



THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER ART MUSEUM
EBERT ART CENTER / 1220 BEALL AVENUE / WOOSTER, OHIO 44691-2363

April 27–May 14, 2012

2012 STUDIO ART

Senior Independent Study Group Exhibition

The Senior Independent Study (I.S.) at The College of Wooster is a year-long project with one-on-one support and guidance by a faculty advisor. For studio art majors, the culmination of this in-depth experience is a week-long, one-person exhibition in the MacKenzie Gallery, located in the older section of Ebert Art Center. This group exhibition features work selected from each student's solo exhibition by Kitty McManus Zurko, Director/Curator, The College of Wooster Art Museum.

Studio Art Majors:

Lida Bilokur '12

Rachel Frank '12

Brenna Hatcher '12

Julia Murphy '12

Sarah Rudawsky '12

Advisor: Marina Mangubi,
Associate Professor of Art

Will Ehrenreich '12

Kelley Waickman '12

Advisor: Bridget Murphy Milligan,
Associate Professor of Art

Ann Lewis '12

Greer Morgan '12

Rebecca Newhouse '12

Abiose Spriggs '12

Marissa Stover '12

Advisor: Walter Zurko,
Professor of Art

Lida Bilokur '12

Advisor: Marina Mangubi

I exited the plane and walked through the Hanoi airport. One Caucasian, five foot nine, bright blonde haired girl towering over a sea of Vietnamese people, was, apparently, quite the sight to see. Every single eye in the room stared directly at me without concern of appearing rude. I followed the flow of people past a sign that read "Baggage Direction Follow". Shortly afterwards, I came to a halt due to a crowded mob of pushy people. Small hands clawed at my sides; everyone was pushing one another attempting to get ahead of the next person in the pack, but in a completely casual and non-aggressive manner. In the United States there would have been a neat line, organized by ropes with staff or security officials standing nearby. This took me by surprise. At first I was nervous and intimidated, I kept getting cut off and shoved back. People who exited the plane ten minutes after me were far ahead of me by now. I decided to toughen up and plow my way forward, following the path of the small man just in front of me. There seemed to be no social constraints, and this was not "politeness" as I knew it.

I looked at my surroundings. There was litter everywhere, and a thin film of dirt covered everything. It was not quiet. Everyone spoke in an abrupt and loud manner with the pitch of a shout. The men and women wore a mixture of clothing from separate generations, creating a confusing combination; old traditional Vietnamese hats covered their heads, but new brand name Nike sneakers stood out on their feet. Crooked and discolored teeth protruded from under their lips, as they chatted away, carrying out their astonishingly loud conversations just inches away from me. There was no sense of personal space. My eyes wandered around this new and bizarre environment that I looked forward to exploring.



Extended Family

Will Ehrenreich '12

Advisor: Bridget Murphy Milligan

“Don’t those look so much more beautiful than the ones we see on everyone’s lawns back home?” the man remarked to his partner. As the two approached I informed the man that the two flamingos were in fact, not real, and he seemed somewhat perplexed.

My intent for the photograph was to complicate the viewer’s relationship with the object by taking it out of the yard where it can be seen as a symbolic reminder of the natural world, and into a marsh, where it is arguably less natural but appears more convincingly real, thus creating its own visual conflict. One woman who came close enough to realize the two birds weren’t real actually became eager to photograph them. After photographing lawn ornaments for some time, seeing that occur felt somewhat satisfying.

In my last four years at the College of Wooster I have spent a lot of time driving around northern Ohio with no particular purpose other than to explore an unfamiliar environment cloaked with rolling farmlands and small townships. In the course of my observations of the natural landscape I began to take notice of certain aesthetic trends adopted by homeowners consisting of different forms of yard art. I became interested in how one would react to seeing some of these objects in places outside of the yard, so that any prior scrutiny attached to the idea of these objects became void when considered in a different context. *Extended Family* is a photographic series consisting of lawn ornaments staged and photographed in environments outside of the boundary of the yard.



An Explanation of Hyperbolic Geometry

Rachel Frank '12

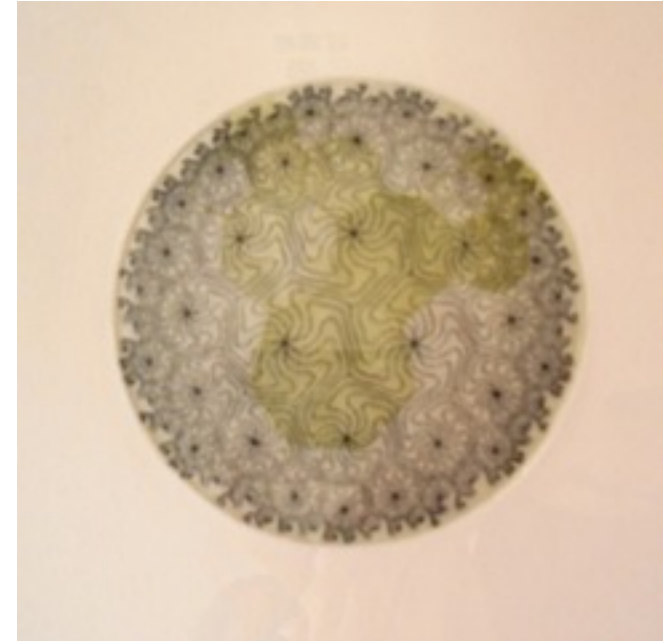
Advisor: Marina Mangubi

The mathematical component of my Independent Study researches the development of hyperbolic geometry and discusses three specific hyperbolic models: the Poincaré disk, the upper half-plane and the Beltrami-Klein model. Focusing more on the Poincaré disk because of its simplicity, the axiomatic system of hyperbolic geometry is explained. The hyperbolic axiomatic system includes the postulates, definitions, and theorems from absolute geometry, as well as the altered fifth postulate and dependent theorems. The fifth postulate is what separates Euclidean geometry from hyperbolic geometry. When given a line and a point not on the line, there is only one parallel line to the given line through the point in Euclidean geometry, whereas in hyperbolic geometry there are at least two parallels.

The altered hyperbolic fifth postulate affects many theorems and this thesis examines those hyperbolic theorems through three models. Unique to each model is the formula for measuring distance between two points. The distance formula is crucial to understand in order for a model to be consistent with hyperbolic geometry.

The Studio Art component of my Independent Study explores hyperbolic concepts through multiple color block prints. I created several relief multiple color block prints that focused on differences between Euclidean versus hyperbolic theorems. My relief prints retain an immediacy of the action of the carved mark and patterns. The intaglio multiple color prints I created retained more of a tonal effect through the various etching techniques employed. My intaglio prints were inspired by specific concepts in hyperbolic models. Both the relief and intaglio prints rely heavily on the relationship between plates for an effective abstract piece. This includes the image and color choice to best represent the concept from which it was inspired by. Multiple block printing allowed me to create a three-dimensional illusion of hyperbolic space in comparison to two-dimensional mathematical diagrams.

There is both a technical side and an abstract side to my Independent Study on hyperbolic geometry. The collection of pieces I produced can be understood on multiple levels dependent on the viewer's mathematical knowledge, which is similar to how hyperbolic geometry is understood in many different models. Researching hyperbolic geometry from a mathematical and artistic viewpoint helped round out both components of my Independent Study.



Johnny Appleseed: Exploring A Cultural Landscape

Brenna Hatcher '12

Advisor: Marina Mangubi

He represents the America that has never been interested in money or public opinion, that has been friendly, sensible, and brave instead of aggressive and bloody, that has nurtured life instead of destroying it, and that has been sensitive to the beauty of this continent, and done something to create here a civilization.

—Charles Allen Smart,
Harpers Magazine, 1939

Within modern culture we remember Johnny Appleseed in elementary classrooms on Arbor Day as an eccentric philanthropist with a pot on his head. His real name was John Chapman (1774–1845), and I decided to dedicate a year to retracing his trail. My journeys took me from his birthplace in Leominster, Massachusetts, to his gravesite in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and to monuments, orchards, and museums through Ohio.

The drawings and paintings sometimes reflect particular places and other times were formed using my memories, observations, and photographs. The paintings could be set in Johnny's time or in ours, forming a connection between the past and present. Michael Pollan's *The Botany of Desire* influenced the language I used to title my pieces—most importantly those concerning Johnny's role in bringing alcohol to the frontier and his fervent rejection of grafting apple trees (the technique that enabled us to have specific varieties of apples). Key themes, such as Johnny's Swedenborgian faith (an offshoot of Lutheran Christianity), the balance between wildness and domestication, and the feelings I had while on a long walk, also resonate within the narrative of my landscapes.

My work exists as my monument, not only to Johnny's legacy, but also to our shared faith in the natural world. In the first page of my journal, under the heading "Qualities I want my project to have," I wrote, "they should be true to who I am—I think they should have a sense of humor."



Time Travelin' is *Dino-Mite!*

Ann Lewis '12

Advisor: Walter Zurko

Looking back to their childhood, many adults have fond memories of reading comics in some form or another. As I have grown, I have noticed that although I was still reading comics, many of my peers felt too old to enjoy them. To those people, the only adults who like comics are nerds who need a girl/boyfriend or are people who crawl out of their parents' basements once a year for Comic-Con. In the realm of comics there is something out there for every reader, so it saddens me when people write off any illustration-based story that has panels and speech bubbles as something only for children and nerds. For my Senior Independent Study, I developed an original story for a graphic novel I hope to create and share after my graduation from Wooster.

Using the Senior I.S. process as a testing ground, I drew a series of comic-style pages and illustrations as part of my original story. My narrative is divided into four parts and involves a time travel escapade gone wrong, misplaced dinosaurs, and unexpected friendships told through comic strips and illustrations. The pages and vignettes depict what could become climatic moments to more relaxed scenes that represent and develop a character's personality in each story.

Anyone can enjoy reading comics and I want to try to engage those people, lovers and skeptics alike, with an original story of my own.



Come to the Table

A. Greer Morgan '12

Advisor: Walter Zurko

Clay and bread share a literal dependency on the earth for their existence, as well as many figurative associations with life. These connections inspired me to find a more direct relationship between bread dough as a sculptural material and the ceramic serving baskets I made. The interdependent sculptural elements of my exhibit are thus intended to cause contemplation about these two mediums.

Food unites people on a basic level by meeting our physical needs, while sitting around a table and sharing a meal can help meet our requirements for nourishment on a deeper level. Welcoming people and providing them with wholesome food can thus become a way of offering an invitation to experience community and a fuller life. The table set for a meal represents this call.

Is there a distinction between everyday life and the process of creating art, or is it simply a variance of perception? When does life become art, and when is art a way of life? I have attempted to address these questions with my senior thesis project by engaging in a relational aesthetic, one that considers relationships and social interactions between people as artistic mediums. To this end, I shared a variety of artisan breads with those who viewed my work each day of the exhibit (see images below). I believe that offering hospitality and encouraging community through sharing food is a way to approach life as a work of art.



The Seen and Unseen Face of God

Julia V. Murphy '12

Advisor: Marina Mangubi

The Patua painters of Northern Bengal are a unique caste of people who fluctuate between the religions of Hinduism and Islam. What is constant is that they are painters: their longstanding vocation is creating Hindu devotional images. A tension exists in their dichotomy of religions with their vocation—Islam forbids creating images of God, while Hinduism encourages creating images of gods. The issue also exists of whether there is a single God, Allah, or a multiplicity of gods as in Hindu cosmology.

I found that there was very little discourse on the issue of whether or not to image a god, so I decided to address it myself in the way that worked best for me—through painting. I created images of human-figured gods in conversation with an imageless deity, as described by the American landscape. As my paintings evolved, they grew from images of bodies integrated into landscapes (the woman in the water) toward images that only hint at human presence in a landscape, without an actual human figure (the cows, the bridges).

I discovered through painting that both concepts, a god that is tangible as well as a god that is expansive and uncontainable, are valid and create a complex, paradoxical understanding of god. Two sides of the coin make it whole.



Terrain

Rebecca Scott Newhouse '12

Advisor: Walter Zurko

The phrase “miniature-landscape” can seem like an oxymoron, since one of the easiest ways to define the gigantic (the complete and total opposite of the miniature) is by observing the nature that encompasses many of us everyday. Landscapes are gigantic, and as humans we are lost amongst its immensity. Yet we constantly reproduce the landscape in ways that are picturesque, easy to digest and surprisingly tenable—postcards, snow globes, figurines, or photographs. For this body of work I explored the human fascination with landscape and through my own interpretation created a series of miniature, three-dimensional panoramas.

Reversing the scale from massive to miniscule has become the center of my thesis; what is it about the all-encompassing scenery of towering mountains or long green fields that makes them so visually and conceptually powerful? Triggered from childhood memories and imagination, I attempted to create landmasses that spark connotations within the viewer while simultaneously reflecting a collective memory (a spiritual presence of a society now dissipated).

Though my work is open for interpretation, I am confident that the familiar geological features will establish a meaningful connection with the viewer, and will spark reactions so much so that in observing the terrain, they will question whether or not they had been to a place like this before.



Reflections on Biological Research

Sarah Rudawsky '12

Advisor: Marina Mangubi

The investigation of the effects of emerald ash borer beetle induced habitat disturbance on spider communities in southeastern Michigan inspired an emotional response in me. I reacted to the process of data collection, the sorting of this data and the environment in which I conducted my research.

I collected spider specimens in the Huron River Watershed region of southeastern Michigan. I collected spider specimens through the use of pitfall traps, which are dug into the ground and collected periodically, and with a hand sorting method. Through the collection process and the long and tedious process of identifying my spider specimens to families that occurred in the laboratory, I developed an intimate relationship with the order *Araneae*. I was also inspired to reflect on my own position in the natural world through my almost daily interactions with it in the forest.

The experiences I had alone or with other research companions as we studied nature through our research efforts and appreciated nature through our immersion in it created conflicting feelings within me. I desired to find my own place in the natural world, but I asserted my dominance over the forest in a daily manner through my manipulations of the environment. The artwork I created reflects these dual motivations I experienced and my emotional reaction to this conflict. These pieces also reference specific memories that aid in the expression of my story as both a research biologist with artistic inclinations and an artist that works in biological research.



Untitled

Abiose Spriggs '12

Advisor: Walter Zurko



Destructive Creation

Marissa Stover '12

Advisor: Walter Zurko

I began collecting discarded materials and looking for objects with a history early on in my life as an artist, gathering scraps off the sidewalks in New York to glue together, first as collages, then as box constructions, and finally as freestanding sculptures. Trash was free, and it was beautiful, with intricate textures and colors.

—Joy Taylor

I have always had a tendency to accumulate things that I find lying around on the streets, things that were left behind or forgotten. Whenever I would come across these “treasures” my imagination flourished, pondering what these objects were and where they came from. My mind would run wild with ideas of what kind of past they had and what the objects could become. After developing several ideas for my exhibition pertaining to found objects, I discovered that I had a penchant for altering manufactured metal and found objects. This thought grew into the idea of how the world had moved from more agrarian based societies to societies based on industrialization. Seeing that this day and age is engulfed with the idea of recycling and reusing influenced by the “green movement” made me think that I was onto something meaningful. Therefore, for my Senior Independent Study Thesis project I decided to not only focus on recycling itself, but in repurposing found objects to create something new, that was not normally associated with the given found objects. I arrived on the idea of creating nature from what were once manufactured objects, made with materials dug from the earth.

In my mind, it makes sense for my exhibition to represent how urban areas are taking over forestland with materials that are used to build these metropolitan areas. What interests me the most is that I find it ironic to use metal and other manufactured materials and objects—the very things that are displacing nature—to recreate nature.



Contemporary Merrymakers

Kelley Waickman '12

Advisor: Bridget Murphy Milligan

And what a martial air the merry makers have withal,—the banners of their companies displayed, their silk scarves glowing against their dark costumes, their hats with swashing cavalier brims, their eyes alert and gleaming, their martial beards and mustachios;—and all of it, all of it, life itself!

This collection of work focuses on the appropriation of Dutch images in regard to a people deemed 'merrymakers' in 17th century Flemish art. Inspired by the paintings of Frans Hals, I chose to explore the stigmas of bourgeois identity and standards of portraiture through the juxtaposition of misplaced, contemporary subjects with elite Flemish objects and common poses. My subjects were chosen based on the exuberance of their personalities in relation to certain works of Hals', and were rendered using similar methods and styles of his painting. In addition, an essential part of this work was created through the observation of gatherings of people in Wooster bars or other communal locations. This provides an accurate correlation between Hals' jolly fools, and their modern counterparts today.

Essentially, this work concentrates on the identity of merrymakers, or 'jolly fools,' as they were often called, and examines the methods of their portrayal. Some scholars believe merrymakers were belligerent folk who took place in dramatic performances of music and dance or exuberant poetry reading. Others contend them to be multi generational and well-to-do lower class who took part in the self indulgences of festive occasions like drinking and smoking. Whoever they were , it is my hope that their vivacity survives through the animate personalities in my own work.

