. I guarantee viewers will be amazed at the breadth of concerns, concepts and media in these works. The show is a site of discovery, a place to witness new practices in painting and sculpture, innovations in healthcare support or approaches to sustainable architecture. It's also a place where you can find refreshing new talent to hire and art and design works to explore or purchase. Curious about the GradEx effect? Learn more about the exhibition in our *Sketch* double feature, beginning on page 10.

Elsewhere in these pages, we build on the theme of exhibiting: what it means in terms of profile, careers and community. This issue's alumni section (page 18) examines several large-scale, multi-partnered or multi-venue festivals and exhibits that featured our grads in both art and design. These are Toronto Design Week, Villa Toronto and Flash Forward 10 (the university's Onsite Gallery exhibition that celebrated the Magenta Foundation and a decade of OCAD U photographers).

You will also find inserted here (page 12) our 2013/2014 Annual Report. Following the success of last year's model, which drew on two of our institutional strengths — data visualization and graphic design — this year's report features illustration, highlighting one of OCAD U's most successful and awarded programs. Referencing graphic fiction in genre and format, *OCAD University: The Inside Tour* takes a storied look at our unique learning environment and its amazing yields: specialized research, professional practice and unrivalled creativity. Illustrated by notable alumnus and faculty member Chris Kuzma, the report is

also available as an accessible, motion-graphic filled digital publication at ocadu.ca.

It has been an exciting year for OCAD University, with our community honouring the Sharp Centre for Design on its 10th anniversary — an occasion celebrated with exceptional generosity by a number of major donors. The remarkable gifts described on page 4 are already playing a role in updating our studio learning environment, creating a centre for experiential learning, underwriting students, supporting programs and research in the Faculty of Art, Faculty of Design and the Indigenous Visual Culture program, and assisting in the development of our commercial incubation capacity.

Please join us at GradEx from April 29th through May 3rd. Help us celebrate 100 years of opening our hearts and our talent to the City of Toronto and the broader community. □

Dr. Sara Diamond

President and Vice-Chancellor, OCAD University,
O. of Ont., RCA

Above
Photo by
Tom Sandler



Above Janie Reed, *Feet First* (shown in 10: Sharp Centre for Design Anniversary Exhibition)

Right Guests of a February 2015 Open House at OCAD U's Onsite Gallery consider the Rosalie Sharp Pavilion revitalization project



Slaight Family Foundation pledges major support

Announced in December 2014 was an additional, historic gift of \$3 million from The Slaight Family Foundation in honour of Ada Slaight. This gift will fund scholarships, improve studios and student gallery space, and create the Ada Slaight Chair of Contemporary Painting and Print Media, the first named chair in the institution's 138 years.

"This investment is a fitting tribute to my mother Ada Slaight in recognition of her 25 years of volunteering, leadership and advocacy in support of OCAD University. This will continue her commitment to enabling students to excel in their studies and push the boundaries of imagination," said Gary Slaight, president of The Slaight Family Foundation.

Sharp Centre's 10th celebrated with exhibition, gala, extraordinary gifts

In November 2014, OCAD University's iconic Sharp Centre for Design turned 10. The stunning black and white "tabletop" structure, which was designed by acclaimed British architect Will Alsop, is home to OCAD U's Faculty of Design, with facilities for the faculties of Art and Liberal Studies.

A remarkable gift of \$2 million from OCAD U Chancellor Kiki Delaney on behalf of the Delaney Family Foundation was announced at the anniversary event. The donation will fund scholarships for undergraduate and graduate visual artists, and the university's Indigenous Visual Culture program — its curriculum, Research Centre, outreach and campus-wide activities.

Also announced was a gift to the university of \$3 million from benefactors Rosalie and Isadore Sharp, the much-loved original donors for whom the building is named. The Sharp donation will be used to create a dramatic new façade on the Rosalie Sharp Pavilion at McCaul and Dundas streets, transforming the building into the OCAD University Centre for Experiential Learning.

The Rosalie Sharp Pavilion revitalization project will turn the administrative building at 115 McCaul St. into a multi-use student-focused centre, which will re-open in the fall of 2016. Said Peter Sramek, acting dean, Faculty of Art, "The plans will see a flexible, multi-use complex, which supports student studio production, pop-up events, group collaborations, displays and engagements with visiting artists and designers. This building will be a hub connecting students with local organizations and communities."

The proposed design by Bortolotto Architects, the Toronto-based firm selected for the project, opens up and repurposes much of the existing structure. A new façade will increase the visual impact of the building and contribute to the aesthetic conversation that was initiated by the Sharp Centre a decade ago and picked up later by the redesigned Art Gallery of Ontario. Project working groups, which will look at plans for the interior of the building, are ongoing throughout 2015.

Urban Ecologies Conference returns

What are the limits of planetary ecosystems? How do urban designers move beyond thinking of mere sustainability to become producers of energy and resources?

From June 17 to 19, 2015, OCAD University's Faculty of Design hosts its second Urban Ecologies Conference. Architects, planners and educators will engage in interactive workshops to foster collaborative learning and tackle the conference's three urban themes: adaptive capacity, resilience and liveability.

Keynote speakers for this TD Bank Group-sponsored event are professors Rachel Strong (University of New Castle, U.K.) and Alfredo Brillembourg (Swiss Institute of Technology, Zurich). For more: urbanecologies.ca.

Right Megan Wickens on site at Awenda Provincial Park. Photo by Cory Blackburn

Below Alex Beriault, *Portrait Study*, photograph, 2015



Provincial park collaboration engages Group of Seven legacy

On a rainy-turned-sunny October day in 2014, 30 OCAD University students set up their paints and palettes along the shores of Georgian Bay at Awenda Provincial Park for **Awenda Inspired!** OCAD U instructor Linda Martinello organized the fourth annual collaboration between Awenda Provincial Park, the Friends of Awenda Park and OCAD U Drawing & Painting. Transportation to and from the park, about half an hour north of Midland, was sponsored by First Student Canada.

As part of the program, the mostly third-year students presented the results of their day's work to interested park campers and hikers, some of whom stumbled upon the artists at work and stopped to engage with them about their projects. The paintings, drawings and photographs based on students' experiences at the park were curated by Martinello for the exhibit *On-Site Awenda Inspired*, at OCAD U's Transit Space, in February 2015.

Tom Thompson (also once a student of the school) was drawn to the landscape of Georgian Bay, where he painted Giants Tomb Island, which was recently added to the borders of Awenda Provincial Park. Members of the Group of Seven also produced a number of paintings inspired by their time in the area.

Awenda Inspired! is open to all OCAD U students, faculty and alumni and, as Martinello attests, is a great way for students to build their CVs.



Festival of the Body celebrates new Life Studies specialization

In early 2015, OCAD U's Festival of the Body launched a month-long series of events and exhibitions in honour of the PanAm/ParaPan Am Games, which will be held in Toronto this July and August. The festival showcased the work of OCAD U students' cross-disciplinary approaches to the body in contemporary art and included a panel on art and athleticism. It also celebrated OCAD U's new specialization Life Studies, a contemporary exploration of the body in art and science, which includes courses from the faculties of Art and Liberal Arts & Sciences. The festival will culminate in a final exhibition of work by OCAD U Art and Design students during the PanAm/Parapan Am Games.

CAMPUS NEWS



Partnered exhibitions make city extended campus

This winter, **Mercedes-Benz Financial Services** sponsored its sixth annual Experiencing Perspectives exhibition, featuring, in its Mississauga offices, the work of Drawing & Painting students, faculty and alumni. Mercedes-Benz Financial gives an annual award of \$2,000 to a graduating student, and \$1,000 to a current student, to recognize emerging artists in Toronto.

Also on display this winter at Toronto's Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre Centre was the **RBC Emerging Artists Project**, featuring work by Faculty of Art Associate Dean Anda Kubis and Associate Professor Michelle Forsyth, as well as Sculpture/Installation student Franco Arcieri and the following OCAD U alumni: Hazel Meyer (Interdisciplinary Master's in Art, Media and Design, 2010), Lisa Myers (MFA, Criticism & Curatorial Practice, 2011) and Alex McLeod (BFA, Drawing & Painting, 2007).



Top Julius Manapul, *Queerious Hybrid* (2014), alumnus work on exhibit for OCAD U's Diasporic Intimacies: Queer Filipinos/as and Canadian Imaginaries conference, organized and co-curated by SSHRC recipient Professor Robert Diaz. Photo by Jane Dennis Moore

Above Franco Arcieri in Experiencing Perspectives. Photo by Martin Iskander

AWARDS ANNOUNCED FOR OCAD U RESEARCH

SSHRC Institutional Grants

Robert Diaz, assistant professor, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences, *Unsettling the Canadian Global City: Queer Filipino/as and Diasporic Imaginaries*.

Lynne Milgram, professor, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences, *From Market to Market: Filipino-Toronto Entrepreneurs Refashion a Transnational Business Landscape*.

Gabrielle Moser, lecturer, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences, *Developing Historical Negatives: Picturing Race and Citizenship in the Canadian Photographic Archive*.

OCAD U Research Seed Grants

Greg Sims, assistant professor, Faculty of Design, *Products Design for Sustainable 3D Printed Matter*.

Alia Weston, assistant professor, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences, *Activate Enterprise: Business Innovation, and Entrepreneurship Development in a Post-Crisis Economy*.

CORUS Seed Grants

Kate Hartman, associate professor, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences, *Concentration-Activated Wearables*.

Barbara Rauch, associate professor, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences, *Making Process: A Temporal Aesthetics Surface Investigation*.

"It's exciting to see how research at OCAD University receives ever greater recognition. And that's for a whole range of activity: from strictly scholarly enquiries to uniquely creative explorations that combine theoretical approaches with practice-based methodologies in art, design and digital media. This funding success story underlines how OCAD U research speaks to the key issues around us."

– Dr. Helmut Reichenbacher, Associate VP, Research & Dean, Graduate Studies

Culture of writing to bridge theory and practice

In response to a year-long needs-assessment and consultation process, a university-wide Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) initiative launched in the fall of 2014. Its objective is to foster a strong culture of writing among OCAD University students and faculty to support learning, teaching and practice. WAC's long-term plan includes activities in three key areas: curriculum development, professional development and resource development.

The three faculty members appointed as Writing in the Disciplines Fellows are: Catherine Black from the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Nicole Collins from the Faculty of Art and Saskia van Kampen from the Faculty of Design.

DesignJam encourages entrepreneurs to flourish

Twenty-first century issues require big, bold, innovative thinking and design leaders at OCAD University are at the forefront.

DesignJam, OCAD U's new program of mentorship and coaching at the Strategic Innovation Lab (sLab) in the Faculty of Design, is co-founded by Greg Van Alstyne, director of research at sLab. Program instructors teach design thinking and creative business skills to cultural entrepreneurs and young members of startups. DesignJam's first public event, on February 4th, was the workshop, "Flourishing Business Design: an Exploration of the Flourishing Business Canvas," facilitated by developers Stephen Davies and Anthony Upward.

Most people know what it means to flourish, but not necessarily how the concept applies to the business model, which can be represented in a diagram and creatively modified using the business model canvas, a technique pioneered by Alex Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur. To introduce participants to the new concept of a flourishing business canvas, Upward opened the workshop

with what he calls the big picture vision, "to sustain the possibility of flourishing on the planet," and encouraged participants to consider how to create the conditions under which people flourish, "a universal and culturally independent concept."

According to workshop leaders, a flourishing business carefully considers and responds to environmental issues of clean air, water and soil; fosters trusting and caring social relationships; and collaborates and competes to best meet the organization's needs. The layered impact of environmental, social and financial concerns drives the flourishing business.

Through a series of facilitator-led group interactions, February's DesignJam participants from a variety of non-profit and corporate milieus worked together to gain a better understanding of how the concept of a flourishing business can be applied to their own projects. Facilitators encouraged participants to use the flourishing business canvas model as a tool to focus and help them articulate the important questions in their organizations. Using a detailed case study example, participants were challenged to think through a set of questions.

One of the workshop's practical objectives was to give participants a design language with which to discuss and expand on the concept of a flourishing business. According to OCAD U instructor Stephen Davies, this new language "can become the *lingua franca* for a co-creative process. By introducing a robust set of concepts with fresh labels, we can make a series of distinctions that help people move forward in their thinking. This way they co-develop a shared semantic and can engage in the process fairly and equitably."

The workshop will be available as an online educational resource, through DesignJam.

DesignJam was developed in close collaboration with faculty from OCAD University's Strategic Foresight & Innovation MDes program and is funded by the Government of Ontario through Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs.

Below Photo courtesy of Greg Van Alstyne and Patrick Robinson





Right and below Pedro Reyes, on site at OCAD University 2014

Nomadic Resident chats with CCP grad Sky Goodden

Pedro Reyes is moving his hands across a pinned-up drawing as though describing the river currents on a map. “It’s basically a kind of spiral that shows the path of life,” he says, gesturing to paper tiles crowded with numbers and cryptic markers of personal achievement. “First hangover, first loss.” The Faculty of Art’s 2014 Nomadic Resident, Mexican artist Reyes has ensnared students (and faculty) in producing a “game of life” that bears the telltale structure, wit and consequence of his practice. “It creates a certain social dynamic that has to do with putting people in a situation where they have to talk to one another under a certain ruse. I told the students, ‘think of this as a group show on a piece of paper,’” he explains. “We’re going to build this together, as a group. It’s a way to be very personal about your own experiences, but also [presents] a collective process to talk about evolving in life. What does it mean to grow up, have a mental age versus a real age? To have goals? How do we change?” Reyes is clearly in his element, animated as he describes the coming days when this prototype will manifest in a piece of lived and live research. I’m told, a week later, that the game was played by multiple students and faculty and that it took the form of an event. Its project (“the game of life”) forged intimacies and revelations. Reyes hasn’t deviated from form.

Pedro Reyes positions himself in the interstices. Whether between geographies (New York, Mexico City, and the near-constant traveling he does to open new exhibitions and continue his research), media and genre (sculpture, installation, social intervention, relational aesthetics), practice (contemporary art, architecture), and source materials pulled from history, science, mysticism, game theory, ritual, sociology and psychology, Reyes lives in the space



between. His politics are not ambivalent, however, and form an assured through-line in his varied and probing practice. Indeed, Reyes’s assertion on issues ranging from gun control to the UN administration is unique in a contemporary-art moment made soft by too much speculation. “It’s suspected that all art has to be open-ended, no? That all art has to ask questions but not answer them,” Reyes reflects. “That if you take a position you are considered messianic, patronizing your audience. I think that’s a kind of cliché that is preventing a lot of artists from taking a stand. It limits the agency that cultural production has. It’s *okay* to have a position and it’s okay to say you stand for this and you want it to change in a particular way.”

When I leave, I turn to see that Reyes has returned to his drawing board, pen in hand.

Sky Goodden (MFA, Criticism & Curatorial Practice, 2010) is the founding editor of MOMUS, an international online art publication that stresses a return to art criticism. She writes for *Canadian Art*, *Modern Painters*, *Art + Auction* and *C Magazine*, among others.

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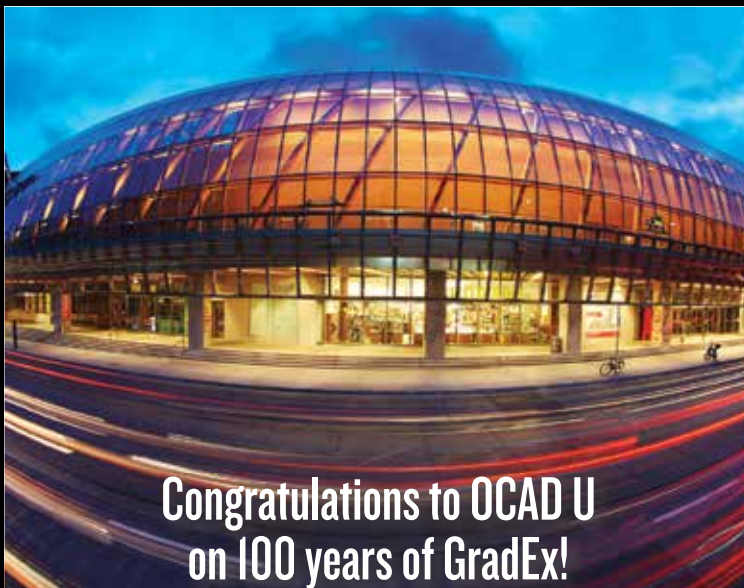
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HAPPY GRADEx ANNIVERSARY!



Congratulations to OCAD U on 100 years of GradEx!

To all OCAD U graduating students,
 and the dedicated staff that helped inspire
 and guide them, the AGO salutes you.

AGO
 Art Gallery of Ontario | AGO.net

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A GRADUATION PRESENT THAT GIVES BACK

Congratulations OCAD University on 100 years of the Graduate Exhibition! The ROM invites new graduates to celebrate their academic success with a membership to the Young Patrons Circle (YPC) or Royal Patrons Circle (RPC). Make a philanthropic gift to the Museum and enjoy exclusive exhibition previews, access to behind-the-scenes collections and networking events for creative professionals.

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Winners receive up to \$2,000 and have their work included in an exhibition at Design Exchange in Toronto!

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 CANADA'S DESIGN MUSEUM



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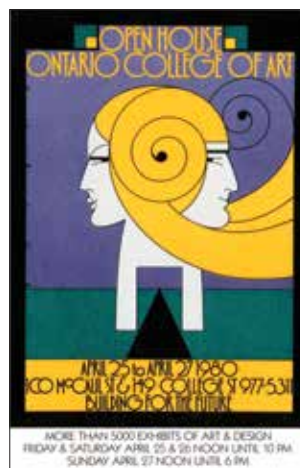
100 Years of Exhibiting Innovative Student Works

A highlight of the Toronto spring cultural calendar for decades, planning has been intense for this year's centenary annual Graduate Exhibition.



Opposite 1924 prize winners standing on steps at Ontario School of Art, including (at left) Governor General's Medal winner Miss St. Clare McDonald. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [57_004_367_029]

Right President Sara Diamond (front) tours the 97th Annual GradEx with Liberal Arts & Sciences Dean Caroline Langill at rear. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [162_3_062_093]. Photo by Christina Gapic



Top left

Staff and pupils' jury selecting drawings for the annual show of student work. Standing (L-R): Dorothy Johnston, J. E. H. Macdonald, H. H. Stansfield, Emanuel Hahn, Fred S. Haines, Yvonne McKague, A. Y. Jackson, Alice McMaster, Arthur Lismer, Mabel Hall. Seated (left to right): Aden Patterson, Edyth Coombs, Roselyn Hammond, George A. Reid (Principal), and J. W. Beatty. Published in *Toronto Star Weekly*, March 6, 1926. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [57_004_367_021]

Top right Annual exhibition of drawing and painting at the Toronto Art Gallery. Photograph published in 1924/25 *Prospectus*. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [57_004_367_026]

Centre Annual Open House Invitation, 1980. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [183_7_268_002]

Bottom Annual exhibition of life drawing and anatomy (third- and fourth-year students) at the Toronto Art Gallery. Photograph published in 1924/25 *Prospectus*. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [57_004_367_025]



Below Annual Open House Invitation, 1981. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [183_7_268_003]



For OCAD University graduands, it's quite the debut. The event now nicknamed "GradEx" has in the past been promoted variously as the Open House, Scholarship Show or Medal Winners Show. In this milestone year of 2015, the exhibition has evolved into a five-day festival intended to reach out to prospective students and bring back alumni, patrons, potential employers and art and design enthusiasts.

Back in the day

A spring rite of passage, an exhibition of works by students in OCA's (as it was then known) first four-year program was mounted in 1915/1916. The school was still in rented quarters and had yet to attain its own building. The Royal Ontario Museum had opened one year earlier, but, with no dedicated art museum as yet, Toronto was lagging behind cities such as Montreal and Detroit in terms of cultural infrastructure. Things were on the upswing, however. The nascent Art Museum of Toronto was in the works, having held its first public exhibition in The Grange, a bequeathed Georgian mansion, in June 1913. (An underwhelming debut, it featured patron Goldwin Smith's collection of dour portraits of Puritan notables and Titian copies belonging to Harriette Boulton Smith.) The Grange house continued to serve as the municipal art museum and venue for annual exhibitions of OCA student work until the Art Gallery of Toronto completed construction of its first galleries in 1919.

In 1920 the Art Museum of Toronto gave the Ontario College of Art permission to commence construction on a proprietary building on the Museum's grounds, but it was not until 1957 that the first graduating student exhibition was held on campus in OCA's "new extension" at 100 McCaul St. From then on, no groundbreaking acts of architecture occurred until the Sharp Centre tabletop addition opened in 2004. Visitors to the Annual Exhibition in 1947 perused works by students enrolled in Basic Training, Commercial Art, 5 Crafts, Design, Drawing & Painting, Interior Architecture and Sculpture.

At the time of OCA's first student exhibition, European academic painting conventions predominated. John William Beatty (who taught painting at OCA on and off from 1901 until 1947) expressed this view early on: "The development of a national school [style] of painting attuned to

Canada's topography and climate was being delayed because Canada's art traditions were still being influenced by middle Europe, and Canadian artists were still receiving their training there." It was the express intention of the upstart school to turn that ship around.

The Group of Seven was still growing into its legend in 1920 when Vincent Massey (future Governor General and founder of Massey College) came up with this bit of poetic doggerel about his fellow Arts and Letters Club members: "Critics recoil with outraged eyes to see/Their polychromatic atrocity." The Group's influence was soon to be pronounced however, no more so than at OCA where, in 1919, Arthur Lismer became vice-president. This was just prior to Lismer's becoming a founding member of the Group of Seven, which assumed the moniker in 1920. Later, beginning in 1928, J.E.H. MacDonald put his stamp on OCA as long-serving principal, a role he kept until his death in 1932. A.J. Casson also taught at the College from 1932 onwards, becoming the school's art director and in 1946, its vice-president.

During OCA's formative years, the diversity that now defines Toronto had yet to be realized. Toronto's cultural elites in the early 1900s were unaccommodating to women, Jews and newcomers of varying nationalities, excluding them from networking organizations. Founded in 1908 for the appreciation of the arts and "good conversation," the Arts and Letters Club did not invite women to be members until 1985 (not a typo). Taking matters in hand, however, women artists convened at the Women's Art Association (founded in 1886) and the Heliconian Club, an arts and letters organization dating from 1909. Both organizations are active to this day in Yorkville.

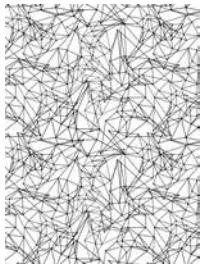
Gradex reflects change

OCAD U's curriculum has reflected and, more recently, pioneered cultural, technological and curatorial change. Cross-talk and synergy with other programs characterize the output of students in Integrated Media, Criticism and Curatorial Practice, Digital Futures and Indigenous Visual Culture. For example, no one should be surprised to see artworks created in media ranging from textiles to video to digital, all by a single student in Life Studies. Multi-disciplinary practices are encouraged at OCAD U and it will be fascinating to see to what extent students in Digital Painting and Expanded Animation, Life Studies, Publications, or Art and Social Change take advantage of increased access to whatever media or techniques will create maximum impact

Upping GradEx's gravitas quotient, 2015 is only the second year that master's-level graduates from six Graduate Studies programs will participate. But already those emerging from the Criticism and Curatorial Practice and Strategic Foresight and Innovation programs, to name just a couple, are generating nothing if not critical questions and exciting curatorial projects.

OCAD U's mission to build a just and inclusive society inspired the institution to offer courses in Indigenous culture beginning in 1990. The fact that Toronto was founded on an important site for Aboriginal peoples, plus the presence in the GTA of more than 31,000 residents of Aboriginal origin (31 per cent of all Aboriginal people in Ontario), inspired the launch of the Indigenous Visual Culture program in 2010/11. While there will be no Bachelor's graduates until 2017, students of Indigenous- and non-Indigenous origin are now taking courses in fundamentals of First Nations, Métis and Inuit art and design. They'll be moving into the new Indigenous Visual Culture Centre, currently under construction on Richmond Street West, in OCAD U's south campus. While scholarship is key, sustaining one's practice is also an issue: "We are building entrepreneurship courses within the OCAD U community," says Ryan Rice, chair, Indigenous Visual Culture program, "with an emphasis on being successful creative capitalists who can sustain their momentum upon graduation independent of grants and public funding."

The quality and sophistication of student work is also evolving. "After 100 years, the spring exhibition continues to inspire and instigate unparalleled energy and creative diversity," says Faculty of Art Dean Dr. Vlad Spicanovic. While painting and drawing, sculpture and material-based art and design continue to be at the pulsing heart of OCAD University, the ante is always being upped. "With 600 students graduating this year," he explains, "we're seeing more and better work than ever before." Clearly times have changed, and so too has artistic production.



Top (L-R) GradEx 2014. Photo by Christina Gagic; **Bri Cleary** (Material Art & Design 2014 Medal Winner), *Topspots*, Infographic pattern, GradEx 2014. Photo by Christina Gagic; Atrium installation, 1991 Annual Exhibition. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [169_6_136_014]

Centre 97th Annual GradEx, Photo by Christina Gagic. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [162_1_060_135]

Bottom (L-R) 94th Annual GradEx, Photo by Marina Dempster. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [151_10_372_008]; **Jeff Winc**, Integrated Media Medal Winner at GradEx 2008. Photo by Marina Dempster; Students prepare for exhibition, 1978. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [46_001_154_286]



Whither technology?

On campus many new digital design and media programs have been launched. But what will we see from students working in virtual space using digital tools? Another bank of monitors? Hardly. Visitors to GradEx won't want to miss the Digital Futures students' 3D IMAX film *Harmony*, appropriately enough about Toronto in the future. If all goes well, IMAX, a Digital Futures partner, aims to supply the virtual reality headsets they currently have in development, facilitating a projected version of the movie. About the film, Digital Futures Chair Tom Barker explains that, in addition to writing the script and doing the cinematography, students also designed the fun, futuristic costumes. Barker says, "Science fiction is a good tool for thinking, not just about technologies, but also social and cultural possibilities."

The big picture

GradEx is the most flamboyant expression of President Sara Diamond's overarching goal to increase what she calls the "porosity" among the school, the GTA community and beyond. She sees GradEx making waves that extend globally, saying, "OCAD University is primarily a studio-based school with thousands of alumni and talented faculty who engage in many positive initiatives with far-reaching cultural, social and economic impacts."

Agreeing that it's a "big, big show" to take in, Diamond recommends the GradEx mobile app, which features maps and location-finders for participating student exhibits; the Alumni Lounge; feature sales; and this year's medal-winning art and design. In the near future she'd like to see student projects — especially those of a more intangible nature, designed in and for the digital space — showcased in a virtual GradEx gallery that could also facilitate subsequent sales and commissions.

Tom Barker is speaking about his Digital Futures program when he says, "Almost all of our special achievements have been collaborations — it's in our DNA." But the gestalt is increasingly enacted across the institution, often from seeds planted at GradEx. OCAD University collaborations with

Bulthap, Mercedes-Benz, First Capital Realty, IMAX, the City of Toronto, Blackberry and Luminato all had their genesis in the "wow" experience of GradEx's unbridled creativity.

The spring event also functions as a job fair and talent showcase and senior staff relish touring the show with patrons and industry visitors, as well as government supporters. One thing can quickly lead to another. Among the great outcomes of GradEx's past is OCAD University's Imagination Catalyst. President Diamond and Robert Montgomery, former Board of Governors Chair, while surveying innovative student projects, dreamed up the incubator and entrepreneurial support system to help recent alumni, students and Ontario-based start-ups take their designs, inventions, services, systems and prototypes to market.

Careers launched

Ever a springboard, gallerists routinely visit GradEx to scout for new artists. But some of those emerging talents end up opening their own commercial spaces. (Wil Kucey the dynamic owner of Le Gallery [Criticism & Curatorial Practice, 2005] comes to mind.) Also in attendance are industry representatives such as those from Deloitte, who in past years were spotted on the lookout for information designers. Post GradEx, dozens of thesis projects are submitted for awards programs such as Young Lions (for advertising) in Cannes. Other final projects find their way into design annuals published by such industry luminaries as *Applied Arts* and *Communication Arts*. Many new grads also make it onto "Top 30 under 30" lists, such as those assembled by *Marketing Magazine* or *ARTINFO Canada*. Students frequently graduate with internships in place (Ikea in Sweden, Blackberry) or are soon hired by the likes of Denmark's LEGO Group, LA's Critical Mass, Loblaw's, Google, Bombardier, the University Health Network's Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, Umbra, IDEA Couture, the Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre and Jane's Walk, along with a host of design, advertising or communications agencies and cultural organizations.

Top (L-R) Exhibition (first-year modelling) works published in the 1925-26 *Prospectus*. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [57_004_367_033]; boat **Michael Doxey**, 1991 Annual Exhibition. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [169_6_136_374]

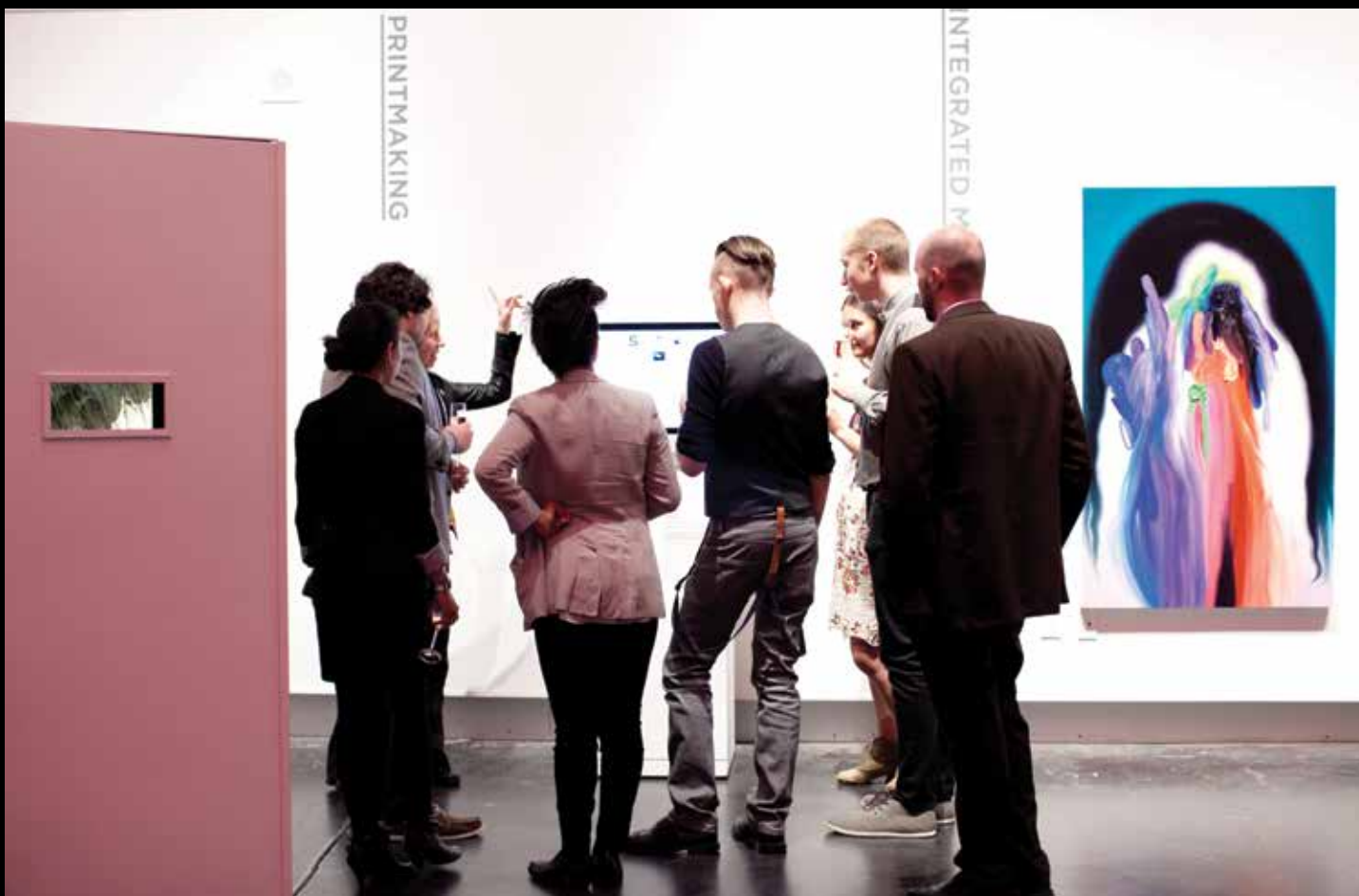
Bottom left Exhibition (third- and fourth-year modelling) works published in the 1925-26 *Prospectus*. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [57_004_367_034]

Centre above Milena Milicic, 2012 Industrial Design Medal Winner, photo by Christina Gagic. OCAD University Visual Resources/Archives [162_3_062_093]

Centre below GradEx 2013 student work. Photo by Sarah Mulholland

Bottom right Meryl McMaster, *Consanguinity*, digital chromogenic print, 2010





Game-changing graduates

Among countless celebrated alumni is Michael Snow (Environmental Design, 1952) who has been rightly described as “an avantgardist’s avantgardist.” Speaking about the sources of his cross-disciplinary practice back in 1967, he explained, “My paintings are done by a filmmaker, my sculpture by a musician, my films by a painter, my music by a filmmaker, my paintings by a sculptor, my sculpture by a filmmaker... who sometimes all work together.” Another stellar alumna, Flavia Sigismondi (Communication & Design 1988,) wrote and directed the 2010 feature film *The Runaways* and her “Mirrors” video for Justin Timberlake received the MTV 2013 video of the year award, adding lustre to a client list that includes Marilyn Manson, The White Stripes and several recent gigs for David Bowie including his absurdly watchable video with Tilda Swinton. But you could choose any decade from the past century and find that it launched revolutionary grads: experimental figurative painter Doris McCarthy (Drawing & Painting, 1930), typographic renegade Stuart Ash (Graphic Design, 1963), art education pioneer Gary Neill Kennedy (AOCA, 1960), renowned illustrator Anita Kunz (Illustration, 1978), indigenous artist Rebecca Belmore (Experimental Arts, 1988), Relational Aesthetics creator Rikrit Tiravanija (Experimental Arts, 1984) and advertising gurus Elspeth Lynn and Lorraine Tao (Communication & Design, 1990 and 1992).

A number of successful OCAD U alums have returned to teach. Alumna and Faculty of

Art Professor Barbara Astman (Experimental Arts, 1973) returned as an instructor several years after graduating, and has maintained an influential photo-based art practice ever since. Master printer, graphic novelist and publisher George Walker (Printmaking and Book Arts, 1978) and lauded installation artist Ian Carr-Harris (Sculpture, 1971) both returned to teach. Gary Taxali (Communications and Design/Illustration, 1991), now a Faculty of Design associate professor, is a sought-after illustrator and designer. It’s a bit of a coup actually that Taxali designed the poster for GradEx 2015.

Recent Faculty of Design Medal Winners who have hit the ground running include: Henry Chong (Industrial Design, 2011; Imagination Catalyst, 2012), whose electric bike helped him become entrepreneur-in-residence at MaRS; Jessica Ching (Industrial Design, 2009), who has her HPV home-testing kit in development; Robert Tu (Graphic Design, 2013; Imagination Catalyst, 2014), who is making inroads with wearable tech; and infographic textile designer Bri Cleary (Material Art & Design, 2014), who was hired by Umbra right out of the gate. Then there’s Hudson Christie, who graduated last May with the Illustration Medal and had an illustration last June in *The New York Times*.

Recent Faculty of Art medal winners swiftly transitioning into viable careers include Erin Loree (Drawing & Painting, 2014) who’s wasted no time in participating in residencies and exhibitions. Before her, Alex McLeod (Drawing & Painting, 2007), with eight solo

GRADEX BY THE NUMBERS

Some call GradEx Opening Night festivities the largest launch party for any art exhibition in Canada, art fairs included. Now a bona-fide blockbuster, attendance has grown phenomenally, with 24,000 visitors flooding through the exhibition over four days in 2014. This year, with an extra day added, attendance could burgeon to 35,000 or more. Wednesday, April 29 is opening day; that evening, the Opening Ceremonies, Medal Winners Celebrate Excellence reception and public gala take place in the Great Hall at the Sharp Centre for Design. Thursday, April 30 and Friday, May 1 are Secondary School Days, with pre-booked groups onsite from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., keen to interact with OCAD U grads. (Last year more than 7,000 high-school students checked out the facilities.) On Saturday of that week, alumni are welcomed into the Alumni Lounge with complimentary refreshments, merchandise and a registration desk for a tour of the Medal Winners' Exhibit.

This anniversary edition of GradEx would not have been possible without the generous support of our many sponsors: CP24, Delaney Capital Management, First Capital Realty, presenting sponsor Mercedes Benz Financial Services, *Now Magazine*, Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund and Steam Whistle Brewing.

But the real stars of GradEx are the Medal Winners, with coveted medals (one for each program) presented with sufficient fanfare to change a student's life. The wild ride begins on the Monday night; come Tuesday morning, medalists liaise with administration and staff, get a video made of themselves and their works and plan their special exhibition. Not to be forgotten after the glitter ball stills, images of the Medal Winners' work are incorporated into the OCAD U logo, appearing on university communication materials for the upcoming year. They're also reproduced on McCaul Street banners. These function both as campus wayfinding and a form of marquee, heralding a rush of talent, OCAD U's brightest, to the bold world beyond the academy.

shows to his credit, was already becoming the poster boy for digital. Meryl McMaster (Photography, 2010) presented a thesis exhibition of identity-quest photo-works so stunning that she not only garnered the 2010 Photography program medal, but also the Charles Pachter Prize, the Canon Canada prize and a number of other honours.

Clearly, while student participation in GradEx is optional, you'd have to have very good reasons not to participate. From a spectator's standpoint, Dean Spicanovic describes the net emotional effect of attending this lollapalooza of an event: "The best part of the GradEx experience is just being in it. No, you can't see everything, but you can feel the overwhelming magnitude of creativity as you are surrounded by it." President Diamond also has a tip for getting the most out of the "joyous" event. "Remember," she says, "with an extra day added, you can always break it down into two visits and come back!" □

Betty Ann Jordan is a Toronto-based arts writer and founder of Art InSite tours.

Opposite Guests at GradEx 2012 socialize in front of work by Drawing & Painting Medal Winner Erin Loree. Photo by Christina Gagic

Right Faculty of Art Dean Vlad Spicanovic enjoys a President's tour of GradEx 2013. Photo by Martin Iskander





Exhibition of home-grown photographers marks festival's 10th

Among the milestones celebrated this year at OCAD University was the 10th anniversary of the Magenta Foundation's **Flash Forward Festival**. Like the opportunity for exposure that GradEx represents (and the launching point the exhibition has become for young careers), Flash Forward has likewise been a seminal exhibiting opportunity in the lives of emerging photographers. The Onsite gallery acknowledged this, in late 2014, with Flash Forward 10: Uncanny Worlds, a showing of works by past festival winners from OCAD University.

Onsite curator Lisa Deanne Smith worked with MaryAnn Camilleri, Flash Forward director and founder of the Magenta Foundation, to put together Uncanny Worlds. Though the Onsite exhibition was fascinating in its own right, Smith is quick to acknowledge Flash Forward: "Its annual competition, publications and exhibitions are important to young OCAD U photographers as they make their way into the professional world."

Magenta was created to organize promotional opportunities for artists through circulated exhibitions and publications. Particularly key to the university and its ethic of learning and mutuality is the standard Magenta has for community collaboration — while developing both a domestic and international presence vital to the success of artists. "When we started Flash Forward 10 years ago," says Camilleri, "it was my hope to bring awareness to emerging artists at OCAD U and create a platform that would encourage and empower them. Never in my wildest dreams did I think that we would change the lives of 1,200 artists during the tenure of this program."



Top Jinyoung Kim, *The Passing*, video still, 2012

Bottom Elise Victoria Louise Windsor, *Fleur Green*, 2014

Flash Forward 10: Uncanny Worlds included works by Photography alumni **Sebastián Benítez** (2014), **Kotama Bouabane** (2003), **Danny Custodio** (2005), **Nathan Cyprys** (2010), **Adrian Fish** (1999), **Jinyoung Kim** (2008), **Alex Kisilevich** (2009), **Sanaz Mazinani** (2003), **Meryl McMaster** (2010), **Stacey Tyrell** (2002) and **Elise Victoria Louise Windsor** (2011) as well as Integrated Media grad **Geoffrey Pugen** (2003).

The artists are diverse, with strong ties to different locations of influence including Canada, the Caribbean, Europe, Iran, South Korea, Laos, Portugal and Venezuela. “Curating within pre-determined limitations,” Smith explains, “can often produce fascinating results, as is the case with Flash Forward 10: Uncanny Worlds. Limited to OCAD U photography alumni who have been winners of Flash Forward, a moment was created in which to search for conceptual links and common areas of interest. It was intriguing to find, more often than not, the images questioned the relations humans have with the physical world.”

As significant as these links turned out to be to the strength of the exhibition, so too were the differences that emerged among the artists’ work. Both owe a likely debt to the OCAD U faculty members who played a part in the training of the photographers involved. Camilleri offers a special shout-out to professors Barbara Astman, Peter Sramek, April Hickox and Jennifer Long. And there are many more. Camilleri adds, “The most lasting achievement of this program is all the talent that has been assembled in what we call the Flash Forward Family. These artists have built formidable careers — thanks to the nature of the program as a launching pad designed to help emerging artists at the dawning stages of their careers. Watching them grow and prosper over the years has been a true honour.”

Below Geoffrey Pugen, *Snake*, 2012

Bottom left Stacey Tyrell, *Church on Pond Hill*, 2009

Bottom right Sebastián Benítez, *Untitled from Excuse Me*, 2013



ALUMNI NEWS

OCAD U alumni at Toronto Design Week 2015

For one week every January, while the city bundles up against the cold, Toronto is quietly taken over by designers. Their main event is the annual **Interior Design Show (IDS)** at the Metro Convention Centre, an exhibition of the latest in international and Canadian design. Held at the same time, the **Toronto Design Offsite Festival** showcases independent design in Toronto with installations and programming across the city, including **Come Up To My Room**, the vibrant annual alternative design showcase at the landmark Gladstone Hotel in Queen West.

“That so many alumni of this institution are featured in events during Toronto Design Week demonstrates how our design graduates succeed in advancing design on a national and international scale,” says Gayle Nicoll, dean of the Faculty of Design. “Toronto Design Week provides an opportunity for the discerning public and design professionals to observe and engage in a wide scope of events, from creative explorations to highly commercial outcomes of the design process.”

Though there are hundreds of OCAD U alumni, faculty and students involved every year, here are a few highlights from 2015's events, which ran from January 15 to 25:



Annie Chou, partner and principal designer, Arc & Co. Design Collective (Graphic Design, 2006)

Featured in: Interior Design Show
Installation: Arc & Co. designed the popular designboom mart at IDS, a 50-by 30-foot design bazaar for emerging and established designers from around the world testing new ideas.

Chou's design success: Her company is a multidisciplinary agency specializing in merging graphic design with 3D projects. Chou loves to confront conventionality: her company eschews a recognizable style in favour of constant adaptability.



Above Annie Chou and Robert Joel Cortez from Arc & Co. at the Interior Design Show (IDS). Image courtesy Arc & Co.

Right Fareena Chanda, *From Now Until the End, And Now Again*, installation at the Gladstone Hotel, 2015. Photo by Agata Piskunowicz on behalf of Come Up To My Room

Fareena Chanda, artist and freelance creative consultant (Interdisciplinary Master's in Art, Media and Design, 2012)

Featured in: Come Up To My Room
Installation: *From Now Until the End, And Now Again*, a walk through a fantastical garden to a final resting place that asks viewers to silently imagine undergoing sublimation.

Chanda's design success: Chanda is an interdisciplinary artist working within the interstitial spaces of art, media and design. She combines her studio practice with creative consulting for cultural clients including the Royal Ontario Museum and the Aga Khan Museum.

Robert Cram, artist, curator, landscape architect, member of the Heretical Objects Arts Cooperative (Interdisciplinary Master's in Art, Media and Design, 2015)

Featured in: Come Up To My Room
Installation: *Orange Crush*, (with DTAH) an ode to the construction wave casting shadows of transformation and cloaking the city in orange plastic.

Cram's design success: Cram works as a landscape architect for DTAH and is a staple of the Toronto art and design community as an artist and curator. He is a co-curator for Come Up To My Room.



Kotama Bouabane
Flower Puzzled
 2014
 32" x 40"
 C-Print
 Courtesy of the artist and Erin Stump Projects
 Estimate: \$2,200

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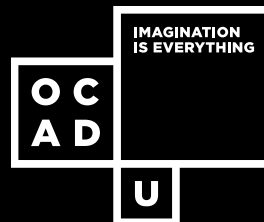


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ALUMNI NEWS



Meaghan Hyckie, artist (Drawing & Painting, 2007)

Featured in: Come Up To My Room

Installation: *Free Convective Mother Clouds*, drawings examining utopian systems of urban planning within a historical context of sublime landscape imagery.

Hyckie's design success: Hyckie's work aims to destabilize familiar imagery such as suburban homes, clouds and explosions. After graduating from OCAD U, Hyckie won the National Open Art Competition Young Artist Prize in London England and co-curated two exhibitions. Her studio practice is now based in Toronto.

Miles Keller, principal, Dystil (Industrial Design, 1989; OCAD U Faculty of Design instructor, Emerging Technologies and Design of Everyday)

Featured in: Interior Design Show

Installation: Selected by an international jury to showcase works in the Studio North gallery at IDS.

Keller's design success: Internationally recognized for product design for a wide range of clients including Herman Miller and Umbra, Keller is one of Canada's most highly regarded industrial designers. His company Dystil is a multidisciplinary firm focused on design problem solutions to improve everyday life.

Carla Poirier, graphic designer, creative director, photographer, curator (Graphic Design, 2009)

Featured in: Come Up To My Room

Installation: Curator of *in a space*, which represents works by eight artists (seven OCAD U grads) exploring both graphic design fundamentals and abstraction to blur the line between art and design.

Poirier's design success: Poirier is the co-founder and curator of Creative Type, Toronto's typography showcase. She's also exhibited her photography and works as a graphic designer for well-known clients such as Nike, National Ballet of Canada and the Art Gallery of Ontario.

Noah Scheinman, artist and writer (Environmental Design, 2013) and

Mary Soroka, art director and illustrator (Medal Winner, Advertising, 2013)

Featured in: Come Up To My Room

Installation: *Surface Space*, a collaboration borrowing from both advertising and architecture to investigate the material reality of images.

Scheinman and Soroka's design

success: Scheinman's work as an artist and writer is fueled by an interest in the relationship between architecture, politics and urban form. Soroka's work as an art director and illustrator focuses on print, packaging, photography, web/app design and time-based media.

Michael Trommer, producer and sound artist (Interdisciplinary Master's in Art, Media and Design, 2015; OCAD U Faculty of Design instructor, English for Art and Design)

Featured in: Come Up To My Room

Installation: *Proximity* (with multidisciplinary artist Corinne Thiessen), a narrative scene and soundscape featuring a couple in a darkened hotel room with their ears to the wall as they listen to the intimate sounds of their neighbours.

Trommer's design success: Trommer uses field recordings and focuses on psychogeographical explorations. His audio installation work has been heard around the world and is on permanent exhibition at London's Victoria and Albert Museum.

Above Meaghan Hyckie, *Free Convective, Mother Clouds*, drawing, 2015. Photo by Agata Piskunowicz on behalf of Come Up To My Room

Below Carla Poirier (curator), *in a space*, graphic design installation at the Gladstone Hotel, 2015. Photo by Agata Piskunowicz on behalf of Come Up To My Room. Artist: **Jacqueline Lane**, *experiments in black and white*

Suzanne Alyssa Andrew is the author of *Circle of Stones*, a novel (Dundurn Press, March 2015). She is a freelance producer, story editor and writer for digital media and a guest associate editor for *Taddle Creek* magazine.



ALUMNI NEWS

Villa Toronto: 20-odd galleries and some notable grads

Villa Toronto 2015 is the latest in a series of international week-long contemporary art gallery events organized by Warsaw's Raster Gallery. The roving series emphasizes the importance of the role of private galleries in contemporary art and focuses on engagement more than the market. It's not an art fair, but a varied set of encounters throughout the host city, open to the local art community and general public. The main venue for Villa Toronto, in January 2015, was the Great Hall at Union Station.

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Michael Snow (Design, 1952) delighted his audience at the Drake Hotel's Underground as part of Villa Toronto. For more than 50 years, the internationally acclaimed experimental filmmaker, pianist, painter, sculptor, photographer, holographic artist and writer has expanded and personified the definition of interdisciplinary artist. Snow, standing in front of the sound booth at the Queen Street performance venue, live-edited footage from his November 2014 jazz piano performance in Tokyo. The resulting improvised video mix of ghostly apparitions enthralled his audience and prompted a lively post-performance Q&A.

Among Michael Snow's many national and international accolades, the OCAD U alumnus is the first person to receive the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts for cinema (2000) and he is a Companion of the Order of Canada (2007).

Villa Toronto 2015 was presented in collaboration with Art Metropole. One of the event posters features the work of OCAD U alumna and 2012 RBC Canadian Painting Competition winner Vanessa Maltese (BFA, 2010).

Left Post performance, Sylwia Serafinowicz, collections curator at Wrocław Contemporary Museum, interviews artist Michael Snow. Photo by Patrick Biller/Drake Hotel

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Exhibition

INFLUENC(ED.) MACHINES

OCAD U's Open Gallery, November 2014

Influenc(Ed.) Machines is the result of primary curatorial research by students of International Collaboration Studio, a new Criticism and Curatorial Practice course taught by Professor Jennifer Rudder. The students researched the Photo Electric Arts Department of OCAD U in the 1970s — a catalyst in the development of new media and electronic art in Toronto. The exhibition revealed a legacy at OCAD U beginning with artist and Professor Norman White teaching Doug Back, who became faculty and taught Layne Hinton (and many others.)

Curated by **Robin Goldberg, Matthew Kyba, Kate Murfin, Tak Pham, Treva Pullen, and Renée Stephens**. Works by (then) OCA and OCAD U faculty **Doug Back, Judith Doyle, Kate Hartman, Michael Page** and **Norman White**, student **Layne Hinton** and collaborator **Sara Bradley**.

Installation view of *Influenc(Ed.) Machines* with works by White, Back and Hinton. Photo by Treva Pullen





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