

2012

Sketch

Diamond, Sara, Andrew, Suzanne Alyssa, Billinger, Steve, Goodden, Skye, Osbourne, Mireille and Lau, Charlene K.

Suggested citation:

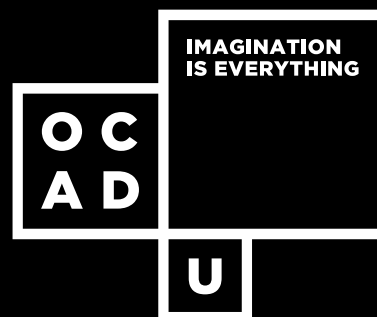
Diamond, Sara, Andrew, Suzanne Alyssa, Billinger, Steve, Goodden, Skye, Osbourne, Mireille and Lau, Charlene K. (2012) Sketch. Winter 2013, 28 (2). OCAD University, Toronto, Canada. Available at <https://openresearch.ocadu.ca/id/eprint/1297/>

Open Research is a publicly accessible, curated repository for the preservation and dissemination of scholarly and creative output of the OCAD University community. Material in Open Research is open access and made available via the consent of the author and/or rights holder on a non-exclusive basis.

The OCAD University Library is committed to accessibility as outlined in the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) and the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#) and is working to improve accessibility of the Open Research Repository collection. If you require an accessible version of a repository item contact us at repository@ocadu.ca.

The magazine of **OCAD University**
Volume 24, Issue 2

Winter 2013



SKETCH



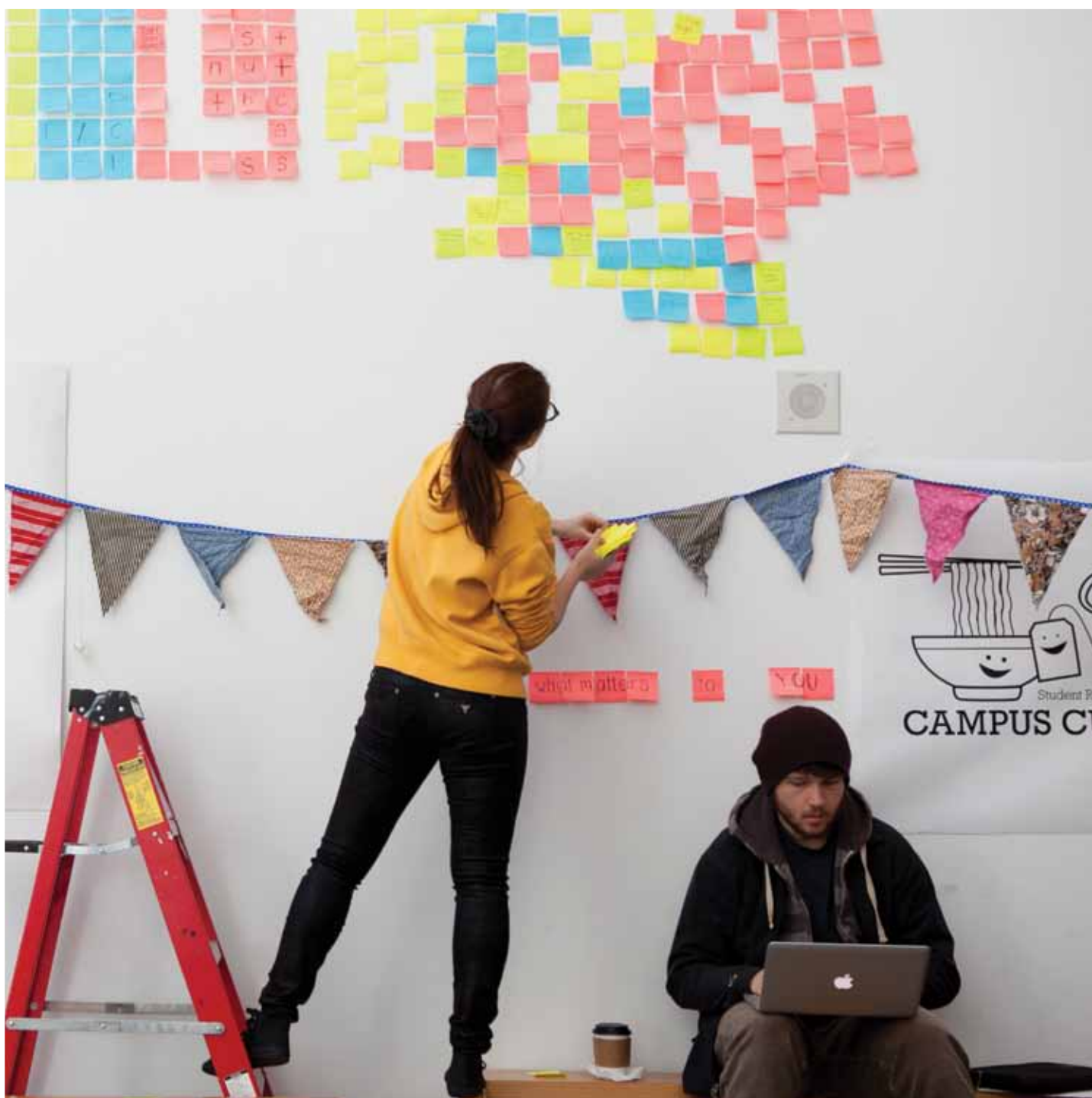
SKETCH

President and Vice-Chancellor **Dr. Sara Diamond**
Chancellor **Catherine (Kiki) Delaney**
Chair, Board of Governors **Ian C. Tudhope**
Vice-President, Academic **Dr. Sarah McKinnon**
Vice-President, Finance & Administration **Matt Milovick**
Vice-President, Development & Alumni Relations and
President, OCAD University Foundation **Jill Birch**
Associate Vice-President, Research, and Dean,
Graduate Studies **Dr. Helmut Reichenbacher**
Associate Vice-President, University Relations **Carole Beaulieu**
Associate Vice-President, Students **Deanne Fisher**
Dean, Faculty of Art **Dr. Vladimir Spicanovic**
Dean, Faculty of Design **Dr. Gayle Nicoll**
Dean, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences and
School of Interdisciplinary Studies **Dr. Kathryn Shailer**
Chair, OCAD U Foundation **Richard Kostoff**
President, Alumni Association **Maggie Broda**

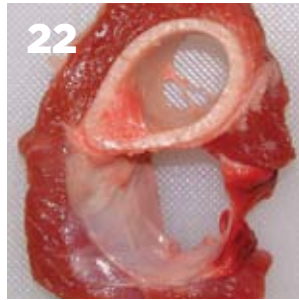
Produced by **OCAD U Marketing & Communications**
Editor **Larissa Kostoff**
Design **Hambly & Woolley Inc.**
Contributors: **Suzanne Alyssa Andrew, Steve Billinger,**
Sky Goodden, Mireille Osbourne, Charlene K. Lau
Special thanks to: **Lynn Austin, Shannon Gerard, Stacy Kelly,**
Keith Rushton, Kelley Teahen, Cheryl Wang

Charitable Registration #10779-7250 RR0001
Canada Post Publications Agreement #40019392
Printed on recycled paper.
Return undeliverable copies to: **OCAD University**
100 McCaul Street, Toronto, Ontario Canada M5T 1W1
Telephone 416.977.6000 Facsimile 416.977.6006 ocadu.ca

Note: The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of its contributors and do not necessarily reflect OCAD University policy or position.



CONTENTS



FEATURES

10 Major stakes: The Indigenous Visual Culture program at OCAD U

The university's newest major features course that draw on all faculties:
Art, Design and Liberal Arts & Sciences
By Millie Knapp

14 Health and wellness by design

In an era of hospital spending cuts, doctor shortages and long wait times, design, art and creative thinking could very well make Canada's health sector well again
By Kira Vermond

2 HAPPENINGS

3 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

4 CAMPUS NEWS

21 ALUMNI NEWS

22 ALUMNI PROFILE

25 EXHIBITION



Front cover Meryl McMaster, *Sentience*, C-Print, 2010.

Courtesy of Katzman Kamen Gallery

Opposite Pictured is Evi K. Hui (BDes, Industrial Design, 2012), using a plasma cutter in the metal fabrication studio. Photo by Justin Merk

Back cover Maxyne Baker, *Home* (detail), copper wire, driftwood, stone, found rope, various grasses, 2012. Photo by Martin Iskander



Happenings



Row 1 Guests participate in the Second Annual OCAD University Pow Wow and Graduate Celebration, held at Butterfield Park on October 16, 2012 to celebrate the afore-named Aboriginal Visual Culture program (now the Indigenous Visual Culture program) at OCAD U; Thunder Jack, a member of the Red Spirit Singers, performs at Butterfield Park

Row 2 Jay Lomax, a member of the Red Spirit Singers, performs during Pow Wow celebrations at Butterfield Park; (L-R) Professor Bonnie Devine, Melissa Penney, Beth Kotierk, Nigitt'stil Norbert, Barry Ace

Row 3 At OCAD University's Scotiabank Nuit Blanche 2012 presentation, Night Kitchen Under the Tabletop: Pictured (R) is Caroline Langill, an associate dean in the Faculty of Art; (L-R) Toronto City Councillors Josh Matlow (Ward 22) and Adam Vaughan (Ward 20)

Row 4 At Night Kitchen Under the Tabletop (L-R): event curator Lisa Myers, participating artist Christina Zeidler, Dr. Sara Diamond, participating artists Sean Procyk and Cheryl L'Hirondelle, event manager Jeff Zoeller; (L-R) Finance & Administration VP Matt Milovick, Judy Rigby, Dr. Rima Alawar, Board of Governors Vice-Chair Azim Fancy

Row 5 At the "135 Reasons" donor thank-you event: Drs. John Semple and Sara Diamond with Jamie Angell of the Angell Gallery; Xylophone players entertain guests at the donor thank-you event; (L-R) Chancellor Catherine (Kiki) Delaney with Development & Alumni Relations VP Jill Birch

Row 6 At the donor event (L-R): Indra Sarwinata, 2012 Advertising Medal Winner Edward Bucchi, Chrissy Spilchuk

Photos by Angela Griffith (rows 1-4) and Christina Gapic (rows 5 and 6)

President's Message

Building strong partnerships



Welcome to the Winter edition of *Sketch*. Its pages are filled with exciting news about projects that have come alive through our partnerships, from community and environmental initiatives to new curriculum, health research and a just-released report on the potential of mobile technology to better our lives.

OCAD University is a city builder committed to the economic and cultural enhancements of Toronto. We are very excited about our partnership with David Mirvish, founder of Mirvish Productions. In 2012, Mirvish and world-renowned architect Frank Gehry unveiled the conceptual design for a mixed-use sustainable project that will transform Toronto's downtown arts and entertainment district and advance the area's future as a thriving cultural centre, creating a new visual identity for the city's premier arts district. As announced, the Princess of Wales Centre for Visual Arts at OCAD University (see page 5) will be housed in the new development. It promises to be an exciting art showcase and learning centre that will include studios, seminar rooms, gallery facilities and a public lecture hall to promote and enable the making, study and exhibition of art. Its proximity to the Mirvish Collection gallery, also part of this redevelopment, will provide opportunity for wonderful partnership and collaboration.

You will also read here about OCAD University's Indigenous Visual Culture program's new Bachelor of Fine Arts (see page 10). One of our institution's strategic priorities is to honour, enhance and communicate the cultural knowledge of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Aboriginal peoples of Canada and the world. OCAD University has worked closely with the Indigenous cultural, educational and political leadership of Canada and our faculty to create a set of programs (minors, a BFA and graduate curriculum) that meet this purpose.

Another OCAD University strategic priority (see page 14) is to bring the lenses of art, design and media to issues of health and wellness — whether it's developing patient-centric experiences, helping the move from acute to community care, building data

visualizations to assist with disease containment, enhancing wayfinding or applying industrial and process design. To this end, we work with many partners: Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, University Health Network, The Hospital for Sick Children and Baycrest (from whom we received the 2012 Chair's Proud Partners Award). And we will soon launch a graduate program in Design for Health.

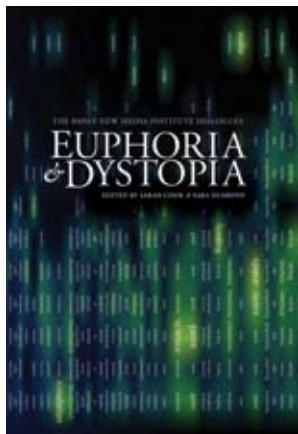
We welcomed the new year by celebrating the completion of Taking Ontario Mobile (takingontario-mobile.ca). This landmark research shows how we can transform the quality of life and economic well-being of Ontarians over the next decade, with the possibilities afforded us by mobile technologies, networks and applications. To become a leading mobile jurisdiction, Ontario needs a forward-looking policy framework that harnesses and catalyzes the province's considerable capacity and leadership across the mobile industries, in healthcare and education. Taking Ontario Mobile lays out a five-year "Mobile Action Plan" to increase productivity and competitiveness, create and retain jobs in the knowledge industries, and enhance efficiency and access to services for Ontarians. Accompanied by the Mobile Innovation Report (mobileinnovation-report.ca), it offers yet another example of how OCAD University is focusing and deploying its assets and, together with its partners, enhancing Toronto, Ontario, Canada and beyond. □

Dr. Sara Diamond

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

Above
Photo by
Tom Sandler

CAMPUS NEWS



Digital Media Symposium at OCAD U

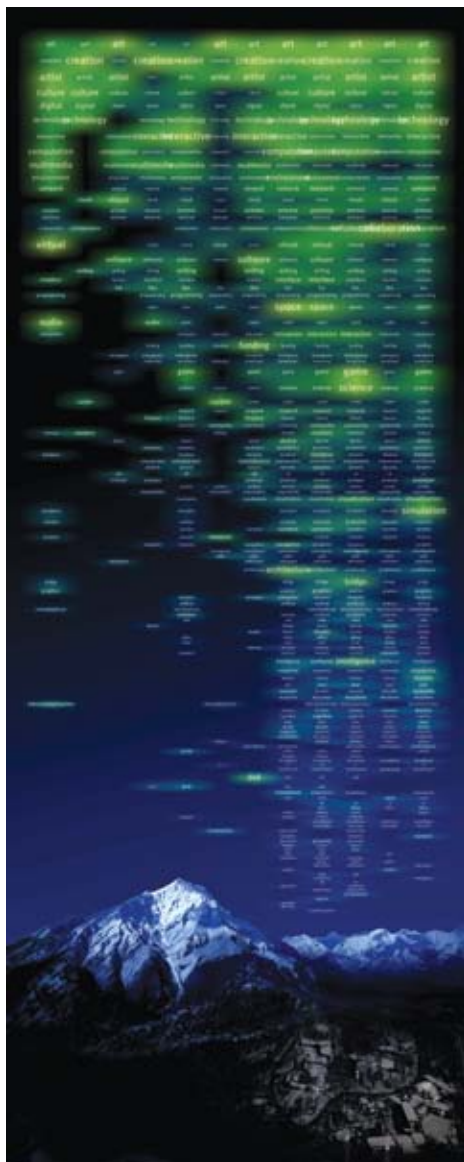
OCAD University presented *Euphoria & Dystopia* in late January, a two-day digital media symposium and graduate student research workshop. Sponsored by national research network and commercialization engine GRAND NCE, *Euphoria & Dystopia* took its inspiration from the book *Euphoria and Dystopia: The Banff New Media Institute Dialogues*, edited by Drs. Sarah E. Cook and Sara Diamond.

The publication is a compendium of some of the most important contemporary thinking about art, design technology and the new media industries at the international level. It invites readers to reflect on the digital concerns of the past 20 years, weighing these against contemporary research and industrial, social and cultural trends.

The symposium welcomed current digital media researchers, designers, artists and scientists, and featured a master's and doctoral student research workshop and an authors' keynote and book launch.

Particularly fascinating were the moderated panels, which investigated themes such as:

- copyright and open source models and the growing importance of data (its analysis and visualization, memory and documentation);
- the underlying scientific grounding for new media in physics and graphics computing;
- artificial life, artificial intelligence and robotics;
- new media art;
- online social and individual identity as it relates to gender, cultural differences, health and wellness; and
- models of production and collaboration in new media.



Dr. Sara Diamond, Jutta Treviranus among Diamond Jubilee Medal recipients

Two OCAD U community leaders received a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal this February. Honoured at a ceremony at Toronto's Roy Thompson Hall were President Sara Diamond and Jutta Treviranus, who is director of the university's Inclusive Design Research Centre and Inclusive Design Graduate Studies program. OCAD U Faculty of Design instructor (and writer, editor and urbanist) Shawn Micallef also received the award.

The commemorative medal was created to mark the 2012 celebrations of the 60th anniversary of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne. It simultaneously acknowledges the Queen's service to this country and the contributions and achievements of 60,000 Canadians.

University to host inaugural Urban Ecologies conference

OCAD U's Faculty of Design, in partnership with TD Bank Group, will be hosting a new international conference series on the intersecting themes shaping the future of design in cities. It will focus on information visualization, systems thinking, regenerative urbanism, urban health and community engagement. Scheduled for June 20 to 21, Urban Ecologies 2013, the first conference in the series, will feature presentations, panel discussions, interactive workshops and student exhibitions. The conference co-chairs, Jesse Colin Jackson, OCAD U's sustainability officer and an assistant professor in the Faculty of Design, together with Environmental Design Chair Bruce Hinds, invite you to find out more at urbanecologies.ca.

Opposite left & right Front and back book jacket images of *Euphoria & Dystopia*, published by Banff Centre Press, Riverside Architectural Press, 2011

Below Concept model for the proposed Mirvish + Gehry development, as unveiled Oct. 1, 2012 at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Pictured in background (to the left of the CN Tower) is Frank Gehry. Photo by Martin Iskander



Mirvish + Gehry (+ OCAD U too)

OCAD U attracted international attention on October 1, 2012 when internationally renowned architect Frank Gehry and Canadian art collector and theatre producer David Mirvish unveiled the conceptual design for Mirvish + Gehry. The large-scale, mixed-use development proposal, which has the potential to transform Toronto's downtown arts and entertainment district, includes a new 25,000-square-foot facility for OCAD U. It's the most significant urban commission to date for Toronto-born Gehry, and a continuation of the cultural legacy established by Mirvish and his family.

The proposal reimagines the arts and culture hub of King Street West in downtown Toronto, currently anchored by the historic Royal Alexandra Theatre, and extends OCAD U's developing south campus. Slated for the north side of King Street West, the new development would occupy the entire block between John Street and Ed Mirvish Way. The OCAD U facility is scheduled to be built in the first of

three towers. The trio of towers would each range in size from 80 to 85 storeys and rise from two podiums scaled to the size of neighbouring buildings. Together, the towers and podiums would form a dynamic still life against the skyline and bring a dramatic new visual identity to the area.

Under the leadership of Mirvish, together with Peter Kofman (president, Projectcore) and Gehry as architect, the project is envisioned as a true collaborative process. Gehry, a graduate of the Architecture program at the University of Southern California and City Planning at Harvard University Graduate School of Design, has designed award-winning cultural institutions around the world, including the Guggenheim in Bilbao, Spain and the redesigned Art Gallery of Ontario.

Gehry grew up in the King West neighbourhood and has a special affinity for this project. Similarly, David Mirvish, who is widely recognized for his longstanding support of Canada's artistic community and OCAD U, says this project is a continuation of the legacy his father, "Honest"

Ed Mirvish, began with the Royal Alexandra Theatre.

"It is truly remarkable to be part of this proposal," says OCAD U President Dr. Sara Diamond. "It promises to be an exciting and landmark development for the urban core and cultural district."

The development will feature a new multi-floor facility for the Princess of Wales Centre for Visual Arts at OCAD University. This will house smaller centres for exhibition and visual research; art history, curatorial and critical studies; publication and print-making; and continuing studies. It will also include a public lecture hall, seminar rooms, studios and gallery space to showcase the university's permanent collection.

The OCAD U collection will be complemented by a new 60,000-square-foot museum space dedicated to abstract art from the Mirvish Collection.

The proposal is now in the municipal approvals process related to zoning and development.



Left Campus photo by Christina Gapic

Below Dean Kathryn Shailer. Photo by Christina Gapic

Custom textbook sparks controversy

OCAD U is still working to find a long-term and affordable solution for providing materials to support the university's newly redeveloped first-year art and design history course.

Global Visual and Material Culture: Prehistory to 1800, launched in fall 2012, draws material from multiple texts that cover Western art and design, as well as Canadian, Aboriginal, and other international art and design not present in many standard texts, explains Kathryn Shailer, the university's dean of Liberal Arts & Sciences. She and a team of faculty experts created a custom pack of readings from three sources: a six-volume art history series by Marilyn Stokstad and Michael Cothren, *Graphic Design History: A Critical Guide*, and a selection of readings covering Canadian and other under-represented fields. But this two-volume custom text would have cost \$800, with much of the expense from licence fees for photographs of artwork.

The publisher, Pearson Canada, proposed supplying the artwork images through online links and removing the images from the custom text, creating a hybrid print-online product costing \$180 per volume. The university agreed to this; however, instead of reformatting the printed book portion, the publisher left blank spots where images were removed.

Students were not impressed with what was dubbed the "art textbook without art" and Shailer says she and others were shocked when they first



saw the new product too late to make changes before classes began. The story received international attention when a student's parent wrote a blog post about the issue that was then picked up widely via social media.

Shailer met with students, who said the hybrid approach was difficult to manage, having to go back and forth between online images and printed text; there was also concern that the custom book had no resale value. The publisher attended a second forum with students, apologized and, to make amends, offered the first five printed volumes of the source art history text series for free, plus a refund of \$50 if students wished to return the custom text in December.

"We are committed to the redeveloped course; we have great feedback from students. What we need to do is find an affordable way to put the material in front of them," says Shailer. "This issue flagged the larger challenge of the high cost of textbooks; in particular, art textbooks. This is an ongoing problem for our students and any art and design school."



Dot Tuer brings Passion, Politics and Painting to the AGO

The wildly successful Frida & Diego: Passion, Politics and Painting exhibition on view at the Art Gallery of Ontario from October 20 to January 20 was guest curated by OCAD U's Dot Tuer, a professor in the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences. Tuer, who is also a cultural historian, assembled more than 80 works on paper and paintings by Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, together with 60 photographs to provide a rare and intimate glimpse of the celebrated Mexican artists as a couple. "By bringing the work together, the show reveals the affinities — and differences — that shaped their creative visions," says Tuer.

Above left Pictured is Dot Tuer with Diego Rivera's *Calla Lily Vendor* (1943). Photo courtesy of the Art Gallery of Ontario

Above right Baguio City Public Market, Philippines. Photo by B. Lynne Milgram

Right Cooking paratha roti in Trinidad. Still from *Dal Puri Diaspora*



SSHRC Insight Grant for OCAD U's B. Lynne Milgram

"Contested Livelihoods: Food Provisioning Systems in Urban Southeast Asia," a research project by B. Lynne Milgram, a Liberal Arts & Sciences professor, and Sarah Turner, an associate professor of geography at McGill University, earned a four-year Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Insight Grant valued at \$160,464. Milgram and Turner are investigating the resilience and flexibility of fresh food traders in Baguio City, Philippines and Hanoi, Vietnam in the face of development agendas to modernize and construct Western-style shopping malls. "I am sincerely pleased and gratified to receive this vote of confidence from the Canadian academic community," says Milgram. "With this support I can continue to make yearly research visits to the Philippines to provide timely, empirically rooted knowledge about the difficulties urban food supply actors face in maintaining their livelihoods." Milgram and Turner plan to use their findings to highlight local efforts to persevere amid globalization and help policy-makers develop informed quality-of-life initiatives to address real, "on-the-ground" needs.

Dal Puri Diaspora wins audience award at international film festival

A documentary about dal puri (affectionately known locally as roti) directed by OCAD U's Richard Fung won the Samsung Audience Award at the Reel Asian International Film Festival in Toronto in November 2012. Fung, a Toronto-based, award-winning video artist, writer, theorist, and a professor in OCAD U's Integrated Media program, wanted to explore the elusive origins of one of his favourite foods. *Dal Puri Diaspora* interweaves cultural histories of people and palates from Fung's birthplace of Trinidad and Tobago to Toronto's Parkdale neighbourhood, connecting diverse audiences with a melange of themes about cuisine and identity — a tantalizing taste of what he calls "home."

CAMPUS NEWS

Right The “feel, hack, play” theme for Digifest 2011. Photo by Digifest

Below Nano Publishing students with Carl Wagan. Photo courtesy of ALSO Collective



Digifest panel strategizes for inclusivity in video games

“Playing for Keeps: Diversity in Video Games,” the keynote panel at this year’s Digifest, an international festival celebrating digital innovation and creativity, was conceived of and led by Emma Westecott, a Digital Futures Initiative assistant professor. Held in October 2012 at Corus Quay in Toronto, the panel discussed what can be done to work towards a more inclusive and creative game industry, and focused on the idea that diversity makes games better.

“Although as many women play games as men, there is a real shortage of women working in the game industry, and in technology more broadly” says Westecott. “I believe this is not only inequitable but also unnecessarily constrains the types of games that are made.” The panel also included Cecily Carver, co-founder of Dames Making Games; Jaime Woo, festival director and co-founder of Gamercamp; and Anna Anthropy, a DIY game developer known for her political engagement.



Carl Wagan: travelling camper van, spaceship of the imagination

At least one thing driving OCAD U’s new Publications specialization is unexpected — and that’s a 1988 VW Westfalia camper van named Carl Wagan. Named in homage to the innovative astronomer Carl Sagan, the camper van is an outreach vehicle: a gallery, print shop, studio, library, reading room, community hub and experiment in radical pedagogy. The brainchild of Shannon Gerard, an assistant professor in the Faculty of Art, Carl Wagan aims to ignite passion for indie publishing and act as a catalyst for the sharing of stories, both at OCAD U and in the community. “Carl Wagan started as a family project,” says Gerard. “Then I realized that everywhere we went, we made friends. Carl inspires conversation and attracts attention, so I decided to use it at OCAD U.”

The overall goal of the Publications program is to spark engagement with book-based cultural activity, including self-publishing, zine-making, screen printing and bookbinding. Carl Wagan enables students to bring indie publishing’s unique strategies, materials and ideas direct to audiences in a variety of settings. And its projects always have a destination.

Carl Wagan emerged as part of the Student Gallery’s 2012 Summer Camp program. Gerard’s Nano Publishing students dressed as Junior Scouts and helped visitors to Butterfield Park to earn badges in bookbinding, poetry, library science and orienteering from the mobile studio. Its next stop was Onsite gallery’s summer show, Letter Rip! in July, followed by a trek to the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA), where it appeared as the Justin Beaver Schoolhouse. Carl Wagan will be back on the road for an East Coast tour planned for the summer of 2013. Follow its travels at carlwagan.com.

Digital Futures undergrads produce *Torontosaurus* e-zine

Running on little sleep and fueled by pizza, 30 students from the Digital Futures Initiative (DFI) program’s first cohort created *Torontosaurus*, a digital magazine for Toronto teens, in a marathon three days. The magazine went live in November 2012 and can be read online at torontosaurus.ca. It focuses on topics relevant to the 16-year-old consultants the students interviewed as part of their market research: technology, advice, music and Toronto city life.

“We all learned a lot about the people we worked with,” says Alanna Predko, the magazine’s managing editor, “And I learned about managing people and bridging them together.” From an educational perspective, the project was a key part of the DFI mandate. And that’s to create what Tom Barker, the program chair, calls an “X” shaped designer, with skills from each point of the X: art, science, design and enterprise. It also helped prove Barker’s theory that the innovation cycle can be shortened to fewer than six days.

As part of the project, students had the opportunity to seek support and advice from some of Toronto’s best-known media experts, including Hamutal Dotan from the *Torontoist*; Matthew Blackett and Shawn Micallef of *Spacing*; Benjamin Boles, *NOW* magazine’s music editor; Adil Dhalia, founder of *MyCityLives*; and Edward Gajdel, a portrait photographer.

Right Poster for the Fatal Light Awareness Program.
Design by Avery Kua

Below Still from *Toronto Beyond Homelessness*, which took second place in OCAD U's Four by Six design competition

Annual design competition takes on homelessness

Four by Six, this year's annual design competition, asked students to think about what it means to be homeless. From October 18 to 22, 2012, interdisciplinary design teams collaborated on solutions to challenge perceptions around homelessness, consider policy as a point of change and make a difference. Students engaged with the topic in an intense way, impressing faculty, including Beth Alber, a former associate dean in the Faculty of Design. "There were some strong, poignant ideas this year," she says. "The students were fired up, and I thought Revolution, the winning team's project, was brilliant." The homelessness theme fits within the Faculty of Design's philosophical mandate: to design for humanity by looking at the world in ways that consider what people need. The design competition also benefits students. "It's a real experience they can bring to their practice," says Alber. "They walk away with a better understanding of what they can accomplish, even in a short time."



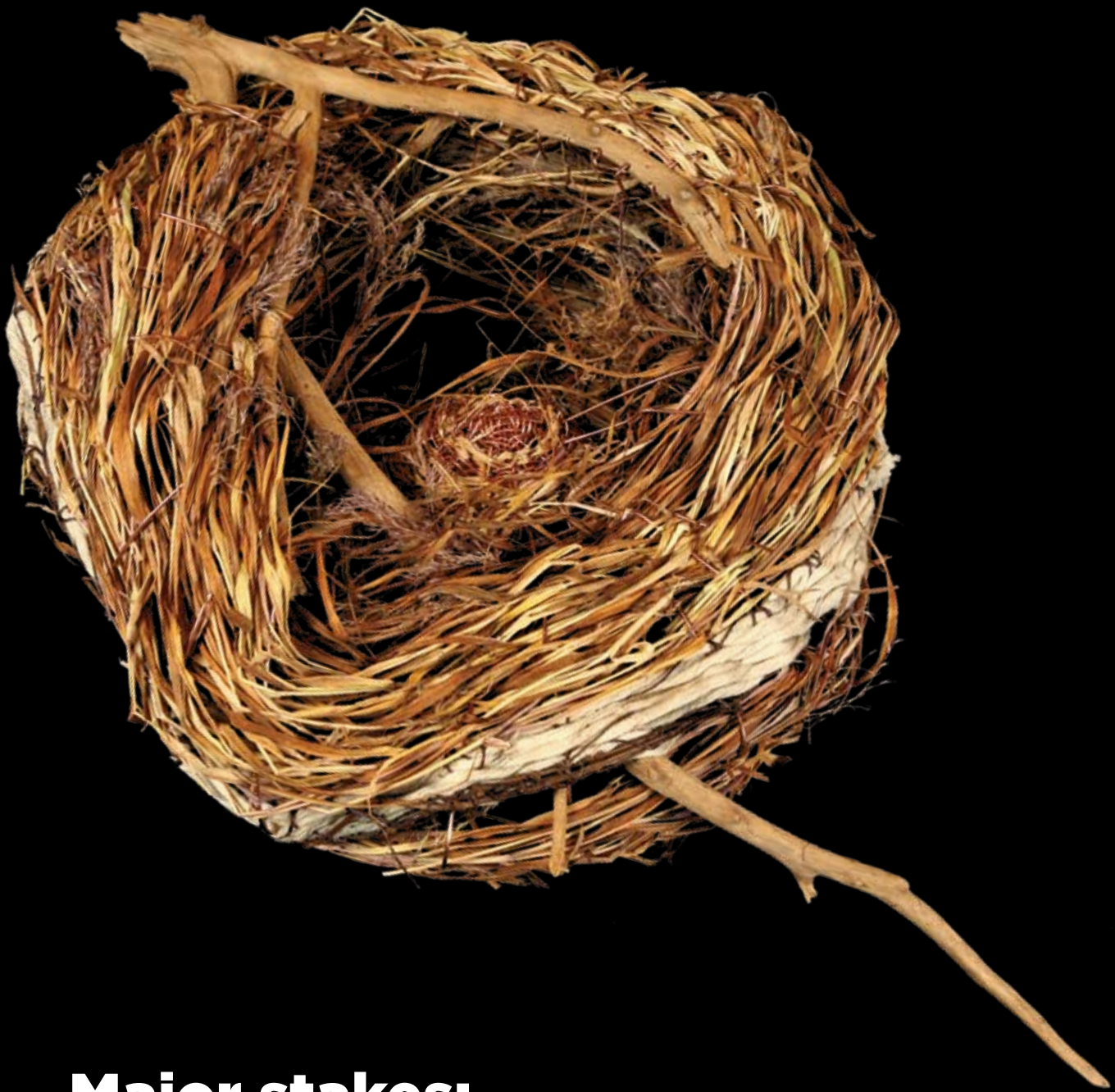
Avery Kua and FLAP win Colours for Conservation competition

Seventy first-year students from OCAD U's Colours in Context course competed in the Colours for Conservation poster competition this winter, a partnership exhibition between OCAD U and Patagonia. The winning poster, selected in a people's-choice ballot, was by first-year Design student Avery Kua and represented the Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP). FLAP received a \$1,000 grant, and Kua took home a new winter coat from Patagonia.

The exhibition opened December 5 at Toronto's King Street West Patagonia store, and was on display throughout the busy holiday shopping season. Organized by OCAD U Faculty of Design instructor Linda Montgomery, together with Patagonia's Andrea Reekes and Blaine Van Bruggen, the competition drew attention to the local environmental causes Patagonia supports. Montgomery developed the Colours for Conservation concept.

The overall goal of the competition was to inspire young designers and illustrators to use their talents to communicate urgent environmental issues. "Ecological colour research played a key role," says Montgomery. "It was a natural extension of what the students were learning in class, and at the same time it was an excellent way to connect them to organizations in the community as ecological ambassadors."

The posters are on view again at the Green Living Show in April 2013 and at the Brickworks in May.



Major stakes: The Indigenous Visual Culture program at OCAD U

By Millie Knapp

“The dream is that every Aboriginal student in the country will have the ability to reach his or her potential.”

— Professor Bonnie Devine, founding chair of the Indigenous Visual Culture (INVC) program at OCAD University

The welcome

“Aanii, tansi, skano...” So begins the new promotional video for the Indigenous Visual Culture (INVC) program at OCAD U. Its trilingual greeting by Professor Bonnie Devine, the program’s founding chair, not only welcomes prospective students; it also speaks to the multiplicity of voices they’re likely to find here.

This is significant. High school and university drop-out rates among Aboriginal students are on the rise in Canada. Social and economic issues plague First Nations, who face high rates of suicide and poverty. Devine sees education as a solution to these issues and instruction about Aboriginal culture as beneficial to all students. “What we want to do is prepare students who are educated in the history and the traditions of this place, whether they are Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, so that they understand what the land has birthed.”

The academy

Devine notes how the role of the academy can help further the scope of Aboriginal culture. “Getting an academic credential helps Aboriginal artists because it’s almost like a passport into the institutional gallery setting,” says Devine. She cites how Aboriginal art history has been written mostly by non-Aboriginal people. Art practices by Aboriginal people were not always seen as legitimate art forms. This view has begun to change in the last 10 to 20 years, as more Aboriginal people complete university degrees and become scholars who write a new Aboriginal art history, a critical history of Aboriginal cultural production, and a critical history of Canada.

“All of that broadens the scope of our cultural production and broadens the voice and the multiplicity of voices

so that it’s not just one view of what Indigenous visual culture is or one view of what art history is,” says Devine. “We’re starting to hear that multiplicity of voices. That’s coming out of the academies.”

The offerings of this particular academy are evolving, most notably with the launch of a new program major and a new program name. Effective April 15, 2013, the Indigenous Visual Culture (INVC) program will replace the afore-named Aboriginal Visual Culture program at OCAD U.

The change follows a period of much discussion and reflection. Explains Devine: “Though the terms aboriginal and indigenous share a similar definition, in recent times indigenous has come to be preferred to aboriginal by many individuals, communities and organizations, and has been adopted in legal and customary terminology by the United Nations. We decided that the term indigenous better reflects the international reach and the global pedagogical, research and socio-political aspirations of the program.”

David General, a former Six Nations chief and founding member of the Society of Canadian Artists of Native Ancestry (SCANA), with 25 years’ experience as a sculptor, curator and multimedia visual artist, was hired in October to replace Duke Redbird, the program’s original mentor and advisor. General facilitates the university’s weekly Buffalo Stew Lunch, a part of INVC support services.

Opposite page Maxyne Baker, *Home*, copper wire, driftwood, stone, found rope, various grasses, 2012. Photo by Martin Iskander

A fourth-year Environmental Design student pursuing a minor in sustainability, Baker’s studies have drawn her to INVC course offerings. She produced this work for an assignment called Toronto, Ontario, Canada in the studio class Introduction to Contemporary Indigenous Sculpture Practice.

Top Nodin Na Mutt, Isaïc Narciso Weber, *Grandfather, Pipesmoke*, acrylic on canvas, 2012. Photo by Martin Iskander

A second-year Drawing & Painting student, Weber is pursuing a minor in Indigenous Visual Culture.

Bottom Alexandre Nahdee, *Waassookwe*, spray paint on canvas, 2012. Photo by Martin Iskander

Nahdee is a fourth-year Drawing & Painting student pursuing an INVC minor. He created this picture for the course Critical Issues and Ideas in Contemporary First Nations Art.



The need

As part of a recent installment of the Buffalo Stew Lunch, OCAD U welcomed the 007 Collective, a group of seven artists from Ottawa, to the university's Onsite gallery on Richmond Street. Seated with Devine, 007 members Barry Ace, Rosalie Favell, Ron Noganosh, Frank Shebageget, Ariel Smith and Leo Yerxa talked to students and faculty. (Bear Witness, a 007 member, was unable to attend.) The group had invited Devine to be the Toronto Special Agent at their inaugural show last November at the Gladstone Hotel. Coinciding with this show, the lunch gathered students and faculty to hear the 007 talk about issues facing Aboriginal artists and communities today.

Devine sees a need for "specialized consultation and specific design solutions" and an approach where First Nations community members are engaged to design and build facilities in their communities. Recent news attention paid to the dire situation in Attawapiskat revealed how trailers were brought in, rather than sustainable housing built, to address the housing crisis there. Devine hopes the Indigenous Visual Culture program will create this type of expertise with courses that derive from all three OCAD U faculties: Art, Design, and Liberal Arts & Sciences.

The circle

Designing Across Difference, a course offered by the Faculty of Design, enables designers to interface with Aboriginal communities. Cathie Sutton, class instructor, invited Devine to critique the class presentations of a hypothetical centre to house the INVC program.

Third-year Industrial Design student Ocean Fukuda began with Aboriginal prophecy as he pointed to the maquette built by his group. The circular building represents the storytelling circle. Fukuda's group recorded the Seven Fires Prophecy into a visual representation and turned it into a building façade texture. "We're literally shaping the outside of the building with the oral history of the Aboriginal peoples," he said. "The strength of our concept is summed up in this quote from Gerald Vizenor, an Aboriginal (Anishinabe) writer: 'You can't understand the world without telling a story. There isn't any centre to the world but story.' With that in mind," Fukuda said, "we chose to explore this particular concept."

"Love it," Devine said. "Love it."

Fourth-year Environmental Design student Nazli Azizi pointed out other features, such as the entrance from the



Above Tara Bursey, *Burning Schoolhouses*, fireworks, Japanese Kozo paper and adhesive, 2012. Photo by Martin Iskander

Bursey is a fourth-year Criticism & Curatorial Practice student. She produced *Burning Schoolhouses* in response to an assignment in Critical Issues and Ideas in Contemporary First Nations Art, a lecture/seminar course in the INVC program.

east. When she finished, Fukuda noted how the interior spiral ramp has stations “to enjoy the story and see the art all the way down. The Seven Fires Prophecy is an ancient Anishinabe teaching that recounts the history of the people, their travails and challenges from earliest times into the future.”

Devine smiled and her eyes twinkled when she spoke. “In many ways, the journey we make when we study the Seven Grandfathers, the Seven Fires teachings, is an interior one. We are truly investigating ourselves. The idea of going down that spiral to come to this central circle has great metaphorical power and potential. It would lend itself to that story.”

The stories

With the program minor in place at OCAD U since 2008, Devine looks forward to the launch of the full BFA in Indigenous Visual Culture in September 2013, which will reflect the multidisciplinary characteristics of Aboriginal cultural practice. Why a multidisciplinary strategy? “Because much of our culture derives from storytelling, which is often a multi-media, multidisciplinary practice.” Many of the Aboriginal artists Devine knows practise across disciplines. “The desire, the impetus, the passion to tell the story is really what motivates their work. I find that a lot of artists, for that

reason, will use whatever material comes to hand to further their storytelling. This is most apparent in the visual arts. I’ve noticed that often we see multi-talented individuals who have the ability to speak across a number of media.”

Devine, a graduate of OCAD U’s Sculpture/Installation program, maintains a multidisciplinary artistic practice that includes writing, teaching, painting and curatorial projects. She explores storytelling through installation art and videos. “I see this being modelled in our communities, where people are called upon and respond in many ways to the needs they see culturally. We try to make our program reflect that,” she says.

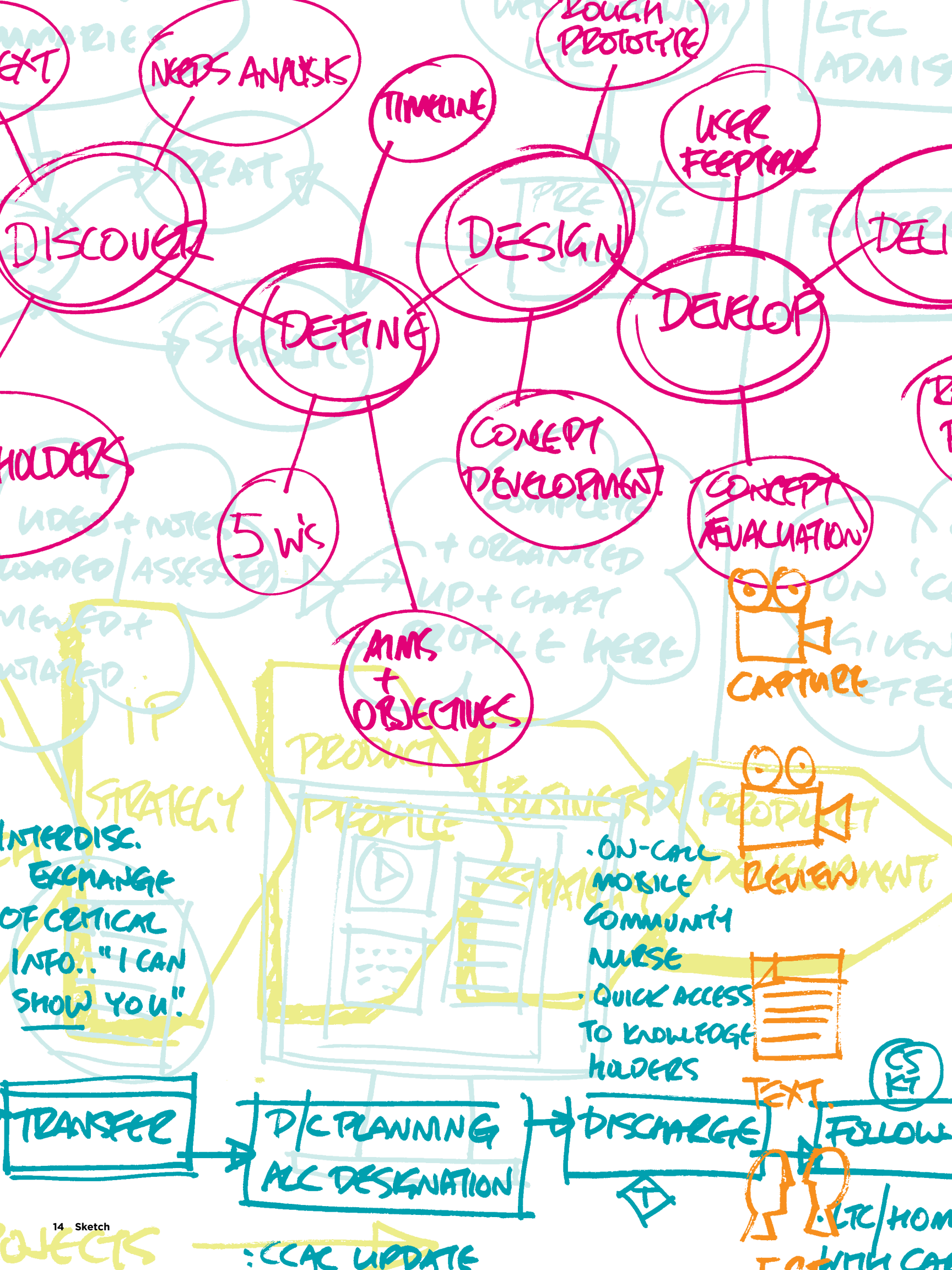
The talent to work across media and through storytelling is something Devine identifies in program students. Once they find their voice, they’re interested in using it in different ways and with whatever tools come to hand. “What we wanted to do when we established the program was allow students to explore different disciplines and different areas of practice — really allow them to use all their gifts,” she says.

Alexandre Nahdee’s gift of storytelling was awakened in instructor Mark Dickinson’s class *Ways of Telling: Aboriginal Literature and Narrative Tradition*. Nahdee, who is Ojibwa/

Portuguese and a Drawing & Painting major, will graduate with an INVC minor in 2013. He put stories he has heard about his ancestor, Chief John “Oshawana” Nahdee, second-in-command to Chief Tecumseh in the War of 1812, together with research for a class assignment. Recently, Nahdee visited the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto to view a portrait of Oshawana, his jacket, and other belongings. He also viewed a life-size portrait of Oshawana hanging in the War of 1812 exhibit at the War Museum in Ottawa.

In a third-year sculpture class taught by Devine, Nahdee told his family’s history and made a breastplate with bone beads and leather. “Since I made that, I’ve been wearing it all the time.” He laughs. “It’s in my backpack now.” At first reticent to reveal his Ojibwa heritage, hearing stories about Aboriginal history and art enabled Nahdee to speak more as the class progressed. When he wears the breastplate, he feels pride. “It’s like I’m showing the entire world that this is me. This is part of my story.” □

Millie Knapp (Anishinabe) is a freelance writer and executive director of the Association for Native Development in the Performing and Visual Arts (ANDPVA) in Toronto. She has worked in media for more than 20 years, with 10 years’ experience managing the Smithsonian’s *American Indian* magazine.



Health and wellness by design

By Kira Vermond

IN AN ERA OF HOSPITAL SPENDING CUTS, DOCTOR SHORTAGES AND LONG WAIT TIMES, DESIGN, ART AND CREATIVE THINKING COULD VERY WELL MAKE CANADA'S HEALTH SECTOR WELL AGAIN

"Should I take the elevator or the stairs?"

It seems like a simple enough question. Yet for Gayle Nicoll, it's one that's anything but straightforward. The OCAD University Faculty of Design Dean has long spent time researching how our physical environment has an impact on the simple health and wellness choices we make each day. She has even co-written a seminal book on the subject, *Active Design Guidelines*, which boasts a run of more than 10,000 copies distributed in 80 countries.

(And for the record, building open, accessible stairs rather than dim, unappealing fire-exit stairwells, encourages us to climb, she finds.)

Surprised OCAD U's focus is moving into the medical realm? Don't be. Nicoll's appointment effective July 1, 2011 is indicative of the university's commitment to merging design and health, not to mention using OCAD U's inherent strengths — creativity, imagination and innovation — to create new health-based systems.

"Designers and artists offer an essential perspective and ability to create environments, objects, processes, communications and policies that address the human condition," says Nicoll.

Or to put it another way, OCAD U students, alumni and faculty have the creative chops and lateral-thinking skills to envision health and wellness in a whole new way. Recent grad Jessica Ching turned her 2011 Industrial Design thesis into a company called HerSwab™, which allows women to conduct

their own Pap tests. Wellness will even be discussed at the university's Urban Ecologies conference (see page 4) in June 2013.

There is a good reason to merge health and design thinking. Health-care costs are rising, the population is aging, there's an increase in chronic disease and need for long-term care. Add these challenges to an inflexible, massive and over-stressed system, and it's easy to see why innovation is so desperately needed.

In fact, one might argue that when it comes to design and wellness, there is no better or more salient match. Just ask any parent who has had to keep an anxious child calm before a medical procedure. Third- and fourth-year OCAD U Design students recently collaborated with Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital researchers and launched ScreenPlay, an über-cool, interactive waiting room, complete with large projection wall.

The success of the project underscores the way design can help make an otherwise uncomfortable or scary situation more tolerable. A nicely designed chair has got nothing on that.

Problems need whiteboards

Design finds itself going through a parallel transformation. Once understood as a noun — i.e., a thing or product, what is ultimately created — design now finds itself moving into verb territory. Increasingly it's about the process, the thinking, problem solving, creating and becoming. And it's about inclusivity.

“Designers and artists offer an essential perspective and ability to create environments, objects, processes, communications and policies that address the human condition.”

— Faculty of Design Dean Gayle Nicoll



Take what Jules Goss has been working on lately. An OCAD U assistant professor and the former chair of Industrial Design, Goss is now the first designer-in-residence at a Canadian hospital.

"My job is to help people think about stuff, which is a weird hybrid between the educational me and the designer me," he says. "They're not always the same thing, but in this context they can be equalized."

In his brightly coloured basement lab at Baycrest hospital in Toronto, which houses three whiteboard-covered walls, Goss is bouncing around ideas about how to ensure that the most complex Alzheimer's patients are moved into long-term care with more dignity and less stress.

One tool? A simple video camera. Patients are filmed on good and bad days at Baycrest. That footage is then edited and put on a DVD for the new long-term care team to view. The DVD also includes personal information about the patient. Did he have a dog? Does she like to golf? What is the best way to handle his feeding?

Now Goss and his Baycrest team are looking for ways to share the material remotely. There's still work to be done around confidentiality and privacy but, by consulting with clinicians, families, patients, the hospital's IT department and other stakeholders, the project is moving forward one idea at a time.

"It has been an iterative process and the experience has been as important as the end result," says Bianca Stern. As director of Culture, Arts & Innovation at Baycrest, she started talking to Goss two years ago about a potential working relationship. "There's a lot of synergy between the way Jules thinks as a designer and what we need to do in terms of client-centred care."

Even before Baycrest partnered with Goss, OCAD U students in both faculties were commissioned for Baycrest projects — collaborations that helped win the university the Baycrest Chair's Proud Partners Award in 2012. Classes continue to visit the hospital to understand how people become attached to the spaces they live in. And with a new Master's in Design for Health on the horizon at OCAD U, learning will flourish.

Marking the medical

There's more to this story than design, however. For Bill Leeming, an associate professor in the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences, the merging of medical and arts takes a more straightforward path. A sociologist, he studies technology's impact on medicine. In one large research project, he is comparing how genetic technologies are being used in Canadian and U.K. centres.

Genetics is a subject with traction. Leeming says he's still amazed that back in 2005 the technology needed to scan the human genome — our complete set of DNA — cost millions of dollars. Today, there's a test that will look at 60 per cent of a genome with a price tag of \$1,595.

"You can buy one over on York Street, complete with genetic counselling services," he says. "This has created whole new possibilities around consumer testing."

In other words, families who have, say, a high cancer risk, could buy a test and try to find out if they have a potentially lethal gene. But this opens up a Pandora's Box of questions, according to Leeming. Does the person understand the information? What if one family member wants to know if a gene is present, but others don't? What should people do if they find out they have the gene anyway?

"There's a huge set of relationships and questions that enter into this that weren't there five years ago," says Leeming.

There is something else that interests him these days: how much his undergraduate students understand about genetics. When he started teaching his Culture of Science class 15 years ago, most didn't have a clue what a genome was or how DNA works. But now, after years of watching forensic shows on television and more discussion in high school, his students come to him with a basic understanding of what a genetic marker is.

Art and craft of medicine

Like Leeming, Francis LeBouthillier, an OCAD U alumnus, assistant professor, and the former Sculpture/Installation chair, is interested in uniting art and health.

"Do you feel like doing an amniocentesis?" LeBouthillier asks as he turns away from the table at the centre of his beautifully chaotic studio to quickly grab a few items behind him. He then hoists a large, floppy mass onto the table. It looks like a pink, plucked turkey that has gone a few rounds in the ring.

As he inserts a long needle into the thing on the table to demonstrate, LeBouthillier takes on the demeanour of a practised physician: calm, quiet and accustomed to teaching a roomful of anxious medical residents how to perform complicated procedures. Then he passes the needle over.

Opposite page Francis LeBouthillier, Model of 28-week-old fetuses with upper airways optimized for the teaching of fetoscopic endotracheal balloon occlusion (FETO) to treat congenital diaphragmatic hernia. Photo by Dianna Renelli

A health projects sampler

If there is anything OCAD U is known for it's the ability to encourage interdisciplinary thinking. The university's new Inclusive Design Research Centre (IDRC) and the OCAD U-based, multi-university Inclusive Design Institute (IDI), which together serve as a hub for inclusive design research, are examples. The reality is that the variety of research, partnered research and curriculum changes is growing. Here's a small sample of what has happened recently at OCAD U:

- **Turn over in comfort.** Patients who must remain in bed for long periods of time can develop painful pressure ulcers. Environmental Design Chair Bruce Hinds works on a research project that uses the principles of biomimicry — and wasp tails for inspiration — to create a dynamic surface that undulates and moves with the patient.
- **Cast in a new light.** Mandad Tabrizi, an Industrial Design student and founder of Heal.X Innovation, is finding a new way to cast buckle fractures (minor bone cracks) in children. The system uses CT scans and Rapid Prototyping and is being developed through Imagination Catalyst, OCAD U's innovation incubator.
- **Feeling 3D.** Haptic Holography, one of 12 university projects funded last year through FedDev Ontario, adopts the premise that existing medical training tools can be made better by integrating holographic overlay and sensory touch. Medical students learning procedures that require extreme precision can breathe a sigh of relief.
- **Chemotherapy made safer.** Inaccurate medical forms kill. OCAD U's Graphic Design program stepped in to redesign pre-printed chemotherapy forms so they would be easier to read and fill out. Eight student volunteers, supervised by OCAD U professors, worked with human factors researchers and a working group of nurses, pharmacists and doctors from across Canada.

"Go right there," he says, pointing to the middle of the mound. "There's nice give and then you'll go through the fat. You can try again if you'd like."

As any physician will tell you, "trying again," is not always an option when working on real patients. Yet it's encouraged when medical students are using one of LeBouthillier's amniocentesis simulators — designed, fabricated and engineered wombs that come complete with a silicone fetus the size of an actual fetus at 24 weeks. The simulator is used to teach invasive perinatal surgery along with amnio procedures. It's also just one of a number of different medical simulators he has developed over the past 10 years for hospitals in Canada, the U.S. and overseas.

"I've watched doctors who are not confident become confident using the amniocentesis model. That's a good thing. A very good thing," he concludes.

Others agree. In 2012, LeBouthillier joined 22 Ontario university researchers to launch the Council of Ontario Universities' Research Matters campaign. Now he's making use of a year-long sabbatical and Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) funding to build a synthetic fetus — complete with soft tissues, bone structures and internal organs — using MRI scans. He's partnering with Javelin Technologies in Oakville, Ont., using highly precise 3D printers and silicone to create the finished product.

LeBouthillier admits it's a huge job, but he's excited about the world of possibilities it could open for medicine, art and design.

"It's a grinding of gears of the left and right hemispheres. I get a lot of mental pleasure out of being able to problem solve," he says. "That's one of the things that OCAD U grads do. They make things that have never been made before." □

With more than 1,000 articles under her belt, Canadians across the country have read Kira Vermond's columns for the *Globe and Mail* and *Chatelaine*, and listened to her career advice on CBC Radio weekday mornings. She has published two non-fiction books with two more to be released in 2013 and 2014. This is her first article for *Sketch*.



PROJECT 31

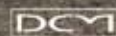
**AN AUCTION OF WORKS FROM FACULTY,
SUPPORTING OCAD UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

Wednesday, March 27, 2013
6 p.m. Art Preview & Reception
7 p.m. Live Auction

Tickets available at www.ocadu.ca/project31

April Hickox, *Linden*. Edition: 1 of 7, 2013, 22"x26", Archival Photograph.
Courtesy of Katzman Kamen Gallery, Estimate: \$ 2,500 - \$3,500

EVENT SPONSORS:



Delaney Capital
Management



**Discover why over 375,000 graduates
enjoy greater savings**

You could **WIN**
a Lexus ES 300h hybrid



or \$60,000 cash!*

**Join the growing number of graduates who enjoy greater savings
from TD Insurance on home and auto coverage.**

Most insurance companies offer discounts for combining home and auto policies, or your good driving record. What you may not know is that we offer these savings too, plus we offer preferred rates to members of the **OCAD U Alumni Association**. You'll also receive our highly personalized service and great protection that suits your needs. Find out how much you could save.

Request a quote today

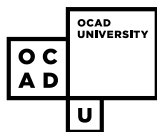
1-866-589-5656

Monday to Friday: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Saturday: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

melochemonnex.com/ocad

Insurance program endorsed by



The TD Insurance Meloche Monnex home and auto insurance program is underwritten by SECURITY NATIONAL INSURANCE COMPANY. The program is distributed by Meloche Monnex Insurance and Financial Services Inc. in Quebec and by Meloche Monnex Financial Services Inc. in the rest of Canada.

Due to provincial legislation, our auto insurance program is not offered in British Columbia, Manitoba or Saskatchewan.

*No purchase required. Contest organized jointly with Primum Insurance Company and open to members, employees and other eligible persons belonging to employer, professional and alumni groups which have an agreement with and are entitled to group rates from the organizers. Contest ends on October 31, 2013. Draw on November 22, 2013. One (1) prize to be won. The winner may choose between a Lexus ES 300h hybrid (approximate MSRP of \$58,902 which includes freight, pre-delivery inspection, fees and applicable taxes) or \$60,000 in Canadian funds. Skill-testing question required. Odds of winning depend on number of entries received. Complete contest rules available at melochemonnex.com/contest.

©/The TD logo and other trade-marks are the property of The Toronto-Dominion Bank or a wholly-owned subsidiary, in Canada and/or other countries.

RBC Painting Competition recognizes Vanessa Maltese

The 14th annual RBC Painting Competition went to 2010 Drawing & Painting Medal Winner Vanessa Maltese (vanessamaltese.com). Maltese's painting *Balaclava* was selected from a pool of 536 submissions in November 2012, netting the artist the \$25,000 purchase prize. She and this year's two "honourable mentions" will also see their work added to RBC's corporate collection — an impressive assemblage of more than 4,000 pieces of art collected over the past century. This is much-deserved, according to the competition jury, which credited the winning work as an example of the breadth and scope of what painters can achieve today in terms of process, subject matter, aesthetic and temperament.



OCAD U photographers find place in Flash Forward

Late last year, the Magenta Foundation offered yet another boost to emerging photographers from Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom, with the publication of its eighth annual *Flash Forward* exhibition and book.

Among those featured in the 2012 edition were OCAD U alumni Alicia Coutts, Nathan Cyprys, Alex Kisilevich, Stacey Tyrell and Shanon Fujioka; alumni/Faculty of Art instructors Kotama Bouabane and Sabrina Russo; instructor Lee Henderson; and fourth-year Photography student Stacey Croucher. A tandem launch (and exhibition) took place in Toronto and London, U.K.

The Magenta Foundation works to establish a place for Canadian artists in the international arts community, while providing a vehicle for galleries to join forces and promote the work of Canadian artists internationally through the publication of books and exhibitions. For more, visit magentafoundation.org.



Meryl McMaster wins Charles Pachter Prize for Emerging Canadian Artists

Famed artist Charles Pachter, who in 2009 was awarded an OCAD U Honorary Doctorate, is also the namesake of a new visual arts prize. Administered by the Hnatyshyn Foundation and announced in October 2012, this inaugural edition of the Charles Pachter Prize for Emerging Canadian Artists went to Meryl McMaster (BFA, Photography, 2010) as well as artists Jordan Bennett and Philip Gray. Each artist will receive \$5,000 per year for three years running.

An Aboriginal artist of mixed heritage, McMaster has been recognized with many awards and scholarships, including the 2010 OCAD U Medal in Photography. Her work has been exhibited widely and can be found in both private and public collections, including the Canada Council Art Bank. She is represented by Katzman Kamen Gallery in Toronto. Visit merylmcmaster.com.

Above Vanessa Maltese, *Balaclava*, oil on panel, 2012. (Now a part of the RBC Corporate Art Collection; courtesy of Erin Stump Projects)

Top left Nathan Cyprys, *Grass Opening*. Photo courtesy of Magenta Foundation

Top right Alex Kisilevich, *Hair Head* (from the series *Kallima*). Photo courtesy of Magenta Foundation

Centre Meryl McMaster, *Wind Play*, digital chromogenic print, 2012. Courtesy of Katzman Kamen Gallery

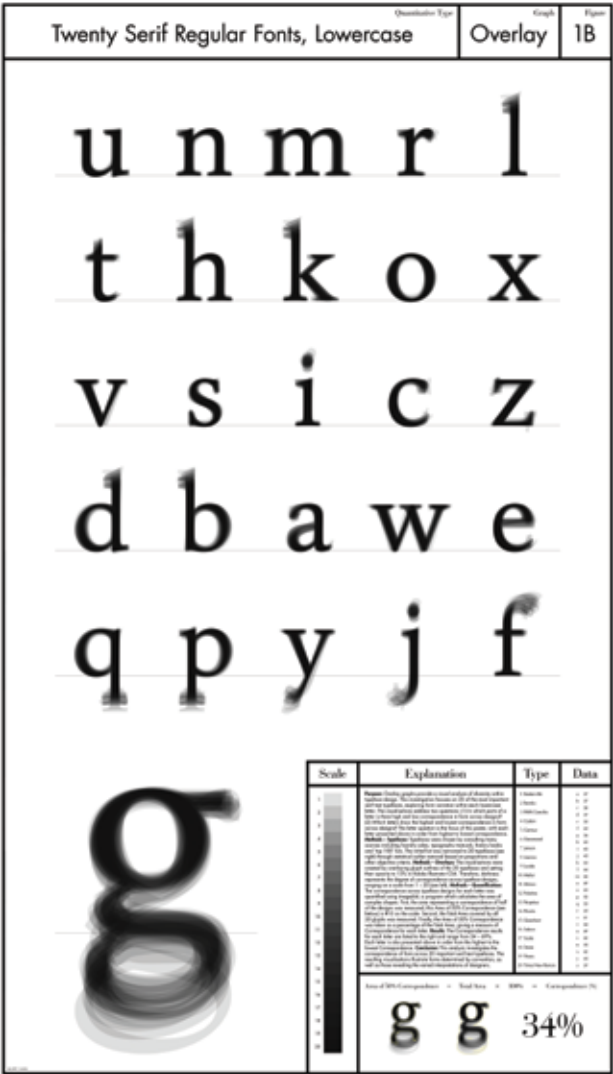
KEEPING IN TOUCH

Visit ocadu.ca/alumni to access the wide array of events, benefits and services that OCAD University offers its alumni community:

- Preferred discounts
- A new career services page
- A new alumni news page, events calendar and exhibition listings
- Alumni mentoring opportunities
- Dedicated alumni life-drawing sessions
- Opportunities to volunteer with the Alumni Association
- A place to update your address and keep in touch

Alumni Profile: Karin von Ompteda

By Naomi Buck



“If designers aren’t interested in what I’m doing, I’ve failed.”
— Karin von Ompteda

To the uninitiated, a letter is a letter is a letter. It’s a means to an end — the word — and through words, meaning. For Karin von Ompteda, who graduated from OCAD U in 2007, the letter itself is a thing of endless fascination, a bundle of visual choices waiting to be unpacked and studied. She’s spent the better part of the last decade tinkering with letters, not just for the fun of it but also with the goal of making them more legible to the visually impaired.

Von Ompteda’s approach to typography is not typical. The 35-year-old Toronto native had undergraduate and graduate degrees in biology before entering OCAD U to study graphic design. While she loved the intellectual rigour of science, she felt her creative muscles twitching. She was passionate about dance and language, but dreamed in statistics. Today she describes her leap from science into the world of art as “the scariest thing I’ve ever done,” but one she has never regretted.

Her OCAD U degree, for which she was awarded the Governor General’s Academic Medal, united her love of language with her obsession with measurement, precision and quantification. Working on fonts, she shuttled between lab-like dissections of letters — the width of their strokes, their core proportions, the spaces between them — and the outside world of type designers.

Von Ompteda sees the gap between the science and design of type as one that badly needs bridging. She feels very at home in the art academy where design practice is valued as much as research and where, unlike the classic university setting, there is no chance of “researching your way out of the discipline. If designers aren’t interested in what I’m doing, I’ve failed,” she says in a conversation from London, U.K., where she is now pursuing a PhD at the Royal College of Art.

For her undergraduate thesis at OCAD U, she worked with the Canadian National Institute of the Blind, her introduction to the world of inclusive design. Her doctorate is a continuation of this work: a deeper investigation into how type influences reading, particularly in the context of visual impairment. But she has no interest in adding yet another font to the myriad that already exist. Like an architect who chooses to specialize in renovation rather than put more structures into an overbuilt environment, von Ompteda draws from extant fonts. Having selected 20 of the most popular serif and sans-serif fonts, she chose the software she had used during her graduate studies in evolutionary biology — she was analyzing pigment distribution on Trinidadian guppies — to establish correspondences among the letters in these fonts. She’s interested in the areas of greatest correspondence, integrating these into what she calls an average font.

Her work, while very mathematical, is not without colour. For von Ompteda, letters have personalities and through analysis, she gets to know them better. She loves the lowercase “g,” for example, as the letter with the highest degree of formal diversity.

For a while, she collected alphabets, finding letters in the things of everyday life, such as meat bones and pubic hair. Her work has appeared in exhibitions such as the Brno Biennial in the Czech Republic and the BIO Biennial in Slovenia, where her research won a BIO.23 Student Award.

Von Ompteda enjoys teaching and the play of theory and practice and would like to remain in academia. Time will tell if she lands in the old world or new. While London is exciting and graphic design in Britain “hard core,” she appreciates the quality of life in Canada, where getting to school can be a hop on a bike and not an hour-long commute from an affordable part of town. And Toronto still has the power to impress. During a recent visit, von Ompteda joined Graphic Design Chair Keith Rushton on a tour of student work featured in the university’s 97th Annual Graduate Exhibition. I’m excited,” she says, “by recent activity at OCAD U in both data visualization and inclusive design — two areas I’m very passionate about!”

Von Ompteda’s next area of focus may well be data visualization in creative design, which she is already exploring in her own practice as well as in the workshops she delivers. In fact, she became a visiting lecturer in information experience design at the School of Communications, Royal College of Art, just as this story went to press. Whatever she does down the road, it will have real-world application. And without doubt, it will involve type.

For more, visit karinvonompteda.com. □

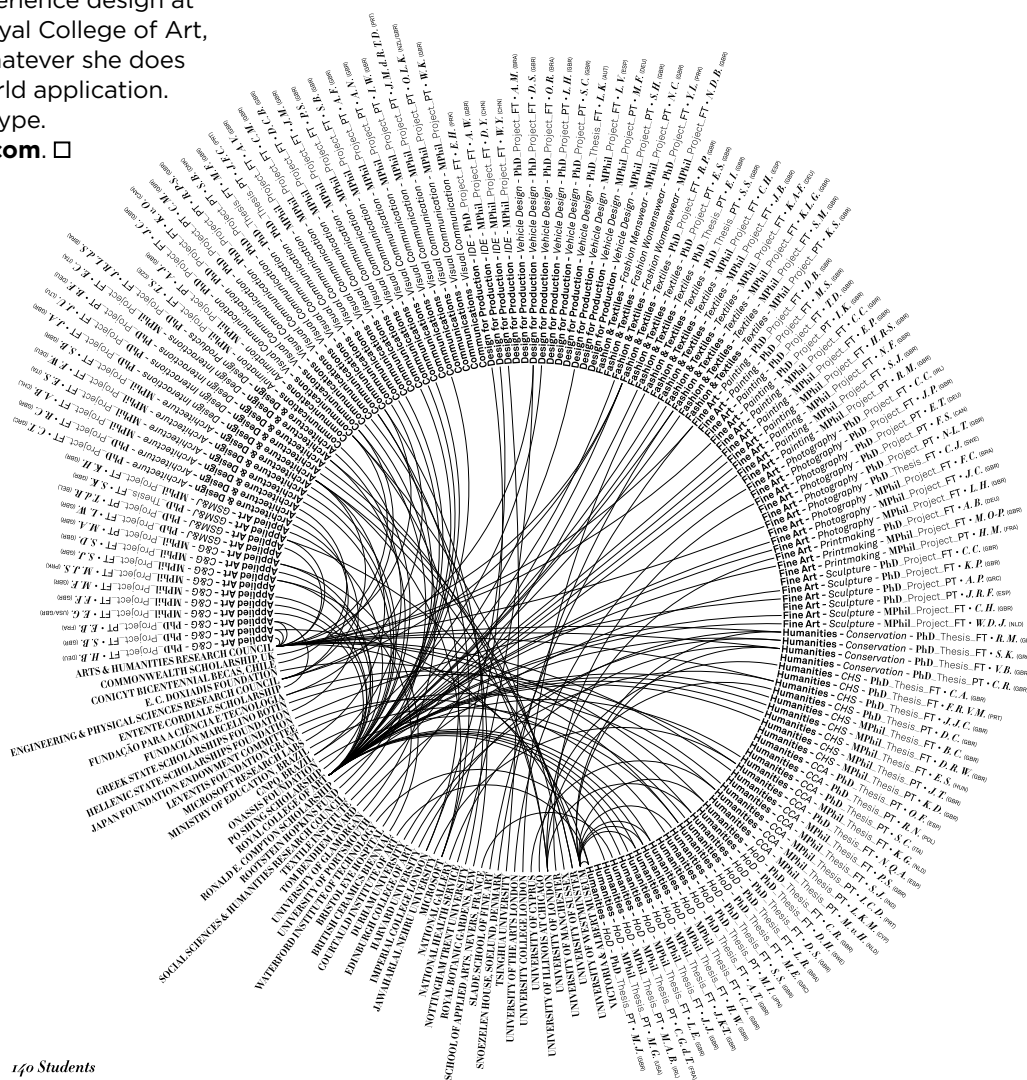
Toronto-born Naomi Buck is a freelance journalist who writes for various media in Canada and Germany, where she has spent much of her adult life. With an academic background in social anthropology, her interests are broad and people-based.



Opposite page Karin von Ompteda, poster visualizing the diversity of form within 20 of the world’s most popular serif typefaces, 2011

Left & below Karin von Ompteda, “Found type” project created during graphic design studies at OCAD U, 2006

Bottom Karin von Ompteda, visualization of PhD and MPhil research at the Royal College of Art, 2009



140 Students
 67 PhD / 73 MPhil
 93 by Project / 47 by Thesis
 92 Full Time (FT) / 48 Part Time (PT)
 7 Schools / 20 Departments:
 Ceramics & Glass (C&G) / Goldsmithing,
 Silversmithing, Metalwork & Jewellery
 (GSM&J) / Architecture / Design
 Interactions / Design Products /
 Animation / Visual Communication /
 Innovation Design Engineering
 (IDE) / Vehicle Design / Fashion
 Menswear / Fashion Womenswear /
 Textiles / Painting / Photography /
 Printmaking / Sculpture / Conservation /
 Critical & Historical Studies (CHS) /
 Curating Contemporary Art (CCA) /
 History of Design (HoD)

ALUMNI NEWS

Interdisciplinary artist developing doc, furniture, landscapes

Joseph Clement (MFA, Interdisciplinary Art, Media and Design, 2011) is developing a feature documentary about Interval House, the Rosedale architectural marvel owned by mathematician/musician James Stewart and designed by Shim-Sutcliffe Architects. Clement's documentary builds on the themes of housing and daydreaming that fueled his OCAD U thesis project, a short called *Collecting Tasker* about a world-renowned neurosurgeon and his collection of butterflies, orchids and paintings.

Clement, who credits OCAD U's program as an opportunity to explore other media, is as eclectic as his subjects. He also designs residential landscapes and is developing a new line of furniture using salvaged materials. He's producing music videos for Lee Ranaldo (of Sonic Youth fame), the Great Bloomers and the Pow Wows. He's working with OCAD U alum Barr Gilmore on the Christian Louboutin exhibition for the Design Exchange. And he writes for a new arts magazine called *Product*.

Spencer Saunders forms Art & Science Digital Experience Design

Spencer Saunders (MDes, Strategic Foresight and Innovation, 2012) dissolved his company, Communicate New Media, over the summer to reposition in the digital marketplace as Art & Science Digital Experience Design. While his former company operated as a full-service digital marketing firm, the new iteration specializes in digital business design.

"Through my research at OCAD U, I identified trends that gave me the foresight to pivot our business," says Saunders, whose research project delved into the future of advertising. His new company works collaboratively with brands such as the Toronto International Film Festival and with experienced business people who want to bring their ideas to market. "We're redefining the role of digital marketing in an innovative context," says Saunders. "It's a holistic business design approach." Visit artscience.ca for more information.

Illustration grad a sketch artist for murder trials

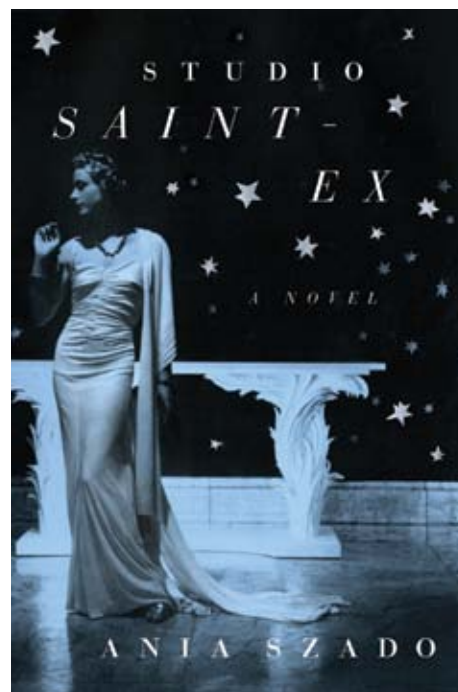
Ever wonder where a BDes in Illustration will take you? Among the roles that Karlene Ryan has assumed, since graduating in 2005, is courtroom sketch artist. Ryan approached an editor at the *London Free Press* in the summer following her third year at OCAD U, and has since covered, among others, the murder trials of David Carmichael, the Bandidos gang, Terri-Lynne McClintic and Michael Rafferty. She has freelanced for the CBC, Global National, the *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star* and worked alongside journalists Christie Blatchford, Timothy Appleby, Rosie Di Manno and Jane Sims.

"My work has been very interesting to say the least," Ryan says. She is quick to credit her former professor, the much-lauded Gary Taxali, for the business advice he's offered over the years. As for subject matter, it comes down to public good. "Some cases take their toll emotionally," she says. "But I remind myself that I'm there to provide the public with an image of what's going on in the courtroom. That image wouldn't be available if it weren't for the courtroom sketch artist." Visit karleneryandesign.com.



Above Book jacket photograph © Estate of Horst P. Horst (reproduced by permission of Art + Commerce). Jacket design by Jason Booher. Published by Penguin Canada, 2013

Right Karlene Ryan, "When Michael Rafferty spoke to Tara McDonald in court," May 15, 2012



Szado's *Studio Saint-Ex* already generating buzz

Ania Szado, a 1985 General Studies grad, follows the success of her debut novel, *Beginning of Was*, with *Studio Saint-Ex*, due out in April from Penguin Canada and Knopf in the U.S. Set in Manhattan during the Second World War, *Studio Saint-Ex* chronicles the tumultuous affair between rising fashion star Mignonette Lachapelle and celebrated French expatriate writer Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Factor into this affair a manuscript — Exupéry's classic, *The Little Prince* — and you've got one compelling premise for a novel.

The sewing and designing that play a role in *Studio Saint-Ex* also run in Szado's family. Her sister works in fashion and her mom, a seamstress, once made an outfit for Miss Canada. Then there's the author, herself a former art student who elected to try, while at OCAD U, a "terribly intimidating" creative writing class. She took the class again after graduating and, when the stories she was working on "needed more of a landscape," she wrote a novel. She says she loves "the challenge of creating an entire world."

Is it still connected to visual art? "I really see things when I'm writing," she says, and she's known for her settings. "Often I also want to see things concretely. I'll colour-code a manuscript, for example, and then print it and lay it out on the floor, so that all I'm looking at are blocks of colour."

Szado holds an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia. She has taught writing privately and at Toronto's Humber School for Writers. For more, visit aniaszado.com.

Exhibition

BRIANNE FREEDMAN

Fourth-year student, Photography

Brianne Freedman explores relationships in her work, particularly those that involve themes of fragility, resilience, connections, disconnections and dreams. She traces her inspiration for the image below to an eco-feminism/body-in-landscape project created for a third-year class called Intermediate Photography: Development. When revisiting the subject matter the following year, Freedman created this image, which won first prize in 2012's Exposé, the Faculty of Design's inaugural photography exhibition. Says Freedman, "I'm interested in visual poetics: in beauty and melancholy and the exploration of moods and emotion one can't easily express."





Scan to read *Sketch* as
an accessible PDF

