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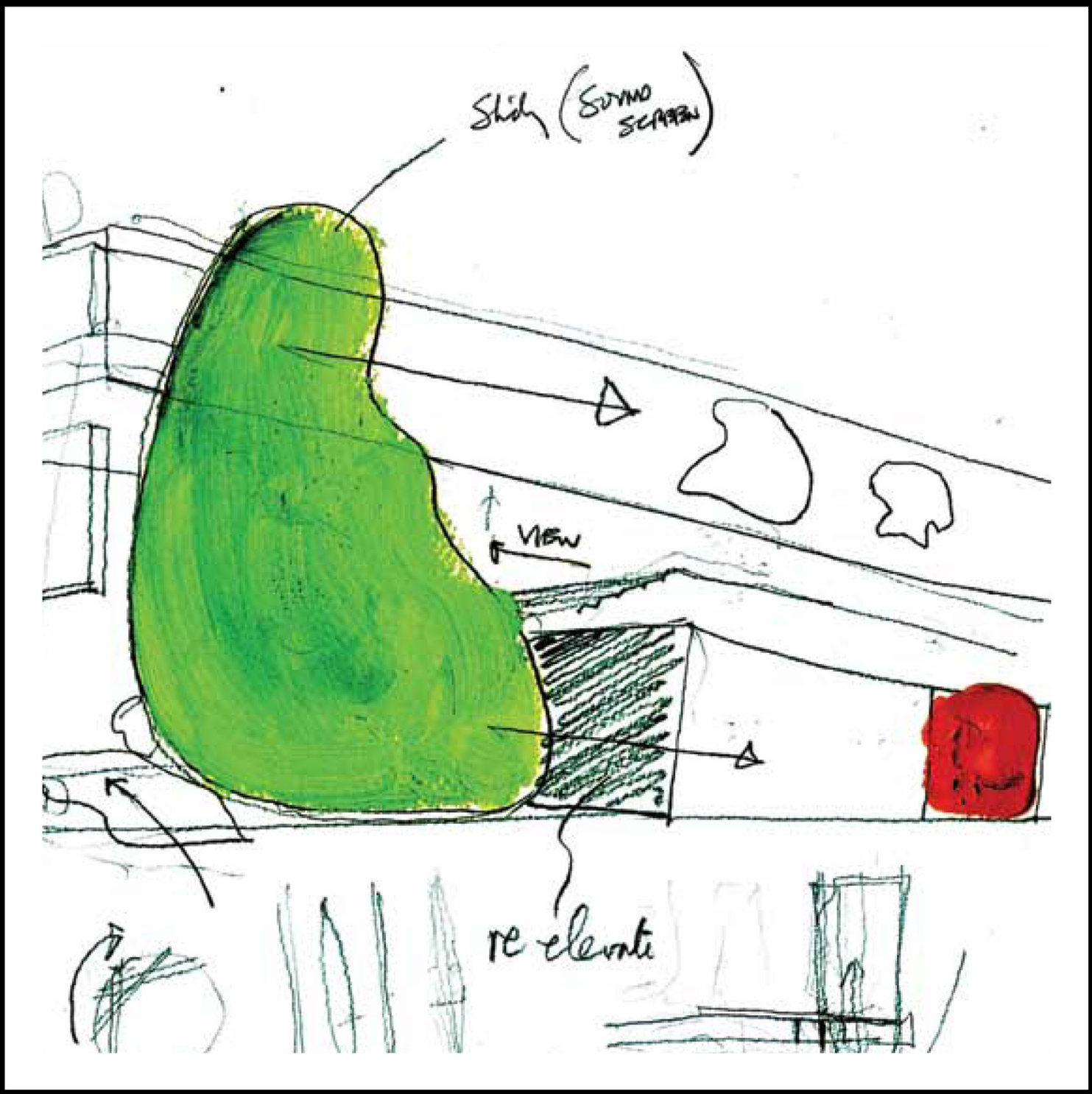
The magazine of **OCAD University**
Volume 26, Issue 1

Summer 2014

IMAGINATION IS EVERYTHING

OCAD U

SKETCH



SKETCH

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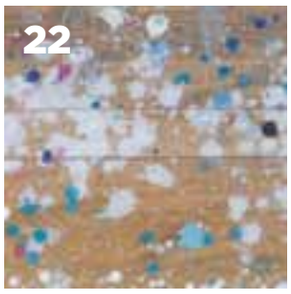

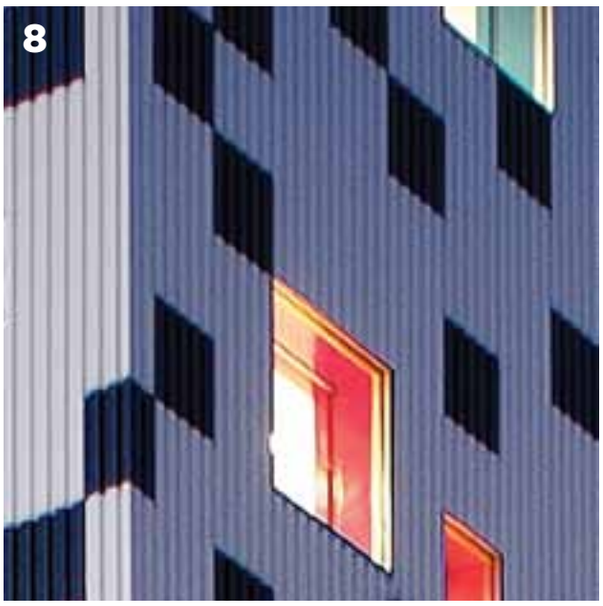

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Front cover Will Alsop, process sketch for Sharp Centre for Design, 2002
Opposite Graduating Illustration student Mireille Osbourne with Dr. Stephen Tulk, Liberal Arts & Sciences faculty member, at the 99th annual GradEx. Photo by Christina Gapic
Back cover Will Alsop, process sketch for Sharp Centre for Design, 2002

Happenings

Row 1 Bidding at OCAD U's Project 31 auction, which raised more than $160,000 in support of scholarships and awards for students; (L-R) Alumna Virginia Trieloff, vice-president, OCAD University Alumni Association with Professor Barbara Astman at Project 31; Guests viewing artwork at Project 31
Row 2 Board of Governors Vice-Chair Dr. John Semple at Project 31; Guests of Project 31; At the 99th annual GradEx Celebrate Excellence Reception: (L-R) Chancellor Catherine Delaney, Board of Governors Chair Ian C. Tudhope, Design Dean Dr. Gayle Nicoll
Row 3 At Celebrate Excellence: 2014 medal winners (L-R) Hudson Christie (Illustration), Chris Lange (Graphic Design), Brendan McMullen (Advertising), Sanaz Mianji (Environmental Design), Dr. Sara Diamond (at podium), Rickee Charbonneau (Digital Futures), Mike Badour (Drawing & Painting), Megan Hunter-Gauthier (Criticism & Curatorial Practice), Cecilia Leddy (Print-making), Alex Beriault (Scultpure/Installation). Not pictured are Aaron MacDonald (Photography), Connor Olthuis (Integrated Media) and Bri Cleary (Material Art & Design; (L-R) Tania Carnegie of KPMG Canada with Rose Anne McCants, executive director, Development and Anthony Hylton, chief of staff, Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario
Row 4 Table artwork for the 99th annual GradEx, at opening night (creative by Illustration grad Ashley Mackenzie); Guests at GradEx opening night; the Great Hall on opening night
Row 5 (L-R) Wrik Mead, chair, Media and Installation Art with Simon Glass, associate dean, Faculty of Art on opening night; guests at the Hazleton Lanes Arts Festival: (L-R) Adam Chapman, Nicole Rocca, Alex Beriault with friends; Art Dean Dr. Vlad Spicanovic at Hazelton Lanes
Row 6 Exhibiting artists (tagged L-R) Jonathon Laliberte, Abbas Rizvi and Shaheer Zazai with friends at Hazelton Lanes Arts Festival
Photos by Christina Gapic and Paul Savaria

President's Message
10/100: The multiplier effect

Above
Photo by
Tom Sandler

The 2014-15 school year offers two vivid markers in OCAD University's history: the 10th anniversary of the Sharp Centre for Design and our 100th Graduate Exhibition. We will herald both with significant celebration and welcome you, our readers, to join us.

The Sharp Centre, named after keystone donors Rosalie and Isadore Sharp, has transformed the cityscape of Toronto. It has provoked others to experiment with architectural creativity, acts as a tourism magnet for our city and is a beacon for OCAD University, attracting faculty, students and public interest. The Sharp Centre insists that artful playfulness stands strong on a foundation of great design.

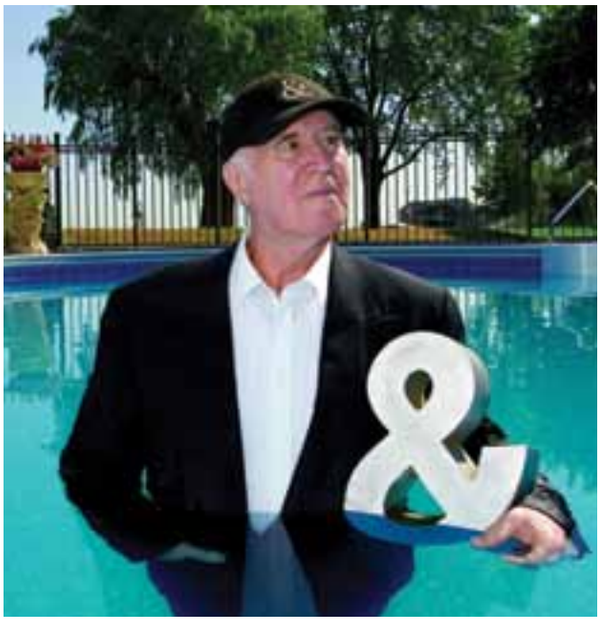
Exhibition flows in the lifeblood of OCAD University. GradEx is scheduled for the beginning of May 2015, so put a hold in your calendars! This past year's GradEx, co-chaired by Dr. Caroline Langill and Richard Hunt, surpassed 7,000 visitors on opening night, brought more than 7,000 high school students through our doors and gave 25,000 people the opportunity to explore the works of emerging artists and designers. For the first time, we presented Masterful at the Open Gallery. Curated by Dr. Michael Prokopow, this featured a selection of design, art and media by OCAD University master's students. Next year will be even greater in scale and ambition and will reflect on our 100 years as a presenting cultural institution and a bastion of art and design education.

For more than three years, OCAD University has fostered the Imagination Catalyst, an entrepreneurial support system for our recent alumni, students and Ontario-based start-ups. Our former Board of Governors Chair Robert Montgomery and I began the Imagination Catalyst to ensure that the valuable inventions, designs, creative industry products, maker initiatives, social enterprises, services and systems that our graduating students imagined and prototyped would find their way to market. Today, the Imagination Catalyst features a sterling group of advisors from the investment, digital media and product design worlds. We've graduated several cohorts, OCAD University companies have raised significant amounts of capital and sales, and we've won awards from the likes of MaRS and the Province of Ontario. Now, we will be able to further grow related training and programs: the Ontario government has committed, through its Youth Innovation Fund, to support Campus Linked Accelerators and our Imagination Catalyst has been conditionally approved for funding. This infusion of cash will be more than matched by a new fund created by Relay Ventures, which will support the best companies (see our feature, "Culture of Entrepreneurship," p. 12).

Entrepreneurship is not new to OCAD University. We've always nurtured individuals and companies who contribute significantly to the Canadian economy. Consider award-winner Barbara Reid, member of the Order of Ontario and the Order of Canada, who's sold 1.5 million books; Will Kucey, founder of LE Gallery; or the late Don Watt, creator of the no name brand for Loblaw. Consider also Christina Zeidler, creative city-builder and President of Toronto's Gladstone Hotel. Zeidler is profiled in these pages as part of a special alumni section featuring OCAD University's partnership with WorldPride. Like 10 and 100, this year's milestones, our community has a multiplier effect — its scores of past achievements creating touchstones for our future. ☐

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

CAMPUS NEWS



IAIN BAXTER& receives Honorary Doctorate
At its annual June Convocation, OCAD University celebrated IAIN BAXTER&, one of the most accomplished living artists in Canada. Drawing on the ideas of Marshall McLuhan and the values of Zen philosophy, BAXTER&'s work investigates issues of media and information technologies, corporate and consumer culture, nature and ecology. BAXTER& is an exemplary multi-disciplinary practitioner whose conceptual curiosity spans sculpture and installation, painting, photography, video art, film production, performance, and guerilla interventions. His work has contributed to the international art dialogue and has garnered appointments to the Order of Canada (2002) and the Order of Ontario (2004), a year that also saw him win the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts. IAIN BAXTER& legally changed his name from "Baxter" in 2005 — adding the "&" to signify, as Canadian curator David Moos put it, a "non-authorial take on art production… an unending collaboration with the viewer and the means to question the artist's role."

IDRC receives funding for Project Outside In
OCAD U's Inclusive Design Research Centre (IDRC) led by Jutta Treviranus received $200,000 from the Ontario Government's Youth Skills Connections Community Stream Program for a new initiative called Project Outside In. The funding, announced in March, will enable IDRC to establish a responsive, experiential skills training program tailored to the constraints and needs of youth with episodic and invisible disabilities (including learning disabilities, mental health challenges and ADHD). One goal of the project is to assist youth facing complex barriers to employment to gain diverse skills and expertise. Another goal is to address a critical skills gap in Ontario and globally for services such as captioning, description and web accessibility evaluation.

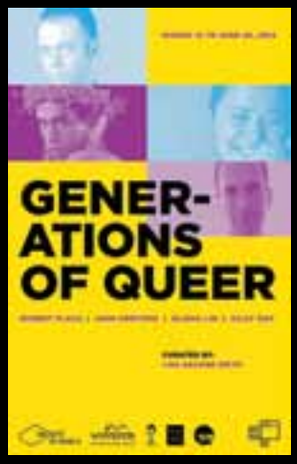
Students recognized for Peer Mentorship and Diversity and Equity excellence
OCAD U students were celebrated at an annual leadership event in March for making a significant contribution to the OCAD U community. Peer Mentor awards honouring leadership in making new students feel welcome and comfortable were granted to fourth-year Industrial Design students Ashley Mauerhofer and Long Gao, second- and third-year Drawing & Painting students Karen Nguyen and Claire Tatangelo and third-year Environmental Design student Vinh Le. Diversity and Equity Excellence awards were given to graduate students Simone Rojas-Pick (Criticism and Curatorial Practice) and Alexandra McLaren (Contemporary Art, Design and New Media Art Histories) for their passionate efforts in fostering a supportive campus by addressing mental health issues.

OCAD U Research Office honours faculty
The Research Office announced the winner this June of the 2014-2015 OCAD University Award for Distinguished Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity. The award recognizes outstanding research achievements of OCAD U faculty members and the impact of their research, scholarship and creative activity on art and design nationally and internationally and comes with a $3,000 research grant. This year's honour went to Dr. Paula Gardner, an associate professor in the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences. The review committee was unanimous in its praise of Dr. Gardner's collaborative approach to research and her ongoing dedication to the mentorship of both graduate and undergraduate research assistants.

Also announced were the inaugural winners of the OCAD University Award for Excellence in Early Stage Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity: Kate Hartman and Dr. Ryan Whyte. Both are assistant professors in the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences and are recognized for their outstanding achievements and commitment to scholarly excellence.

Above Honorary Doctorate recipient IAIN BAXTER&

OCAD U hosts Mobile HCI
From September 23 to 26, OCAD U will host Mobile HCI, an interna tional conference on designing the future of mobile healthcare support. The conference, which is open to researchers, professionals and designers, will be a forum on how recent advances in mobile technologies can contrib ute to new mobile healthcare systems. Its team of distinguished organizers includes Dr. Sara Diamond, OCAD U's president. "Studies like Dr. Diamond and Dr. Vera Roberts's Taking Ontario Mobile have demon strated the importance of the mobile sector here in Ontario," says Dr. Helmut Reichenbächer, associate vice-president, Research and dean, Graduate Studies. "We're looking forward to hosting this important international conference for the very first time in Canada. It s bringing together a wide range of experts and offers a fertile ground for the productive exchange of ideas.



Onsite [at] OCAD U gallery's Generations of Queer
"My father died on September 3, 2012. He was 74 years old and a gay man," writes curator Lisa Deanne Smith in the essay describing the Generations of Queer exhibition at Onsite [at] OCAD U gallery. The show, which opened March 12 and runs until June 28, was inspired in part by Smith's father s experience and brings together the work and stories of four artists who have different stories to tell: Robert Flack, a photographer who died in 1993; John Greyson, a video artist and filmmaker; Elisha Lim, an illustrator, animator and storyteller; and Kiley May, a Mohawk storyteller, artist, creator and shaman. "Storytelling becomes a political action in the work of all the artists in Generations of Queer," says Smith. "It s important to hear these stories and to understand and celebrate how they affect our lives both within and outside the queer community.

Above Generations of Queer poster. Designed by ALSO Collective

Right Level Up 2014. Photo by Sarah Mulholland

Faculty of Art hosts State of Blackness Conference
OCAD U's Faculty of Art hosted the State of Blackness Conference, an interdisciplinary event bringing together artists, curators, academics, students and the public to discuss diasporic artistic practice, representa tion and arts education, on February 22. Andrea Fatona, a Criticism & Curatorial Practice instructor, designed the conference itinerary to gather a network together of delegates from across Canada, the U.S. and the Caribbean and to create a space for ongoing discussion. The conference was developed in partnership with the Ontario Arts Council, with support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

OCAD U students showcase games (and win awards) at Level Up 2014
More than 600 gamers and designers attended the fourth annual (and biggest yet) Level Up Showcase held at the Design Exchange on April 4. The event was first launched in 2011 by Emma Westecott, assistant professor, Game Design and director, game:play Lab at OCAD U, together with Steve Engels, senior lecturer in Computer Science at the University of Toronto. This year, students from 17 post-secondary institutions from across Ontario presented more than 60 games. Lava Leaper, a get-to-school challenge by the OCAD U and U of T student team, won the Artistic Achievement Award, while Office Joust, a cubicle throw-down that arms players with mops (another OCAD U/ U of T collaboration) won the People's Choice Award.

CAMPUS NEWS

David Cronenberg talks with Piers Handling as part of the President's Speaker Series
David Cronenberg, the iconic Toronto-based Canadian filmmaker and master of the macabre, creepy obsessions and weird fantasies, was interviewed at OCAD U in January by Piers Handling, director and CEO of the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). The conversation followed Cronenberg's design, architectural and location themes and techniques through his 40-year career, with illustrative clips from some of his films. Cronenberg discussed the relationship of technology to the human body, the visuals of urban decay and the power and freedom represented by the car, but admitted the body is always his most fascinating subject — especially its relationship to food and sex. Cronenberg was the subject of an ambitious, international touring exhibition curated and launched in Toronto by TIFF in the fall. OCAD U students and faculty contributed to a special virtual part of the exhibition that makes a vast collection of scholarly essays, footage and research materials available online. Look for OCAD University on youtube.com to watch a video of the talk.

Peter Schjeldhal explains contemporary art and the baroque at OCAD U
New Yorker art critic Peter Schejeldhal was at OCAD U in February to give a talk in partnership with the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art (MOCCA) about themes inspired by the gallery's Misled by Nature: Contemporary Art and the Baroque exhibition. Schejeldhal, who's also written about art for *The New York Times*, the *Village Voice*, *ARTnews*, *Artforum*, *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair*, is the author of four books on art criticism and several collections of poetry. He explained the drama, aesthetic experience and historical references showcased in contemporary works by artists such as David Altmejd, Mark Bradford, Bharti Kher and Tricia Middleton.

Community arts pioneer Judy Baca brings her vision to Toronto
Judy Baca, a Chicana muralist who teaches at the University of California, gave a lecture at OCAD U in March. Baca is renowned for her political landscapes, including *The Great Wall of Los Angeles*, a cherished community project for which she served as a director. One of the longest murals in the world, it's a multicultural history "tattooed" along a flood control channel in the San Fernando Valley. As artistic director of the Social and Public Art Resource Centre (SPARC) in L.A., Baca's focus is on giving voice to historically disenfranchised works and preserving their stories. Baca's lecture was a co-presentation by Latin American Canadian Art Projects, Community Arts Practice (CAP) at York University and OCAD U's Faculty of Art.

Above Judy Baca with one of her murals. Image courtesy Judy Baca

Right Douglas Coupland. Photo by Mark Peckmezian for *MONTECRISTO Magazine*

OCAD U Honorary Doctorate recipient Douglas Coupland visits campus and conference
Celebrated Canadian novelist, visual artist and designer Douglas Coupland delivered the keynote "Anything is Everything" at the annual conference of the graduate program in Contemporary Art, Design and New Media Histories (CADN) in March. The themes Coupland explores in his visual work are similar to ideas in his bestselling novels (e.g., *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture*): the synthesis of high and low culture, and socio-cultural shifts resulting from the introduction of new technologies. The first major survey of Coupland's visual work, "Douglas Coupland: everywhere is anywhere is anything is everything" runs from May 31 to September 1 at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Student, faculty and alumni artists receive recognition
Several members of the OCAD U art community were recognized for their work this spring. In April, Reena Katz (2010 Integrated Media Medal Winner), Chris Curreri (1998, Foundation Studies) and Integrated Media instructor Jean-Paul Kelly were long-listed for the Sobey Art Award, one of Canada's pre-eminent awards for contemporary Canadian Art. Curreri made the Sobey Award shortlist and he and Kelly were also on the longlist for the AIMIA | AGO Photography Prize, one of the country's largest photography awards. Also in April, Georgia Dickie (2011 Sculpture/ Installation Medal Winner) won an artist prize from Toronto Friends of the Visual Arts.

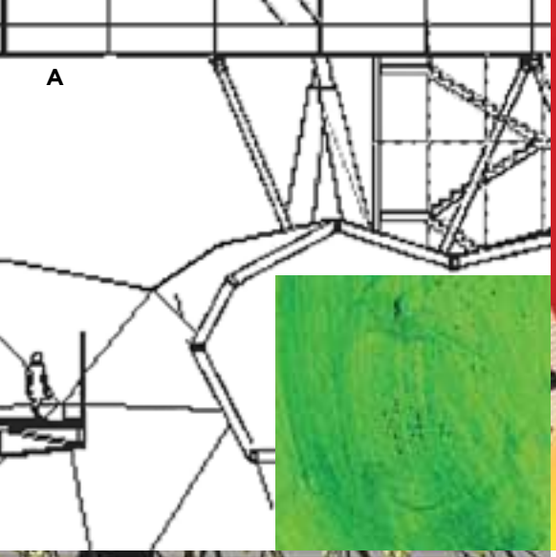
Student entrepreneurs get noticed by Ivey and SXSW
OCAD U students and alumni working on new business ventures are gaining attention. In January, a team of Strategic Foresight and Innovation (SFI) students (Ryan Church and Nihal Ahmed) together with Schulich School of Business students (Jason Lin, Justin Chopra and Srivatsan Vijayakumar) made it to the shortlist in the prestigious IBK Capital Ivey Business Plan Competition. Their product, Circle of Love, is a waterproof medical wearable that tracks vital sign statistics. In March, Pantea Razzaghi (BDes, Graphic Design, 2007), co-founder of Synbiota Inc., a virtual collaboration site that connects scientists, researchers and universities to solve complex problems using genetic engineering, together with her startup team won the Accelerator Award in the Innovative World Technologies category at SXSW.

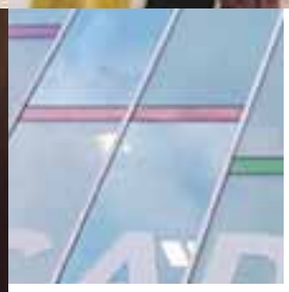
OCAD U hosts tribute to Gregory H. Woods
OCAD U hosted a tribute in January for renowned architect and educator Gregory H. Woods. Woods was the lead project architect with Alsop Architects on OCAD U's Sharp Centre for Design, which opened in 2004 (see page 8) and transformed the campus. Based in Toronto, Woods worked on award-winning projects all over the world with Robbie Sane, Robbie/Young + Wright Inc., Alsop and Alsop RMJM and ZAS and ZAS/Taylor Smyth. One of his last projects involved his consulting on designs for the new Lassonde School of Engineering at York University. Friends, colleagues, former students and members of the design community gathered at OCAD U in recognition of his outstanding contribution to architecture, design and the art of life.

"Maestro" Peter Porcal remembered
OCAD U suffered the loss this spring of Peter Porcal, resident art historian and administrator for OCAD U's Florence Off-Campus Studies program. The beloved and passionate instructor passed away in April. A Czech national who lived and worked in Florence, Porcal spent 20 years ushering students through the program, managing the program and teaching in what many described as a "transformative" way. He is remembered for his kindness, commitment and his infectious sense of mischief. "Peter was handsome, flamboyant and incredibly well-read — yet still humble," says Faculty of Art Professor Peter Sramek. "He taught us curiosity and wonder in the face of the world's greatest treasures. And he will always remain as one of them to those of us who knew him."

Top Chris Curreri, *Untitled (Clay Portfolio)*, gelatin silver print. Image courtesy Daniel Faria Gallery

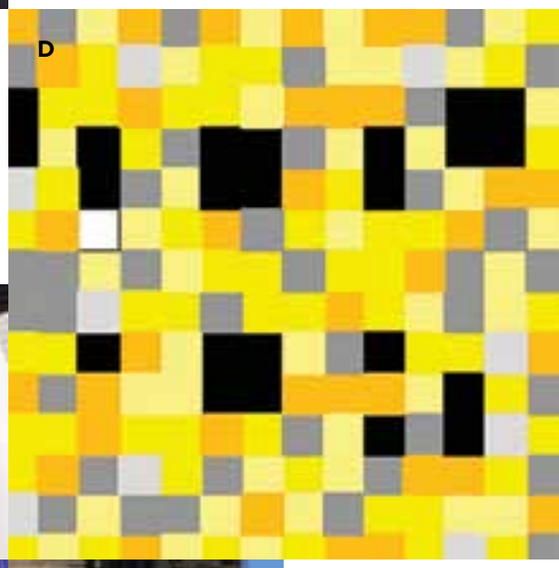
Left Peter Porcal with one of his Florence Program cohorts. Photo by Marc O'Brien

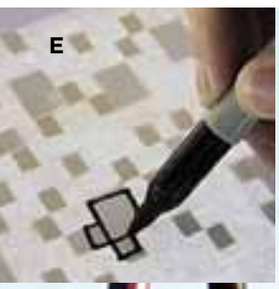


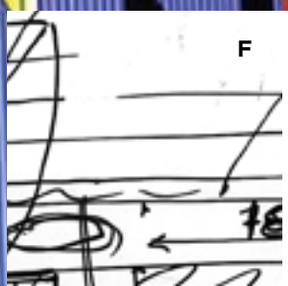


The Sharp Centre at 10

By Alex Bozikovic







A Process sketch by Will Alsop, 2002

B Squishy Sharp Centre hand-knit by Sarah Mulholland, 2009. Photo courtesy Sarah Mulholland

C Sharp Centre costume (which also doubles as a coffee table) created by Rob Shostak. Photo courtesy Rob Shostak

D Process sketch by Will Alsop, 2002

E Sharp Centre's pixellated shapes, highlighted by Bruce Mau Design and used as inspiration for new OCAD U logo, 2011

F Process sketch by Will Alsop, 2002

All other photos by Richard Johnson and Martin Iskander

Can one new building transform the image of a city? After the opening of the Guggenheim Bilbao in 1997, that seemed possible. Frank Gehry's iconic museum made that provincial Spanish city a cultural destination.

In Toronto we have a Gehry now but, though the Art Gallery of Ontario is a fine building, it never became an icon. For that you have to look next door, to OCAD U's Sharp Centre for Design (named after lead benefactors Rosalie and Isadore Sharp). If there's one new building that defines Toronto's image in the 21st century, it is architect Will Alsop's flying tabletop — ungainly, unorthodox yet welcoming. It is an icon and also a place that connects with people.

Who would have predicted this? No one — including Alsop, an architect known in Britain as an *enfant terrible* with a love for hot pink. When he came to Toronto in 2000 to interview for the commission, he recalls feeling underwhelmed with the city and unlikely to win the job. "Toronto didn't fill me with great joy," Alsop says from his London office, giving the phrase his usual air of authority. "The people were nice, certainly, but I thought it was a city that hadn't grown into itself. It was quite uncertain."

When he presented his ideas to OCAD U, he had no specific design in mind. Instead, he says, he brought an attitude of enquiry and openness. "I didn't know what form it should take. So I said: our idea was to include the people of the Grange. To work creatively with students, staff, the president of the Art Gallery of Ontario, and residents, and find a good solution." This proved to be precisely the right line of argument for an art and design university that was under pressure to transform itself, and Alsop won the commission.

Alsop, now 67, was an adventurous choice. He had never built in North America and his career in Britain and around Europe had been uneven. A graduate of London's elite Architectural Association School of Architecture and trained in drawing, he showed early talent — he came second in the Centre Pompidou competition in 1970, losing out only to future stars Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano. But where Rogers and Piano launched careers of increasing success and increasingly rigorous boxes, Alsop's work and career wandered. His buildings are defined by playful visual gestures: amoeba-shaped windows, bands and scribbles of primary-school colour.

Always keep your feet on the ground

Whimsy was not what OCAD U needed most in 2002. The institution was facing practical demands from the so-called double cohort — an incoming class of students comprising the last of Ontario's Grade 13s combined with graduating Grade 12s; it needed to expand quickly. Alsop had to develop the design quickly, and his team launched into discussions with the city and neighbours. The goal was to include their ideas and win their support.

Lots of consultation and no time: this could be a recipe for a bland and undercooked building. But Alsop has a genuine love for dialogue and an equal love, it seems, for subverting the conventions of architecture and city-building. "There shouldn't be rules about urbanism," he says. "When you get advice from a lot of experts, the results aren't actually better. What can you do? Engage with people." Among the ideas from neighbours was a desire to maintain a connection to Grange Park — at ground level, from McCaul Street, and visually from the Village by the Grange apartments. "And so I said," Alsop recalls, "'I'll start at your roof level, and you can see under it.' The building came out of that process."

This may be a bit of a fable, but the basic moves, which are Alsop's, remain both brilliant and surprising. The final design, created after Alsop opened an office here and teamed up with local architects Robbie/Young + Wright, lifts a mass of new space 26 metres above the ground, connected to the existing building by slashes of colour: an elevator core (black) a diagonal exit stair (red) and 12 rainbow-hued steel columns. The public square underneath the building does, as planned, link McCaul Street to Grange Park.

"Will Alsop's academic building is an altogether original and welcome enrichment of Toronto's urban fabric: artistically bold and imaginative, and respectful of residents and users in its culturally intense neighbourhood… This addition to OCAD is cocky and attractively humorous, an element in the urban scene that holds its own with tough urbanity while allowing new public space to open up beneath it."

— From the 2005 Toronto Architecture and Urban Design Awards jurors' comments

SELECTED HONOURS

- Named by CNN as one of the world's most spectacular university buildings, 2014;
- cited by the *Toronto Star*'s Christopher Hume as one of "The 5 most influential buildings in Toronto," 2013;
- included in the Quora list of "most interesting buildings in the world," 2012;
- named by *Travel and Leisure Magazine* and the BBC as one of the "world's strangest buildings," 2011;
- honoured with a **Toronto Architecture and Urban Design Award** 2005: Award of Excellence — Building in Context; as well as
- a **Canadian Consulting Engineering Award**, 2005 for MCW Consultants and Carruthers & Wallace;
- a **Royal Institute of British Architects Worldwide Award**, 2004; and
- a **National Post Design Exchange Award**, Architecture, 2004.

Getting to that stage required some creative give-and-take with Alsop, led by university administrators Lenore Richards and Peter Caldwell. The Sharp's body, which is finished in a pixellated grid of black and white, could have been much gaudier. Alsop's initial plans had it in yellow aluminum, both with and without a series of giant brush-swirls on the outer facades. Then it was going to be a morbid black, before OCAD U talked Alsop down. For the zone in between the existing 100 McCaul St. building and the Sharp Centre, Alsop played with a series of rounded blobs (see cover) of uncertain purpose. These never appeared, thankfully.

In the end, the centre is a box — a handsome one, which Alsop says was shaped by the Classical idea of the golden section (which specifies a harmonious proportion between the sides of a rectangle) and also by his favourite cigs. "It's proportioned to the size of a Benson & Hedges Gold cigarette pack. That pack," he says with an appreciative laugh, "is the golden section and it's gold! With the building, the form feels correct. The Greeks learned, and they taught us."

An architectural conversation

This mixture of seriousness and mischief is typical of the architect. In the case of OCAD U, his building's urban design is crazy enough to be brilliant. It is also now in strong dialogue with the expanded AGO, whose protruding upper galleries, wrapped in blue titanium, form a shimmering counterpart. President Sara Diamond says this "architectural conversation" has helped bring about real links between the institutions. "Gehry found a way to link the buildings that works both from a distance and within the streetscape," she says. It raises the question: Why can't these institutions work more closely together?"

That's only one way in which the Sharp Centre has changed the university. Its shape, so surprising and memorable, signalled a new creative ambition within OCAD U, relative to the city. Diamond says that it's inspired an internal shift as well: "Even before it opened, it helped attract a new level of international faculty and talent." Diamond cites herself as an example, along with Dutch Professor Job Rutgers. "I certainly would not have considered the job without also considering the building as a symbol of where OCAD University wanted to go in the future," she says. "It is a visionary playful representation

of contemporary art and conceptual art side by side with this functional and very creative design statement."

The word "functional" is not used lightly. The building serves the student body well in its specific arrangement of spaces and its rough-and-ready character. The central open spaces on the fifth and sixth floors invite students of all disciplines to work and collaborate, using laptops and tablets. This reflects some foresight by Alsop and the university a decade ago, an insight that also led to an extension of university network support for mobile devices. Another move which has worked exactly as intended was creating deep windowsills on each level. "My thinking," Alsop says, "was that people would sit there — which they do. The views up there are good. People are looking at computer screens all day and I think it's important to extend the range of the eye — or stare out the window when you don't know what the fuck to do next. It's a human element."

In these respects Alsop, who attended art school in Northhampton, England and has taught extensively, drew on both his own ideals and his experience in education. Diamond credits him with working closely with the school and understanding its need for change and flexibility, a quality that also influenced the feel of the building. The interior finishes are inexpensive and rough; not especially elegant, but that's fine in this case. Students feel they can make stuff without worrying about the drywall. Alsop feels strongly that a place like OCAD U "shouldn't be too precious — so if you want to throw a bucket of paint, you don't have to protect the building. That's why architects like old warehouses," he adds, "because you feel you can do anything to them."

This is an idea that Diamond shares. She says that in preparing the institution's newest studio spaces in existing buildings at 230 and 240 Richmond St., "we do not want to over-renovate. What we really want to do is leave them as much as possible as they are."

But the Sharp Centre, inside and out, has brought something genuinely new to the city's design landscape. According to Diamond, colleagues see the Sharp project and OCAD U as synonymous. "The building is the brand," she says.

To improve the relationship of the campus with the neighbourhood, Alsop has one more suggestion. "I think what the school needs is a really good bar," he says. He recalls how in his student days, the bar at the Architectural Association "was for everyone — you could see very well-respected figures and go up and talk to them. I don't think many architects and designers go into OCAD to hang out. And why not?" It's a good question, and another reminder that Toronto is better for having Alsop show up here to add to the party. ☐

Alex Bozikovic (alexbozikovic.com) is the architecture critic for *The Globe and Mail*. He's also written for *Spacing*, *Azure*, and *Dwell*.

Opposite page In the Sharp Centre Open Studio at GradEx 2014. Photo by Christina Gapic

Right Photo by Richard Johnson, 2005

feltro

Culture of entrepreneurship

By Dana Yates

Is innovation possible without imagination?
Not according to OCAD University alumni. For years, these visionaries have proven that creative inspiration can lead to unexpected inventions. Just consider the clever simplicity of the late Don Watt's no name branding for Loblaw. Or the wearable, sound-generating sensor that 2013 Material Art & Design graduate Loretta Faveri developed to encourage children with special needs, for instance, to move their bodies and become "physically musical."

These creative innovations and others like them are critical to the provincial economy. In fact, as the Ontario government reported in 2013, during the past decade the province's creative industries grew by 40 per cent and created 80,000 new jobs. With so much at stake, entrepreneurial artists and designers now require a range of supports to run prosperous businesses — the kind of supports that are available through OCAD University.

According to the 2013 Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP), an annual online survey on the impact of art-school education, 86 per cent of OCAD University graduates will run businesses or operate as independent contractors at some point in their careers. Moreover, 57 per cent of alumni are already self-employed or entrepreneurs.

"The results [SNAAP 2013 and 2011] led us to think how we could better support student success with entrepreneurial programs and services. We want to give students business skills as well as an art and design education so they can move forward successfully," says Deanne Fisher, OCAD University's associate vice-president, Students.

Opposite Sam Kennedy's Feltro, an interactive construction toy for kids and adults that promotes open-ended creative play. Photo by Christina Gapic, 2014

A place to grow
Today, the university is home to a thriving and ever-evolving culture of entrepreneurship. The subject is embedded in the curriculum and all faculties now offer entrepreneurship courses. Simply put, OCAD U is a natural hub for creative entrepreneurs. The largest and most comprehensive art, design and media university in Canada, it is not only located in the country's centre for design, culture and business, but many of its 500-plus full- and part-time faculty are also entrepreneurs or in professional practice.

All those elements have been brought together to great effect in the Imagination Catalyst (IC), the university's flagship entrepreneurship and commercialization initiative. An incubator and accelerator for student- and alumni-run startups, the IC helps entrepreneurs launch new enterprises or bring their designs, products and services to market.

In addition to presenting seminars, lectures and entrepreneurship-focused events, the IC offers a one-year, experiential entrepreneurship program and incubator called Take It to Market. The initiative is open to OCAD University graduates, post-grad students and faculty who have a concept, product or service that's ready to launch within a year.

Once accepted into Take It to Market, entrepreneurs of all types are provided with work space, relevant business education, skills training, one-on-one personal and business development coaching, and access to an experienced, distinguished pool of investors and advisors who can provide guidance and access to funding. Further support is provided by an expert mentor team as well as an entrepreneur-in-residence.

"The IC is for people who need to develop business skills. The incubator will help them achieve faster growth with less risk," says Petra Kassun-Mutch, executive director of the IC.

> “We want students to make informed choices about their careers… We’re going to give them the skills to do what they love and make a viable living as artists, designers and entrepreneurs.”
>
> — Deanne Fisher, OCAD University’s associate vice-president, Students

Above Robert Tu discusses his work, MeU with a guest at the Imagination Catalyst Umbra event. Photo by Christina Gapic, 2014

Right Petra Kassun-Mutch, executive director, Imagination Catalyst. Photo by Christina Gapic, 2014

Start me up

The accelerator has spurred many success stories, ranging in size from small, medium and local-scale enterprises to those with global potential. One example is PUSH, a sports-science technology company that was co-founded by Industrial Design alumnus Mike Lovas (BDes, 2013). The startup is known for its fitness-tracking device, which analyzes, manages and tracks weight training and workout performance. With seed funding and support from the IC and the JOLT technology accelerator, housed in the MaRS Discovery District, the PUSH team has gone on to secure an additional $250,000 investment from the Ontario Youth Investment Accelerator Fund.

Social entrepreneur and fellow Industrial Design graduate Julie Forand (BDes, 2013) has also secured new funding for her startup Sprout Guerrilla. Focusing on urban sustainability and guerrilla gardening, the company offers moss products to cover barren surfaces, thereby enabling vegetation to grow where it otherwise could not. To further her work, Forand has received awards from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Ontario Centres of Excellence, respectively.

Forand isn’t the only one who is transforming the urban landscape. Graphic Design graduate Robert Tu (BDes, 2013), founder of Robert Tu Designs, has combined his OCAD University education and previous degree in electrical engineering to develop MeU, a wearable LED panel that displays texts and graphics. The programmable technology, which can be applied to clothing, can be used by cyclists, for example, to indicate turn signals.

These are only a few of the impressive enterprises that have come out of the IC. Recently the Government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Research and Innovation’s Youth Jobs Strategy, Youth Innovation Fund, recognized the importance of these activities by announcing they would provide funding to expand Campus Linked Accelerators (CLAs) in Ontario and help them to align with global best practices and connect into regional innovation ecosystems. OCAD University’s Imagination Catalyst has conditionally been approved for this funding.

The OCAD University CLA will build on existing capacity and expand OCAD U’s pipeline to sustain creative entrepreneurship and engender more youth employment and build a system to further support OCAD U students, alumni and Ontario’s creative community. As well, under the guidance of OCAD University’s Strategic Innovation Lab (sLab), Imagination Catalyst would work with Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) to design, develop and implement programming that would support creative entrepreneurs across the province.

Further, OCAD University Board of Governors member John Albright, co-founder and managing partner of Relay Ventures, is leading a $1-million investment of private funding to OCAD University through the creation and oversight of an investment fund, which will provide early stage (or seed) financing for IC teams. This new investment will contribute 10 per cent toward the operating costs of the IC program. This relationship will boost the Imagination Catalyst and OCAD University’s brand and reputation as a hub of creative entrepreneurship.

Right Loretta Faveri poses with her wearable, sound-generating sensors. Photo by Christina Gapic, 2014

What's more, creative and social entrepreneurs will benefit from a new partnership that has been established between OCAD University and the Centre for Social Innovation, a co-working space for those whose focus is social change. Ultimately, the partnership will accelerate the social enterprise field by offering entrepreneurs space, training, acceleration support and access to grants and financing.

Learning to fly

Well before students graduate they need entrepreneurial skills to transition to creative careers, and the university has a number of co-curricular initiatives in the works to support them. The first is the RBC Institute for Emerging Artists and Designers, which is supported by a $200,000 gift from the RBC Foundation. Formerly the Career Development and Experiential Learning unit, the institute will offer free seminars, workshops and clinics on such topics as business planning, financial literacy, leadership skills, marketing, networking, portfolio development and crowdfunding.

Meanwhile, a grant from the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities is being used to envision a Hub for Freelance Professionals at OCAD U. Currently in the conceptual stage, the hub will eventually bring students together to learn the pragmatic details of business ownership, including rates, invoicing and incorporation.

That knowledge will not only help students support themselves after graduation; it will also contribute to their self-confidence, explains Professor Michelle Forsyth. But she cautions, making a profit is only one aspect of life as an artist.

Forsyth, who joined OCAD University from Washington State University last year, is developing a professional practice course in the Faculty of Art (FoA). Scheduled to launch in winter 2015, the third-year course will be mandatory for all FoA students starting at the university this year.

The course, says Forsyth, will cover business-related topics, such as taxes and recordkeeping, as well as how to apply for grants, find exhibition spaces and cultivate artists' communities.

Wil Kucey, a 2005 graduate of Criticism & Curatorial Practice, for instance, is one of many OCAD University alumni who have made a career out of supporting artists. Owner and curator of LE Gallery, Kucey was named best young curator by *NOW* magazine in 2007 for his "uncanny knack for ferreting out a diverse range of the best young up-and-coming artists in the Toronto area."

Finding a unique path after graduation — as Kucey has done — will be key to students' long-term success, insists Forsyth. "If they only focus on traditional goals," she says, "they won't feel free to make mistakes and go in directions they hadn't anticipated."

Fisher echoes that sentiment. "We want students to make informed choices about their careers," she says. "We're going to give them the skills to do what they love and make a viable living as artists, designers and entrepreneurs." ☐

Dana Yates is a Toronto-based freelance writer who specializes in translating university research for lay audiences. She also coaches professional women on how to open a side business, helping them to turn their expertise into marketable, client-attracting systems.

Jessamyn Kahn's philosophy of art as a continuum

Jessamyn Kahn (BFA, Drawing & Painting, 2013) stands in her light, airy studio in front of her large, bright paintings. Her studio is in the parlour of an old house in downtown Toronto, and she appears calm and relaxed — in her element surrounded by stacks of canvasses, repurposed tin cans stuffed with paintbrushes and different kinds of paint. The floor is covered with vibrant paint splatters that almost seem like accidental artworks.

Kahn's parents were both artists. "I made art as soon as I figured out which end of the pencil to use," Kahn says of her childhood. "I did other things away from art for a long time and then one year I realized that if I didn't try to be an artist, I would be disappointed."

Kahn enrolled at OCAD U to learn how to make jewellery, but an elective painting class with Stephen Ibbott (a sessional instructor in the Faculty of Art and well-known contemporary painter) shifted her focus. She changed her major and turned her attention to painting. "My professors at OCAD U encouraged me to experiment," she says. "I made a ton of weird, terrible stuff and they prodded me to look and think and keep making work."

“OCAD U gave so much to me that I want to reach back and give the school and future students a hand. It makes me happy to strengthen that continuum by supporting art education.”

All photos by Cristina Gapic

While at OCAD U Kahn also studied with Drawing & Painting professors Paul Sloggett, Colette Laliberté and Michèle White, as well as sessional instructor Nicole Collins and Integrated Media professor Philippe Blanchard. “It really was a good education and I learned things in every course that I use now,” she says. “I also learned a lot from my fellow students, and I feel fortunate to be their peer in painting.”

Kahn’s abstracts explore a juxtaposition between loose brushstrokes and hard-edged geometric shapes. Her goal as an artist is to materialize imagination and intuition and to make a space where something unexpected occurs.

Kahn shows her work at juried and solo exhibitions. She is the recipient of the Project 31 Drawing & Painting Award (2013), the George Reid Scholarship (2008) and the OCAD U Byrex Prize (2008). In 2013 her work showed in the Hazelton Lanes Arts Festival and in Experiencing Perspectives, an exhibition sponsored by Mercedes Benz Financial Services. This year her work appeared in the OCAD U Alumni Exhibition and she has an upcoming show at Loop Gallery in Toronto from July 19 to August 10.

Kahn believes art is a continuum. “We’re all standing on the shoulders of the artists who came before us,” she says. “OCAD U gave so much to me that I want to reach back and give the school and future students a hand. It makes me happy to strengthen that continuum by supporting art education.”

Kahn also remains connected to the OCAD U community. “Now that I’ve graduated, I attend talks and social events at the school. It’s always fun to come back for a visit. I like to reconnect with the professors and to meet other people who share the same commitment to the university.”

In both 2013 and 2014 Kahn donated works to The Big Draw, an annual juried fundraiser at OCAD U for the Drawing & Painting program. She also donates directly to the university. “Art makes us better people, whether we are making it or appreciating it,” she says. “Money can buy happiness if it is a donation. Every little bit will help OCAD U.” ☐

Find out how you can support OCAD U at **ocadu.ca/donate** and see Kahn’s paintings at **jessamynkahn.com**.

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ALUMNI NEWS

OCAD U CELEBRATES WORLDPRIDE

Keith Cole (Interdisciplinary Master's in Art, Media & Design, 2012)

Keith Cole, an interdisciplinary artist, dancer, actor, performer and drag queen, is celebrating 25 years in art this year. Cole, who studied theatre at York University then joined the Hardworkin' Homosexuals artist collective in 1996, has appeared in numerous films, television shows, theatre productions, live performances and solo and group art exhibitions. He is the recipient of a Harold Award (1999), a Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts (2005) and a Dora Award nomination (2012).

In 2010 Cole ran for mayor of Toronto with a goal to keep art on the municipal agenda (he garnered enough votes to rank eighth out of 88 candidates). Though he's not running again in 2014, he learned about galvanizing a community on issues (he was particularly impressed by the efforts of the Bicycle Network). "It was incredible," he says. "I encourage people to get involved with politics. It opened my eyes."

Cole also started his MFA at OCAD U in 2010, with a goal to expand his art practice and to write more. While at the university he began an ongoing series of collage-based works he calls his "army of black lesbians" and thoroughly enjoyed working with David Pelletier in Sculpture/Installation as a teaching assistant. In 2011, while studying at OCAD U, he had a major solo exhibition at Paul Petro Gallery called Three Bad Words, exploring psychopathy and the perplexing case of Colonel Russell Williams, an army careerist, closet cross dresser and murderer.

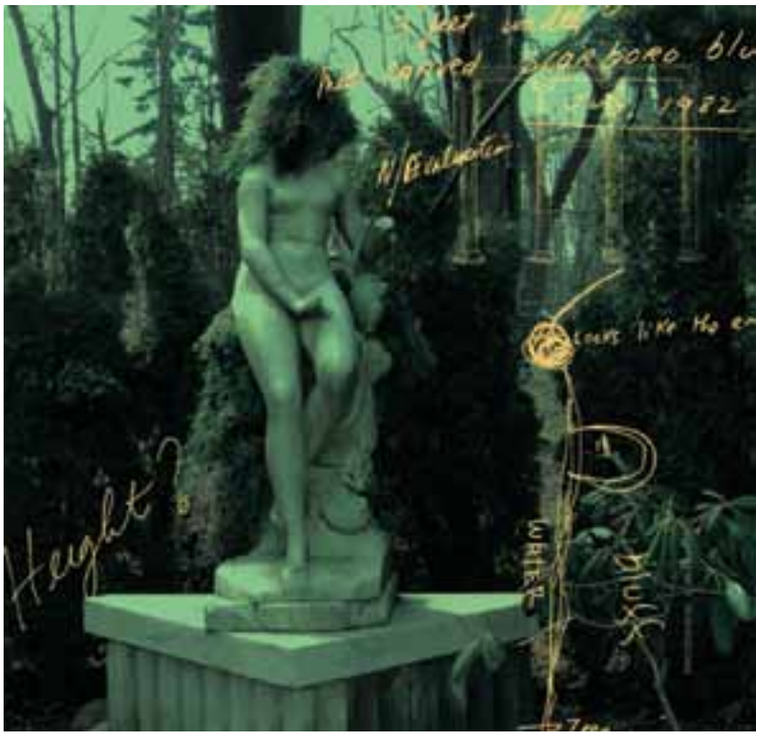
Cole admits he's always working "on a million things." When interviewed this spring he was writing about Canadian artist Charles Pachter, choreographing a pas de deux for *Hackerlove*, a theatrical fantasy at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, recording the story of Oscar Wilde's 1882 lecture at Allan Gardens for the QueerStory.ca history app, getting ready to teach an Art History course at Seneca College and preparing for a WorldPride performance of *Truth/Dare: A Satire (With Dance)*, a recreation of the classic Madonna documentary. For more: **keithcole.ca**.

Wendy Coburn (AOCA, Experimental Arts, 1984)

Wendy Coburn inspires colleagues and students to strive for equity and justice in their work. A sculptor and installation artist, Coburn's work addresses issues that include the representation of women, spectacle and myth in mediating cultural difference, queer and sexualized bodies, everyday objects and material culture. Her 2012 *U-Haul Suite* photo series, which uses toy trucks and moody backdrops to address the joke question "what does a lesbian bring to a third date?" (Answer: "a U-Haul") was part of the Acting Out exhibition at the University of Lethbridge in 2013. As a Faculty of Art associate professor, she led curriculum development for the Art and Social Change program, teaches studio courses (including "Making Gender: LGBTQ Studio") and was recognized in 2013 with the first BLG Faculty Equity Award.

Top Toronto mayoral poster, 2010. Illustrated by John Webster

Right Wendy Coburn, *U-Haul Suite #3*, photograph, 2012



Reena Katz (BFA, Integrated Media, 2010)
Reena Katz, a social practice, sound and performance artist, created a modular stage project for Border Cultures Two (work, labour) at the Art Gallery of Windsor. From January to April of this year the stage supported a variety of community groups, moving between sites in Detroit and Windsor, including the gallery, a church that was involved in the Underground Railroad (a secret network of 19th-century slave escape routes) and a collective house. Katz worked with an architect to design and imagine the stage, which she constructed of plywood, rebar, canvas and leather.

The Windsor show is just one of five exhibitions Katz's work has appeared in so far this year, though each of her works is different. In addition to the stage she also created *sounds for collective grieving* for The University Art Gallery at UC San Diego, a radio play for Castle Galleries in Manchester, U.K., a collaborative work about contemporary feminist issues and gender identity at Feminist Art Gallery at the University of Lethbridge and an archive-based project commissioned by the Vera List Centre for Art and Politics in New York.

"My practice is rooted and bound in public space and having a real social practice, in service with social movements of all kinds," Katz says. "I work with people who are outside mainstream cultural production, including collective anti-capitalist households and queer student groups, with frequent gestures to labour. Everyone from security guards to cultural labourers and the general public are invited to participate in my work."

Katz studied at OCAD U after working as a practising artist for a decade. "It was an amazing opportunity for me to focus my ideas and my writing about my work, connect with professors and other students and experiment," Katz says. Her work at OCAD U also helped land her an exit scholarship to study at Parsons the New School for Design in New York in 2012.

Katz was long-listed for the 2014 Sobey Art Award. Her latest project, Restless Precinct, is a group exhibition and series of events in Guildwood Park in Scarborough that runs through June. For more: **radiodress.ca**.

Naty Tremblay (AOCA, Integrated Media, 2006)
Naty Tremblay, a Métis multidisciplinary artist, musician, community collaborator, activist and youth organizer, describes themselves as a hybrid person working in a wide variety of media and fields. They grew up in a French-speaking community in southwestern Ontario where they learned the importance of sharing stories and being part of social justice movements through art. Since leaving OCAD U, they work with Toronto communities and LGBTQ youth through The People Project, an arts leadership organization they co-founded, and at Sketch Community Arts Youth Training. Their work is rooted in criticality, creativity and caring and celebrates diversity, participation, support, accessibility, inclusion and social change. In 2009 Tremblay appeared, together with their identical twin, in a video installation by Candice Breitz, OCAD U's Nomadic Resident, 2013/2014.

Above Reena Katz with curatorial collective SUM°, 2014. Restless Precinct (a site specific, group exhibition and performance series)

Left Candice Breitz, *Factum Tremblay*, dual-channel video installation video still, 2009

Top Walter Segers, *Swimming Pool Boys #2*, "What I Did On My Summer Vacation" series, 2011

Above Walter Segers, Self Portrait 2014

Below Antonio Lennert. Photo by Darren Rigo

Walter Segers (Photography Residency Artist, 2009; BFA, Photography, 2008)

What I Did On My Summer Vacation is an ongoing series of photographs exploring intimacy, sexuality, gender and identity, all through fantasy travel scenarios featuring Ken dolls. Instead of hanging in a typical bricks-and-mortar gallery, the photos are represented by digital art curation site and iOS app Wondereur. Segers's work, together with that of other established and emerging artists, was selected to appear on Wondereur by its team of curators, which includes OCAD U Faculty of Art professors Barbara Astman and April Hickox.

Segers, who was born and raised in Belgium and immigrated to Canada in 1993, regularly exhibits at physical galleries as well, both locally and internationally. After he was awarded the M.C. McCain Post-Graduate Photography Residency Artist at OCAD U in 2009, his work was in a Scotiabank CONTACT Photography show at Toronto's Gladstone Hotel and in an exhibition called Identities at Galerie AMU in Prague and Galerie 12 in Zlín, Czech Republic.

His work questions individuality and belonging, travel, immigration and personal freedom. "There is usually a slight subtlety in my photo-based work," he says. "It offers the viewer an immediately recognizable place in the pleasure of visual consumption of the image — an image that can pass as normative and likeable to many. However, when viewed as a set, the viewer is faced with an unsettling series of elements that are critical to the very notion of how we see, and of how the viewer places his or her identity."

Segers recently finished two new pieces for *What I Did On My Summer Vacation* and says Wondereur has helped him gain exposure for his work. He is also participating in the sketchbook project at the Art House Co-op in Brooklyn and will have work in Nuit Rose on June 21 as part of Toronto WorldPride. His work will be featured as part of The Sketchbook Project's Mobile Library at Toronto's Distillery District in September. For more: **waltersegers.com**.

Antonio Lennert (Graphic Design medal winner, 2012)

Antonio Lennert is pushing design into new ground with ALSO Collective, the studio he co-founded with Symon Oliver (BDes, Graphic Design, 2011). The Toronto-based multidisciplinary design studio is a diverse network of creative professionals (and OCAD U alumni) focusing on projects in the cultural and medical sectors. "Our goal is to contribute to a culture of dialogue while strengthening our communities," says Lennert. The prolific, multi-award-winning company works with organizations such as SickKids Hospital and The University of Toronto Orthopaedic Sports Group, collaborates with the Toronto Design Offsite Festival and recently developed the creative for the Onsite [at] OCAD U Generations of Queer exhibit. This summer ALSO Collective is launching Surf the Greats, a not-for-profit that takes as its goal the preservation of the Great Lakes.

Alumni Profile: Christina Zeidler

By Gabrielle Moser

"Collaboration has been central to my practice," Christina Zeidler tells me, "even when I'm trying to work solo!" We meet for coffee one sunny spring morning in the café of the Gladstone Hotel, where Zeidler is president and developer, to talk about community organizing, taking a playful approach to media and the pleasures and pitfalls of working in Toronto. She says she's an early riser and it's easy to see why: with a list of current projects longer than most people's curriculum vitae, she has a lot to accomplish each day.

Zeidler is a multitasker in the best sense of the word, using her multidisciplinary approach and enthusiasm for Toronto's art scene to generate a vibrant community of queer artistic practice around her. After completing a BA in English Literature at McGill University in 1990, Zeidler came back to Toronto, where in 1995 she earned an AOCA in New Media from OCAD U. ("It was so long ago it was still called new media," she jokes.) She has been a creative powerhouse ever since, working as an artist, musician, community organizer, film director and cultural worker in Toronto. In 2003, she co-founded (with artist/educator Pamila Matharu) Come Up to My Room, Toronto's alternative design festival, and 11 years later the annual event continues to provide space for the incubation and presentation of cutting-edge projects by local artists and designers.

Zeidler's artistic practice has centred on film and installation work, often drawing on the legacies of feminist politics for its content. *Rehearsal for an Endurance Performance of the SCUM Manifesto in C Major*, for instance, saw her compose a score for the radical feminist manifesto by Valerie Solanas, which a bandmate then transformed into a rock opera (Zeidler somehow also finds time to maintain a music career, performing in the euro-electronica-pop-diva duo, ina unt ina, and in the high-concept art band Mintz). The resulting work, an immersive, eight-screen music-video installation, was presented as part of curator Lisa Myers's 2012 Nuit Blanche exhibition at OCAD U, Night Kitchen Under the Table Top.

"When I was a student at OCAD, we had to work collaboratively, to make our own gallery spaces happen. I always had one foot in the institution and one foot in the community," Zeidler says. "I had amazing professors there. I was the lucky child of equity hiring. Lisa Steele, Paulette Phillips, Judith Doyle and Johanna Householder were all there, connecting us with the wider community and giving us an education in Toronto's art history."

That focus on the importance of the local art context has only intensified with time. Ziedler is an unabashed localist, not only working in Toronto, but making artwork about Toronto — an anomaly in an increasingly globalized art world. *Portrait of a Serial Monogamist*, the lesbian romantic comedy she is currently working on with writer/director John Mitchell, is not just filmed but also set in the city's artistic community. Funded through an Indiegogo campaign and starring a cast of local artists and musicians, it is Zeidler's first feature-length film. "I'm interested in the Toronto art scene and in bolstering it. [The Gladstone] is about that; that is its purpose — to have a living conversation about the local art scene and then connect that nationally and internationally. And that journey really started at OCAD."

Zeidler's next project weaves together the various threads of her professional and artistic practice, working with a collective of artists and curators to organize Nuit Rose, a Nuit Blanche-inspired, queer contemporary art festival planned in conjunction with WorldPride 2014. The brainchild of curator and arts administrator Francisco Alvarez, Nuit Rose aims to highlight Toronto's queer art scene to local and international audiences. The Gladstone Hotel has built a legacy of producing Pride-themed exhibitions each year, hosting the

Opposite Photo courtesy Christina Zeidler

Centre 10x10 Photography Project 2013 (celebrating 100 LGBTQ Canadians who have contributed to the arts). Composite features 2013 photographers Belle Ancell, Lise Beaudry, Bruno Billio, Paul Dymond, Lynne Fox, Stev'nn Hall, R.Jeanette Martin, Anthony Manieri, Adam Moco, and Walter Segers

Bottom Christina Zeidler, *Rehearsal for an Endurance Performance of the S.C.U.M. Manifesto*

10x10 Photography Project, which sees 10 queer photographers make portraits of 10 of their artistic peers, and the "That's So Gay!" group exhibition on the hotel's upper floors. "The programming that has emerged around those events means the Gladstone can be a cultural hub for WorldPride," Zeidler explains. But Nuit Rose is also drawing on the support of other stakeholders in Toronto's West Queen West area, with the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, The Theatre Centre, Artscape Youngplace, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, and the Drake Hotel all collaborating on the event.

"Nuit Rose," says Zeidler, "is brand new and emerging from 'grass' roots. It has an ethos of 'Let's put on a show!' And that has always been my credo, in a way." When I ask her what kind of picture of the Toronto queer scene she hopes visitors to Nuit Rose will take home with them, she's effusive but circumspect: "I think we have one of the most interesting queer scenes in the world. It's a very diverse scene and the arts are a prominent part of that. We're trying to show the robustness of Toronto's queer culture."

It is this insistence on the importance of making space — of claiming and celebrating her artistic peers — that characterizes Zeidler's practice. "When I try to think about what ties my various works together, I think of it as trying to make visible what seems invisible to other people: of letting other people come into a world I know well. Nuit Rose is another facet of that. It's about making this city that we're proud of and this scene that we're proud of visible to ourselves and to another community." ☐

Gabrielle Moser is a writer, educator and independent curator based in Toronto. She regularly contributes to Artforum.com and has curated exhibitions for Access Gallery, Vtape and Gallery TPW, and currently runs No Looking After the Internet, a monthly, out-loud "looking group." Moser is a PhD candidate in art history and visual culture at York University and teaches in the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences at OCAD U.

Will Munro (AOCA, Sculpture/ Installation, 1997)
A series of photographs from the estate of Will Munro was on view at Paul Petro Gallery in Toronto in May (together with that of Robert Flacks) as part of Standing Ground, a posthumous exhibition co-presented by Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival and Toronto's Inside Out LGBT Film Festival. Munro produced the photos in 2004, capturing an androgynous model wearing underwear reconstructed from a vintage metal rock T-shirt and beaded in a delicate constellation pattern.

Munro was an artist and community builder who passed away from brain cancer in 2010 at the age of 35. The Beaver, a restaurant he co-founded, continues to run The Will Munro Memorial Fund for Queers Living with Cancer in his memory, together with the 519 Church Street Community Centre.

"Will Munro both challenged and inspired the queer, punk and art communities through his artwork and events," says Lisa Deanne Smith, acting curator, Onsite [at] OCAD U. "Coming to prominence when Toronto was still reeling from the AIDS crisis, Munro helped provide a broader context and somewhere to go beyond the gay ghetto. From 1999 to 2006, Vazaleen was his monthly event that mixed communities via loud music, art, glam and glitter. His art practice reflected his day and night lives, revealing his sensitivity and commitment to multi-dimensional identities."

Another of Munro's photos will appear in Fan the Flames: Queer Positions in Photography at the Art Gallery of Ontario (from June 18 to September 7 in celebration of World-Pride). The exhibition explores queer identity and the play of gender, and Munro's work was selected by curator Sophie Hackett to appear in good company, alongside that of Nan Goldin, General Idea, Robert Mapplethorpe and others.

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Sarah Liss, author of *Army of Lovers: A Community History of Will Munro*, insists that conscious echoes of Munro's work continue. "The interdisciplinary nature of his practice, his interest in creating work that was vibrant and unfussy and interactive, his investment in art as a living, community-based enterprise, his love of sex and camp and his no-shame philosophy — all these things are not only still absolutely relevant, but very much present in some of the most exciting work I see happening right now in Toronto," she says. Liss describes this as an "insistence that the voices, perspectives and experiences of marginalized groups and individuals are celebrated, acknowledged and not swept under the rug of time."

Paul Petro, the exhibition's curator and a long-time Munro supporter, first met Munro while he was studying at OCAD U, in the early days of Vazaleen. Petro mounted Munro's final solo exhibition, Inside the Solar Temple of the Cosmic Leather Daddy, in 2010.

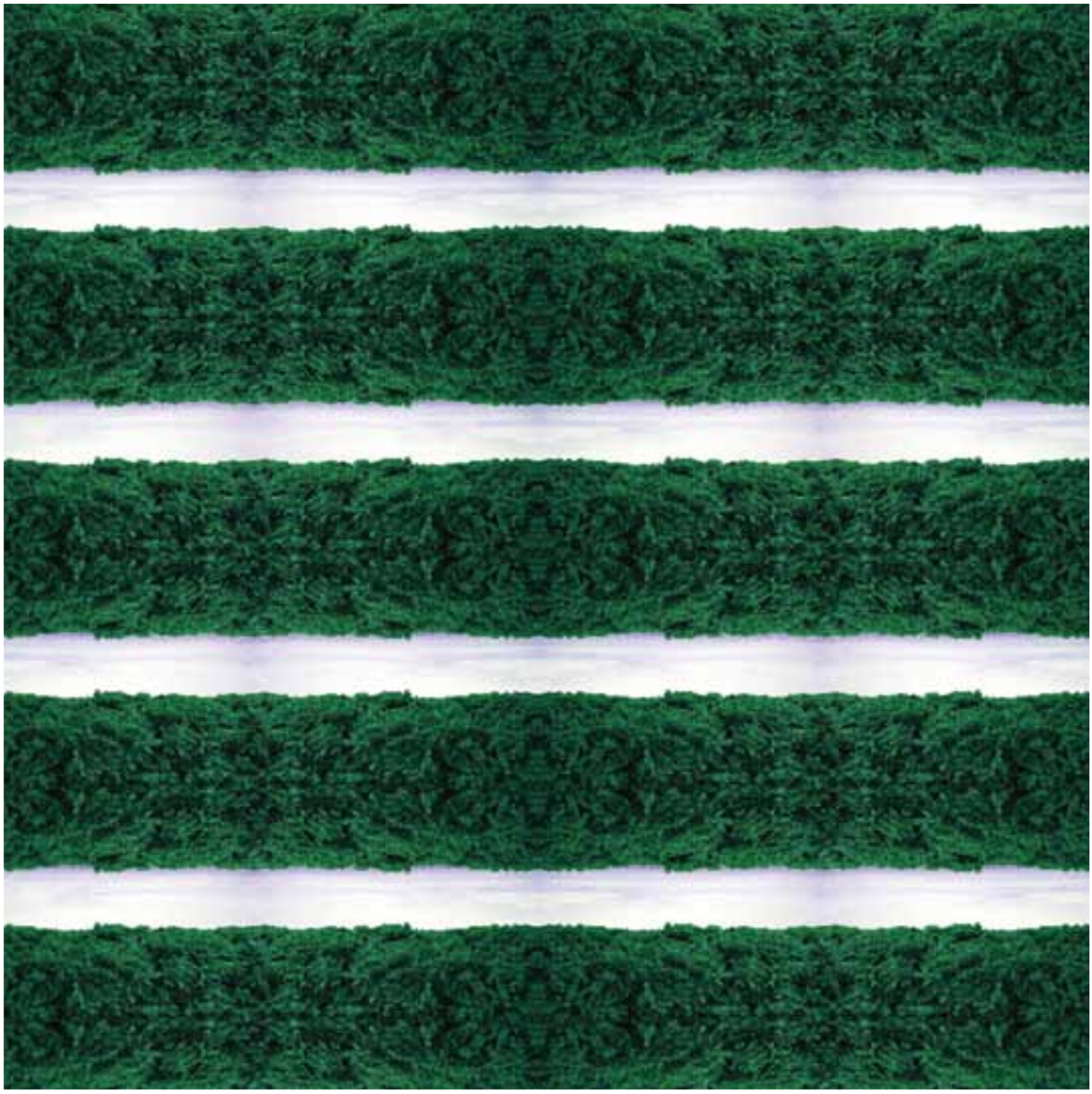
"Munro's work opened up doors to the future," says Petro. "We can look forward to more critical appreciation and understanding of the impact and meaning of his work down the road."

Top Will Munro, *Untitled*, photograph, 2004. Image courtesy Paul Petro Contemporary Art and the Estate of Will Munro

Exhibition

JENNY BOUCHER
Fourth-year student, Material Art & Design

Textiles in the Year 2020 emerged out of a Surface Design 2 course. Instructor Ana Galindo challenged students to design a collection inspired by streetwear in the year 2020, for the Suretex Designext competition, in which Boucher was a shortlisted winner. "Western culture," she says, "was founded on the belief that there's an infinite supply in nature. In 2020, the cost of natural fibres is at a premium, but new technologies and thinking have redefined our perceptions of art and science. This collection revises our sentimental memories of nature with composite imagery that transcends our perceptions of what 'natural' means.



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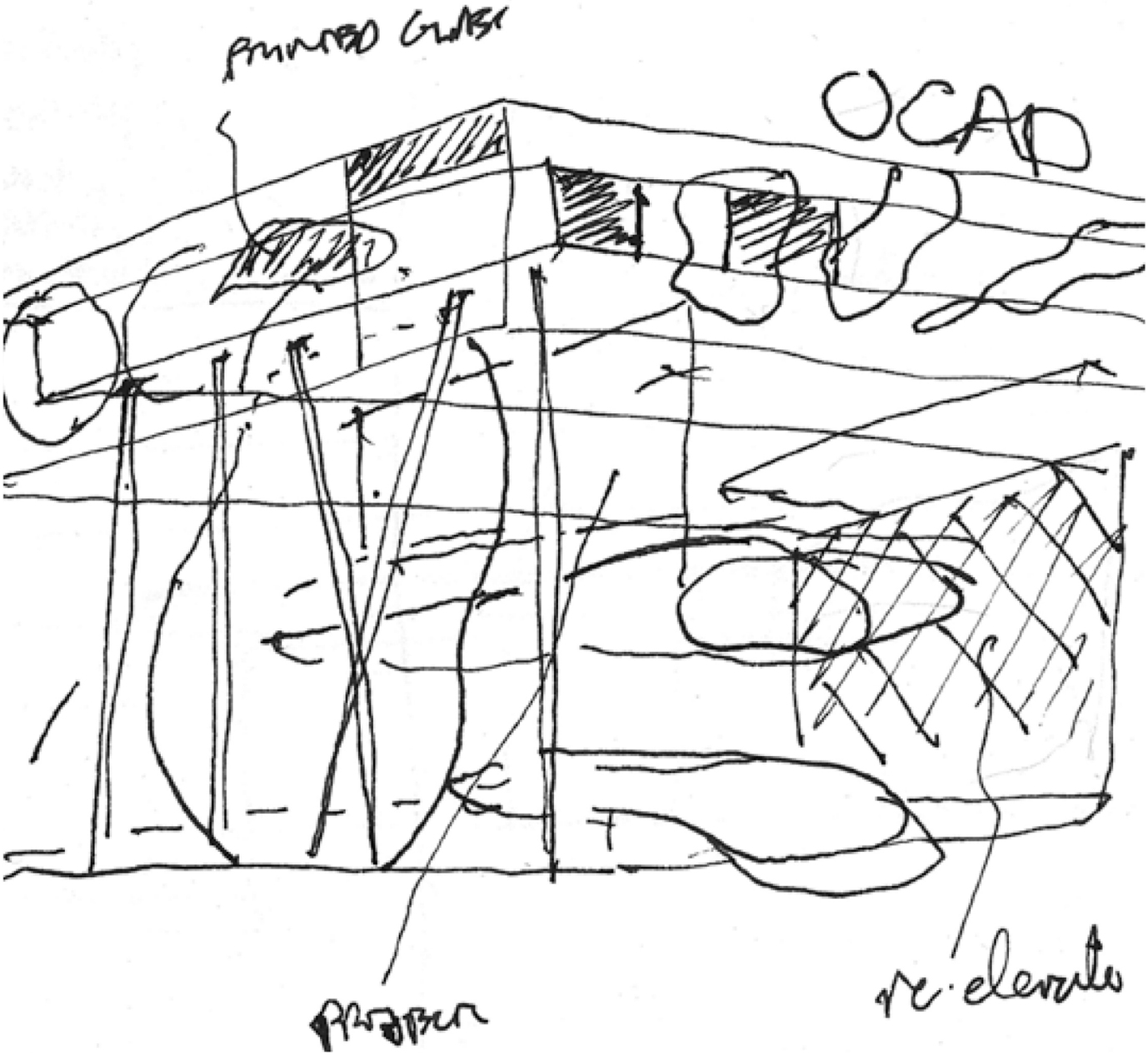
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