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ERNESTINE M. RACLIN SCHOOL OF THE ARTS // 2021

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Michele Morgan-Dufour

DEAN

Jorge A. Muñiz, D.M.A.

EDITOR

Cory Iwaszewski
Tamea Rector

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Kate Luce

COPY EDITOR

Kathy Borlik

DESIGNER

Katrina Wilborn

WRITERS

Kathy Borlik
Cory Iwaszewski
Kate Luce
Cassidy Martenson
Jorge Muñiz
Nikoks Potamousis
Patrick Watterson

PRINCIPLE PHOTOGRAPHERS

Tally Diaz
Brianna Edgerly

SECONDARY PHOTOGRAPHERS

Sarah Brubaker
Demarée Dufour-Noneman
Brandon Galvan
Cory Iwaszewski
Nathan Albert
Peter Ringenberg
Michele Morgan-Dufour
Teresa Sheppard

// PRODUCTION NOTES

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Welcome from Dean Muñiz

My warmest welcome to this latest edition of our ASPIRE magazine!

2020-2021 was a year of great struggles and sorrows, but it was also a year of triumphs and exemplary heroic service! Through this pandemic, we have seen many, many acts of selflessness and generosity, starting with our first-responders and the medical community. Because of our amazing community here in Michiana, we are slowly transitioning back to a normal campus that is once again full of students, faculty, and staff.

My most heartfelt thanks are also to all the members of our IU community who, through careful planning and close attention to scientific developments, have made it possible that not only our Titan community, but also our patrons and friends of the Raclin School around our region will be able to enjoy our *on-campus*, fully-packed, upcoming season of performances, lectures, and exhibitions. This ASPIRE magazine is dedicated to all of you!



As you read through these pages, you will nevertheless experience the hard work, determination, and sheer passion for the Arts and the advancement of scholarly work that all our faculty, staff, and students have accomplished amid the pandemic. I am *delighted* to see the energy, drive, and resilience that our Raclin Titans have shown during this past year!

The Raclin School did not stop producing amazing performances, riveting lectures, and scholarship achievements: we just had to re-imagine ourselves as artists and scholars in a different way so we could still reach out to all of you. This is the spirit of true scholars, artists, and creators: to constantly reflect, adapt, and comfort others by critically thinking about our place in our society. The Arts are not just necessary for the well-being of a society: they are indispensable!

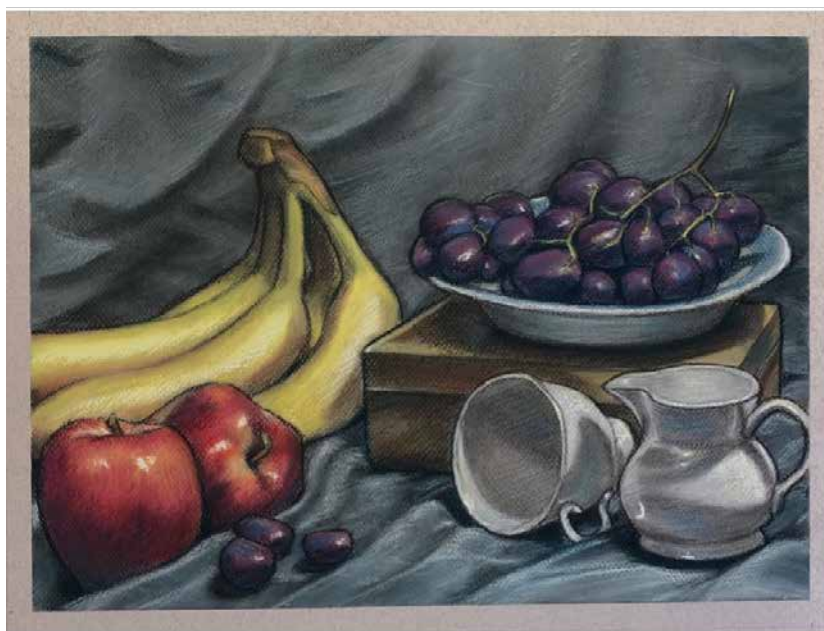
Many of the new approaches we have taken this year will surely stay with us for years to come. I encourage you to read through these pages and reach out to us if we can be of assistance. We look forward to seeing you at the many events throughout our 2021-2022 season!

With warmest regards,

Jorge A. Muñiz, D.M.A.
Interim Dean
Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts



Top //
A Cruel Angel's Thesis, 2021
 watercolor, gouache, india ink and
 acrylic on watercolor paper, 16"x20"
 by Kate Luce



Bottom Left //
 by Bethany Jankowsky // student

Bottom Right //
Still Life
 Charcoal Pencil with color, 12"x18"
 by Theresa Salay // student

INSIDE

1. Welcome from Dean Muñiz
4. Creating and teaching in the digital age
6. Brandon Hollihan: The process of publication
7. Chloe Dukes' art makes prime time
9. Kolt Sizer working toward MFA
10. Michiana true crime drawn to life
12. Brian Hutsebout: a retrospective on the journey of work
15. Communicating in a digital environment
16. Michele's Little Hearts Theatre goes virtual
17. Fine Arts students create work semi-remotely
19. Dora Natella leaves her mark in Bloomington
21. Congratulations to all our recent graduates!
22. Adaptation: New Media Studies during the COVID-19 pandemic
25. Bringing the holidays home
27. Two Decembers for *Three Decembers*
28. Artur Silva brings awareness to South Bend
31. A role model in the Arts
32. A legacy fulfilled
34. 19 years of dedication: Larry Lambert retires
35. Linda Freel leaves behind a legacy

Creating and teaching in the digital age

By Kate Luce



When last year brought big changes to education, teachers shifted to the digital age. For Katie Neece, teaching and creating in the digital age are part of her life.

Neece graduated from IU South Bend in 2013, receiving her BFA in Painting and Drawing with a minor in Art History. During this time, her work revolved around Dutch masters' works and darker palettes

As someone who spent her entire life growing up in the area, Notre Dame's MFA program interested Neece. However, she did look at other places.

"It was in town, which is a plus. I am the epitome of a townie. I'm from here, I went to school here; but it was also something that was economically feasible for me. I was looking at and applying to other graduate schools. I had an interview at the University of Chicago and went for a visit. It was a great school, but it was intense. It was a little more experimental and avant-garde," Neece recalled.

IU Bloomington was another option for Neece, but she was not sure if she wanted to attend the same program.

"I applied to Notre Dame three times because I didn't get in the first two times. I was getting really disenchanted. I was like 'this isn't

working.' What I was creating was not coming from a place of investigation or any kind of exciting perspective. It was kind of like recycling my old work. Looking back at it, I know why they didn't pick me. I was not doing anything particularly good or interesting," Neece explained.

Because of this, Neece flipped the switch on her work. She changed her subject matter and began researching things that interested her. She credits the rejections for pushing her work into new directions.

During this time, Neece began researching the New Aesthetic, which is a fine line between fine art and technology. From drones to glitch art, some artists are taking this aesthetic further. In addition, Neece became interested in Vaporwave.

Vaporwave is a genre of music and art that recontextualizes past aesthetics in a digital age, which rose to popularity in the early 2010s. Vaporwave employs elements of nostalgia and surrealism. The movement had many spin-offs after the rise to popularity on social media platforms.

"It's my favorite thing. It's kind of a cornerstone to the work I do still because I am fascinated with the nostalgic view of the past, and this recycling of past forms in the current

cultural ether. We are looking at these old, dated forms, but we are looking at them like 'this was such a better time.' We are romanticizing it, and I question why that is. The Vaporwave music genre reflects that," Neece says.

Neece's work incorporates computer graphics software while using traditional oil painting techniques. Her work brings together the abstraction of early 20th century European avant-garde artists, 1990s American mall aesthetics, pop culture, and design aesthetic.

Now, Neece is dedicating her creative life to this art style with flat colors, added drop shadows, familiar images, and bold shapes.

Notre Dame's program is a hybrid. Neece was able to focus on her studio work, and also had the opportunity to teach. During her first year, she was a teaching assistant for a painting class. She applauds Notre Dame's MFA program for pushing their students directly into the classroom.

"The department throws you in right away. They don't really explain it. I was a teaching assistant my first year in Painting 1 with Jason Lair. It was a great group, and a lot of our students became BFA students in painting, so I was able to see them grow throughout the years," Neece explained.



After her first year as a teaching assistant, she was able to take the reins and teach her own class. She taught a Drawing 1 class at Notre Dame for four semesters. Her time at Notre Dame solidified her passion for teaching.

“It was really formative for me. I loved that. I thought it was really cool to just have the autonomy to teach your own class. It reinforced me knowing that this is what I wanted to do. I wanted to teach drawing and painting ultimately,” Neece shared.

Giving her student confidence and providing students with a space to be creative is one of the more rewarding aspects of teaching.

Neece graduated from Notre Dame in 2020, and was able to find a teaching position through Holy Cross College. While she was nervous at first, she decided it would be a good time to take the position.

“I applied because a good friend of mine, Austin Brady, started teaching at Holy Cross right out of grad school. So, I knew that they needed instructors for intro classes or to help fill faculty. I got an email back, and they were really interested in my work. They had an opening,” Neece says.

The first class assignment was graphic design. Neece second guessed herself.

While she knew some things about it, she wasn’t sure if she knew how to teach it. However, she remembered how Linda Freel had taught the class when she took it at IU South Bend. She used drawing as the basis for her class, and relied on her graphic design class to be tactile.

Angelo Martienez, department chair of Fine Arts at Holy Cross, believed Neece would be an excellent candidate for the position, since she uses many digital renderings for her paintings.

“They asked me if I would take the position, COVID happened and we had to figure all of that stuff out. Then, they added another class, digital illustration. I taught Graphic Design 1 and Digital Illustration. Very small classes, we had to teach in person, which was interesting. It was really great. I was able to learn about myself from my students, which I loved. I love the challenge of learning from my students and learning things I wouldn’t have thought about before,” Neece says.

While she never expected to be teaching a graphic design class, she believes it has helped her diversify her work. Nowadays, traditional artists are expected to be familiar with the digital arts. Whether it is taking your own photos and editing them or making your own website, artists are being pushed towards technology.

For the spring 2021 semester, Neece taught Graphic Design 1 and 2-D Fundamentals.

“This semester was insanely atypical. It was ridiculous. I had to put up with a lot, and had had to figure it out. My teaching experience from Notre Dame had set me up for success. I knew what a normal semester looked like, and that was a piece of cake in comparison. When COVID started, I was able to plan out what to teach, my materials, and rubrics.”

While she was able to teach digitally, she was prepared to teach on Zoom if needed. Luckily for her students, all they needed was a sketchbook and pencil this semester. She stayed empathetic to everyone’s situations, but didn’t let her students slide and not do work.

While this past year has been anything but normal, Neece is excited to be in the classroom and bringing her love of creating to her students. To keep up to date with Neece’s work, visit her website at **katieneece.com**.



“his work with *Tehillim* will be one of the highlights of his professional career”

Brandon Hollihan: The process of publication

By Cassidy Martenson

The IU South Bend Department of Music is making waves again. Brandon Hollihan, adjunct lecturer in music, has been published by the National Collegiate Choral Organization. Hollihan's article "The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach as a Western Influence on Steve Reich's *Tehillim*" was published in the fall 2020 issue of *The Choral Scholar & American Choral Review*.

Hollihan lovingly calls *Tehillim* his "passion project" since it was at the heart of his dissertation at the Sacred Heart Music Program at Notre Dame. His dissertation, "Rehearsal and Performance Issues in Steve Reich's *Tehillim*: Unlocking the Process," was completed in pursuit of his doctor of musical arts (DMA) at the University of Notre Dame.

Hollihan explains that the dissertation "mainly focuses on the vast challenges seen in putting together *Tehillim*, including how to sing, counting the rapidly changing time signatures, and the great challenge in conducting the music." He completed his dissertation under the guidance of his advisor, Dr. Carmen-Helena Tellez, who specializes in contemporary music.

For Hollihan, the word "process" played a vital role in his dissertation. The use of the word in his title is in reference to an essay by Reich entitled "Music as a Gradual Process." According to Hollihan, "the 'process' was how to put together a successful performance of *Tehillim* in as many different facets as possible." This process eventually allowed Hollihan to perform *Tehillim* alongside Third Coast Production, a Grammy-winning ensemble from Chicago, for his lecture recital at Notre Dame.

His dissertation paved the way for his article "The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach as a Western Influence on Steve Reich's *Tehillim*." The article examines work by each composer and provides examples of the ways that Reich imitates Bach in his composition, *Tehillim*. The composition was originally written in 1981 for four voices and a chamber ensemble consisting of strings, woodwinds, percussion and two electronic organs. By highlighting the similarities between *Tehillim* and the work of Bach, Hollihan uncovers western music influence that is often overlooked in association with Reich's music.

Being published was another "process" that Hollihan was able to experience through *Tehillim*. He explains that he submitted his article to the editor-in-chief for an initial review, and then it went on to an editorial panel for their suggestions and edits. While the peer-review process can be challenging, it is rewarding and allows for the best article possible. The article was then proofread and published in the fall 2020 journal.

Hollihan says his work with *Tehillim* will be one of the highlights of his professional career. He is grateful for the opportunities provided to him by the University of Notre Dame and hopes that his research can help other musicians who want to learn more about minimalist music.

Hollihan teaches Aural Skills and History of Rock and Roll at IU South Bend, while also serving as a faculty member at Bethel University. Additionally, Hollihan serves as the music director at First United Methodist Church. Anyone that wishes to read Hollihan's article can access it at <https://ncco-usa.org/publications/the-choral-scholar-american-choral-review/issues/82>.



Chloe Dukes' art makes prime time

NBC show “Kenan” uses prints by South Bend native Chloe Dukes as part of set design.

Written by Kathy Borlik, Tribune Columnist, as seen in the South Bend Tribune

Budding artist.

Chloe Dukes, Integrated New Media Studies BFA '17.

It took a few years for Chloe to decide that art was her future. It has worked out.

A designer from NBC’s “Kenan” show recognized her talent and incorporated two pieces of her prints into a set design in the pilot episode of the Kenan Thompson comedy in February.

Right over a desk, there it was. She was thrilled to pieces.

Chloe is originally from South Bend, an Adams High School grad and the daughter to Gail and Howard Dukes. Yes, that Howard Dukes from The Tribune.

She’s currently working on her master’s in art administration at Indiana University Bloomington. She taught art for several years and worked at the South Bend Museum of Art.

How did this all happen with “Kenan” and the set designer? She said it was luck and Instagram. She got busy and posted some of her art during the quarantine period. The art was shared and shared again. Until someone from the show found it. The set designer for “Kenan” was looking for a strong representation of Black women. Chloe’s untitled work was just what the designer wanted.

“I got a message from the designer.” She didn’t take it seriously right away. “I Googled it, and it was legitimate. I was so excited.”

For the show, Chloe basically knew it was going to be on a shelf in a scene.

Chloe is also working on some murals in Bloomington for Artisan Alley. She is on track to graduate next fall.

Mom Gail said she wanted her daughter to follow her heart. “You never know what babies are going to do, but as a child, she loved texture and colors. She took notebooks to church. I knew she was an artist. We told her to do what makes your heart sing.”

And it has been singing for a few years.

Howard said they are very proud of her and excited that her dreams are coming true.

Chloe told her mother that she was inspired by an art teacher at Holy Cross School, **Jen Sweazy**. “Mrs, Sweazy saw something in Chloe’s art,” Gail said. Jen currently teaches at St. Joseph Catholic.

Jen said she remembers Chloe and her creativity. “I always knew Chloe had a gift when I saw her drawing women in her thought-up fashion designs. It’s funny how so many years later something like that sticks with you.”

Jen said Chloe is an example of the importance of art education and giving kids a chance to explore. “It just takes one, one person to say, ‘That’s good. I see you.’ Kids just want to be seen and appreciated.”

We can’t wait to see what is next.



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KOLT SIZER

WORKING TOWARD MFA

By Kate Luce

WHILE the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted many things in our lives, for Kolt Sizer, BFA '19 Fine Arts, it has changed his work in his MFA program to be more introspective and personal to his roots with the blue-collar lifestyle.

Sizer is currently working towards his MFA in painting at Bowling Green State University. Sizer applied to several MFA Programs and received offers from Bowling Green State University and Miami University of Ohio. With a keen interest in the different approaches to painting showed by BGSU's professors and an offer including a graduate assistantship, Sizer chose to attend BGSU.

At BGSU, Sizer is pushing his work in a different direction. When enrolled at IU South Bend, Sizer focused on everyday moments that people might take for granted, scenes from his life, and the blue-collar lifestyle. However, he had many conversations about pursuing something different than painting and drawing.

During his time as an undergrad, his work relied heavily on models. Times changed with COVID, and there was a halt to models on campus. Sizer decided to take his work in a more personal direction, focusing on self-portraits as one of the main subjects.

In addition, Sizer is working in different mediums. He is drawing more and using wood panels as his medium of choice.

"My work has become a lot more personal. Every piece in my studio, besides a couple of still lifes I have been working on, are all self-portraits. It's funny. I didn't even put it together until last week, which is ridiculous because I am making them. My painting professor was talking about something and said, 'you know Kolt and his self-portraits.' I was like, 'I do self-portraits!'" Sizer laughs. "I started looking at myself differently. I started thinking of myself more as a symbol. My previous work talked about the working class. I kind of took all of those ideas and boiled it down to me. I am a symbol of my heritage."

With his dad being a contractor and working in construction, Sizer is using these mediums to also symbolize himself. The wood panel has become important because it follows ideals that he finds important. The materials add power to his work.

Sizer is moving away from clay in his sculpture work and is repurposing a church pew for a current project. Moving away from clay was an accident at first. However, his move towards wood has been an interesting experience, as he had to turn rough cut wood into lumber, something he had never done before.

In addition to all the exploration of work and mediums, BGSU encourages their MFA students to examine as many mediums as possible during their first year.

"It's extremely stressful because you feel like you don't know what you are doing. It will be three weeks ago this weekend, but one of my committee members brought up my drawings and

asked why there aren't any paintings. A big thing about my drawings is that I am reacting. There is form and craftsmanship to it, but there is a physicality and texture to my work that is really coming out because I am reacting in the moment. It's almost a material-body movement," Sizer says.

Sizer's fondness of the immediacy and effects of charcoal have pushed him away from painting. However, painting is something Sizer is looking towards doing in the future, just unconventionally.

"You can't just react with painting. You have to choose a color and medium. There are choices you have to make before you even start painting. [My professor] was like, 'why don't you start out your paintings as monotypes, print it, and do the painting,'" Sizer says.

"My goal is to have a solid private practice, where I am making my own work and it is getting out in the world. However, I do think teaching [is another thing I'd like to do]. I was doing it at the South Bend Art Museum and enjoyed it, but we'll have to see if I like it in a college setting," Sizer says.

Sizer is pushing towards this goal and creating work that is moving him further into self-discovery.

As for now, Sizer has two pieces of art (*Smoke Break* and *Taking a Lunch*) that have been accepted in two different shows. One will be going to the Open Theme Juried Exhibition at the Cultural Center of Cape Cod and another going to Figurative Arts National Juried Exhibition in Dallas, Texas.

MICHIANA TRUE CRIME DRAWN TO LIFE

By Kate Luce

An infamous female serial killer whose ultimate fate remains elusive more than 100 years later, Belle Gunness is one character whose mystery rivals her murders. It's a story well known in parts of northern Indiana, but others might not know this tale. Well, not until now.

John Thompson, lecturer in fine arts, has researched, written, drawn, and published a graphic novel about the life and true crimes of Belle Gunness, titled *The Comely Widow: The Crimes of Serial Killer Belle Gunness*.

Taking place mostly in La Porte, Ind., Gunness murdered

multiple husbands, after purchasing life insurance policies on them and/or taking all of their money. She moved from Norway to the United States and rehomed herself in La Porte in 1881. During her spree, it is said she killed anywhere between 11 to 40 men.

In 1908, her farmhouse was burned to the ground. The authorities found the body of a headless adult woman and her children. The authorities also found 11 bodies buried on her property. However, after Belle's supposed death, many people reported sightings of her throughout the Chicago area. These sightings never lead to any confirmed identities or arrests.

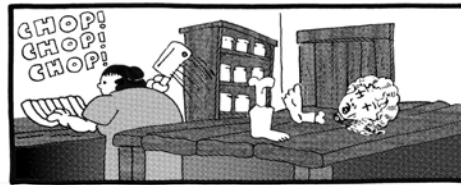
Thompson has been developing this graphic novel since 2018, spending a long time researching the project. From reading books, to going to the La Porte County Historical Museum, to even visiting the property where Gunness's home once stood, Thompson has been hard at work learning the details of the story before crafting the book.

Thompson's interest in true crime came from his grandmother, who was extremely interested in the dark side of people. The story of Belle Gunness resonated with Thompson, from the mysterious twists and turns to the tie to Michiana.

"I advocate for the Midwest a lot," Thompson explains. He wanted to bring attention to this story "...because I mean, this is still one of the biggest stories that ever came out of the door."

There is also an interesting political angle to the Belle Gunness case. The reporting from the local newspapers at the time tended to each lean in a different way according to the politics of that newspaper. "It's as if they felt 'Here's the story, but let's sensationalize it,'" Thompson explains. "But they didn't really need to do that with this story, because it's already pretty interesting. At the time in the La Porte area, there





were two rival newspapers. One was affiliated with the Democratic party and one was on the side of the Republicans. Depending on their side, you know, the stories would be molded to fit their viewpoint."

Bringing the project to fruition was not an easy task. Thompson had to scrap his first effort as it did not effectively incorporate the elements he had envisioned. "I drew about 20 or 30 pages and was not really happy with the direction it was going. So I kind of scrapped them and started from scratch" he recalls.

As a college instructor of graphic design and design history, as well as having his own artistic career, Thompson incorporated all of his skills and talents for the creation of this project and discovered a touchstone with the courses that he teaches. Research, drawing, and processing everything to digital provided Thompson with a connection to his teaching.

"I teach history of graphic design and as part of my course curriculum I've included some history of comics. So, through my teaching, I started to figure out how to incorporate some of this stuff that I'm already teaching into my work as well. The whole point of creative work if you're teaching in the arts is that you're incorporating your work into your curriculum."

As much as the case itself was researched for *The Comely Widow*, so was the presentation and drawing style. Thompson made the artistic decision to base the look of his comic on newspaper comics and cartoons prior to the 1950s, choosing his inspiration for several of the characters to be reminiscent of the style of Popeye.

"I designed the characters based off of existing characters. Belle Gunness is inspired by Myrtle Sappo from E.C. Segar's comic strip "Sappo." The young Belle looks similar to Segar's Olive Oil from "Popeye," but with different hair. Other characters are inspired by the work of Chester Gold who wrote Dick Tracy," Thompson says.

One of Belle's suspected victims, William Mingay, is based on the character Lyman from Indiana's most well-known comic artist Jim Davis's strip "Garfield." This character "violates my rule of keeping the character designs. . . pre-1950s" Thompson writes in the Notes section at the end of his book. Thompson allowed this discrepancy because Davis is a "fellow Hoosier," and Lyman becomes "famously an absent character" from the strip, just as Mingay appears only briefly in Belle's life.

When the project was finished, Thompson introduced it to the public by posting a page of the comic a day on his website. This sparked interest for the book. He finished posting his graphic novel on March 12, 2021.

Thompson's book can be ordered in digital, hardcover, and paperback through Amazon by searching for *The Comely Widow: The Crimes of Serial Killer Belle Gunness*.



Brian Hutsebout: a retrospective on the journey of work

By Kate Luce

Brian Hutsebout, adjunct professor in fine arts, came to IU South Bend last year to teach sculpture during Professor Dora Natella's sabbatical. During his time here, he pushed students to create work through unconventional materials and methods.

In Oct. 2020, Hutsebout spoke to a number of students and faculty in the fine arts department about his work processes, the concepts his work encompasses, and his artistic journey.

"I specifically talk about certain key turning points in my artistic career. Briefly talking about my undergraduate career in graphic design, but not focusing on it. I learned how to transition into how to be able to do sculpture, and then that became a transition in doing my independent study, graduate school, and so on and so forth," Hutsebout recalled.

Hutsebout has his roots in graphic design, receiving his BFA at Georgia Southern University. Sculpture was something that he discovered later in his BFA practice. During one of the last semesters before graduation, Hutsebout took a sculpture class and knew instantly that it was a medium that connected with him.

"Partly, I chose graphic design as a student because I can make money from it," Hutsebout laughed, "The idea of graphic design for me at the time was, 'I can be a creative person for someone else's ideas.' If you have the ideas, I can make it, design it, and problem solve. I liked that idea of problem solving, but I never really had an artistic voice."

While Hutsebout enjoyed the change of pace in sculpture class, it was difficult to find a connection with the importance of the environment, something his work is focused on currently.

"It was one of the first experiences I had where I realized that this art can change people. It can get them to move in a certain way or change in a certain way," Hutsebout explained.

After graduation, Hutsebout worked on graphic design projects, but also ended up working at R.E.I., the sporting goods store, as a transition towards something else. With retail comes waste, whether from packaging or defective products. Hutsebout was witnessing the immense amounts of trash that build up from discarded products.

"I took an independent study, but in order to do that, I had to take a class for credit. The professor didn't really know me, but wanted to make sure I was pursuing my interests. I did the standard assignments, but towards the end, I started to have a connection to the materials I was working with at R.E.I. that they were not able to recycle. I think that other experiences related to people and the environment all started to tie in," Hutsebout says.

During this transition, Hutsebout was unsure of what he wanted to do. Teaching was another option Hutsebout was interested in, particularly in art history or sculpture. "Once I decided I wanted to teach sculpture, that's the basic reason why I wanted to go to grad school. I didn't know much more than that. But I wanted to teach sculpture," Hutsebout recalls.



He spent two years preparing for grad school by pursuing an independent study in order to create a portfolio. During this time, he was able to gain the skills needed for a graduate level course.

Hutsebout recalls discussing his future with his mentor during his independent study, and received this advice. "You can go to school anywhere, it all comes down to where you might want to live and practice. Most art is on the coasts." Hutsebout immediately started looking at both coasts to see what was available.

Before he applied to graduate school, he traveled to each school he was interested in. Two schools that interested Hutsebout were the San Francisco Art Institute and the Pacific Northwest College of Art. These schools had programs that focused on creating community, and with the direction of his work, this is what made these schools both appealing options.

Hutsebout ended up attending the Pacific Northwest College of Art, where he received his MFA in Applied Craft and Design in 2014.

During his time in graduate school, Hutsebout was able to dive equally into the concepts of his work, the art of making, and community involvement. One of the first projects his cohort was tasked with was to build a bike repair shop and a bike park for an area of Portland. Within the span of a couple of weeks, the group was able to have this shop fully functional.

During graduate school, Hutsebout created work focusing on how people interact with the environment, and spotlighting environmental issues.

"I learned about the importance of the connections with the community. I am working with my artwork that is often times out in the community. Our program had a mentor-student program. Every semester you got to choose a mentor, but the mentor was also an artist out in the community. Every semester, I was able to choose one that would align me with where I needed to be."

Through his graduate program he was able to network and be an active listener to the community in his work.

Hutsebout came to South Bend partly because he inherited his grandparents' home and partly to gain experience teaching sculpture at St. Mary's College. Once a full-time position to teach at IU South Bend opened up, he was ready to take the position.

Since living in South Bend, Hutsebout has been actively creating work in the area. His sculpture *Ode to Cottonwood* has recently been installed at Howard Park. The dedication ceremony took place November 27, 2020.

Hutsebout's artist talk has been recorded, to view the talk visit: youtu.be/7QK05Aei9K0.



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Michele's Little Hearts Theatre goes virtual

A white blanket of snow covers the trees, ground, and houses. Cold air stings your cheeks as you wait for the buses to arrive. The only sound you hear are your boots crunching in the snow, as you pace in anticipation on an early February morning.

These surroundings were all too familiar to the staff of the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts. These are the moments just before five to six thousand local elementary school students pile into the campus auditorium for the Michele's Little Hearts Theatre production. An Annual production that is run by the School of the Arts each February.

However, in February 2021 there were no buses, no children, no anxious running around last minute to make sure everything is as perfect as can be. The children were not coming, and the staff was nowhere to be seen. During the current COVID-19 pandemic, all in-person events, which included one of IU South Bend's biggest audiences, were cancelled for the academic year.

In spite of one of the biggest obstacles standing in the way, the theatre and dance department at IU South Bend were determined to still connect with the students, whatever it may take.

The theatre and dance department decided to create the production and film it so all who wanted to take part still could, entirely virtual. This would be no easy task, and in a year when campus has been completely shut down for a time, most students, staff, and faculty are virtual, many hurdles were going to have to be overcome.

Like everything when it comes to Art, it can bind people together, bringing one another together physically and mentally. This year's production did just that, with the generous support from Women's Philanthropy at Indiana University.

A year ago, Justin Amellio, associate professor of theatre, applied for a grant to help children's theatre make their 6-year cycle, this grant would help the production be sustainable. In a year of uncertainty, the grant could not have come at a better

time. The amount of assistance and support the grant helped create for the department and the production will not soon be forgotten. "This is the first time I applied for this grant, and the support felt from Women's Philanthropy at Indiana University is indescribable," Amellio said as he reflected on the process. "The organization saw the value in such a successful program, as Michele's Little Hearts brings live theatre to the community and many elementary school students for the first time. This is such an important program for our department, our school, and our community, and they saw that."

The production on average brings in thousands of students from around the region each year. The students come in droves by buses, and some even stay to eat lunch on campus before their long haul home.

While the School of the Arts had to truly improvise during COVID-19, the department is beyond excited to once again open its doors to the children, students and the community of South Bend for the 2021-22 academic year.

Fine Arts students create work semi-remotely

By Kate Luce

When the 2020-21 academic year shifted from in-person to online, the Fine Arts Department at IU South Bend had to change accordingly. While some classes are currently in-person, others have decided to stay online.

“In the fine arts department we are making art and creativity, which are integral to our lives and our understanding in the world. In short, we are doing the best that we can, and we are making art,” says Susan Moore, department chair, professor of fine arts.

While some classes decided to go entirely online last semester, other classes decided to meet in-person for the first part of the semester. With safety at the forefront of concern, class mode of instruction was determined by the individual needs of each class.

“Over the summer, I met with faculty across the South Bend campus to talk about the challenges and benefits of teaching online, and teaching face-to-face. We talked about technology, labs and lectures. It was good to have input from different departments in deciding what would work best in Fine Arts. Based on the information we had at the time, the faculty decided to elect individually to teach online or in-person. The decision was based on the course goals, activities and learning for

each class, and the preference of the instructor,” Moore explains.

For example, Ron Monsma, associate professor of fine arts, held his painting and drawing classes outside when the weather cooperated. While classes could not use live models in an enclosed space, such as a studio, working with landscapes helps students work with perspective, large spaces, and selecting detail.

This shift was similar to what many other professors were doing with their classes. Bill Tourtillotte, lecturer in fine arts, adjusted projects to better suit the needs of the semester.

“Last semester, I taught four classes in the hybrid traditional format. For social distancing, each class of 16 had been divided into two groups of eight. Each group came to the studio once a week in combination with doing outside studio work and research equal to a class meeting. For the remote activities, there were image resources, support materials and technical tutorials on Canvas for each class. I was available on Zoom for appointments and technical problem solving,” Tourtillotte said.

Tourtillotte spent the previous summer planning three different scenarios for the semester. “The last projects

we will do on-line after Thanksgiving were the first projects in Plan B if the spread of COVID-19 threw us out of the classroom. These projects were designed so that they could be accomplished/produced in a domestic setting and used simple non-toxic materials and techniques accessible to all.”

John Thompson, lecturer in fine arts, took a hybridized approach to his graphic design classes. Meetings, demonstrations, and critiques were in person, while discussion and some of the homework was pushed online.

“Most of my classes were hybrid with most of the course content such as readings and recorded lectures posted in Canvas,” Thompson explained. “For visual art projects I also had project critiques posted as discussions when students made their initial post as a picture of their work and their peers then respond with their feedback.”

Students and professors had to adjust to the transition. As the semester wound down towards fully online, professors prepared accordingly. Whether it be Zoom-based classes or adjusting projects to better suit working at home, fine arts students continued to create art.

“Art, teaching, and learning are bigger and more powerful activities than all the challenges we face, if we make art and work together,” Moore says.

Although the year was difficult for all involved, the department of Fine Arts has done everything possible to assure that students are still the number one priority.







Photography by Andrea Natella

Dora Natella leaves her mark in Bloomington

Written by Nikoks Potamousis

Twenty-four sports, one team. These words are exemplified by the *Spirit of Indiana* sculpture that was installed at the south end of Memorial Stadium at IU Bloomington in the spring semester of 2021.

This sculpture was commissioned as part of the bicentennial celebration of Indiana University. While no one could have foreseen just how challenging 2020 would turn out to be for the university, the country, and the world, it is clear that this monument meets the moment.

The spirit of teamwork and self-sacrifice across the country, especially in the healthcare field, were essential as the nation got through the darkest days of the pandemic. These values are first instilled in many of us through sports and that is why this monument represents much more than meets the eye.

When Patricia R. Miller, one of IU's most successful alumni, gave a generous donation for the construction of a statue for the bicentennial, a committee was formed and the search began for a sculptor. Miller, co-founder of Vera Bradley, is known for her philanthropy and civic engagement.

IU President Michael McRobbie knew of an experienced sculptor from IU South Bend, whose outdoor sculptures he had seen while visiting the South Bend. McRobbie took interest in a sculpture by associate professor of fine arts, Dora Natella, titled and contacted her.

Natella has been a faculty member since 2004 and has garnered many awards for her decades of work. Her mastery of classical sculpture as well as her experience in bronze casting was perfect for this project.

When McRobbie asked Natella if she would be interested in such a prominent opportunity, she accepted without hesitation, and that's when the journey began in the summer of 2018.

Natella immediately started to develop a concept and sketched a few design ideas to submit to the committee. After months of discussion, they landed on the idea of a huddle of student athletes coming together as they prepare to face their opposition. The sculpture, like any great artwork, represents much more than meets the eye. Memorial Stadium is, in fact, the place where most students at IU Bloomington graduate each May. Just as the athletes come together to mentally prepare for the task ahead, so do the graduating students as they move on to their next phase of life.

Once Natella had the idea, her next step was to find models to photograph so that she could begin to form the initial clay maquettes to show the committee for approval. Since the athletes portrayed in the sculpture were not intended to depict any particular sport, Natella asked a variety of coaches from IUSB and IU Bloomington if they knew of any student athletes who would be interested in modeling for this project.

After a series of scheduling conflicts, and months of searching, the final group came together. There would be three male athletes, who played soccer, football, and baseball respectively, as well as two female athletes, one volleyball player and one basketball player.

In addition to diversity of sport, the diversity of race was an intentional choice made by the committee. Two of the models are Black, one model is white, and two are biracial. The diversity of this sculpture ensures that any student can see themselves represented. When describing the statues, Natella said that “they’re classical but at the same time quite contemporary.”

Another clear indicator of modernity is the clothing that the athletes are wearing. The committee decided that the student athletes should be wearing training clothes so that they would not be representing a specific sport. When observing the monument, be sure to look out for the details that Natella added to honor the bicentennial of IU. Each detail had to be meticulously sculpted on the eight-foot clay models in Natella’s studio in South Bend.

After the models were completed in clay, a team from New York came and took an impression of each, producing several molds. The molds were then crated and shipped to Bollinger Atelier, an art foundry in Arizona to be cast in bronze. The process needed to transform the artwork

from clay to bronze is not common knowledge. Following the ancient lost-wax process, the foundry used the molds to produce exact wax replicas of the original clay. The foundry then built refractory molds around the waxes.

The molds are fired in a kiln, melting the wax, and leaving room for molten bronze to replace it. This is how something fragile like clay was turned into an enduring work of art. To stay on schedule, Natella and her team were at the studio every day and had to work around the many challenges posed by the pandemic. Natella was finally able to see the molten bronze take shape after two years of work.

She had some help from two former students as well as her son Andrea Natella, who helped with many technical and hands-on tasks. Dora Natella has often said that “even Michelangelo didn’t do it alone.” In other words, everlasting achievements are always the product of teamwork, and this truth dwells in the very essence of the monument.

It is certain that when students, athletes, parents, and everyone in between see this monument, they will be inspired by the message of hope. This will be an iconic landmark at IU for years to come, and will serve as a reminder to all that anything can be accomplished when people all work together towards a shared goal.





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Megan Koczan
Aalyah Miller

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Ashley Cox
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Sabrina Malone
Rachel Mejia
Madelyn Pfifer
Ramsey Snyder
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Kristyn Cook
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Molly Hodge
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Jacob Medich

ADAPTATION:

New Media Studies during the COVID-19 pandemic

By: Cassidy Martenson

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the Indiana University South Bend community to adapt, overcome, and persevere in the face of great adversity. Integrated New Media Studies (INMS) is one department that experienced great transformation during the Fall 2020 semester and beyond. INMS transformed their usual in-person classes into completely hybrid distance courses taught via Zoom and Canvas.

While these changes may intimidate some students and faculty, INMS students were excited to utilize new technology and adapt to this abnormal situation. Michael Lasater, professor of mass communications and department chair of integrated new media studies, states that “If there is any department other than Computer Science that is most comfortable with the new technology, it would have to be new media.”

Justin Meister, a senior INMS student, made it clear that the challenges of this semester have been accompanied by equal opportunity for growth. Meister says that this unique semester has given him the opportunity to be more creative and take his work in new directions. Meister stated that, “a lack of one thing requires more creativity around it.” In his case, the lack of actors, resources, and in-person connection has allowed him to find new ways to complete projects. This newfound creativity has been a bright side to the strange semester.

Lasater explains that at first he was resistant to the idea of fully online courses, but knew that it was the safest way to complete the semester. Teaching 100% hybrid distance is challenging for professors as they struggle to gain the in-person connection that is achievable in the classroom. Additionally, professors quickly discovered that Zoom does not have the bandwidth to handle many of their videos and instructional materials.

Disconnect between professors and students is something that many have cited as an issue during these challenging times. Lasater states that it can be frustrating to teach via Zoom when students choose not to do live video. He states that while he has “respect for reasons why people may not want to have video, it’s like talking to a bunch of cardboard cutouts.”

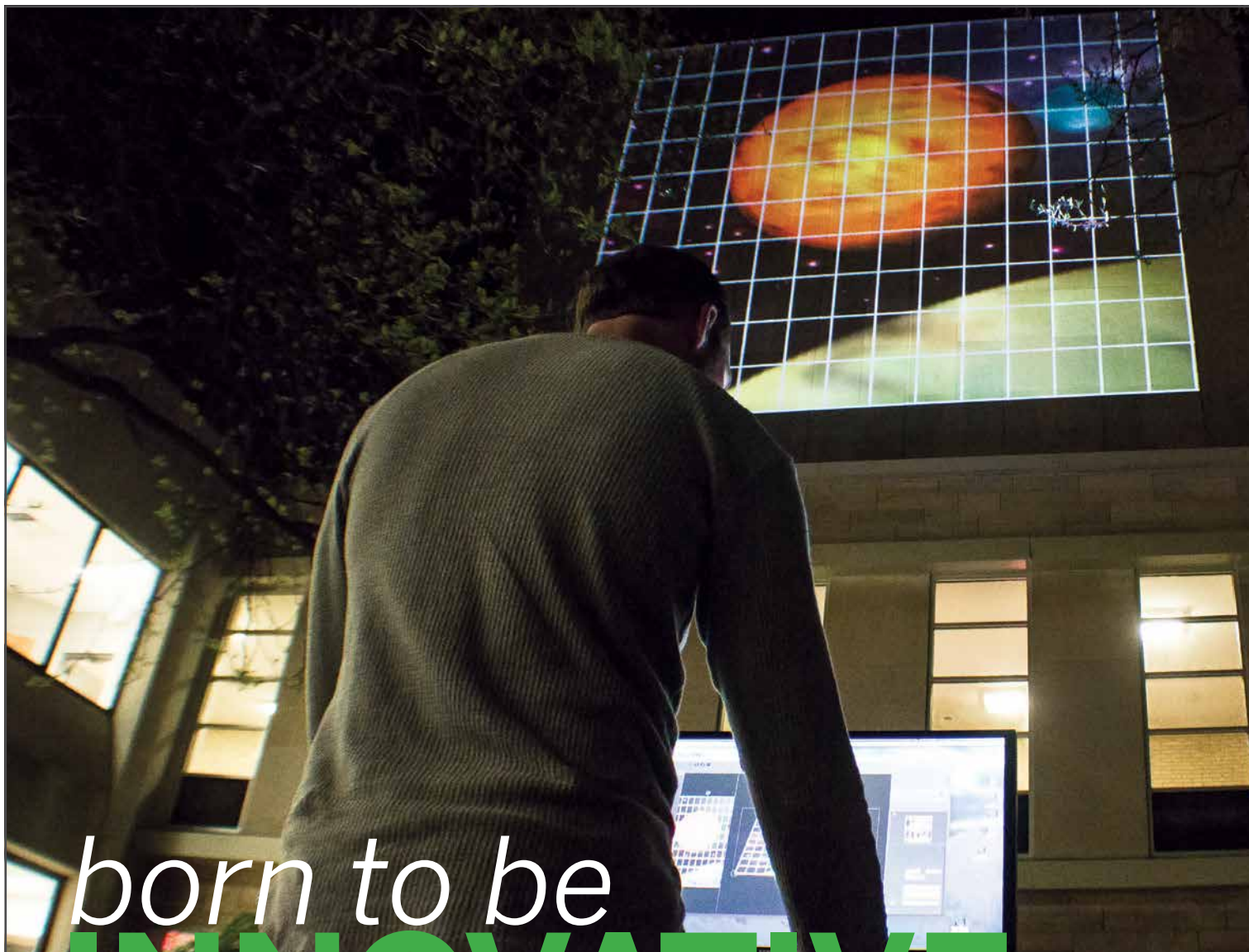
This disconnect has also been felt by the students. Meister states that “the engagement in terms of numbers of students who show up to class has been reduced, there are just a lot of outside pressures.” That is a struggle that colleges face during these abnormal times because mental and physical health must remain the number one priority. Luckily, Meister explains that professors within INMS have been lenient with students regarding deadlines and personal issues that arise.

Even with technological and connectivity issues, INMS has proven that there are

many great things that have emerged from the challenges. Professors have been forced to become more organized and gain new experiences that will help them in the future.

Technologically, Lasater has found the shared screen feature on Zoom to be extremely helpful because students can visually work out their issues with the professor. Additionally, student advising for INMS has been going very smoothly over Zoom thanks to this feature. The ability for the advisor to see the student’s class schedule and details allows them to walk them through the process more easily.

The future looks bright for INMS. With the return of in-person classes for Fall 2021, Lasater states that they will bring what they have learned through Zoom classes to the physical classroom. There is no going back to the way things used to be. Instead the department will continue to move forward, stronger than ever.



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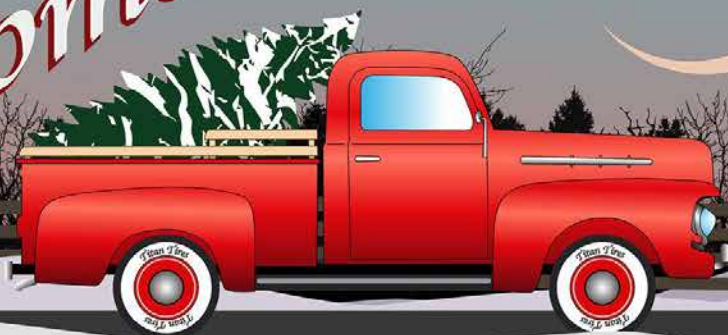
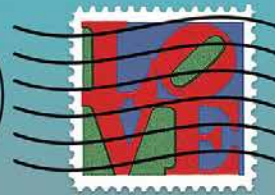


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Holidays at Home

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with IU South Bend,
presented by the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts



Bringing the holidays home

By Kate Luce

If it was not abundantly clear, the pandemic made everyone feel further apart. However, with technology, many found ways to connect. This holiday season we masked up, stayed home, and Zoomed with our loved ones. The pandemic might have kept us apart, but despite this, the holidays stayed merry.

The beloved annual Teddy Bear Concert had a similar fate. With all events on hold for IU South Bend, “Holidays at Home” was broadcast on a Youtube livestream and WNIT to bring the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts home.

“The pandemic threw a wrench in everything that Raclin did on a stage, which is not different than it is for anybody else. The things about the holiday performance that were important to us that were really the hallmarks of what that event is are things celebrating the time of year, more importantly, interacting and helping our community in some way.” Demarée Dufour-Noneman, Associate Director of Marketing and Production, says.

“For us, it was very important as a school, that even in a pandemic, we were continuing to be very active as artists. Both our students, faculty, and staff were very much in the forefront. We are artists and scholars, we need to be a face for our campus and for our community,” Jorge Muñiz, Interim Dean of the Ernestine Raclin School of the Arts says.

While it was only livestreamed and aired on TV, the heart of the production stayed primarily the same. The spirit of collaboration was present well throughout Holidays at Home. Integrated New Media Studies worked on the production side of the whole livestream. Communication

Studies and Fine Arts worked on the marketing and graphic design work. Of course, the Jazz Band, IU South Bend Choir, and the IU South Bend Tap and Kickline all made an appearance during the production.

“It gave us opportunities to involve the departments in different ways that we might have if we had been live. I think that just sort of from a School of the Arts perspective, that level of collaboration with our faculty and our staff and our students, it was awesome. We have a lot of things that happen that are collaborative across the departments all the time, but for some of us, it gave us a moment to sort of reflect and say, we should be thinking more about the ways in which we do and do not collaborate and what that creates” Dufour-Noneman says.

“We should be collaborative because we are not five different departments in another school that has many other things. Our five departments are what creates that school. We are to be interconnected,” Muñiz says.

The event partnered with organizations, a tradition to help bring awareness and donations to groups helping the Michiana community.

This year, Titans Feeding Titans, IU South Bend’s student and community based food pantry, and La Casa de Amistad, a community center that advocates and empowers students and the community of South Bend’s west side, were the featured organizations for the show.

“On our website, there were a couple of links to the best ways that those organizations had for you to donate. We talked with them, and we asked what helps? How does it help? Where should

people go? How can we make this super easy for people to support you if that’s what they’d like to do? So those links that we had sent people straight there,” Dufour-Noneman says.

The production was unlike anything Raclin School of the Arts has seen before. Performers also had to adjust to the changes of the pandemic. Choirs performed online through Zoom.

The Jazz Band, staying socially distant, set the mood of the performance. They provided the Kickline with a backdrop of music and kept the spirits merry.

The Kickline did a lot of their practices through Zoom, focusing on individual dances rather than a group-focused dance. When they did perform together, they wore masks and stayed socially distant.

“The kick line practiced the whole year. During the online portion of classes, we practiced on Zoom, just like the Rockettes! When the campus opened, we practiced with masks. We never stopped! The group was happy to have a positive outlet during the pandemic,” Karen Pajor, adjunct lecturer of theatre and dance, says.

While this year Raclin School of the Arts was home for the holidays, the hope for next year is that things return to normal, the performance will be live, and will make a child’s holiday all that more special.



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Two Decembers for *Three Decembers*

by Patrick Watterson

With a burgeoning opera company about to undertake its most ambitious season full of collaborations, artistic director Dr. Emanuel Christian-Caraman was forced to postpone the South Bend Lyric Opera's 2020 production. Perhaps most ambitious was the SBLO and Ensemble Concept 21 along with IU South Bend, production of *Three Decembers*. However, Dr. C., as he is known by his students, has been able to retain his cast and partners in anticipation of a December 9 and 10, 2021 premiere.

Three Decembers is a modern, two-act chamber opera, written by American composer Jake Heggie, with libretto by Gene Scheer. The three parts of the opera are set in the month of December in the years 1986, 1996, and 2006 and it tells the story of a famous actress, Madeline, and her two adult children.

Caraman sums up the opera by saying that "It's about family, it's about our society, about our lives as artists. It's dealing with old social norms, evolving forward, and trying to reconcile certain aspects of society." The opera explores the discovery of self, single parenting, (and whether Madeline is able to successfully or otherwise balance her career) and LGBT+ themes, in a time where various stereotypes, rumors, and fears swirled about during the AIDS epidemic.

It explores dreams as a young adult artist, reality and how different a path a person's life can take from their intended plans. Caraman echoes this thought by explaining how he never thought he would be the artistic director of an opera company, let alone start one. Along with a beautiful score, the opera tells a story of triumphs, heartbreak, and setbacks, as may happen to any family.

In what he feels is a "reality show world," Caraman believes that this is a great

opportunity for students to see a "real" reality. *Three Decembers* challenges its audience to think about what is truly important—and to any one person, that may be different. One must only look at the past year of canceled events, productions, and take stock of what a person is doing. It is easy to continue going through motions because that was the norm. However, having a pandemic brings an abrupt stop to many things. The time off has allowed people to be introspective and ask if what they are doing is what they truly want, and if it makes them happy.

Caraman is anticipating the upcoming opera and the questions about the artform.

Many people are unaware that there are operas being written today. Hearing the word "opera" many people think powdered wigs, and 17th, 18th, and 19th century music. Caraman assures us that opera is alive, well, and that a COVID-19 centered opera was written and completed this past January.

In fact, Caraman was part of a cast premiering this opera titled *On Call COVID-19* on April 17, with the Chicago-based organization "Working in Concert" about six essential workers who are doctors in different settings around the world. The work echoes *Three Decembers* in that it also takes place in three different times—March 2020, September 2020, and New Year's Eve 2020.

Graduate students at IU South Bend Raclin School of the Arts are excited for this fantastic opportunity to understudy the *Three Decembers* roles and learn from working professionals. As an added treat, composer Jake Heggie will be giving a masterclass to IU South Bend's composition students.



ARTUR SILVA

BRINGS AWARENESS TO SOUTH BEND

By Patrick Watterson



Artur Silva received an amazing offer in August 2020, when he was approached about interviewing artists and directing a short film documenting the development of the Black Lives Matter asphalt mural in Indianapolis. The offer was extended by the online website NewDayCulture.com. The movie project is still unnamed.

Silva is a professor at IU South Bend and teaches time-based media and theory.

The street mural is next to the Madam Walker Legacy Center on Indiana Avenue. The site is an important landmark in Indiana, a symbol of Black resistance and culture. Madam C.J. Walker is believed to be the first self-made African American female millionaire in the U.S.

The mural, in downtown Indianapolis, involved 18 artists, many from Indianapolis. Although the project also drew participants from many places outside the city.

Following the completion of the mural, Silva spoke to several of the artists inside the theatre.

He was able to ask questions about the mural, why they felt compelled to undertake the task and their personal expressions about Black Lives Matter.

Having the opportunity to be on the ground, in the moment, was powerful, according to Silva. He said the atmosphere was electric, and while generally positive, there was tension in the air. A polarizing issue, the mural and its artists were faced with protestors, biting words, and hurled obscenities. For their own

protection, the street was barricaded at both ends to eliminate the potential of vehicles used as weapons, which, as Silva gravely added, has precedent in Indianapolis.

Adding that the event went smoothly, but like many other Black Lives Matter murals across the nation, the Indianapolis work was defaced and damaged only eight days later. Silva is not dismayed, however, because the overwhelming majority of Indianapolis is supportive of the project. The strong emotions and vocal detractors validate the project. The scenes have been documented in Silva's film.

His feeling was that it gave the artists encouragement that what they were doing was the right thing to do. Continuing that they were able to express themselves properly in a public space, but sad that there are opponents of this form of expression, saying "Art is in the center of the biggest conversations we have in our society."

Silva said the fact that art can be incendiary is an important statement. Artists should remember that their work can have a profound effect. The creation should interact with the world around it, and not be stagnant. It exemplifies the importance of art in our society.

When asked what his hopes for the film were, he said this project is one puzzle piece in a whole 1,000 plus piece puzzle. His interest as an artist is to understand visual representation in the public space, and how it is different from the art that is put in a museum. Art that is confrontational, reaching out to its observers in the street, perhaps even literally, is significant.

His hope is that along with the conversation that borders on visual representation, and spatial justice, that this work can be a part of a larger conversation about equity and a set of conditions that were fabricated hundreds of years ago and have been reinvented and repurposed in different languages. There is the ultimate importance of breaking the cycle.

Above all, he says, he hopes that the important and difficult conversations begin and that there must be real engagement in the dialogue before there can be legislative action. And art can play a very significant role in having those conversations.

Silva goes on to say that the project will have two parts: the Indianapolis mural, and other murals in major cities in the United States. The first part of the film project is primarily based around the Indianapolis mural, while the second part will center around murals in other cities, such as Chicago, and New York City, and will contain similar content.

Documenting the mural's creation in real time, the interviews over the course of a month, gathering information, reshoots, and editing, the project has taken more than four months to complete. Further complications, including COVID-19, have caused the project to experience delays.

The project is currently in post-production and anticipates a release to a number of venues, such as Union Station in Washington, D.C., drive-in theaters across the country, and a digital release. Additionally, the film plans to travel with a supplementary exhibit.

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A Role Model in the Arts

A simple question that can have multiple answers: "What makes a teacher great?"

This question is often discussed and thought about as students move along their academic journeys. Students can have many teachers along the way, from preschool all the way to walking across the commencement stage after their four years of college. Many individuals will enter their lives, trying their best to inspire, and lead them towards that door of endless opportunities. An argument can be made for any individual who chooses to offer their time to bettering the lives of others.

In the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts, each department is filled with inspiring professors. However, there is one that is always front and center that has been acknowledged for everything he does in and out of the classroom. You can normally find him on the stage at his music events, or with his family in the crowd, supporting his fellow colleagues and students. Ryan Olivier, assistant professor of music, has not just been a supporter of the arts for many years, but a professor who has continuously supported his students and inspired them to reach high for their goals.

In 2021, Olivier was honored to receive two teaching awards: one from his peers through the Office of Academic Affairs (The Trustees' Teaching Award) and one from the students of IU South Bend through the Office of Student Life and the Student Government Association (Educator of the Year).

For the School of the Arts, this comes as no surprise to anyone in the department. Olivier goes above and beyond when representing the department, and Indiana University, in the highest regard. While Olivier did apply for the Trustees Teaching Award which needed student evaluations and peer reviews, the Educator of the Year award took him by surprise. "On a campus with so many fabulous teachers who care deeply about their students' education, it was quite an honor to be recognized in this fashion," Olivier recalls. In a year when everyone in the world was trying to figure out how to get by, Olivier continued to get the job done, which was to inspire his students and educate them to the highest level.

Everyone over the past year has experienced a hard time. Whether that be in the classroom, losing their job, not seeing loved ones for extended periods of time, the frustration of everyone was at an all-time high. This led

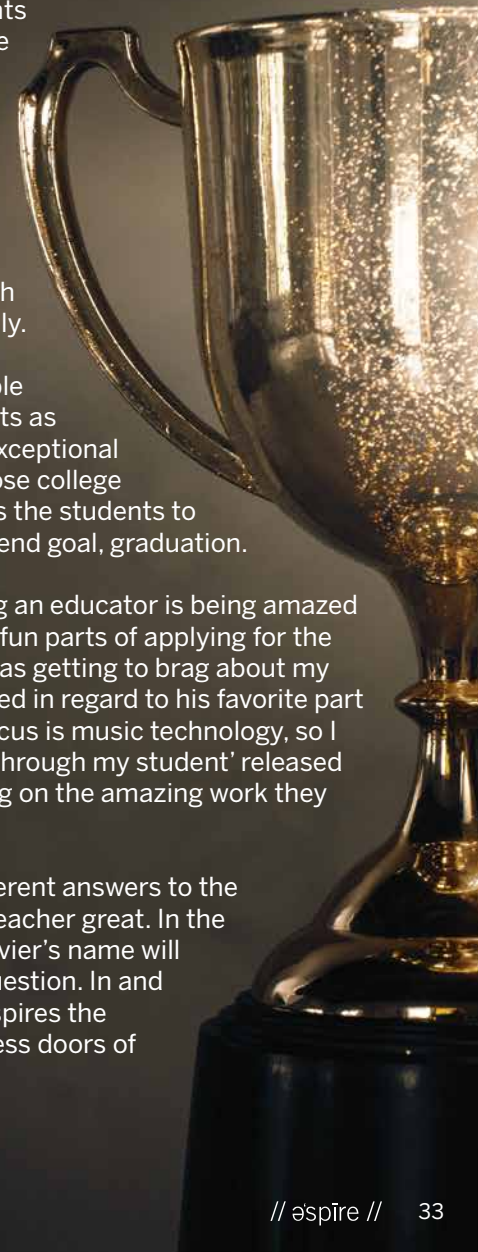
Olivier to do what he does best, "I tried to prioritize common courtesy and understanding whenever possible," Olivier said as he reflected on the year. "I don't always get this right and it is easy to misunderstand or misinterpret what someone is trying to tell you when your only method of communication is virtual. What I learned, however, is that the little things can make a big difference."

Thinking back to the question, "What makes a teacher great," you can simply sit in one of Olivier's lectures and soon start to find some of those answers. Or watch as he changes the lives of students when they walk through the doors of IU South Bend for the first time, and sit in his classroom for their first college course.

Olivier's teaching has touched the lives of many students over the years both professionally and personally. His positivity and energetic attitude create a comfortable environment for the students as they sit in his classes. His exceptional teaching style helps put those college fears at ease, and motivates the students to keep pushing towards that end goal, graduation.

"My favorite aspect of being an educator is being amazed by my students. One of the fun parts of applying for the Trustees' Teaching Award was getting to brag about my students," Olivier commented in regard to his favorite part of teaching. "My primary focus is music technology, so I spent some time combing through my student's released performances and reflecting on the amazing work they have done."

People will always have different answers to the question of what makes a teacher great. In the School of the Arts, Ryan Olivier's name will always be used with that question. In and out of the classroom, he inspires the uninspired, opening countless doors of opportunity for students.





A legacy fulfilled

By Kathy Borlik

A lively conversation with Associate Professor Ron Monsma can go in numerous directions – art, music, travel, teaching, city living and wellness. With every subject, he has something insightful to add. It is a delightful journey and a listener wants the chat to go on a little bit longer.

Now for a new topic. He talked recently about his retirement which began after the spring 2021 semester. It will not be sitting-on-the-couch-type of retirement, he claims. The new phase will be just as creative. Monsma still has art and music to produce. Lucky for all of us, he is good at everything he does. Lucky for students, he has been a great teacher.

Monsma has been a member of the faculty in the Raclin School of the Arts since 1997 teaching both painting and drawing. He received his bachelor's degree from IU South Bend in 1984. His works have appeared in numerous publications such as *Best of Pastel*, *Pure Color*, and *100 Artists of the Midwest*. He has won a number of awards and teaches workshops. He won the Jack Richeson Best of Show Award in the 9th Annual Pastel 100 competition sponsored by the *Pastel Journal* among others.

Before art, he had music when he toured as a drummer with a number

of bands. He performed a set with John Fogerty and appeared with Def Leppard. "There were too many bands to mention," he said. However, he did drop a few names such as Southside Denny and Bill Boris. He toured for years before he decided he needed a steady income.

Monsma produced illustrations for Memorial Hospital, Tidy Cat and Saint Mary's College. Working as an illustrator was tough work and time consuming, he said. "It was a learning experience. I was able to bring simplification, symbolism and metaphor" to the fine art.

He started to take classes and studied with Tony Droege at IU South Bend. He started to teach as a visiting lecturer, then assistant and then associate. It makes it sound like there was a plan, he said. But there wasn't. "I always knew I wanted to be in the arts. I was a lifer – always making art. I was influenced by Tony, about what it means to be an artist."

For his students, he said, it is important to learn the skills and practice. "Much like practicing the scales on a piano. From there it is to guide and make suggestions." Monsma said he marvels at his students. "They are smarter, more engaged. They are sharp. They are exciting to watch."

Kate Luce, of South Bend, has taken several classes with Monsma since 2017. "He is very engaging as a teacher, a problem solver. If you have issues with painting, he makes suggestions. He knows his stuff. He cares about his students."

However, he can hand out tough love, Luce added. Luce will graduate in December 2021. "I will miss not having him in my final semester. Makes me a little sad but I understand."

Jorge Muñiz, interim dean, said he knows how well Monsma works with his students. "He is loved by his students. His work as a teacher has touched many hearts."

Susan Moore, professor and fine arts department chair, spoke about both the dedicated professor and talented artist. Monsma is a "genuine teacher. He is enthusiastic about his profession. He balances energy and humor" as he works with students. "Ron was good about talking with high school students during orientation about being an artist."

As an artist he captures his subjects in a very accurate way, realistic. "His images tell a story," Moore said.

As a member of the faculty, Moore said he has been "hardworking and



supportive” in collaborations in the School of the Arts. “We don’t ever say that we are replacing Ron. It is a time shift and a change” with his retirement. There are no replacements. “We’re happy that he will be a member of the community.”

Lucas Eggers is an assistant director of content management at the Mendoza School of Business, University of Notre

Dame. Eggers was in several art classes with Monsma. “He was friendly and offered great advice. When you got praise or criticism it was valid. He connected with students.”

Eggers admires Monsma’s flawless works. Monsma has a way of pointing out ways to improve a student’s painting. “Sometimes the subject seemed flat. He would step in and

offer a suggestion.” Taking it all in, the painting would jump off the page with a little additional work.

Monsma said it has been an absolutely great career. For the future, “I’ll be doing what I’ve always done. My art, my drumming. Maybe a workshop. No pressure.”



19 years of dedication: Larry Lambert retires

By: Cassidy Martenson

After nearly two decades, Larry Lambert, associate professor of communication arts, retired at the end of the spring 2021 semester. His passion, kindness and dedication to the IU South Bend community will be missed by faculty and students.

Lambert received his Ph.D in Communication and Culture with a focus in rhetoric from Indiana University Bloomington in the nineties. His dissertation, “Invoking the Machine: The Rhetorical Appeal to Machine Technology in American Whig Discourse” is an analysis of the political and cultural movement and how it has shaped the American identity.

He began teaching at IU South Bend in the 2002 fall semester. He has taught a range of communication courses including Business and Professional Communication and Organizational Communication. In his final semester, Lambert is teaching Introduction to Speech Communication, Persuasive Speaking, and Nonverbal Communication.

“He was our departmental historian, helping us to understand the departmental traditions before many of us arrived as faculty. He also mentored several faculty in our department, including myself, as we went through the promotion process,” says Kari Wilson, department chair of the

communications department.

“In the discussions, in class, in assignments, and in exercises students talk about their own communication, who they communicate with, and what’s important to them,” states Lambert. There is a high level of personal engagement in the field of communications. This engagement is something Lambert has enjoyed as it allowed him to connect with students.

“I had Dr. Lambert for two out of my five classes and I definitely feel like I have learned a lot from his classes. His teaching style kept me very engaged and helped me retain material better. I wish him all the best in his upcoming retirement,” says Alyssa Bosse, IU South Bend student. Lambert’s teaching style and outgoing personality will be missed by students and faculty.

“Dr. Lambert has a long history in the communication studies department and we are going to miss him tremendously,” says Wilson. Lambert will miss the IU South Bend community as well. Lambert has enjoyed interacting with faculty and students during his time on campus. He explains that the IU South Bend community is interested in what truly matters. While there is a common interest in education and improvement, he says that many IU community members have a passion for larger issues.

He will also miss the beauty of campus and the resources IU South Bend has provided him. He explains that while the campus may be small, it has all the components of a larger university. From the new Education and Arts Building to the removal of Greenlawn Hall, the campus has blossomed beautifully.

Due to COVID-19, Lambert has missed out on his favorite events on campus. Commencement gives him the opportunity to celebrate students and their accomplishments and it brings him joy to see students supported by family and friends. Lambert has attended every IU South Bend commencement since he has been at the university.

“His hard work and dedication to the department are extremely valued, but we wish him all the best as he takes a well-deserved retirement,” continues Wilson. Lambert will spend his retirement with friends, family and good books. He looks forward to taking the time to read all the books he has collected over the years and hopefully returning to traveling as vaccinations continue in the U.S.

“I have really enjoyed my years at IUSB. IUSB has been a really good community for me to become connected with” says Lambert. He hopes that students continue to engage with communication and understand its vast history.



Linda Freel leaves behind a legacy

By Kate Luce

Passed away September 8, 2020



Linda Freel was best known at IU South Bend for her emphasis on drawing, love for the outdoors, and her passion for teaching students. She was an artist and educator, but for many who were lucky to know her she was much more. Freel was a mentor, colleague, and also a friend.

Well before her time at IU South Bend, Freel received her BA in Education at Bethel University. She took a few art classes at IU South Bend before pursuing an MFA from Notre Dame.

Freel has been an educator since she was 21-years-old and spent the last 12 years of her life teaching art classes at IU South Bend.

Freel was not just an educator, but a very active artist throughout the area, participating in many shows and juried competitions at galleries and museums. Her drawings and paintings often depicted plants and wildlife native to the area. She drew outside for reference. Even the cold could not stop her, as she would draw landscapes in the frigid Indiana winter.

To her colleagues and friends, Freel will be remembered for her love of teaching, beautiful work, and care.

“Linda was a friend and colleague of mine for many years. Although she taught classes in graphic design as well, drawing and painting is where she really shined and loved to teach, and her instruction in that area was of real value to our program. Linda was there

for me while I was on leave last spring, not only taking over my classes but also as a friend,” Ron Monsma, former associate professor of fine arts, says.

Susan Moore, department chair of fine arts will always remember Freel as irreplaceable, not just to IU South Bend, but to the community as a whole. “She was a good colleague, she always participated in the faculty exhibition and the Scholarship Art Sale. She made beautiful work. She was encouraging and a valuable mentor to drawing and painting students.”

She encouraged her drawing class to find inspiration in the landscape. Freel pushed her students to think critically within the parameters of each assignment. Upper level students were inspired to create work that resonated with them on projects.

Many former students have been particularly impacted by Freel.

“When I took Graphic Design with Linda, she opened up a whole world to me as far as understanding and challenging what I knew about design, color, and aesthetics. I will always be indebted to her because of how much she taught me. She pushed her students to really think about what they were designing or creating. She challenged them to push their work to make it successful. She wanted her students to be the best version of themselves and that showed through her teaching and her passion for art,” Katie Neece, BFA Painting and Drawing ‘13, remembers.

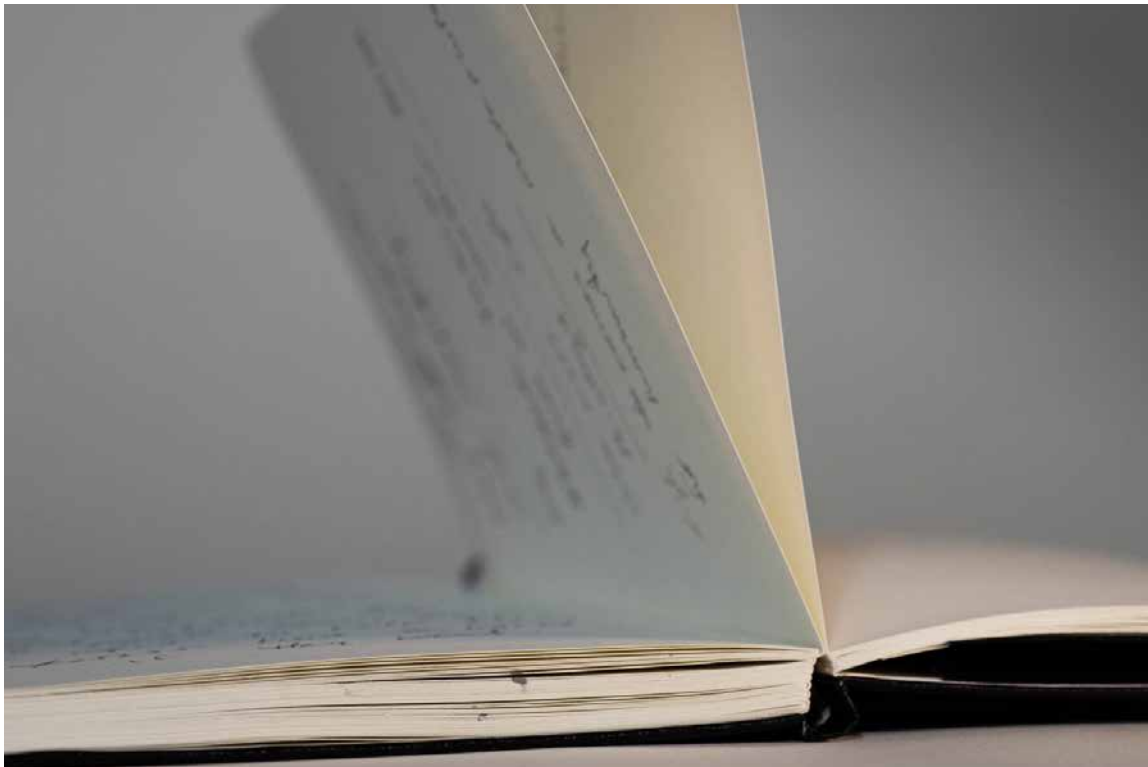
Neece, now a professor at Holy Cross College, felt particularly impacted by Freel’s style of teaching. She focuses on traditional means of rendering when it comes to her graphic design courses.

“Linda was upfront and honest to her students and was a no-nonsense woman. She was passionate about teaching and her practice and wanted to share that with everyone she taught and came in contact with,” Neece says reflecting on her time with Freel. “She is someone who greatly impacted my life in so many ways and she will be greatly missed. A funny thing I remember her saying is, ‘Once you make big paintings and everyone notices them, then you can go back to small paintings.’”

Former IU South Bend student Julia Kanestrom, BFA Painting and Drawing, ‘20, started a fund to plant a tree in Freel’s memory.

“Nature was one of the few topics we could both identify with. I believe this small gesture of planting memorial trees to celebrate her life would help solidify our bond, the bond she grew with others and be a living testament of what she loved most.”

Freel’s impact will be felt throughout IU South Bend for many years to come. Her passion for teaching and creating art is something that will be missed by many. However, Freel’s legacy will continue to bloom.



Top //
Sketch, 2021
 by Susan Moore // faculty

Bottom Left //
 by Kolt Sizer // alumni

Bottom Right //
 Skull Poster
 by John Thompson // faculty

Contact Susan Moore
sulmoore@iu.edu
574-520-4860
EA 2030

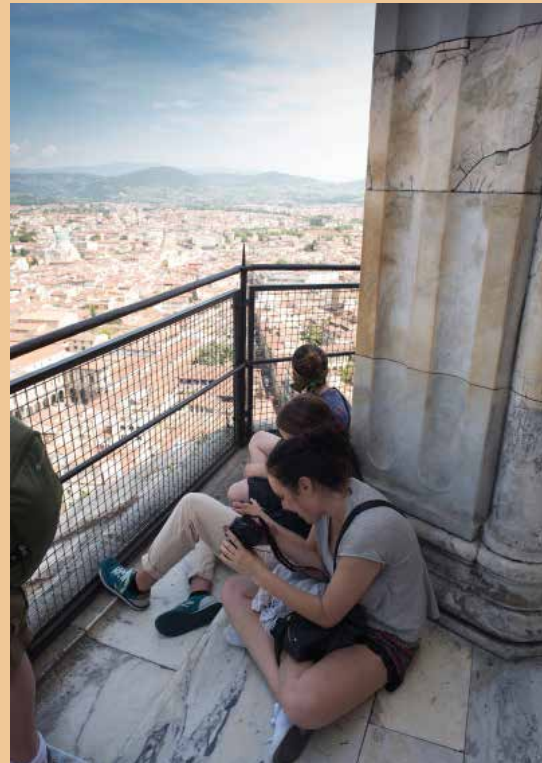
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